

**‘A SAFE AND HONOURABLE PEACE’: BRITISH
POLITICAL DISCOURSE, POLITICS AND
POLICY FORMATION IN THE MAKING OF THE
TREATY OF UTRECHT, 1708 TO 1713**

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PhD History 2022

I, Kevin Douglas Tuffnell, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

21 March 2022

'The sound of peace, was not to the people so agreeable and desirable; but the epithets of good, safe, lasting and honourable, were always wanting to make the harmony, to make the words sonorous, and to please the ears.'¹

¹ *Reasons why a Party among us, and also among the Confederates, are Obstinate Bent against a Treaty of Peace with France at this Time* (London, 1711), 23.

Acknowledgements

Completing a PhD is often said to be a lonely endeavour, but it would of course be impossible without the support and guidance of others. I must begin by thanking my principal supervisor Jason Peacey of UCL, who, aided by my second supervisor, Stephen Conway, has guided me with great patience throughout the almost seven years it has taken to complete this project. Their input has been unfailingly clear and constructive, and I hope that they have found the experience as enjoyable as I have.

During my primary research I troubled the staff at many archives, and I am indebted to them for their help. While it is somewhat invidious to do so, I must single out the staff in the manuscripts room at the British Library; as I obsessively chased down sources, they patiently delivered to me numerous boxes, only to have to take them back just minutes later. And those at the Kenneth More Memorial Library at the University of Kansas, who spared me a trip to the mid-western United States by diligently identifying and copying a selection of letters from the correspondence of Arthur Moore held there. Thanks are also due to the librarians at my two favourite workplaces – the Institute of Historical Research and the London Library.

The IHR played another important role, as the home of the British History in the Long Eighteenth Century seminar. This has provided not only a stimulating forum in which to hear papers given by fellow historians of the eighteenth century, but also a supportive environment in which to meet and share knowledge with others who have completed their PhDs, who are working on them, or who are simply fascinated by the history of the period. I salute in particular my fellow ‘old lags’ among the members – Paul McIntyre, Stephen Hoare, Martin Price, Richard Senior and David Williams – conversations with whom have helped maintain my sanity (especially over the last two years).

Beyond UCL and the IHR, I have naturally come across many other academic historians during the course of the project. Among them was Dr

Manuel Castellano García, a fellow speaker at a September 2020 conference who had recently completed a PhD analysing the use of public discourse by Robert Harley's ministry in securing peace between the summer of 1710 and the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht (a remit somewhat narrower in focus and in timescale than my own).¹ Sadly his thesis was prepared in Spanish (a language I neither speak nor read), but I much enjoyed our discussion when a brief window in the pandemic allowed us to meet in London.

Most of all, I am deeply grateful to my wife Ruchanee, who has patiently borne my absences in libraries and archives (and in my study), and joined me as I tracked Queen Anne and her reign through museums, galleries and stately homes. Thank you.

¹ M. Castellano García, *Opinión pública y diplomacia británica ante la guerra de Sucesión española (1710-1713)* (Universitat Pompeu Fabra thesis, 2018).

Abstract

By 1708, Britain and her Allies – principally the States-General and the Holy Roman Emperor - had been fighting the War of the Spanish Succession for six years, and Britain had been at war for sixteen years of the previous twenty-one. War weariness was widespread, and the focus of British politics turned increasingly to securing peace, an objective attained with the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.

This dissertation presents a holistic analysis of British domestic politics, foreign policy-making and diplomacy surrounding the peace negotiations, and is positioned at the intersection of three principal historiographical strands: those concerning discourse and the public sphere, British politics in the age of Queen Anne, and the formation and implementation of foreign policy. The analysis is undertaken primarily through the prism of contemporary discourse across a broad range of categories, ranging from the official statements of governments, through wider foreign policy debate involving the opposition and the media, to cultural representations, demonstrations and public celebrations.

Establishing the central role of political discourse in both the shaping and validation of British foreign policy in the making of the peace, this dissertation provides significant insights in three principal areas. First, it demonstrates the complexity and inter-relation of the narratives deployed in the contention over the peace. Secondly, it identifies the protagonists, both domestic and foreign, engaged in the propagation, suppression and rebuttal of those narratives, and the means which they employed. Thirdly, it describes the outcomes which those actors sought and achieved: attempting to influence ministers, Parliament, Allies and a politically engaged public with a close interest in foreign affairs. It also sheds light on other issues raised by the historiography: the tension between realist and ideological objectives in foreign policy; the interplay between domestic and foreign policy; and the role of Parliament.

Impact statement

This project, drawing on international relations theory, and the historiographies of British politics in the age of Anne, of diplomacy and of the public sphere, provides a holistic picture of the way in which public discourse in Britain was used both to influence and to validate foreign policy formation in the early eighteenth century. Through this approach, it enhances understanding of the period by addressing lacunae in the existing historiography.

The subject is not only of historical interest: the frequency of references to the cost of war in 'blood and treasure' in the reporting of last summer's NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan demonstrates how narratives in public discourse can persist across centuries. Through identifying resonances such as this the current project can provide much needed perspective to the analysis of current events, with the aftermath of the Brexit referendum of June 2016 providing a recent, and very pressing, example. The peace made at Utrecht, like the UK's departure from the European Union, sharply divided the country, and discourse surrounding the two issues exhibits striking similarities. At a macro level, the role of Britain on the international stage was called into question, but many other common features can be identified. An unregulated press then, and social media now, fuelled a febrile debate of which truth was commonly thought to be the principal victim; 'dog whistles' played on public prejudices – distrust of foreigners and fear of immigration; exaggerated claims of prospective economic gains and losses were thrown back and forth; the ministries asserted the royal prerogative in order to avoid Parliamentary scrutiny (in each case nearly falling in consequence); and, once discussion of detailed terms had commenced, ministers and diplomats endured the challenges of negotiating under intense public scrutiny, and employed on the record briefings and leaks to further their diplomatic objectives by appealing to both domestic and overseas audiences.

A cynical conclusion might be that history repeats itself as farce; a more measured one that while there can be no guarantee that a political shock such as the Brexit vote will not recur, greater understanding of historical

precedents might go some way towards healing the political wounds which result. To that end, material drawn from the research undertaken for this project has formed the basis of several presentations highlighting the role played by political discourse in the making of the peace, and of an article (submitted for publication) describing the ways in which Britain's negotiating counterparts sought to intervene in British political discourse for their own ends.

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Abbreviations

<i>Annals</i>	A. Boyer, <i>History of the Reign of Queen Anne Digested in Annals</i> (London, 1703-1713)
BL	British Library
BL Add. ms	British Library, additional manuscripts
BM	British Museum
Burnet	G. Burnet, <i>History of my own Time</i> (T. Burnet (ed.)) (Oxford, 1833)
Bodl.	Bodleian, Weston Library
Cartwright	J. Cartwright (ed.), <i>The Wentworth Papers, 1705-1739: Selected from the Private and Family Correspondence of Thomas Wentworth, Lord Raby, created in 1711 Earl of Stafford</i> (London, 1883)
Chandler	Chandler, <i>The History and Proceedings of the House of Commons</i> (London, 1742) accessed at http://www.british-history.ac.uk.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/search/series/commons-hist-proceedings
Cobbett	W. Cobbett, <i>Parliamentary History of England: from the Norman Conquest in 1066 to the Year 1803</i> (London, 1806-1820)
ESTC	English Short Title Catalogue
<i>Gazette</i>	<i>London Gazette</i>
HBC	Hudson's Bay Company Archives, TNA
HALS	Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies
<i>HCJ</i>	<i>Journal of the House of Commons</i>
HL	House of Lords papers, Parliamentary Archives

<i>HLJ</i>	<i>Journal of the House of Lords</i>
HMC	Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts
HoL	House of Lords
KHLC	Kent History and Library Centre
Leics RO	Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Record Office
NYPL	New York Public Library
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> , Oxford University Press, online edition
Parke	G. Parke (ed.), <i>Letters and Correspondence, Public and Private, of Henry St. John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke during the Time he was Secretary of State</i> (London, 1798).
<i>Political State</i>	A. Boyer, <i>The Political State of Great Britain</i> (London, 1718-1740)
Snyder	H. L. Snyder (ed.), <i>The Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence</i> (Oxford, 1975).
SP	State Papers, Queen Anne, accessed at http://www.gale.cengage.co.uk/state-papers-online-15091714/part-iv.aspx .
Staffs RO	Staffordshire Record Office
<i>Statutes</i>	<i>Statutes of the Realm</i>
TNA	The National Archives, Kew
<i>Votes</i>	<i>Votes of the House of Commons</i> , designated by year and issue number

Introduction

By 1708, Britain and her Allies had been fighting the War of the Spanish Succession for six years, and Britain had been at war for sixteen years of the previous twenty-one. Central to the conflict was the issue of which of two claimants should succeed to the Spanish monarchy, including its possessions in Italy and the Americas: Louis XIV's grandson, Philip, Duke of Anjou, or Archduke Charles of Austria, second son of the Holy Roman Emperor. Yet Britain's aims went beyond securing Spain for the Austrian claimant: Queen Anne's 1702 declaration of war described the Allies' objectives as being to preserve the liberties and balance of Europe, and to curb the exorbitant power of France, citing both the threat to freedom of commerce posed by the French monarch, and the affront offered by his recognition in 1701 of the Pretender's claim to the Queen's throne on the death of her (and his) father, James II.¹

That affront was re-emphasised in 1708, when British forces thwarted an attempted invasion of Scotland led by the Pretender, and sponsored by France. The invasion may have been the principal explanation for the Whigs, perceived as more enthusiastic supporters both of the war and of Britain's Protestant succession than their Tory opponents, securing in spring 1708 their only victory in the five elections of Anne's reign.² The balance of the Queen's ministry, led since 1702 by Sidney Godolphin and the Duke of Marlborough, had already shifted in the Whigs' favour through the appointments of the Earl of Sunderland, and later Henry Boyle, as Secretaries of State for the Southern and Northern departments respectively; electoral success precipitated further changes, with the Queen being forced to accept the appointment of two further members of the 'Junto' of leading Whigs, Somers as Lord President and the Earl of Wharton as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Yet despite the Whig's electoral gains, and their increased role in the ministry, the Allies' greatest victories were behind them, their campaign in Spain had stalled following defeat at Almanza the previous

¹ *A General Collection of Treatys, Declarations of War, Manifestos, and other Publick Papers, Relating to Peace and War* (London, 1732), vol. I, 421-422.

² W. Speck, *Tory and Whig: the Struggle in the Constituencies, 1701-15* (London: Macmillan; New York: St. Martin's, 1970), 85.

year, and war weariness was growing at home. By the winter of 1708-1709 the focus of British politics had turned increasingly to securing peace, an objective attained with the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.

While the historiography of Britain's role in the negotiation of the treaty is considerable, and has recently expanded following its tricentenary, much of it focuses on particular aspects of the subject.³ The current study aims both to challenge and to complement that historiography by taking a holistic approach which combines consideration of British political culture, politics and foreign policy formation in the making of the peace of Utrecht, and to demonstrate the complex interactions between them. Focussing on the role of discourse, it will test assertions such as that made by the international relations theorist Lene Hansen:

'Foreign policy decision-makers are situated within a larger political and public sphere, ... their representations as a consequence draw upon and are formed by the representations articulated by a large number of individuals, institutions and media outlets'.⁴

Hansen was writing in the context of the Bosnian wars of the 1990s, but Andrew Thompson has made a similar point when writing of early modern Britain:

'Foreign policy was not simply determined by the desire for profit or territorial gain. It was part of a complex web of ideas that were intimately related to a broader political culture'.⁵

Several factors underpin the selection of the Utrecht negotiations as a case study through which to examine these propositions. First, they occurred during a period of febrile political strife between Whigs and Tories, in which the timing and terms of the peace, and the manner in which it should be made, were fiercely contested. Simultaneously, Parliament's role in foreign policy was in transition. While the ability to control supply had always given Parliament an element of influence, Mark Thomson has argued that the

³ E.g. *Britain, Spain and the Treaty of Utrecht, 1713-2013* (T. J. Dadson and J. H. Elliott (ed.)), *Studies in Hispanic and Lusophone Cultures*, 8 (London: Legenda, Modern Humanities Research Association and Maney Publishing, 2014).

⁴ L. Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (London: Routledge, 2006), 7.

⁵ A. C. Thompson, *Britain, Hanover and the Protestant Interest, 1688-1756* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), 2.

impeachment of ministers allegedly responsible for William III's partition treaties at the end of the seventeenth century marked a watershed, establishing a role for Parliament in foreign policy, and limiting the royal prerogative; while not making foreign policy, Parliament expected to be consulted on it, and that ministers would justify their actions to it.⁶ If Jürgen Habermas's thesis is accepted, the negotiations also coincided with the development in Britain of a 'public sphere': a locus in which private individuals could conduct rational and critical discussion of political issues, and so form a reasoned public opinion through which authority could be influenced or restrained.⁷ Whatever view is taken of the Habermasian construct, the opening years of the eighteenth century were marked in Britain by a profusion of discourse, across a range of media, which brought a wider public into political debate. And in that debate, the issue of the peace came to be paramount. Finally, the available sources, while presenting challenges, are more than sufficient to allow substantive conclusions to be drawn.

Historiographical context

Diplomatic History

The historiographical context of the project comprises a number of strands, each signalling the importance of domestic political culture and discourse in foreign policy formation; of these, diplomatic history provides a convenient starting point. Traditionally, diplomatic history concentrated on the legal framework in which diplomats operated, their privileges and immunities, and the role of the ambassador; questions of foreign policy formation and international relations were beyond its scope.⁸ This preoccupation is reflected in Howard Nicolson's 1950s lectures on diplomatic method, in which he

⁶ M. A. Thomson, 'Parliament and Foreign Policy, 1689 – 1714', William III and Louis XIV: Essays, 1680-1720 (R. Hatton and J. S. Bromley (ed.)) (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1968), 130-139. Geoffrey Holmes agreed: G. S. Holmes, *The Making of a Great Power: Late Stuart and Early Georgian Britain, 1660-1722* (London: Longman, 1993), 255. Also David Onnekink and Gijs Rommelse, 'Introduction', *Ideology and Foreign Policy in Early Modern Europe (1650-1750)* (D. Onnekink and G. Rommelse (ed.)) (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 1. However, Jeremy Black placed less emphasis on the suggested change in the nature of the prerogative at the beginning of the eighteenth century: J. Black, *Parliament and Foreign Policy in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 1-9, 38. Brendan Simms suggested that the change occurred in the seventeenth century: B. Simms, *Three Victories and a Defeat: the Rise and Fall of the First British Empire, 1714-1783* (London: Allen Lane, 2007), 662-668.

⁷ J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: an Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (translated by T. Burger, assisted by F. Lawrence) (Cambridge: Polity, 1989).

⁸ E.g. G. Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (London: Cape, 1955).

distinguished 'diplomacy', the art and machinery of negotiation, from the fields of foreign policy and international relations – a distinction at the heart of one of the most potent criticisms of diplomatic history.⁹

David Horn's *The British Diplomatic Service, 1689-1789* demonstrates this distinction, being primarily a description of the service's organisation, of the recruitment and remuneration of diplomats, and of their duties and working environment.¹⁰ Jeremy Black's *British Diplomats and Diplomacy* took a similar approach.¹¹ These are works of traditional diplomatic history, as is A. D. Maclachlan's study of the Utrecht peace negotiations: a detailed narrative exposition, it contains little discussion of foreign policy or domestic politics.¹² The approach exemplifies William Roosen's criticism that much diplomatic history had been limited to a detailed account of the negotiation of a particular treaty, recording every proposal and counter-proposal.¹³

In consequence, diplomatic history became subject to concerted criticism on three principal grounds, each contextual. The first, articulated in 1995 by Melvyn Leffler, was that it failed to take account of the cultural environment in which its subjects were operating.¹⁴ Leffler urged diplomatic historians to embrace approaches in other historiographies, and address issues of gender, culture and language.¹⁵ Progress has been made: in 2009, Thomas Zeiler hailed the return of diplomatic history to the mainstream, having embraced the study of culture and identity, gender and race.¹⁶ But both Leffler and Zeiler wrote from the viewpoint of US-centred modern historians; in 2008 John Watkins, introducing a collection of articles on the cultural significance of diplomatic encounters in the medieval and early modern world, argued that

⁹ H. Nicolson, *The Evolution of Diplomatic Method* (London: Constable, 1954), 2.

¹⁰ D. B. Horn, *The British Diplomatic Service, 1689-1789* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961).

¹¹ J. Black, *British Diplomats and Diplomacy 1688-1800* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2001); similarly, H. L. Snyder, 'The British Diplomatic Service during the Godolphin Ministry', *Studies in Diplomatic History* (R. Hatton, and M. S. Anderson, (ed.)) (Harlow: Longman, 1970), 47-68.

¹² A. D. Maclachlan, *The Great Peace: Negotiations for the Treaty of Utrecht, 1710-1713* (University of Cambridge thesis, 1966). Maclachlan's account has been complemented by discussions of the negotiations based on the role of particular individuals, e.g. B. W. Hill, 'Oxford, Bolingbroke and the Peace of Utrecht', *Historical Journal* 16 (1973), 241-263.

¹³ W. J. Roosen, *The Age of Louis XIV: the Rise of Modern Diplomacy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman, 1976), 3-4.

¹⁴ M. P. Leffler, 'New Approaches, Old Interpretations, and Prospective Reconfigurations', *Diplomatic History* 19.2 (1995), 173-196.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 177.

¹⁶ T. W. Zeiler, 'The Diplomatic History Bandwagon: a State of the Field', *Journal of American History* 95.4 (2009), 1053-1073; also K. Urbach, 'Diplomatic History since the Cultural Turn', *Historical Journal*, 46.4 (2003), 991-997.

progress was not as advanced for this earlier period, and demanded more interaction with cultural and social historians.¹⁷

The second criticism related to diplomatic history's failure to engage with broader theories of international relations, although here the issue may be definitional – if diplomatic history is the history of diplomacy, then it can hardly be criticised for focussing on that alone, rather than extending into international relations, or the domestic politics underlying foreign policy-making. As Zeiler accepted, reconceptualization of the field had created uncertainty as to what truly constituted diplomatic history.¹⁸ Such reservations have not, however, stemmed the flow. Zeiler himself called for works of diplomatic history to engage more fully with international relations theory, while Leffler asserted that his own work on the Cold War already did so.¹⁹ And there are cases of international relations theory taking centre stage in works within the broad category of diplomatic history, such as Evan Luard's study of the role of the concept of the balance of power in early modern Europe's states system.²⁰

The final criticism was that diplomatic history took no account of how the foreign policy diplomats were implementing was formulated, and how that formulation related to domestic politics. Gordon Craig, arguing in 1971 for a renewal of interest in political history, proposed that the study of diplomacy should be concerned not only with foreign policy implementation, but with the policy itself, seeing it as an expression of the nation's moral and intellectual assumptions, the desires of its political parties and economic interest groups, and the influences exerted by its bureaucratic structures.²¹ Daniela Frigo has made a similar point: for some historians to specialise in domestic politics, while others focused on international relations, prevented close

¹⁷ J. Watkins, 'Towards a Modern Diplomatic History of Medieval and Early Modern Europe', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38.1 (2008), 1-14. Progress has, however, been made: e.g. H. von Thiesen, 'Diplomacy in a Changing Political Order: an Actor-Centred View of European Diplomats at the Time of the War of the Spanish Succession', *The War of the Spanish Succession: New Perspectives* (M. Pohlig and M. Schaich (ed.)), Studies of the German Historical Institute, London (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 63-84.

¹⁸ Zeiler, 'Diplomatic History Bandwagon', 1072.

¹⁹ Ibid, 1053; Leffler, 'New Approaches', 179.

²⁰ E. Luard, *The Balance of Power: the System of International Relations, 1648-1815* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992); contrast J. B. Wolf, *Toward a European Balance of Power, 1620-1715* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1970), being principally a narrative account, with limited consideration of the development of the concept of the balance of power.

²¹ G. A. Craig, 'Political History', *Daedalus* 100 (1971), 329.

understanding of the connections between the two. Diplomacy should be regarded 'as the arena of action into which the manifold currents of a state's political life flowed', including the influence of groups and factions, legal and political culture, and religious and confessional motives.²²

The current study builds on this increased contextualisation of diplomatic history aiming, through its focus on the role of political discourse, to develop a better understanding of the interaction between domestic politics and political culture, and international relations and foreign policy formation.

Realism, ideology (and idealism) in international relations

Engagement with foreign policy formation requires historians to confront the dichotomy central to classical international relations theory: what is, or should be, the primary objective of a state's foreign policy - the single-minded pursuit of the national interest (Machiavellian realism), or the idealistic pursuit of progress in the relationships between states (idealism)?²³

Hans Morgenthau described these competing approaches. Realism sees the world as a result of forces inherent in human nature, and aims to work with these forces rather than against them. The alternative approach ('idealism' for Morgenthau, but arguably more appropriately described as ideological when discussing the early eighteenth century) seeks a rational order, derived from universally valid abstract principles, and embraces considerations which realism rejects: economics, ethics, aesthetics and religion.²⁴

For Morgenthau, realism prevailed. However, in international relations realism is not a monolithic concept. Recent discussion of international political economy has highlighted mercantilism as an element of realism, perceiving economics as a basis for political power, and economic strength and military-political power as complementary, not competing, goals: 'for mercantilists, the creation of wealth is the necessary basis for increased

²² D Frigo, 'Introduction', *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Italy: the Structure of Diplomatic Practice, 1450-1800* (D. Frigo (ed.)) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 5-6, 11.

²³ N. Machiavelli, 'The Prince', *Machiavelli: the Chief Works and Others* (translated by A. Gilbert) (Durham and London, 1989) (e-book), locations 312-1840.

²⁴ H. J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations: the Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Knopf, 1954), 3-5 and passim; Thompson, *Britain, Hanover and the Protestant Interest*, 3.

power of the state'.²⁵ Yet attempts to refine the definition of mercantilism imply an ideological element. For Steven Pincus, mercantilism was central to a conflict of ideologies at the turn of the eighteenth century: Tories (mercantilists, in his terms) considered that wealth derived from land, and was therefore finite, leading to the conviction that inter-nation trade was a zero-sum game, and to an inclination towards protectionism; the Whigs' focus on the wealth-generating capacity of labour led them to the opposite conclusion.²⁶ Others are unconvinced by this ideological shift in the definition of mercantilism. While accepting that early modern mercantilists were apprehensive of the economic advance of rival nations, John Shovlin has rejected the idea that they believed wealth was finite: 'they understood that commerce underpinned the power of states, and that in the logic of power-balancing it is not the size of the pie that matters, but how the slices are apportioned'.²⁷

This issue – whether mercantilism is an element of realism, or at the heart of an ideological divide – is pertinent to one of the questions addressed by the present study: whether early eighteenth century states took a primarily realist approach to the formation of foreign policy, or one which was ideological. In one analysis, after the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 religion and other ideological concerns no longer drove foreign policy: realism prevailed, and wars were fought in the pursuit of military or economic power.²⁸ However, introducing their 2011 volume on ideology in early modern European foreign policy, David Onnekink and Gijs Rommelse argued for a refocusing on the role of ideology in foreign policy formation reflecting the development of the new diplomatic history, and recent challenges to the primacy of realism in studies of international relations.²⁹ They contended that political and economic ideology emerged in foreign policy in the century after the Treaty of

²⁵ R. Jackson and G. Sørensen, *Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013) (e-book), 162.

²⁶ S. C. A. Pincus, 'Rethinking Mercantilism: Political Economy, the British Empire, and the Atlantic World in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *William and Mary Quarterly* 69.1 (2012), 3-34. Also the other contributions on mercantilism in the same edition.

²⁷ J. Shovlin, *Trading with the Enemy: Britain, France, and the 18th-Century Quest for a Peaceful World Order* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2021), 16.

²⁸ Luard, *Balance of Power*, 7; R. Hatton, *War and Peace 1680-1720* (London: London School of Economics and Political Science, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1969), 5; Onnekink and Rommelse, 'Introduction', 2-3.

²⁹ For an overview of current trends in international relations theory, see Jackson and Sørensen, *International Relations*.

Westphalia due to a number of factors, including the entertainment of new theories of political economy, the emergence of partisan politics, and the expansion of the public sphere.³⁰ In his response, Robert von Friedeburg was supportive of their argument, finding an 'intimate connection between foreign policy, internal factions and ideology as a tool of factions to go about the pursuit of their interest'.³¹

If differing understandings of mercantilism suggest that it may be too simplistic to posit a binary opposition between realist and ideological foreign policies, the same is true of the concept of the balance of power. Traditionally seen as an essential aspect of realism, its fluidity poses problems: Morgenthau identified four alternative meanings of the term, while Martin Wight proposed no fewer than nine.³² Some applications of the policy, such as Wolsey's attempts to establish two evenly matched continental powers, with England holding the balance, could clearly be seen as realist.³³ And while the recitals to the Treaty of Utrecht implied that the equilibrium of power it sought to achieve was a normative ideal to secure the tranquillity of the Christian world, a cynic might suggest that such terminology was a cover for what was in essence a realist solution designed in Britain's national interest.³⁴ By contrast, Thompson has suggested that a state seeking to keep or hold the balance could, while portraying the balance as a good in itself, be pursuing its own ideological ends – in Britain's case liberty and freedom of conscience.³⁵ Realism and ideology thus intermingle in the apparently straightforward concept of the balance of power, with a dash of idealism thrown in.

³⁰ Onnekink and Rommelse, 'Introduction', 5-7. They identified examples of the approach: S. C. A. Pincus, *1688, the First Modern Revolution*, (New Haven (CT); London: Yale University Press, 2009), 305-365; D. Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

³¹ R. von Friedeburg, 'Response to the Introduction: "Ideology", Factions and Foreign politics in Early Modern Europe', *Ideology and Foreign Policy* (Onnekink and Rommelse (ed.)), 11-28, 12 and passim.

³² M. Wight, 'The Balance of Power', *Diplomatic Relations; Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (H. Butterfield and M. Wight (ed.)) (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966), 149-175.

³³ Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy*, 163.

³⁴ E.g. J. B. Hattendorf, *England in the War of the Spanish Succession: a Study of the English View and Conduct of Grand Strategy, 1702-1712* (New York and London: Garland, 1987), 236; A. C. Thompson, 'Balancing Europe: Ideas and Interests in British Foreign Policy (c. 1700–c. 1720)', *Ideology and Foreign Policy* (Onnekink and Rommelse (ed.)), 274.

³⁵ Thompson, 'Balancing Europe', 276-277; Thompson, *Britain, Hanover and the Protestant Interest*, 39; T. Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England, 1660-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 198-199.

The position is further complicated by the fact that to postulate a dichotomy between realism and ideology in the pursuit of foreign policy is to assume that there is a single, objectively determinable national interest which a realist foreign policy can pursue, independent of political ideology. Morgenthau hinted at this problem: the concept of realism was not immutable, but could change depending on the political and cultural context in which the foreign policy was being formulated.³⁶ But what if the national interest is not fixed even at a single point in time? Considering Charles II's foreign policy, Stéphane Jettot concluded that the question of the national or public interest in foreign affairs was actively debated within wider political discourse, and shaped by competing groups or individuals.³⁷ Black described a Parliament divided in the later Stuart period not only over how to achieve commonly agreed objectives, but over what was in the national interest, while Mark Knights traced that disagreement into the wider public.³⁸

This question of the role of public and political discourse, and of political culture, in foreign policy formation brings into play more recent theoretical approaches to the study of international relations. Constructivism rejects realism's material focus, instead emphasising the social aspects of international relations: culture and identity are the key elements in determining how external relations are conducted.³⁹ Post-structuralist approaches build on these themes, and on post-structuralism's emphasis on the primacy of language, to develop further the linkage between foreign relations, identity and public and political discourse.⁴⁰ This approach is reflected in the recent historiography, for example in Tim Blanning's analysis

³⁶ Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, 8.

³⁷ S. Jettot, 'Ideologies of Interests in English Foreign Policy during the Reign of Charles II', *Ideology and Foreign Policy* (Onnekink and Rommelse (ed.)), 145-146. Also Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 28.

³⁸ Black, *Parliament and Foreign Policy*, 22; M. Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation in Later Stuart Britain: Partisanship and Political Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 20.

³⁹ T. Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell U Press, 2002); Jackson and Sørensen, *International Relations*, 208-224 (although some might see these factors as operating through the mechanism of defining the national interest – *ibid*, 223).

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 236-238; Onnekink and Rommelse, 'Introduction', 4; Hansen, *Security as Practice*; D. Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

of the impact of culture on the foreign policies of the early modern European powers.⁴¹

The historiography thus establishes one of the propositions which underpins the current study: whether foreign policy is determined by a realist pursuit of the national interest, by ideology, or by prevailing political and public discourse, the sources for its formation must be sought in a state's political culture and domestic politics.

Domestic politics and foreign policy

Geoffrey Holmes' *British Politics in the Age of Anne* is central to the historiography of British politics in the early years of the eighteenth century.⁴² Emphasising the contention between Whig and Tory, Holmes analysed the issues which divided the parties, including those relating to foreign policy, and described the machinery of politics at Westminster. He paid less attention to electoral politics in the constituencies, or to influences on policy formation, and his book was published before the introduction of the public sphere into the historiography.

Holmes identified three key grounds of inter-party contention: religious toleration and the status of the Church; the safeguarding of the Protestant succession; and the conduct of the war, and the making of peace.⁴³ Superficially only the last of these – the making of war and peace – was a matter of foreign policy, but the others bore closely on it. Religion's continuing potency as a political issue reflected persistent concerns over the perceived threat of Catholicism to the security of the state, to the primacy of the Church, and to English liberties. The prospect of Louis XIV establishing a 'universal monarchy' on the continent, coupled with his continued sponsorship of the Pretender, meant prosecution of the war could be presented as complementary to domestic policies on religion, and as

⁴¹ T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture; Old Regime Europe 1660-1789* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). See also the discussions of identity in L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 1992) and Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England*.

⁴² G. S. Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne* (London: Hambledon Press, revised edition, 1987).

⁴³ *Ibid*, 51-81. Tim Harris presented a similar picture, with particular emphasis on religion as a source of political contention: *Later Stuart Politics: Party Conflict in a Divided Society 1650-1715* (London: Longman, 1993), 147-175.

securing the succession – one of the stated war aims of the Grand Alliance of England, the Holy Roman Empire and the States-General.⁴⁴

If foreign policy lay at the heart of party conflict, and ideology played an essential part in foreign policy formation, foreign policy would surely have been fiercely contested. Yet John Hattendorf, in his work on English grand strategy in the War of the Spanish Succession, argued that despite the change from a Whig- to a Tory-dominated ministry in 1710, ‘...both shared the same ultimate objectives and, for a time, the same grand strategy’.⁴⁵ By contrast, Holmes emphasised the differences between the parties, describing a continuing debate during the period 1708 to 1712 over three critical points: when, how, and on what terms to make peace. For Holmes, Tory policy towards the end of the war reflected a continuing enthusiasm for a predominantly naval strategy in contrast to Whig inclination towards continental engagement.⁴⁶ Brendan Simms expanded on the point: the party divide in 1711 to 1713 was not simply one between navalists and continentalists, but also about differing conceptions of the European balance and how it should be upheld.⁴⁷

The resolution to this conundrum may lie in different understandings of the terminology being used – at the highest level politicians of both parties would have agreed on the objectives to be achieved: enhanced trade and commerce; future security, achieved principally through the balance of power; and (although perhaps less resoundingly) recognition of the Protestant succession. They might nonetheless differ over the policies to be adopted in order to achieve those objectives, and the means by which those policies should be implemented.⁴⁸ Alternatively, there may simply have been no policy in the modern sense of the term. Concluding his study of the peace negotiations, Maclachlan commented: ‘nothing could be more misleading

⁴⁴ The foreign policy implications of the Protestant succession are considered in E. Gregg, *The Protestant Succession in International Politics, 1710-1716* (New York and London: Garland, 1986) and, over a longer timescale, in Thompson, *Britain, Hanover and the Protestant Interest*.

⁴⁵ Hattendorf, *England in the War of the Spanish Succession*, 268. On British strategy see also T. J. Denman, *The Political Debate over War Strategy, 1689-1712* (University of Cambridge thesis, 1985).

⁴⁶ Holmes, *British Politics*, 75.

⁴⁷ Simms, *Three Victories*, 65. John Elliott agreed: ‘Party Politics and Empire in the Early Eighteenth Century’, *Making the British Empire, 1660- 1800* (J. Peacey (ed.)) (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), 38-55.

⁴⁸ J. Black, *Debating Foreign Policy in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Farnham/Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 217.

than to suppose that each power attempted to implement self-consciously coherent programmes'.⁴⁹

The close link between the main issues of principle dividing the parties on the one hand, and the primary foreign policy issue of the day – the conduct of the war – on the other raises a second question, which this study will also consider: was foreign policy so material that domestic policy was subordinated to it – did foreign policy have primacy? This idea, originally posited by von Ranke in the context of German history as the *Primat der Aussenpolitik*, has recently been taken up more generally. Simms placed the relationship between foreign and domestic policy at the heart of his study of the British empire in the eighteenth century: 'foreign policy, rather than taxation, popular unrest, religion, elections or colonial expansion, was the central political preoccupation in eighteenth century Britain'.⁵⁰ This idea of primacy carries with it suggestions of a connection to realist theories of international relations: 'realist historiography has long noted the importance of finance, and thus of "internal" politics to mobilize resources, for the pursuit of "foreign" politics'.⁵¹

Elsewhere Simms (introducing, alongside William Mulligan, their volume *The Primacy of Foreign Policy in British History, 1660-2000*) regretted a continuing tendency to treat British foreign policy separately from politics, society and culture (a deficiency which the current project seeks to redress), and pursued further the concept of foreign policy's primacy. Yet a majority of the contributors, including Onnekink, questioned its applicability.⁵² While noting the apparent primacy of foreign policy on William and Mary's accession, given the immediate declaration of war on France, Onnekink resisted the temptation to take this analysis further.⁵³ Instead he reiterated the importance of the 'functional reconnection' of foreign and domestic policy following the cultural turn, suggesting that, in consequence of considering

⁴⁹ Maclachlan, *Great Peace*, 682.

⁵⁰ Simms, *Three Victories*, 1.

⁵¹ von Friedeburg, 'Response', 13.

⁵² W. Mulligan, and B. Simms, 'Introduction', *The Primacy of Foreign Policy in British History, 1660-2000: how Strategic Concerns Shaped Modern Britain* (W. Mulligan and B. Simms (ed.)) (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 3, 11.

⁵³ D. Onnekink, 'Primacy Contested: Foreign Policy and Domestic Policy in the Reign of William III', *Primacy of Foreign Policy* (Mulligan and Simms (ed.)), 32-48.

foreign policy as a function of national culture, there was a gravitational pull towards the primacy of domestic issues.⁵⁴ This reflected an earlier comment of Craig who, when calling for diplomatic historians to address themselves to the relationship between foreign policy and domestic and economic forces, had suggested there might be a tendency to assert a *Primat der Innenpolitik*.⁵⁵ Craig also commended a suggestion that in times of political instability (which Anne's reign certainly was) 'international relations, including war, ... become an extension and tool of domestic politics'.⁵⁶

Foreign policy, diplomacy and the public sphere

The case for the primacy of foreign policy places significant reliance on Habermas's concept of the public sphere: Mulligan and Simms argued that foreign policy not only occasionally dominated the public sphere, but also hastened its emergence.⁵⁷ This approach was reflected in Simms' and DooHwan Ahn's chapter in the same volume, in which they demonstrated the prominence of foreign policy coverage in the British press in the mid-eighteenth century, and argued that this represented an aspect of the primacy of foreign policy.⁵⁸ Addressing the years at the beginning of the century, Simms has contended that war and foreign policy were central to the growing public sphere, and so became the primary motor of party-political polarization under Queen Anne.⁵⁹

The public sphere is also prominent in the analyses of those arguing for a greater appreciation of the role of ideology in the making of foreign policy: the sphere's significant expansion was one of the preconditions which Onnekink and Rommelse identified for the emergence of ideology in foreign policy formation.⁶⁰ Von Friedeburg asserted that public political discourse was

⁵⁴ Ibid, 34.

⁵⁵ Craig, 'Political History', 331.

⁵⁶ A. J. Mayer, 'Internal Causes and Purposes of War in Europe, 1870-1956: a Research Assignment', *Journal of Modern History* 41 (1969), 303. At least one post-structuralist international relations theorist has, however, rejected any attempt to find a relationship between foreign and domestic policy: Campbell, *Writing Security*, 62.

⁵⁷ Mulligan and Simms, 'Introduction', 7; also Simms, *Three Victories*, 1.

⁵⁸ D. Ahn and B. Simms, 'European Great Power Politics in British Public Discourse, 1714-1763', *Primacy of Foreign Policy* (Mulligan and Simms (ed.)), 79-101. See also Black, *Debating Foreign Policy*, 38; W. J. Roosen, *Daniel Defoe and Diplomacy* (Selingsrove, Pa.: Susquehanna University Press, 1986), 19.

⁵⁹ Simms, *Three Victories*, 53-54. Also A. Gestrich, 'The Public Sphere and the Habermas Debate', *German History*, 24.3 (2006), 413-430.

⁶⁰ Onnekink and Rommelse, 'Introduction', 5-7.

necessary for the existence of ideologies: cheap print media made it possible for competing sets of ideas to develop and make their appeal to a broader public.⁶¹

This study reflects these approaches; in the context of Britain's conduct of the Utrecht negotiations, it examines and challenges the posited binary oppositions between the primacy of domestic and foreign policy, and between realism and ideology, through close analysis of political discourse in the public sphere.

What, then, was the public sphere? Habermas described a bourgeois sphere in which private people came together as a public and, through rational-critical discussion, sought to restrain and influence governmental authority; he went on to locate the first development of such a sphere in Great Britain at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the period the subject of the current study.⁶² Habermas's principal purpose was to analyse the decline in the public sphere over time, and his historical analysis has attracted criticism.⁶³ Alan Downie accused him of an unreconstructed Marxism, and of demonstrating a flawed understanding of British society and its political system.⁶⁴ The assumption that rational debate took place in the sphere has also been questioned, with Knights arguing that the debate could be anything but rational; this is consistent with his broader thesis that under the later Stuarts public political discourse was marked not so much by its rationality as by the mutability and unreliability of its language.⁶⁵ Finally, the concept has been challenged on the grounds of periodicity: if (as Habermas argued) the public sphere came about in part due to the lapse of press licensing in 1695,

⁶¹ von Friedeburg, 'Response', 11; a view supported by C-E. Levillain, reviewing Onnekink and Rommelse's volume in *Parliamentary History* 33.2 (2014), 376.

⁶² Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, passim, 27, 57-58.

⁶³ A point made by Gestrinch: 'Habermas Debate', 415.

⁶⁴ J. A. Downie, 'Public and Private: the Myth of the Bourgeois Public Sphere', *A Concise Companion to the Restoration and Eighteenth Century* (C. Wall (ed.)) (Malden (MA) and Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 58-79; Blanning identified uncertainty over whether the concept was rooted in class identity: *Culture of Power*, 11.

⁶⁵ M. Knights, 'How Rational was the Later Stuart Public Sphere?', *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (P. Lake and S. C. A. Pincus (ed.)), (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 252-267; Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation*, Part II.

why had it not arisen on the earlier breakdowns of censorship in England in 1642 and 1679?⁶⁶

Many historians have nonetheless adopted the public sphere in their analyses, often reflecting elements of these criticisms - for example, by seeking its genesis at a point earlier than the turn of the eighteenth century. In their introductory chapter to *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, Peter Lake and Steven Pincus sought to identify a public sphere in England as early as the sixteenth century.⁶⁷ Asserting the mutability of the concept, they contemplated the existence of multiple public spheres in the period leading to the English civil wars.⁶⁸ This approach is symptomatic of the tendency, identified by Brian Cowan, for historians to modify the theoretical framework of the public sphere well beyond Habermas's own formulation.⁶⁹ Ethan Shagan, writing in the same volume as Lake and Pincus, advocated an alternative, more pragmatic approach: it was not for historians to search for the moment at which perfect 'rationality' or 'publicness' was achieved, but to ask how different sorts of communications in different settings acted as infrastructures for politics, channelling and distorting messages in interesting and productive ways.⁷⁰ Cowan also suggested thinking of the public sphere in less conceptual terms: 'as a way of characterising and conceptually organising proliferating studies of the emergence of public opinion as a factor in political action, the efflorescence of print culture and especially the periodical press and political propaganda, and the development of new spaces of public sociability such as coffee houses, club life and commercialised leisure spots'.⁷¹

This less theory-bound approach, which this study will follow, is vindicated by the fact that the absence of the public sphere from the historiography of the early eighteenth century prior to 1989 (when Habermas's book was published in English) did not hinder valuable studies of the political discourse of the

⁶⁶ Downie, 'Public and Private', 60; similarly Blanning: *Culture of Power*, 13, 14.

⁶⁷ P. Lake, and S. C. A. Pincus, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England', *Politics of the Public Sphere* (Lake and Pincus (ed.)), 1-30.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁶⁹ B. Cowan, 'Geoffrey Holmes and the Public Sphere: Augustan Historiography from Post-Namierite to the Post-Habermasian', *Parliamentary History* 28 (2009), 173.

⁷⁰ E. H. Shagan, 'The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Public Sphere', *Politics of the Public Sphere* (Lake and Pincus (ed.)), 33.

⁷¹ Cowan, 'Holmes and the Public Sphere', 167.

period, such as those of William Speck, Alan Downie and J. O. Richards.⁷² Indeed, as Cowan has pointed out, in the first chapter of *British Politics in the Age of Anne Holmes* provided a rich discussion of the way in which political partisanship in the early eighteenth century infused every element of what would now be called the public sphere.⁷³

Nonetheless, Cowan accepted that Holmes's focus on Parliament and the ministry led him to pay little attention to print, the press and public opinion.⁷⁴ Yet the idea of public opinion is at the heart of the concept of the public sphere: for Habermas, rational-critical discourse in the sphere generated a public opinion to be deployed in opposition to authority. But if, as Knights contended, the discourse was commonly irrational, then the public sphere would be incapable of generating a single, rational public opinion.⁷⁵ Downie concurred: in 'an unrepresentative and undemocratic political system, entrenched interest groups were virtually fireproof'; appeals to the public through print literature thus appealed not to reason, but to emotion and self-interest.⁷⁶

This is not to argue that public opinion did not exist, rather that it was neither rational nor monolithic. In discussing the concept, historians have sought to describe, and identify the genesis of, the 'public'. For Knights, by the time of the later Stuarts, the public had become 'a unified and personified abstraction'.⁷⁷ Cowan found multiple publics being, as he put it, made and unmade; he was, however, sceptical that the early modern period represented a turning point in the political history of public opinion, and the

⁷² W. A. Speck, 'Political Propaganda in Augustan England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5th series, 22 (1972), 17-32; J. A. Downie, *Robert Harley and the Press: Propaganda and Public Opinion in the Age of Swift and Defoe* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979); J. O. Richards, *Party Propaganda under Queen Anne: the General Elections of 1702-1713* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1972). Also D. S. Coombs, *The Conduct of the Dutch: British Opinion and the Dutch Alliance during the War of the Spanish Succession* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff for the University College of Ghana Publications Board, 1958).

⁷³ Cowan, 'Geoffrey Holmes and the Public Sphere', 168.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 168. Elsewhere, Holmes acknowledged the existence of 'public opinion' at the turn of the eighteenth century, albeit thought of by contemporaries as 'the sense of the people' or 'the national will': G. Holmes, *Politics, Religion and Society in England, 1679-1742* (London: Hambledon Press, 1986), 7-8.

⁷⁵ Knights, 'How Rational was the Later Stuart Public Sphere?', 257.

⁷⁶ Downie, 'Public and Private', 73-74.

⁷⁷ Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation*, 95.

point has been made that the term itself did not emerge until the 1730s.⁷⁸ Nonetheless, for David Zaret, public opinion had developed as a practice by the middle of the seventeenth century; as Heinz-Joachim Müllenbrock put it, the ‘public’, including those who did not have the vote, could now participate in political communication.⁷⁹

If, as Knights has asserted, public opinion had developed into a potent political force by the reign of Anne, it raises a question at the heart of the current project: how did public opinion influence the formation and conduct of foreign policy?⁸⁰ Matthew Anderson identified the impact on diplomacy of ‘an increasingly vocal and often volatile public opinion’, but only in the 1880s.⁸¹ Nicolson, however, suggested a much earlier date, attributing to Cardinal Richelieu the proposition that ‘no policy could succeed unless it had “national opinion” behind it’.⁸² And in his work on Daniel Defoe’s writings on international affairs, Roosen contended that by 1700 all European governments were aware of the need for public support for their diplomatic policies, and that Defoe’s prolific output on the subject was at least strongly suggestive of some degree of public engagement with it.⁸³ Holmes concurred, finding in the two decades around the turn of the eighteenth century ‘very rapid development,... of an informed opinion in England on continental issues, a degree of political education which had simply not existed for most of the seventeenth century’.⁸⁴

This central question, of the impact of public opinion and of the discourse which influences it on foreign policy formation, brings the discussion back to international relations theory, and the post-structuralist discourse analysis adopted by Hansen in her work on the Bosnian wars of the 1990s. Hansen was concerned to place the study of international relations and foreign policy within the sphere of political discourse: ‘it would ... be extremely unlikely –

⁷⁸ B. Cowan, ‘Introduction: Reading the Trial of Dr Sacheverell’, *Parliamentary History* 31 (2012), issue supplement 1, 8; e.g. Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation*, 95.

⁷⁹ D. Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture. Printing, Petitions and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), 39; H.-J. Müllenbrock, *The Culture of Contention: a Rhetorical Analysis of the Public Controversy about the Ending of the War of the Spanish Succession, 1710-1713* (Munich: Fink, 1997), 18.

⁸⁰ Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation*, 95.

⁸¹ M. S. Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy, 1450-1919* (London: Longman, 1993), 106, 111.

⁸² Nicolson, *Evolution of Diplomatic Method*, 51, 52.

⁸³ Roosen, *Defoe and Diplomacy*, 15.

⁸⁴ Holmes, *Making of a Great Power*, 245.

and politically unsavvy – for politicians to articulate foreign policy without any concern for the representations found within the wider public sphere as they attempt to present their policies as legitimate to their constituencies’. However, the approach was more nuanced: taking as a starting point post-structuralism’s emphasis on the agency of language, Hansen focused on the way in which discourse defines identity – most obviously national identity – and the relationship between that definition and the formation of foreign policy. In her view this relationship was not causal, so that any attempt to identify the impact of discussion of foreign affairs in the public sphere on policy formation would be intellectually flawed; the two were linked through discourse, but not by linear causation.⁸⁵ Hansen also addressed the question of whether an emphasis on the centrality of discourse to the analysis of international relations implied that idealism prevailed over realism in policy formation, as might be inferred from assertions that the continuing relevance of ideological factors in early modern foreign policy was a consequence of the development of the public sphere.⁸⁶ For her, the strategy of discourse analysis was to incorporate material (ie realist) and ideational factors, rather than to privilege one over the other: both were constructed through discourse.

The positioning of the present study

While not embracing Hansen’s post-structuralist agenda, this study follows her lead in placing discourse at its heart, and is positioned at the intersection of the historiographical strands described: those concerning discourse and the public sphere, politics, and the formation and implementation of foreign policy, as applied to Britain and the making of peace at the end of the War of the Spanish Succession.⁸⁷

Of these strands, the public and political discourse of early eighteenth century Britain has been the subject of considerable attention over the last thirty years, following Habermas’s temporal and geographical location of his model public sphere. But the topic had hardly been neglected before the concept’s introduction into the historiography, as the works of Speck and

⁸⁵ Hansen, *Security as Practice*, passim, and 7, 10, 26-27.

⁸⁶ E.g. Onnekink and Rommelse, *Introduction*, 5-7.

⁸⁷ Hansen herself acknowledged that post-structuralism and discourse analysis were not identical: Hansen, *Security as Practice*, xviii.

Richards (among others) demonstrate. While these works provide essential context for the current study, they are not a substitute for it: Richards' focus was on electoral politics, while Speck provided a relatively brief survey of a much longer period. The same is true of the studies of politics and the press which include the reign of Anne, and of those which focus on specific elements of the public sphere such as coffee houses, theatres, preaching, and addresses and petitions.⁸⁸

Other studies of the public sphere during the period, such as R. L. Weeks' 1956 thesis on Defoe's and Swift's writings on the peace of Utrecht, have focused on the role of particular authors.⁸⁹ Weeks set out to evaluate the techniques employed in Defoe's and Swift's respective works, and the effect of those works on the political world. Yet the thesis is for the most part a narrative account of the writings which they produced, accompanied by a comparative analysis of their respective literary styles. There is little in the way of a unifying argument, and only a limited attempt is made to assess Defoe's and Swift's political impact.⁹⁰

There are, nonetheless, broader accounts of British political discourse surrounding the making of the peace between 1710 and 1713, such as Müllenbrock's *The Culture of Contention*. However, by limiting his sources primarily to periodicals and pamphlets, Müllenbrock discounted significant elements of the public sphere, including the interventions of Parliament, the Allies and the public. His focus was principally on the content of his sources,

⁸⁸ For example: L. W. Hanson, *Government and the Press 1695-1763* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936); B. Harris, *Politics and the Rise of the Press: Britain and France 1620-1800* (London: Routledge, 1996); S. C. A. Pincus, "'Coffee Politicians Does Create": Coffeeshouses and Restoration Political Culture', *Journal of Modern History* 67 (1995), 807-834; J. Loftis, *The Politics of Drama in Augustan England* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1963); T. Claydon, 'The Sermon, the "Public Sphere" and the Political Culture of Late Seventeenth-century England', *The English Sermon Revised: Religion, Literature and History, 1600-1750* (L. A. Ferrell and P. E. McCullough (ed.)) (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2001), 208-234; Edward Vallance, *Loyalty, Memory and Public Opinion in England, 1658-1727* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019); Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture*. Also J. Farguson, 'Promoting the Peace: Queen Anne and the Public Thanksgiving at St Paul's Cathedral', *Performances of Peace: Utrecht 1713* (R. E. de Bruin, K. van der Haven, L. Jensen and D. Onnekink (ed.)) (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 207-222 on public celebrations, and M. Knights, 'Possessing the Visual: the Materiality of Visual Print Culture in Later Stuart Britain', *Material Readings of Early Modern Culture: Texts and Social Practices, 1580-1730* (J. Daybell and P. Hinds (ed.)) (New York, 2010), 85-122 on visual culture.

⁸⁹ R. L. Weeks, *Defoe, Swift, and the Peace of Utrecht* (Indiana University thesis, 1956).

⁹⁰ L. Poston, 'Defoe and the Peace Campaign', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 27 (1963) 1-20 is another example of studies focussing on particular authors.

and on the rhetorical strategies which they adopted; questions of policy-making and of impact were beyond the scope of his study.⁹¹

D. S. Coombs' *The Conduct of the Dutch*, analysing anti-Dutch propaganda during the war, provides another example. In dealing with the period in which the making of the peace had become a point of contention between the Britain and the States, Coombs focussed principally on the content of the propaganda; he was less strong on the admittedly problematic issue of agency – by whom was the propaganda being instigated – and impact. Coombs' account leaves ample scope for the present project: it is limited to anti-Dutch propaganda; it focuses principally on print media rather than other elements of the public sphere; and it makes relatively little of the domestic political concerns which formed the background to the political wrangling over the making of the peace.⁹²

Finally, Alan Downie's *Robert Harley and the Press* described Harley's role in the origination and organisation of press and print campaigns; given its scope, the roles of Harley, and of his client Defoe, took centre stage, as compared to those of other politicians and writers. And Downie said relatively little about the underlying context of Parliament and policy, and the impact of Harley's press campaigns upon either.⁹³

The intersection of foreign policy, domestic and Parliamentary politics and political discourse has, however, been addressed by Jeremy Black. In *Parliament and Foreign Policy in the Eighteenth Century* he considered whether the idea of a Parliamentary foreign policy could fairly be said to have developed over the century, and in *Debating Foreign Policy in Eighteenth-Century Britain* he analysed the connection between foreign policy and political discourse.⁹⁴ While useful for their thematic discussion, and in particular in identifying the methodological challenges faced by researchers, these studies' common ground with the present project is limited: they do not bring all of the proposed themes together in one place, addressing Parliament's role in one volume, and the impact of debate in the public

⁹¹ Müllenbrock, *Culture of Contention*.

⁹² Coombs, *Conduct of the Dutch*.

⁹³ Downie, *Robert Harley and the Press*.

⁹⁴ Black, *Parliament and Foreign Policy*; Black, *Debating Foreign Policy*.

sphere on foreign policy in another; they do not address the relationship between domestic and foreign policy; and they discuss the reign of Anne relatively briefly, given the longer timescale covered in each case. This longer timescale is also a characteristic of studies placing Britain, and its development as a nation, in a European context, such as those of Brendan Simms, Andrew Thompson, Tony Claydon and Linda Colley.⁹⁵

By contrast, John Hattendorf's study of English grand strategy in the War of the Spanish Succession concentrated on British foreign policy under Queen Anne.⁹⁶ Addressing what he perceived as a failure of existing accounts of the politics of her reign to discuss in depth the objectives of foreign policy, or for which armed force was employed, Hattendorf's principal focus was on the conduct of the war rather than the negotiation of the peace, and he took relatively little account of the political drivers of policy, seeing domestic politics as largely a matter of staying in power – only to this extent, he asserted, was the ministry moved by public opinion.⁹⁷ This refusal to take account of public opinion also characterised Edward Gregg's thesis on the Protestant succession in international politics. Gregg largely ignored Parliamentary politics and political discourse; indeed, he asserted that historians had been misled by the propaganda of the period (it was not clear precisely how) and discounted it as source material.⁹⁸

The historiography thus presents the opportunity for the current project - a holistic analysis of British political discourse, politics and foreign policy formation in the making of the peace of Utrecht, combining consideration of three principal issues: the narratives deployed in the contention over the peace; the actors engaged in the propagation, suppression and rebuttal of those narratives; and the outcomes which those actors sought and achieved.

Methodology, sources and structure

Taking its lead from Hansen, this project analyses British politics and foreign policy formation primarily through the prism of discourse. Proposing a

⁹⁵ Simms, *Three Victories*; Thompson, *Britain, Hanover and the Protestant Interest*; Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England*; Colley, *Britons*.

⁹⁶ Hattendorf, *England in the War of the Spanish Succession*.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, xvii, 229.

⁹⁸ Gregg, *Protestant Succession*, 7.

methodology for such a study, Hansen outlined a model dividing discourse into a number of categories, ranging from the official statements of governments, through wider foreign policy debate involving the opposition and the media, to cultural representations and ‘marginal political discourse’, in which she included films, books and websites.⁹⁹ While designed principally for the analysis of recent events, this methodology is equally valid when analysing the events of the early modern period, since it is possible to identify contemporary discourse within each of the categories which Hansen described.¹⁰⁰ This project employs discourses across all those categories; doing so provides the greatest potential for understanding the forces acting in British politics, and the respective roles of different protagonists (including the Queen herself). It also avoids the limitations which arise from studying only certain types of media, or the works of certain authors, and mitigates the risk of simply treating the media as a proxy for public opinion. The sources used include not only contemporary pamphlets and periodicals, but also material generated by Parliament, play scripts and sermons, petitions and addresses, and contemporary accounts of celebrations and demonstrations. These have been read in relation to each other, both to identify the ways in which they are inter-linked (‘intertextuality’, in Hansen’s terms), and what Hansen described as ‘basic discourses’ (‘narratives’ in the terminology of this thesis); those concerning the threat of universal monarchy, or the dangers of popery and arbitrary government provide obvious examples.¹⁰¹

While many categories of discourse have been analysed, significant reliance has been placed on periodicals and pamphlets, and the events or decisions to which they were responding, or which they were seeking to influence; an understanding of the timing of their publication is therefore crucial. In the case of periodicals, this is straightforward; in the case of pamphlets, less so. For this study, pamphlet publication dates have been determined primarily through studying advertisements in periodicals. This is imperfect – phrases in the advertisements such as ‘just published’ introduce an element of

⁹⁹ Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 64.

¹⁰⁰ D. Onnekink, ‘Pride and Prejudice: Universal Monarchy Discourse and the Peace Negotiations of 1709-1710’, *Performances of Peace* (de Bruin, van der Haven, Jensen and Onnekink (ed.)), 69-91, adopts Hansen’s methodology in considering early modern policy-making by the States-General.

¹⁰¹ Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 8, 52. Hansen advocated identifying only two or three ‘basic discourses’; this thesis, driven by the primary source material, analyses a greater number of narratives.

uncertainty. Nonetheless, this approach, when combined with evidence from advertisements in other pamphlets, from textual analysis, and from references in contemporary correspondence, allows dates to be assigned with reasonable accuracy to a substantial majority of the relevant pamphlets.¹⁰²

If the timing of most pamphlets can be established relatively easily, there is a greater difficulty with authorship – pamphlets were usually published anonymously. This is problematic: authorship indicates not only who might ultimately have procured or influenced the production of a pamphlet, but also their motivation. In his study, Müllenbrock largely avoided this issue by presenting the prevailing discourse as a Whig/Tory dialectic; he thus implicitly assumed two coherent organising forces, while nonetheless acknowledging the scope for dispute over the attribution of particular pamphlets.¹⁰³ While this study rejects that assumption, the analysis required to resolve authorship disputes is beyond its scope; it adopts in most cases the attributions given in the English Short Title Catalogue, except where content, context or contemporary accounts make these unconvincing.

Audience presents a complementary challenge to that of authorship: who were the recipients of discourse, and how many of them were there? Identifying individual readers is possible only occasionally, through extant diaries and correspondence, and counting them is also problematic. Although some indication of a pamphlet's popularity can be derived from the number of editions through which it went, only in very few cases are there estimates of sales: Dr Sacheverell's sermon of November 1709 is thought to have sold approximately 100,000 copies, although that would have been exceptional.¹⁰⁴ The position in relation to periodicals is somewhat clearer: Henry Snyder calculated that by 1712 between 67,000 and 78,000 issues were being

¹⁰² Müllenbrock, in *Culture of Contention*, apparently relied on textual analysis for dating: 14, 35. A. Bialuschewski, 'A True Account of the Design, and Advantages of the South-Sea Trade: Profits, Propaganda, and the Peace Preliminaries of 1711', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 73.2 (2010), 273-285 is a rare example of the use of advertisements, applied to a single pamphlet.

¹⁰³ E.g. Müllenbrock, *Culture of Contention*, 14, 63; compare P. N. Furbank and W. R. Owens, 'On the Attribution of Periodicals and Newspapers to Daniel Defoe', *Publishing History* 40 (1996), 83-98.

¹⁰⁴ H. Barker, *Newspapers, Politics and English society, 1695-1855* (Harlow, 2000), 130.

printed each week.¹⁰⁵ These numbers, however, tell only part of the story: the Whig writer and politician Joseph Addison estimated that at least 20 people read each copy of his *Spectator*.¹⁰⁶ The problem of audience also extends to other elements of the public sphere: it is impossible to ascertain how many theatre-goers saw a play, although the daily audience in London has been estimated at 500 to 600; similarly, the size of the congregation who heard a sermon is unknown, though potentially substantial given contemporary social imperatives.¹⁰⁷ And the readership or audience for a particular element of discourse is not, of course, a measure of its influence; as Downie put it, 'assessing the efficacy of a particular polemic is singularly problematic'.¹⁰⁸

The final issue with periodicals and pamphlets is that of completeness. While the Burney Collection of newspapers is comprehensive, there are omissions from the print runs of some of the periodicals included, and also (perhaps not coincidentally) of specific issues which were particularly controversial.¹⁰⁹ The problem is greater in the case of manuscript newsletters such as Dyer's, where there are significant gaps in the extant collections.¹¹⁰ A different question arises with pamphlets: how many have simply not survived? In practice, however, the sheer volume of contemporary pamphlets which are available, combined with the identification of relatively few 'missing' titles from contemporary print media and correspondence, provides a high degree of confidence that the number is not significant.¹¹¹

The question of incompleteness also arises in the case of other primary sources employed in this study: records of proceedings in Parliament; correspondence of the politicians involved in the peace negotiations, whether in the state papers or in their personal archives; and journals. Reporting Parliamentary proceedings was a breach of privilege, and while Abel Boyer

¹⁰⁵ H. L. Snyder, 'The Circulation of Newspapers in the Reign of Queen Anne', *The Library* 5th series, 23 (1968) 206-235; Snyder also provided figures for individual periodicals.

¹⁰⁶ Barker, *Newspapers*, 46.

¹⁰⁷ H. Smith, 'Politics, Patriotism, and Gender: the Standing Army Debate on the English Stage, circa 1689-1720', *Journal of British Studies* 50:1 (2011), 51; Claydon, 'The sermon', 212.

¹⁰⁸ J. A. Downie, 'Public Opinion and the Political Pamphlet', *The Cambridge History of Literature, 1660-1780* (J. Richetti, (ed.)) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 552.

¹⁰⁹ Burney contains no issues of the *Flying Post* for either 1709 or 1710; the *Flying Post* of 3 January 1713 is an issue which may be missing due to its suppression.

¹¹⁰ E.g. the collections in BL Add. ms 70420 and 70421, which do not go beyond 1710.

¹¹¹ See Black, *Debating Foreign Policy*, 13-15 for a discussion of these and other issues relating to print sources.

commenced some reporting with his *Political State* from 1711, establishing what was said in either house of Parliament is difficult.¹¹² And where speeches were reported there are questions over whether those reports were accurate, and some accounts are the work of propagandists for one party or the other.¹¹³ Correspondence is also incomplete, and records may in some cases never have existed: Hattendorf made the point that there was no clear procedure through which foreign policy was made, and much was probably concluded in the course of informal meetings of which no record was kept.¹¹⁴ And compiling a comprehensive account of Harley's role in promoting periodicals and pamphlets favourable to ministerial policy is close to impossible due to his inefficiency in responding to correspondence – just as Defoe frequently had to infer what he was expected to write, researchers are left to draw inferences as to Harley's motivation.

Despite these challenges, the available primary sources amply support the analysis set out in the five chapters which follow. In the interests of clarity, given the complex series of events which led ultimately to the making of the peace, these have been arranged chronologically, rather than thematically. Nonetheless, the chapters, while addressing defined (if overlapping) periods of time, each have a thematic emphasis: chapter 1, on the failure of the peace talks in The Hague in 1709, describes the narratives prevailing in contemporary discourse, the development of which is followed in the succeeding chapters; chapter 2, which addresses the ministerial changes of 1710 and the ensuing election, demonstrates how the issue of war and peace was exploited domestically, in pursuit of political power; chapter 3, covering the initial stages of the negotiations conducted by the new ministry, focuses on the mechanics of the control of discourse; chapter 4, dealing with the finalisation of the treaty, emphasises how Britain's Allies and enemies both intervened in, and were the subject of, domestic discourse; finally, chapter 5 returns to domestic politics in discussing the immediate legacy of the peace and its impact on the election of 1713, while also providing an

¹¹² *Political State* was published monthly; references in this thesis are to the collected edition.

¹¹³ E.g. W. Pittis, *The History of the Third Session of the Last Parliament, etc.* (London, [1713]).

¹¹⁴ Hattendorf, *England in the War of the Spanish Succession*, xv.

opportunity to trace the continuities and discontinuities in the discursive narratives over the entirety of the period studied.

These chapters demonstrate the significant benefits to be gained from the approach adopted by this study – a holistic analysis of British political discourse, politics and foreign policy formation. Building on that approach they together reveal the depth and sophistication of political discourse in Britain over the making of the peace of Utrecht: the diversity of those participating and intervening in that discourse; the multitude of means and narratives they employed in doing so; and the variety of the impacts which they sought and achieved. This analysis also sheds light on other questions raised by the historiography, including the tension between realist and ideological objectives in foreign policy, the relationship between foreign policy and domestic policy and politics, and the level of influence exercised by Parliament.

1 'No Peace without Spain': the Failure of the Peace Negotiations of 1709

Introduction

On 30 June 1708 an Allied army under Marlborough's command defeated the French at Oudenarde. This was the third of Marlborough's major victories over the French, after Blenheim and Ramillies, and the least convincing. French peace overtures, made after the Allies' capture of Lille in December, led to negotiations at The Hague during the spring of 1709. These collapsed at the end of May, by which point the negotiators had agreed 'Preliminaries' comprising 40 articles; confident of success, the British diplomat Horace Walpole brought the Preliminaries to London for ratification by the Queen. When told that Louis XIV had refused the terms, British ministers were genuinely surprised. French objections centred on the provisions concerning the Spanish monarchy. Commonly referred to as article 37, these required that Philip of Anjou should surrender the entire monarchy of Spain to Archduke Charles during a proposed two months' cessation of arms; if he refused, not only would the cessation come to an end, but Louis would assist the Allies to eject him.

The negotiations at The Hague have often been neglected in analyses of British political discourse concerning the making of the peace of Utrecht, such as Müllenbrock's; these have commonly concentrated on the concerted peace-making efforts of the incoming Tory-dominated ministry of Robert Harley, which commenced in the summer of 1710. Before this, Müllenbrock argued, 'the most controversial issues concerning [the war's] final outcome had not yet been put irrevocably on the public agenda'.¹ But the neglect may also be due in part to the fact that while certain Whig members of the ministry led by Lord Treasurer Sidney Godolphin were thought to be media savvy, its leader (in the words of one historian) scorned Grub Street.²

¹ Müllenbrock, *Culture of Contention*, 31. Also Poston, *Defoe and the Peace Campaign* and Weeks, *Defoe, Swift and the Peace of Utrecht*.

² Müllenbrock, *Culture of Contention*, 33; Hanson, *Government and the Press*, 88.

Yet if ministers' engagement in public discourse was limited, it does not follow that discourse played no role in policy formation. Commencing with an assessment of the public mood in the period leading up to and during the 1709 negotiations, and providing an analysis of the narratives being pursued through print and other media in relation to the peace, this chapter demonstrates how the ministry reacted to discourse through seeking to influence it and through its policy decisions, and sought to take advantage of it to validate those decisions. It will argue that the ministry's failure to conclude a peace in mid-1709, through its insistence on the terms relating to the Spanish monarchy, was an inevitable result of the environment created by the dominant narratives in political discourse, narratives which the ministry had itself sustained.

Gauging the mood – politics and the public

By the latter half of 1708 the potential of the making of peace as a contentious political issue was becoming clear. As early as July, Marlborough was receiving reports from England that his victory at Oudenarde was being belittled and that the Tories were agitating for peace; nonetheless, he trusted that the Whigs would continue to support him in fighting the war, 'and then I don't doubt but to bring France to such a peace as they desire'.³ Godolphin sought to reassure him, while confirming his concerns about criticism of the continuation of the war. Malice and envy were leading the Tories to raise unrealistic expectations of military success; the motive, he implied, was to enhance the case for peace when those expectations were disappointed.⁴

If the issue of the peace was becoming pressing within Westminster, what of the wider political nation which followed the debate through periodicals and pamphlets? Rumours of French peace proposals first appeared in print in January 1709, and one commentator wrote that by late February 'the news of a peace ... ran very hot'.⁵ Bishop Burnet concurred: 'There was all this winter great talk of peace, which the miseries and necessity of France seemed to

³ Marlborough to Duchess of Marlborough, 26 July 1708 NS, Snyder, 1036.

⁴ Godolphin to Marlborough, 23 July 1708, Snyder, 1046-1047.

⁵ Newsletter, 6 January 1709, Newdigate Collection, Bodl. Mss. Film 298, LC3300; also *English Post*, 26 January 1709; *Post Boy*, 22 January 1709; N. Luttrell, *A Brief Relation of State Affairs from September 1678 to April 1714* (Oxford, 1857), vol. 6, 410, 412.

drive them to'.⁶ That much of this talk took place in the coffee houses can be inferred from one pamphlet (probably of spring 1709) recounting a discussion of the peace between 'two of the most able and notable politicians in most coffee-houses about town', and was confirmed by one correspondent in May: the possibility of peace 'is variously discoursed of in the coffee houses'.⁷

Participation in discourse was not limited to reading the papers, or arguing over coffee. The politically active in counties and boroughs could express themselves through petitions and addresses. Addresses to the Queen congratulating her on the latest military success were commonplace, although the fact that the number submitted after the victory at Oudenarde (ninety-eight) was significantly fewer than were submitted following Blenheim and Ramillies implies some reduction in support for the war.⁸ While such addresses may have been self-serving, they nonetheless give an insight into the thoughts of those who drafted them on the terms of a possible peace. The City of London's address claimed that after the battle 'the ambitious and haughty monarch of France shall be speedily compelled to beg for peace', so contributing to a narrative of French weakness that became prevalent over the following months.⁹ In July 1708 the Whig-inclined *Post Man* printed a petition from the Grand Jury of Hampshire to the county's two recently elected MPs, asking that they act in Parliament so that the war should be carried on 'with the utmost vigour... to obtain a sure and lasting peace'; this should include the restitution of the entire monarchy of Spain to the House of Austria, to restore the balance of Europe and reduce the exorbitant power of France. This, they averred, was the means to secure the constitution and the Protestant succession.¹⁰

This petition, and the City of London address, made express the link between military success and the terms on which the peace might be obtained. Thus public support for the war was an important element in the politics of the peace, and the ministry sought to promote that support through frequent

⁶ Burnet, vol. 5, 411.

⁷ *A Whisper in the Ear, or A Word to Peace* (London, 1709), 2; J. Calthorpe to C. Calthorpe, 3 May 1709, HMC Le Strange, 11th Report, appendix, part VII, 116.

⁸ Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation*, 117.

⁹ *Annals*, vol. 7, 223. See subsequent chapters for further discussion of the mechanics of addressing, and of the weight to be attached to addresses as an expression of public opinion.

¹⁰ *Post Man*, 24 July 1708.

celebrations and commemorations; yet the impact is hard to assess, not least because reporting of the public's reaction was mediated through potentially biased observers. The *London Gazette* reported that in London and Westminster the day of celebration for Oudenarde was marked by bonfires, illuminations and bell-ringing, demonstrating 'the publick joy upon so glorious and happy an occasion'.¹¹ The diplomat de l'Hermitage wrote to his political masters in the States-General to similar effect, adding that the Queen's coach was followed by a cheering crowd so thick that it could barely move.¹² But the *Gazette* was an official publication, and the Dutch envoy may have wished to tell his masters what they wanted to hear: that British enthusiasm for the war remained high. There is a more cynical account in a letter probably written by a future Tory MP and minister, who detected little joy or satisfaction. He reported few people in the windows or on balconies, adding: 'it was to be read in everybody's countenance that they looked upon the giving of thanks for a victory at Oudenarde to be a mocking of God'.¹³

While there was popular participation in celebrations of victories, there was also public unrest. Riots over the price of grain took place in many towns in 1708 and 1709, reflecting the impact of a severe winter.¹⁴ In one example, in March 1709 an armed mob in Christchurch attacked five wagons of corn destined for the commissioners of transport, and a crowd of over 100 threatened to open one of the merchants' stores, stone him and burn down his house.¹⁵ Attributing disturbances such as these to public feeling against the war, and thus in favour of peace, is difficult, but a connection can be inferred: the riots commonly occurred in circumstances in which grain appeared to be intended for export overseas; in one case it was claimed that the French had been responsible for buying up grain at inflated prices; and, admittedly in late summer 1709, after the peace talks had failed, one riot was said to have been caused by the presence of 'foreigners', who had been

¹¹ *Gazette*, 23 August 1708.

¹² De l'Hermitage to the States-General, 31 August 1708 NS, BL Add. ms 17677CCC, f.552.

¹³ E. Lewis to R. Harley (?), 19 August 1708, HMC 29 Portland, vol. IV, 501.

¹⁴ Frequent references appear in the Secretaries of State's letterbooks: SP44/107 and 108 contain reports of violent disturbances in Poole, Tewkesbury, Christchurch, and Plymouth. There were also riots in Suffolk and Coggeshall: papers of Sunderland as Secretary of State, BL Add. ms 61608, ff.59, 173.

¹⁵ Sunderland to the Attorney-General, SP44/108/55.

seen with local grain merchants.¹⁶ Another cause of disquiet was recruitment, following recent legislation designed to render it more effective. The *Gazette* reported that five men had come among the commissioners recruiting in Ipswich ‘in a disorderly and furious manner’, and taken it upon themselves to discharge those who had been recruited.¹⁷ This was a rare reference in the press to domestic disturbances (as opposed to reports of those in France), and may have been intended to deter others – the *Gazette* reported that the men were to be prosecuted.

Thus by early 1709 a nation well supplied with news on the conduct of the war, and on foreign affairs, was able to follow closely the latest rumours on the making of the peace, to discuss the peace in public forums, and to engage in public debate through petitions and addresses. Victory celebrations and public protest provided further opportunities to participate in discourse.

Narratives

What, then, were the narratives that characterised discourse concerning the peace? As the following discussion demonstrates, the prevailing narratives were many, were often inter-related, and were calculated to appeal to both reason and emotion. While some spoke to longer term policy objectives, and can be analysed in the line with the opposition between realist and ideological considerations identified in the Introduction, others spoke to more immediate practical and political concerns, falling less neatly within that framework.

‘Spain entire’ and the balance of power

Realist thinking was prominent in discourse: the importance to Britain of maintaining the balance of power (alternatively, the balance of Europe) was a common theme. The concept had emerged in the late seventeenth century, and was widely regarded as being the essence of the foreign policy of

¹⁶ Report from Tewkesbury, SP44/108/78-80; anonymous report, SP44/108/153-154; *Post Boy*, 1 October 1709.

¹⁷ *Gazette*, 17 March 1709

William III.¹⁸ In the context of the war maintaining the balance had come to be synonymous with curbing French power, and (to that end) with the objective of wresting Spain from Philip of Anjou. Thus, in declaring war in 1702, the Queen referred to the Grand Alliance of 1701 having been built by William 'to curtail the exorbitant power of France'.¹⁹ The Alliance similarly spoke of France and Spain together being able to dominate Europe, and while it originally referred only to obtaining for the Emperor reasonable satisfaction in relation to his pretensions to Spain, when Portugal was brought into the Alliance in 1703, its expressed aim came to be the securing of the entirety of Spain for the Austrian claimant.²⁰

It was implicit in the idea of the balance that the excessive power of any state might need to be curbed, not only that of France, and this was reflected in some of the contemporary discussion. In January 1709 the firmly Whiggish *Daily Courant* introduced a complex proposal for peace that portrayed the war as the latest example of rivalry between the Bourbons and the Habsburgs, and argued that if the entirety of Spain were to go to Austria the conflict would sooner or later be renewed.²¹ In March Defoe wrote in the *Review* that care should be taken to ensure that France not be reduced too low, and to restrain 'the overbearing greatness' of the Empire as well as that of France.²²

However, such concerns were widely rejected. In a dialogue of April 1709, the Whig-inclined *Observer's* interlocutor (Roger, a gullible countryman) argued that if the peace terms reduced France too low the balance would be disturbed. *Observer* disagreed – the Empire was too weak to disturb the balance due to internal threats from Hungarian rebels and external threats from the Ottomans.²³ *A Letter Shewing the Danger of Concluding a Peace with France*, probably written at much the same time, argued that Spain was

¹⁸ H. Butterfield, 'The Balance of Power', *Diplomatic Relations* (Butterfield and Wight (ed.)), 132-148; Wolf, *European balance of power*; Luard, *Balance of Power*.

¹⁹ *General Collection of Treatys*, vol. I, 421-422.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 415-420; *General Collection of Treatys*, vol. III, 354-363.

²¹ *Daily Courant*, 15 January 1709.

²² *Review*, 24 March 1709.

²³ *Observer*, 12 April 1709.

so poor that it passing to the Habsburgs should not affect the balance.²⁴ Defoe now weighed in with a lengthy essay on French power, and the dangers which would be posed by France if permitted to grow too great for her neighbours.²⁵

This emphasis on curbing the excessive power of France came to be reflected in advocacy of securing 'Spain entire', a theme which became dominant as the negotiations proceeded. The *Daily Courant* shifted from its advocacy of partition in January to support in April for the ministerial position that the entirety of Spain should be secured.²⁶ And while Defoe had counselled against regarding France as the only threat to the balance of power, by late March 1709 he advocated insisting on the whole monarchy of Spain. As he wrote immediately after the peace talks failed: 'they would not give us the main thing for which we make war, I mean Spain, without which we cannot make peace'.²⁷ This focus on Spain resonated with the public: an address from the corporation of Bath referred to the Queen's 'most generous resolution' that the monarchy of Spain should pass to the house of Austria, and in April 1709 Arthur Maynwaring (who was close to the Marlboroughs) wrote to the Duchess that if the Dutch were to propose giving any part of Spain to France, 'it will never be approved of here, nor be safe for any Englishman to agree to'.²⁸

There were three principal reasons for advocating 'Spain entire'. First, that it was the only way to ensure a lasting peace. At a time when there were rumours that the French were seeking a partition which would leave Naples and Sicily with Philip, the *Daily Courant* reproduced, with implicit approval, a letter printed in Brussels claiming that such a peace could not be secure: 'if the Allies grant those terms they will throw up a thousand happy circumstances which now so eminently favour them, and after a short breathing must take up the sword again, with infinitely less advantage on their side and more danger'. Spain without those two territories would be too weak

²⁴ *A Letter Shewing the Danger of Concluding a Peace with France in her Present Circumstances; and Giving an Account of the Present State of Europe* (London, 1709), 2.

²⁵ *Review*, 12 April 1709.

²⁶ *Daily Courant*, 3 April 1709.

²⁷ *Review*, 19 March, 26 July 1709.

²⁸ Bath address, BL Add. ms 61495, f.54; Maynwaring to Duchess of Marlborough, 19 April 1709, BL Add. ms 61459, f.166.

to protect itself from future attack by an alliance between them and France.²⁹ According to *A Letter Shewing the Danger*, if Philip were to have Sicily the Bourbons would only be lending Spain to the Habsburgs for a few years – a future war would be inevitable.³⁰

Second, it was argued that substantial damage to British trade would result were the Bourbons to have any part of Spain. Again in the context of the suggestion that Philip be allowed to retain Naples and Sicily, the *Daily Courant* contended that he would ally himself with France, and that in consequence Britain's trade to Italy and the Levant would be irretrievably lost.³¹ The *Observer* agreed, and made a similar point in relation to Britain's broader trading interests: if the balance of Europe was not preserved by the recovery of Spain and the West Indies, 'our West Indies trade must inevitably decay; and it will be hard to preserve our other colonies there', and Britain's trade with Spain ('one of the most considerable branches of our commerce') would be threatened.³²

This contention, that securing the entire monarchy of Spain was vital for the nation's trading interests, resonated with a wider discourse seeking to ensure that commercial issues were taken into account in the terms of the peace. This was exemplified by the Hudson's Bay Company's campaign to ensure that Britain recovered the bay under the peace terms: it petitioned the two Secretaries of State and other ministers, sent representations to Marlborough and Viscount Townshend (Britain's negotiators), and had representatives present in The Hague during the talks.³³ Some lobbying was actively sought by the ministry. Sunderland wrote to the Council of Trade in May 1709 seeking advice on the terms of the commerce treaties with France of the previous 60 years, and on which terms had been the most advantageous to Britain, leading to a concerted effort to solicit the views of merchants and boroughs.³⁴

²⁹ *Daily Courant*, 9 March, 2 April 1709.

³⁰ *A Letter Shewing the Danger*, 2.

³¹ *Daily Courant*, 2 April 1709.

³² *Observer*, 23 February, 26 March 1709.

³³ Committee minutes 20 April, 18 May 1709, and General Court minutes 29 April 1709, HBC, BH1/2/A1/31 f.8, f.10, f.12.

³⁴ Sunderland to the Council of Trade, 16 May 1709, HL/PO/CO/1/7 f.70.

Commercial interests went beyond private lobbying: the Hudson's Bay Company's case was set out in a pamphlet (*The Right of the Crown of Great Britain to Hudson's Bay... Asserted*), the text of which was reproduced in the *Daily Courant* in May 1709, 'for the information of the publick'.³⁵ And there are indications that other merchants also used the press to make their case: referring to a previous issue of the *Observer* vindicating Britain's title to Newfoundland, Roger commented in May 1709 that 'some gentlemen are very well pleased at what you have said about Newfoundland, and think it ought to be a matter of too great consequence to be forgo in the treaty'. The same issue discussed the damage suffered by the tobacco merchants due to low prices and the prohibition on trade with Spain, and promised to discuss further what they wanted from the peace.³⁶

Thus both commercial considerations, and the imperative of preventing a future war – essentially realist considerations - featured in discourse supporting the case for 'Spain entire'. These were complemented by a contention addressing ideological concerns. It was argued that only through securing the entirety of the Spanish monarchy could the liberties of Europe be protected, reflecting the explicit connection made in the Queen's declaration of war, and in the Grand Alliance, between curbing the power of France and protecting those liberties.³⁷ The *Daily Courant* made this point when it asked in July 1708 what was to be expected if Philip remained on the throne of Spain - the Dutch would not be safe from being treated as rebels and heretics; their liberty (and that of the English) required protection.³⁸ In his 1708 pamphlet, *The Present State of the War*, Addison began by portraying the French as the enemies of British liberty, and went on to assert that none should wish for peace with France 'till the Spanish monarchy be entirely torn from it, and the House of Bourbon disabled from ever giving the law to Europe'.³⁹ The *Observer* also made a connection between the balance of power, securing the entirety of Spain and the Protestant succession: if Spain were not to be recovered, and the balance restored, Britain could not be

³⁵ BL Add. ms 61358, ff.50-51; *Daily Courant*, 13 May 1709.

³⁶ *Observer*, 27 April, 14 May 1709.

³⁷ *General Collection of Treatys*, vol. I, 416, 421-422.

³⁸ *Daily Courant*, 31 July 1708.

³⁹ J. Addison, *The Present State of the War, and the Necessity of an Augmentation, Consider'd* (London, 1708), 1-2, 9.

secure 'against the St Germain family' or a host of other popish pretenders to the throne.⁴⁰

Liberty, Protestantism and the Succession

The case for maintaining the balance of power, by curbing the power of France and (specifically) denying Spain to the Bourbons, was thus inextricably linked to the well-established narrative of the threat to liberty represented by French hegemony. In the seventeenth century concern over the danger potentially posed to Europe and its liberties by the advent of a 'universal monarchy' had become widespread; and while various prospective universal monarchies were identified, by the end of the century the term had come to be most closely associated with the threat posed by France.⁴¹

Here, ideology came to the fore, and references to tyranny, and the threat to freedom represented by universal monarchy, became a common rhetorical flourish – directed at France, and at Louis XIV in particular. The *Daily Courant* wrote of Louis trampling on the necks of the French, 'subduing their very minds and consciences, and making them absolute slaves to his will and pleasure'; his aspirations for universal monarchy threatened Britain and continental Europe with the same.⁴² The City of London's address following Oudenarde spoke of the Queen's defence of her subjects' religion, laws and liberties, and the liberties of 'other injur'd nations', while Gloucester's of March 1709 lauded her as the scourge of ambitious tyrants.⁴³ Pamphleteers took up the theme. In *Windsor Castle, a Poem*, Queen Anne was praised for resisting the growing power:

'Of proud aspiring France, that waits each hour
The liberties of Europe to devour.'⁴⁴

These themes of liberty and tyranny were combined in the play *Appius and Virginia*, performed four times in February 1709. The play, whose dedication to Godolphin praised him for having shaken France's excessive power, tells

⁴⁰ *Observer*, 23 February 1709.

⁴¹ See, for example, the discussion in T. Claydon, 'The Revolution in Foreign Policy, 1688-1713', *The Final Crisis of the Stuart Monarchy: the Revolutions of 1688-91 in their British, Atlantic and European Contexts* (T. Harris and S. Taylor (ed.)) (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2013), 219-242.

⁴² *Daily Courant*, 3 July 1708, 7 January 1709.

⁴³ *Gazette*, 2 August 1708; Gloucestershire's address, 18 March 1709, HALS DE/P/F/146.

⁴⁴ *A Happy Memorable Ballad, on the Fight near Audenarde* (London, 1708), 9.

the story of the tyrant Appius's attempts to enslave Virginia, and concludes with Virginia dying in the cause of liberty. Virginia's gender was significant, and the play's epilogue made an explicit link to the threat to British liberty:

'The blessing ne'er cou'd be secur'd by man,
But Heav'n reserv'd th' immortal fame to Anne.'⁴⁵

Discourse was commonly vague as to what exactly was meant by 'liberty' – other than as the antithesis of tyranny. Nonetheless, when Defoe wrote of France as 'an oppressor of the common liberties of Europe', with no further elucidation, he presumed his readers understood the two essential elements: freedom from French domination, at home or abroad; and, in consequence, freedom of conscience.⁴⁶

Advocacy of such freedom was reflected in exhortations that Britain should assume the role of principal defender of the 'Protestant interest', exhortations which drew heavily on the narrative of French tyranny. Those with time and a strong stomach could read through the 251 pages of the perhaps misnamed *Short Account of the Complaints, and Cruel Persecutions of the Protestants in the Kingdom of France* (first published in 1686, and by 1708 in its third edition).⁴⁷ *Semper Eadem: or, Great Britain's Assurance of a Peace*, published in May 1709, described how 600 hundred Protestant churches had been destroyed in France since 1675, and contained tales of starvation, torture and forced conversions; another pamphlet focussed on the mistreatment of Protestants forced to serve in the French galleys.⁴⁸ The theme was also taken up in the periodicals: in March 1709 the *Post Man* wrote of the conversions of French Protestants wrought by 'booted missionaries'.⁴⁹

For the *Observer*, the British and Dutch were responsible for the protection of the Protestants of France and of the Empire: for the benefit of those in France the peace should require the restoration of the Edict of Nantes; for

⁴⁵ J. Dennis, *Appius and Virginia* (London, [1709]).

⁴⁶ *Review*, 12 April 1709.

⁴⁷ J. Claude, *A Short Account of the Complaints, and Cruel Persecutions of the Protestants in the Kingdom of France* (London, 1708).

⁴⁸ *Semper Eadem: or, Great Britain's Assurance of a Peace* (London, 1709), 10-12; J. Bion, *Relation des Torments qu'on Fait Souffrir aux Protestants qui Sont sur les Galeres de France* (London, 1708).

⁴⁹ *Post Man*, 12 March 1709.

those in the Empire, it proposed the restoration of the terms of the Treaty of Westphalia guaranteeing freedom of conscience for Lutherans, and the repeal of article 4 of the Treaty of Rijswijk, which had provided that Catholicism should remain the settled religion in certain territories returned to the Empire after the Nine Years' War.⁵⁰ Reporting with approval Marlborough's demand for the repeal of article 4, the *Post Man* described it as the 'fatal clause' inserted into the Treaty of Rijswijk by a Jesuitical trick, 'so much prejudicial to the protestant interest in Germany'.⁵¹ Territorial solutions were also suggested: writing in August 1709 on the plight of Protestant refugees fleeing religious oppression in the Palatine, the *Daily Courant* suggested that the Duchy of Lorraine should be restored in order to provide them with a protective barrier.⁵² Again, the ministry was subject to lobbying, this time on the Protestants' behalf; and, as in the case of the lobbying of commercial interests, this had a public element – petitions of dissenting ministers in Ireland and London, calling for the protection of European Protestants, were printed in the London press.⁵³

Defence of Protestantism both at home and abroad was naturally linked to the protection of the Protestant succession; the two were commonly referred to in one breath, particularly in loyal addresses to the Queen. Addressing the Queen in late 1708, London's dissenting ministers called for the war to be continued until 'the liberties of Europe are entirely vindicated, the violated rights of the Protestants in France, and elsewhere, perfectly restored, and the Protestant succession every way secured'.⁵⁴ Similarly, in their address of March 1709 Gloucestershire's gentlemen offered to lay down their lives in defence of 'the Protestant succession and the Church of England as by law established'.⁵⁵ Defoe took a similar line: it was absolutely necessary that the war be continued 'till the King of France be oblig'd wholly to renounce the interest of the Pretender'.⁵⁶ This connection between the peace and the succession, which would become more prominent as the war continued,

⁵⁰ *Observer*, 7 July 1708; *General Collection of Treatys*, vol. I, 9, 363.

⁵¹ *Observer*, 12 March 1709; *Post Man*, 24 May 1709.

⁵² *Daily Courant*, 8 August 1709.

⁵³ E.g. Somers to Godolphin, 10 May 1709, Bodl., Mss. Add. A.191, ff.123-124; *London Gazette*, 23 December 1708, 27 January 1709.

⁵⁴ *Gazette*, 23 December 1708.

⁵⁵ Gloucestershire's address, HALS DE/P/F/146.

⁵⁶ *Review*, 10 May 1709.

played into concerns that Tory advocates of peace were in the pockets of the French – a narrative of treachery. The Earl of Shaftesbury (a confirmed Whig) feared that ‘the false politics of some well-meaning and worthy men in joining with those who still lessen’d [France’s] wounds and magnify’d her vigour and remaining power, will be a snare to us in a treaty’.⁵⁷ As the *Observer* put it: ‘I have heard my Grannum say, that when she was afraid of having her house attack’d by thieves without, she took care in the first place to examine, that there was none within’.⁵⁸ It was a logical step to accuse those campaigning against the war of Jacobitism, particularly in the aftermath of the Pretender’s failed invasion. In October 1708 *Observer* told Roger, who had given a downbeat account of the progress of the war in Flanders: ‘I thought you were a man of more sense, than to listen to the clamours and comments of Jacobites, who magnify all disadvantages on our side, and lessen those on the side of the enemy’.⁵⁹ And in *A Whisper in the Ear*, one speaker referred to the importance of recovering the entirety of Spain: ‘and if you gain-say this, I say you are one of those Tory-ry Jacobite high-flyers that want peace to the advantage of the French’.⁶⁰

The balance of forces

These elements of discourse reflected major policy concerns: the establishment and preservation of the balance of power, the pursuit of British commercial interests, the protection of liberty and freedom of conscience at home and abroad, and the securing of Britain’s Protestant succession. More immediate was the question of the relative strength of Britain and her Allies on the one hand, and of France on the other. Ironically, given the concentration on the need to curb French power, one of the most prevalent narratives in contemporary discourse was that of the extreme *weakness* of France. This narrative was directly linked to the issue of the peace, as it could be prayed in aid of the argument that one more battle won, or one more successful campaign, would make the French desperate for peace; it followed that a firm line should be taken in any negotiations. Addison, writing

⁵⁷ Shaftesbury to Furlly, 28 May 1709, T. Forster (ed.), *Original letters of John Locke, Algernon Sidney and Lord Shaftesbury* (London, 1847), 254-256.

⁵⁸ *Observer*, 9 March 1709.

⁵⁹ *Observer*, 23 October 1708.

⁶⁰ *A Whisper in the Ear*, 2.

in 1708, argued that: 'another Blenheim or Ramillies will make the confederates masters of their own terms, and arbitrators of the peace'.⁶¹ It was the potency of this narrative, combined with the stress placed on the need to secure Spain entire, which created an environment in which the ministry was emboldened to push for all of Spain to pass to the Austrian claimant, confident that France would have no alternative but to concede.

France's portrayed weakness took many forms. The first was economic: pamphlets and periodicals contained many accounts of starvation in France. The author of *Letters to a Nobleman*, published in early 1709, wrote of the traders of Paris being short of money and stock, 'and all sorts of things are extreamly dear'.⁶² The effects of the harsh winter of 1708/09 on the French population were described with relish: 'letters from all the towns of the kingdom tell us, that the miseries occasioned among the poorer sort of people by the excessive cold are inexpressible'.⁶³ Such accounts persisted as the peace talks progressed. In April 1709, the *Observer* reported that the condition of France was 'very bad for Lewis the XIVth ... his country is full of tumults for the want of bread; so that in some places the people have broken up his magazines and intercepted his vessels with corn and provisions'.⁶⁴ That such reporting was calculated to encourage the ministry to take a firm line in the negotiations, and to encourage public support for doing so, is suggested by another article of April 1709 in the *Post Boy* (which at that point was broadly supportive of the ministry) - it reported the rejection of the latest French terms, and in the same paragraph recounted the story of a French couple who had killed their children, and then themselves, for want of food, illustrating 'the great misery with which [France] is universally afflicted'.⁶⁵

France was also shown to be in a state of financial collapse. Defoe wrote in April 1709 that France's finances were in the utmost disorder, her treasure

⁶¹ Addison, *The Present State of the War*, 14.

⁶² J. Shaw, *Letters to a Nobleman from a Gentleman Travelling thro' Holland, Flanders and France* (London, 1709), 118.

⁶³ *Daily Courant*, 1 February 1709.

⁶⁴ *Review*, 12 April 1709.

⁶⁵ *Post Boy*, 28 April 1709.

exhausted, and her credit broken.⁶⁶ This weakness could be contrasted with Britain's financial strength: in a neat juxtaposition, the *Daily Courant* reported on a single page in February 1709 not only that the Bank of England had successfully raised £2.2 million, doubling the stock of the bank in a day, but also that France's proposal to create a national bank to ease its credit position had failed.⁶⁷ Military weakness followed. The *English Post* carried reports from France's frontiers in April 1709: 'their troops are not yet paid, which occasions frequent disorders; ... the officers make loud complaints, that they can neither pay their debts, nor prepare their equipages to take field'; the *Post Man* added that the army would not be able to fill its magazines due to the scarcity of corn.⁶⁸ In May Defoe wrote of the French armies being mutinous: 'let them tell you if their infantry are not naked and their cavalry ill mounted'.⁶⁹

French military weakness was portrayed not only as a function of financial and economic stress, but also of cowardice. In January 1709 the *Supplement* printed a letter purportedly written by an English officer held prisoner in France, who commented of the French troops: 'their courage may be justly compared to snow falling in August, which the warm sun soon dissolves'.⁷⁰ A similar theme features in Farquhar's play *The Recruiting Officer*, which was performed seven times during the 1708/09 season. Asked if the French army had attacked the British at the battle of Landen in 1693, Captain Brazen replies: 'the French attack us! Oons, Sir, are you a Jacobite? ... Because none but a Jacobite cou'd think that the French durst attack us'.⁷¹

Suggestions of cowardice formed part of a broader narrative of French degeneracy. The *Post Boy* quoted a prayer purportedly written by a French archbishop, in which military failure was implicitly attributed to the nation's 'luxury and voluptuousness' and 'high contempt of virtue'.⁷² Some writers combined descriptions of French moral turpitude with exhortations that the British should avoid falling into the same trap: 'I think it a piece of good

⁶⁶ *Review*, 23 April 1709

⁶⁷ *Daily Courant*, 23 February 1709.

⁶⁸ *English Post*, 11 April 1709; *Post Man*, 19 April 1709.

⁶⁹ *Review*, 10 May 1709.

⁷⁰ *Supplement*, 31 January 1709.

⁷¹ G. Farquhar, *The Recruiting Officer* (London, 4th edition, [1709]), 28.

⁷² *Post Boy*, 16 December 1708.

service to wean and take off that pernicious fondness of many English gentlemen, whom nothing pleases so much as the French tongue, French ay, French wine, French cooks, ... French mistresses, ... ; ...for having travelled into France ... they have brought home French vices and diseases to the disgrace of the nation...'⁷³ Others expressed a different concern – that 'we seem to detract from the glory of our own conquests; if the French are such effeminate creatures, to what expense of blood and treasure has Great Britain been put, to subdue men who, by this character appear less than women?'⁷⁴

Part of this narrative of moral failure drew on the contrast between the wealth of the French nobility and the distress suffered by the wider population, leading to attacks on Louis himself.⁷⁵ *Letters to a Nobleman* described him as having spent over £50 million on his palaces, and indulging in licentious excess, while thousands of his unhappy subjects were rotting and starving in the streets.⁷⁶ Such personal attacks also sought to ridicule Louis, including by portraying him as being under the thumb of his mistress and undisclosed wife, madame de Maintenon.⁷⁷ The author of *Prince Eugene's Catechism* wrote that 'the gout, fistula, stone and pox, has disabled him from the pleasures of the placket' and that his troops were no more able to face an encounter with 'true Blew Englishmen', 'than an old superannuated leacher of fourscore can grapple between the sheets with a young girl of sixteen'.⁷⁸ Thus, like France, Louis was physically drained and impotent.

While powerful, this narrative of weakness did not have a monopoly – there were regular reports of France's readiness to continue the war, and of the diligent preparations being made to do so. Nonetheless, the overriding impression created by print discourse was of a nation on its last legs, at the Allies' mercy.⁷⁹

⁷³ Shaw, *Letters to a Nobleman*, xix.

⁷⁴ E.g. *English Post*, 2 February 1709.

⁷⁵ *Post Boy*, 29 January 1709.

⁷⁶ Shaw, *Letters to a Nobleman*, xiv.

⁷⁷ *Daily Courant*, 8 January 1709.

⁷⁸ *Prince Eugene's Catechism Concerning a General Peace* (London, 1709), 4.

⁷⁹ *Daily Courant*, 2 March 1709; *Supplement* 11 March 1709.

These assertions of French weakness, appealing both to reason and to humour, were complemented by appeals to patriotism, through the celebration of Allied military victories and heroes – these were evidence of the Allies’ moral and material superiority. Again, there was an overt connection to the issue of the peace and its terms. Praising the successes of the 1708 campaign, *Prince Eugene’s Catechism* called for more of the same - ‘a safe and honourable peace may as easily be obtain’d (after we have given him one brush more) as we can wish for’.⁸⁰

This line of thinking was not, however, uncontested. In his fable *The Paradox* the Tory William Pittis warned against pride after the fall of Lille at the end of 1708:

‘But let Great Britain, while her genius smiles,
Remember France has several Lisles...
And if she gives much way to pride,
Fortune may yet espouse the vanquish’d side.’⁸¹

Celebrations of victory nonetheless took many forms, including dances, such as ‘*The Brawl of Audenarde*’, *Mr Siris’s New Dance for the Year 1709*.⁸² In print, news of military success was greeted enthusiastically: ‘a great and glorious victory’ declared the *Gazette* after Oudenarde.⁸³ Pamphlets also played a part: both *A Happy Memorable Ballad, on the Fight near Audenarde* and *Jack Frenchman’s Lamentation* celebrated the victory, while *The French Pride Abated* did the same for the capture of Lille.⁸⁴ Addresses congratulating the Queen came from all quarters of Britain, and were referred to or reproduced in the *Gazette*.⁸⁵

The *Gazette*, when printing those addresses, came to adopt a form of introduction that referred to the army being under Marlborough’s command, demonstrating the close link between the narrative of military success and the lionisation of those responsible for it, principally Marlborough and his fellow general, Prince Eugene of Savoy, and pamphlets equally linked

⁸⁰ *Prince Eugene’s Catechism*, 5.

⁸¹ W. Pittis, *Æsop at Oxford* (London, 1709), 14-17.

⁸² Advertisement, *Gazette*, 17 February 1709.

⁸³ *Gazette*, 8 July 1708. See also *Post Man*, 24 July 1708.

⁸⁴ *A Happy Memorable Ballad; Jack Frenchman’s Lamentation, an Excellent New Song* (London, 1708); *The French Pride Abated* (1708).

⁸⁵ The issue of 26 July 1708 refers to six addresses, with more in subsequent issues.

success to the military leaders.⁸⁶ This narrative of heroism could also be deployed in implicit support of the Protestant succession: one pamphlet described the courage of the future George II at Oudenarde: ‘full firmly he stood, as became his high blood’.⁸⁷ Partisan competition in praising heroes followed: in the autumn of 1708, the House of Commons, at the instigation of a Tory MP, passed a vote of thanks to General Webb (another Tory) for his successful action at Wijnendale.⁸⁸ The Tory speaker, William Bromley, was quoted as having said that another general who had had not only thanks but great reward appeared yet to be unsatisfied, and Godolphin believed that the vote was an act of malice directed at Marlborough.⁸⁹ The death of the Tory Admiral Rooke in January 1709 provided an opportunity for Pittis to praise him for his naval victories at Marlborough’s expense:

‘Blenheim’s campaign to Vigo’s flames should yield,
And Malaga surmount Ramillies field.’⁹⁰

Even praise for Eugene could be construed as criticism of Marlborough. Following Oudenarde, Shaftesbury commented: ‘I have long observed that both in England and in Holland [Prince Eugene] has many pretended admirers who cry him up to the skies, for no love to himself but hatred to other people’.⁹¹ This mattered because of the direct connection between Marlborough and British conduct of the war: praise of Marlborough represented confidence in continuing Allied success, and so in a more robust approach to the peace; criticism of him the opposite.

This criticism could be deeply personal. In volume 1 of her *New Atalantis*, published in May 1709, Mrs Manley satirised Marlborough as Count Fortunatus, playing on the family motto (‘faithful but unfortunate’) to suggest that he was neither – his advancement had been due to his abandonment of

⁸⁶ E.g. *Gazette*, 2 August 1708. *The French Pride Abated*; T. Gibson, *Scipio Britannicus. The scourge of France, an Heroic Poem* (London, 1709)

⁸⁷ *Jack Frenchman’s Lamentation*; see also *The French Pride Abated*.

⁸⁸ Cobbett, vol. 6, 701.

⁸⁹ *Annals*, vol. 7, 270-271; N. Tindal, *The Continuation of Mr. Rapin de Thoyras’s History of England: from the Revolution to the Accession of King George II* (London, 1751), vol. 2, 116; Godolphin to Marlborough, 24 December 1708, Snyder, 1187.

⁹⁰ W. Pittis, *Nereo, a Funeral Poem Sacred to the Immortal Memory of Admiral George Rooke* (London, 1709), 11.

⁹¹ Shaftesbury to Furlly, 22 July 1708, B. Rand, (ed.), *The Life, Unpublished Letters, and Philosophical Regimen of Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury* (London, 1900), 387-388.

James II (and to his sister's affair with James), and had allowed him to amass a substantial fortune.⁹² *An Account of a Dream at Harwich* portrayed the Duchess as a fury ('her garment was all stained with tears and blood') sitting by the guardian angel (the Queen) of a town under attack from robbers, while a horseman in golden armour, his shield bearing the image of Judas, restrained his men from using all their efforts to destroy the attackers.⁹³

The implication, that Marlborough was not fully committed to France's defeat, pointed to another narrative: that the war was being unnecessarily prolonged and (by implication) that Marlborough and his fellow ministers were thwarting efforts to make peace. This narrative would subsequently be developed to comprehend an allegation that those opposing the peace were in league with the Dutch, even to the extent of conspiring to introduce republican government in Britain. In 1708/09, only the seeds of this were visible, in the connection being asserted between contemporary Whigs and the rebels of '41.⁹⁴ For now, the focus was on accusations that those in power were motivated by the pursuit of wealth: 'they strut; they domineer; and they treat us with such scorn and insolence, as if they thought it no robbery, but an honour to have cheated the Commonwealth'.⁹⁵ *An Account of a Dream at Harwich* referred, when speaking of the character representing the Duchess of Marlborough, to 'a temple she had caused to be erected and dedicated to her pride' (the palace at Blenheim).⁹⁶ This obsession with personal gain was contrasted with the virtue of alternative heroes, as when Pittis wrote of Rooke:

'He never his country or its councils sold,
Or barter'd all at home for foreign gold.'⁹⁷

Yet this narrative of Marlborough's greed was naturally contested. In discussing the siege of Lille the *Observer* refuted the suggestion that Marlborough and Eugene were prolonging the war for their own ends – they were risking their lives in doing so. And as Marlborough strove to conclude

⁹² D. Manley, *Secret Memoirs and Manners of Several Persons of Quality, of Both Sexes. From the New Atalantis, an Island in the Mediterranean* (London, 1709), 20-43.

⁹³ *An Account of a Dream at Harwich* (London, 1708).

⁹⁴ E.g. BL, Western prints, PPA137674.

⁹⁵ *The Speech of Caius Memmius, Tribune, to the People of Rome, Translated from Sallust* (London, 1708), 14.

⁹⁶ *Dream at Harwich*, 14-17.

⁹⁷ Pittis, *Nereo*.

the peace negotiations the Whig-inclined *Tatler* satirised the idea: 'the Duke . . . , has plainly shown himself unacquainted with the art of husbanding a war'.⁹⁸

The unreliability of the Allies, and of the enemy

Proponents of an early peace could thus seek to undermine the narratives of Allied military prowess, and of heroism, by personal attacks on Marlborough, and by impugning his motives and those of his fellow ministers. A further line of attack, also subverting the narrative of Allied military superiority, lay in the suggestion that the Allies might not be pulling their weight, an idea which would become a prominent element of discourse as the war continued and peace proved elusive. The fable *A Notable Sort of Ally* described an alliance of the beasts in which the fishes (the Dutch, the other maritime power) promised much by the way of troops and ammunition, but failed to deliver.⁹⁹ Such concerns were reflected in the debate in the Commons in December 1708 on the augmentation of forces for the following year. De l'Hermitage reported that while the Commons were well disposed, there had been a suggestion that the Dutch should increase their forces in proportion, on the basis that the augmentation was more for the States' benefit than for Britain's.¹⁰⁰ The sentiment was reflected in the Lords' address to the Queen, who responded that she would do her utmost to ensure that the Allies furnished their share of the augmentation.¹⁰¹

At this stage, however, criticism was directed more at the Empire than at the Dutch. The *English Post* commented in December 1708 that while nothing had been wanting on the part of Prince Eugene, the Empire had been deficient in furnishing its troop quotas.¹⁰² Defoe for one was more comfortable with the commitment of the States, who he considered had given manifest proof of their fidelity to the Alliance.¹⁰³ Similarly, *Letters to a Nobleman* also defended the Dutch: 'the constant assertors of the public

⁹⁸ *Tatler*, 21 May 1709.

⁹⁹ Pittis, *Æsop at Oxford*, 23-25.

¹⁰⁰ De l'Hermitage to the States-General, 3 January 1709 NS, BL Add. ms 17677DDD, ff.2-4.

¹⁰¹ Cobbett, vol 6, 754.

¹⁰² *English Post*, 31 December 1708.

¹⁰³ *Review*, 21 April 1709.

liberties of Europe'.¹⁰⁴ Addison, however, had no concerns in relation to any of the Allies: 'we are to be told, that England contributes much more than any of the other Allies, and therefore it is not reasonable that she shou'd make any addition to her present efforts ... I don't see any tolerable colour for such a conclusion'.¹⁰⁵ And the *Daily Courant* went to considerable lengths to refute suggestions in the French press that the Emperor had provided insufficient troops, or the Dutch insufficient funds.¹⁰⁶

Such satisfaction with the Allies' efforts was consistent with commentary which emphasised the importance of making peace only in concert with them. In a lengthy article on the prospects for peace in summer 1708, the *Daily Courant* wrote that one of the two inferences to be drawn by the public was that 'no treaty with France can safely be entered into without the participation, concurrence and consent of all the Confederates'.¹⁰⁷ And in the spring of 1709 Defoe was making the same case in the *Review*.¹⁰⁸

It was in this context that another aspect of the narrative of France's moral decadence came into play: the idea that she, and her sovereign, were deeply untrustworthy. Thus it was suggested that a key objective of French diplomacy was to divide the Allies through underhand means. In March 1709, during the early stages of the negotiations, the *Observer* referred to 'the designs of the French court, to wheedle any of the Allies into a separate and dishonourable peace', and in May the *Daily Courant* wrote of the French employing 'their usual practices of insinuating jealousies and offering all private advantages', to split the Allies.¹⁰⁹ The idea appeared to reflect public concern: in the early stages of the talks, de l'Hermitage reported that the view was already being expressed in London that they were simply an artifice on the part of France, designed to lead to divisions among the Allies.¹¹⁰

But concerns over France's bad faith had other, equally serious, implications: the history of broken French promises, most pertinently in accepting the

¹⁰⁴ Shaw, *Letters to a Nobleman*, ix.

¹⁰⁵ Addison, *The Present State of the War*, 36.

¹⁰⁶ *Daily Courant*, 1, 24 July 1708.

¹⁰⁷ *Daily Courant*, 9 July 1708.

¹⁰⁸ *Review*, 21 April 1709.

¹⁰⁹ *Observer*, 5 March 1709; *Daily Courant*, 13 May 1709.

¹¹⁰ De l'Hermitage to the States-General, 26 March 1709 NS, BL Add. ms 17677DDD, ff.130-132

throne of Spain for Philip of Anjou in the first place, underlined the importance of imposing rigorous peace terms. The obsession with French duplicity could be taken to extremes. In August 1708, the *Observer* discussed the rumour that the French had tried to assassinate Eugene with a poisoned piece of paper: 'I have heard, master, that the very heathens abhor'd such poysoning practices, as those of the French King and his faction'.¹¹¹ In *The French King's Catechism*, Louis was satirised for his unreliability. Asked if he was sincere in his peace proposals, he replied: 'as sincere as I us'd to be in affairs of the same nature; I want a peace, and when I want that, I can promise anything, swear anything, and break it as soon as I've done'.¹¹² In May 1709, apparently responding to a rumour that the terms of the peace might require Louis to acquiesce in Allied attempts to force Philip out of Spain, the *Observer* was dismissive: 'what security can we have that the French King will keep this bargain with us', going on to refer to his failure to honour previous renunciations of the Spanish throne.¹¹³ Shaftesbury demonstrated just this distrust: 'I laugh'd at the French swords when oppos'd to ours; but I dread the force of corruption, and those other weapons, which they can better manage, and we can less ably resist'.¹¹⁴

The balance of negotiating power

What did these intersecting narratives imply for the conduct of the peace talks? The *Observer* opined in March 1709 that the British position was so strong that peace should not be made on any terms other than those which the Queen and Parliament had laid down, including Spain entire.¹¹⁵ Yet the issue over which the peace would ultimately fail had already been identified: in January 1709 the *Post Boy* cited a letter from Paris saying that while there was a desire for peace in France, Louis had said that it was no longer in his power to deliver Spain to the Archduke.¹¹⁶ This was echoed in a comment attributed to him by the *Daily Courant* at the end of April: 'tis no longer in his power to yield up [Spain] to the House of Austria, without the consent of King

¹¹¹ *Observer*, 28 August 1708.

¹¹² *The French King's Catechism, or Madam Maintenon's Last Advice* ([London], 1709), 7.

¹¹³ *Observer*, 7 May 1709.

¹¹⁴ Shaftesbury to Furlly, 28 May 1709, Forster, *Original letters*, 254-256.

¹¹⁵ *Observer*, 26 March 1709.

¹¹⁶ *Post Boy*, 29 April 1709.

Philip and of the Spanish nation so that all he can possibly do ... is ... to leave it to the Allies to carry their point there by force of arms'.¹¹⁷

There were, however, reports of divisions between Paris and Madrid, and of a lack of enthusiasm in France for defending Philip's throne, and the conclusion widely drawn in the press was that France was so weak that the Allies could dictate the peace terms.¹¹⁸ In April the *Tatler* hoped that: 'the Allies have so just a sense of their present advantages, that they will not admit of a treaty, except France offers what is more suitable to her present condition'.¹¹⁹ Theatre-goers received the same message. The prologue to Mrs Centlivre's play *The Busie Body* (dedicated to Somers, and first performed in May 1709) declared: 'on our own terms will flow the wish'd for peace'.¹²⁰ At the end of May Shaftesbury reflected this view: 'the excessive weakness of France would have forc'd her to comply with anything we could have asked'.¹²¹

Thus during the autumn of 1708, and the winter and spring of 1709, readers of periodicals and pamphlets were exposed to multiple narratives regarding the conduct of the war and the making of the peace. Appeals to emotion through regular celebrations of military victories and lionisation of British and foreign generals combined with narratives of French tyranny and untrustworthiness and with ideological appeals for the security of Protestantism and the Protestant succession; harder-headed analyses were directed to the objective of achieving a balance of power in Europe, most obviously through the securing of the entire Spanish monarchy for the Austrian claimant, and argued that France was weakened to the point that she was no longer able to fight. Narratives antithetical to the continuation of the war – such as that focussing on the unreliability of the Allies – were present, but relatively muted, and there was, at this point, limited discussion of the costs of the war in terms of money, commerce or casualties. An engaged reader might therefore have been in sympathy with the author of *Prince Eugene's Catechism* when he combined the central message of the

¹¹⁷ *Daily Courant*, 30 April 1709.

¹¹⁸ *Post Man*, 10 February 1708, 26 February 1709.

¹¹⁹ *Tatler*, 12 April 1709.

¹²⁰ S. Centlivre, *The Busie Body* (Edinburgh, 1768), x.

¹²¹ Shaftesbury to Furlly, 28 May 1709, Forster, *Original letters*, 254-256.

strength of the Allies' negotiating position with celebration of military success, references to tyranny, liberty and French perfidy, and to Louis' subjection by women: 'tis in the Queen's power to make him do just what she pleases; her generals have beaten his armies over and over ... and now brought the tyrant on his knees, to beg for that peace he so wilfully and basely broke, so that this great monarch who boasted not so long ago, to give laws to all Europe is at last humbled by a woman'.¹²²

Discourse, the ministry and Parliament

This comprehensive picture of the narratives which characterised public discourse concerning the continuation of the war, and the making of peace, leads to further questions: who were the protagonists driving those narratives, and to what end? The ministry did not have a monopoly in influencing discourse, but its sensitivity to it became manifest, both in the steps which it took to intervene directly, and indirectly through the exploitation of Parliament as a forum for, and generator of, discourse.

While it is a commonplace that Godolphin placed little value on propaganda, the ministry was undoubtedly concerned with public discourse, and with managing perceptions overseas. Marlborough for one was conscious of press reporting. In December 1708 he complained about a report in the *Gazette*; his sensitivity is indicated by the fact that his objection was probably to a relatively benign statement that after the army had advanced on the French, 'notwithstanding all the diligence we made, we could only come up to attack their rearguard'.¹²³ In relaying new Dutch demands in April 1709 on the extent of the barrier to be established between them and France, Marlborough expressed concern at the public reaction to the demands once they became known.¹²⁴ Later that month he wrote to the Dutch Grand Pensionary, Anthonie Heinsius, that he feared the Preliminaries (as they then stood) would be thought by many to be insufficient, in failing to provide for the

¹²² *Prince Eugene's Catechism*, 6.

¹²³ Boyle to Marlborough, 14 December 1708, BL Add. ms 61128, f.209; *Gazette*, 29 November 1708.

¹²⁴ Marlborough to Boyle, 19 April 1709 NS, Sir G. Murray (ed.), *The Letters and Dispatches of John Churchill, First Duke of Marlborough, from 1702 to 1712* (London, 1845), vol. 4, 481-482.

restoration of Newfoundland and Hudson's Bay or for a new treaty of commerce with France.¹²⁵

Godolphin was also concerned with public opinion. In October 1708 he wrote to Marlborough that he was sure that if he were back in the country within 48 hours: 'all might yett goe well. I mean as to the publick'.¹²⁶ In November he informed Marlborough of rumours that a work critical of the Duke was being written in the States, encouraging him to ask the Dutch to have the author watched, and to seize his books and papers.¹²⁷ Later, in May 1709, he wrote: 'I hear people are very much upon the watch to find fault with the management of this treaty...'; and 'what the French Protestants may expect from a treaty of peace is much talked of here'.¹²⁸ He demonstrated his attention to public opinion once again immediately after the negotiations had failed, reporting to Marlborough that the view that they had been right to break off the talks represented 'the true thoughts of our people here'.¹²⁹

There was also a foreign element to the management of opinion and the press, including through overseas participation in the domestic print debate. Copies of French newspapers and letters were circulating in Britain, and the British papers reprinted reports from them. In July 1708 the *Daily Courant* referred to the Parisian press and commented that: "'tis visible the writers of the *Paris Gazette* and *Mercure*, have their eyes very much on England when they are working up their relations of the occurrences of the war, and calculate them for the friends here of absolute monarchy'.¹³⁰ Defoe encouraged Godolphin to crack down on foreign news reports, complaining of the impact of the London papers printing translations of 'the blusters and form'd storys' contained in the *Paris Gazette* and other French periodicals.¹³¹

Some foreign interventions were more direct, with diplomats pressing ministers to curb reporting of which they disapproved. In July 1708 the

¹²⁵ Marlborough to Heinsius, 29 April 1709 NS, B. van't Hoff (ed.), *Correspondence 1701-1711 of John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough and Anthonie Heinsius, Grand Pensionary of Holland* (The Hague, 1951), 434.

¹²⁶ Godolphin to Marlborough, 2 October 1708, Snyder, 1123-1124.

¹²⁷ Godolphin to Marlborough, 30 November 1708, Snyder, 1163-1165.

¹²⁸ Godolphin to Marlborough, 19 and 20 May, and 27 May 1709, Snyder, 1260, 1264-1265.

¹²⁹ Godolphin to Marlborough, 10 July 1709, Snyder, 1307-8.

¹³⁰ *Daily Courant*, 1, 19 July 1708.

¹³¹ Defoe to Godolphin, 3 August 1708, G. H. Healey (ed.), *The Letters of Daniel Defoe* (Oxford, 1955), 261-264.

Emperor's ambassador to London complained to the ministry that the papers, including the *Gazette*, continued to describe the Elector of Bavaria as such, despite his having been demoted from that position: 'this is ill taken at the Court of Vienna'.¹³² And when the *Daily Courant* published its proposals for peace in January 1709 the envoys of both Portugal and Tuscany were sufficiently outraged that they forced the ministry to take action against the paper.¹³³

Ministers were also mindful of the impact that domestic events and discourse could have abroad, on both Allies and enemies. In autumn 1708 Marlborough made the case for an augmentation of troops for the campaign the following year on the basis that this would encourage the Dutch to do the same, and 'their declaration would have a greater effect in France'.¹³⁴ A letter from Paris printed in the *Post Boy* suggested that reports of the augmentation had indeed had a beneficial effect: the French court was very uneasy that Parliament had resolved to carry on the war with vigour.¹³⁵ After the Bank of England's successful fundraising in early 1709 Sunderland celebrated the fact that the whole sum had been raised by noon, and hoped that the news would carry due weight in France elsewhere.¹³⁶ After Parliament had addressed the Queen on the peace in March 1709, the Earl of Halifax (a member of the Whig Junto alongside Wharton, Somers and Sunderland) sent a copy to the Elector of Hanover, an important ally as well as being second-in-line to the throne under the succession mandated by the Act of Settlement. Claiming credit for having proposed the address in the Lords, Halifax expressed confidence that Britain would not accept peace until France had been humbled, and obliged to submit to terms which rendered the Protestant succession 'certain and permanent'.¹³⁷ For the *Observer* the address was 'the most effectual way ... to prevent the designs of the French court, to wheedle any of the Allies into a separate and dishonourable peace'.¹³⁸ Such

¹³² Boyle to Marlborough, 13 July 1708, BL Add. ms 61128, f.82.

¹³³ *Daily Courant*, 15, 19 January 1709.

¹³⁴ Marlborough to Godolphin, 16 November 1708 NS, Snyder, 1145-7.

¹³⁵ *Post Boy*, 23 December 1708.

¹³⁶ Sunderland to Marlborough, 22 February 1709, BL Add. ms 61651, f.152.

¹³⁷ Halifax to Elector of Hanover, 4 March 1709, J. Macpherson (ed.), *Original Papers; Containing the Secret History of Great Britain, from the Restoration to the Accession of the House of Hannover* (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1775), 138.

¹³⁸ *Observer*, 5 March 1709.

effects were not, however, guaranteed. Marlborough described a conversation with Torcy (Louis XIV's foreign minister) in May 1709 in which he told him that by reading the Treaty of the Grand Alliance, and by attending to what had lately occurred in England, he would understand that Britain would insist on the entire monarchy of Spain; Torcy wrote in his memoirs that it was not the first time he had heard a frivolous objection based on an address of the English Parliament, which everyone knew was not law.¹³⁹

Given ministerial sensitivity to public opinion, it was natural that ministers should seek to influence that opinion, reinforcing narratives favourable to their policy of vigorous prosecution of the war, and standing firm on the terms of any peace. This could first be done by repeated emphasis on military victories. The instructions given by Sunderland in November 1708 were typical: he recommended the Lord Mayor of London to organise 'publick rejoycings' for the outcome of the year's Flanders campaign, while also mandating a gun salute.¹⁴⁰

Celebration of military success found its clearest expression through the ordained days of thanksgiving – for the victory at Oudenarde in August 1708, and for the success of the 1708 campaign in February 1709. Alongside processions, fireworks and illuminations, these gave the ministry the opportunity to employ the pulpit to preach its message, with sermons to the Queen, the Lords and the Commons commonly being printed to ensure a wider audience. While such sermons were unlikely to have been written under direction, it is reasonable to assume that they reflected the views of the patrons of those who preached them, and of those who authorised their publication, and they could serve to reinforce key narratives of public discourse. Preaching at St Margaret's Westminster in August 1708, the Reverend Knaggs celebrated Marlborough's heroism, described the tyranny of 'that great Pharoah, the French King', and warned of the danger to Protestantism, by analogy to the reign of Queen Mary: 'your religion ... taken

¹³⁹ Marlborough and Townshend to Boyle, 19 May 1709 NS, BL Add. ms 36795, ff.1-3; J. B. Colbert, Marquis de Torcy, *Memoirs of the Marquis of Torcy ... Containing the History of the Negotiations from the Treaty of Rijswijk to the Peace of Utrecht* (London, 1757), vol. I, 288.

¹⁴⁰ Sunderland to the Lord Mayor, 29 November 1708, SP44/106/445.

from you, your government over-turned, your churches turned into mass houses'.¹⁴¹

Sermons preached on the day of thanksgiving in February similarly reflected themes already described. The Reverend Pead, chaplain to the Whig Duke of Newcastle, having taken as his text 'Let them be taken in the Devices they have imagin'd', described the faithlessness of Louis XIV.¹⁴² On the same day, preaching to the Lords, Bishop Trimnell summarised the cause for which the country was fighting: 'the defence of our Sovereign, against a foreign pretender to the Crown; the defence of our liberties against arbitrary and unlimited power; and the defence of our religion against a gross and cruel superstition'.¹⁴³ Preaching to the Commons Francis Hare, Marlborough's chaplain, reflected another prominent theme of early 1709: the Allies' military successes had plainly revealed the weakness of the enemy.¹⁴⁴ Printed by order of the Commons, this sermon went through at least three editions. Prayers ordained for these occasions could also reinforce desired narratives: that for February 1709 lauded the successes of the last campaign, acknowledged the role of Marlborough, and accused the enemy of treachery and an insatiable desire for dominion and greatness.¹⁴⁵

These public events were complemented by Parliamentary addresses. While the message to be drawn from the December 1708 address congratulating Webb on the victory at Wijnendale could be seen as ambiguous, there was no such ambiguity in the address approved later that month congratulating the Queen on the reduction of Ghent, and 'the many wonderful successes, with which God has blessed the arms of your Majesty and the Allies'. Marlborough was personally associated with the victories, and the address reinforced the narrative of French weakness: 'we have reason to hope the enemy ... will soon find themselves under an absolute necessity of

¹⁴¹ T. Knaggs, *A Sermon Preach'd at St. Margaret's Westminster, August the 19th. 1708* (London, 1708).

¹⁴² D. Pead, *Parturiunt Montes, &c. or, Lewis and Clement Taken in their own Snare* (London, 1709).

¹⁴³ C. Trimnell, *A Sermon Preach'd before the House of Lords, at the Abbey-Church in Westminster, on Thursday, Feb. 17. 1708*, (London, 1709).

¹⁴⁴ F. Hare, *A Sermon Preach'd before the Honourable House of Commons, at the Church of St. Margaret Westminster, on Thursday, Feb. 17. 1708/9* (London, 1709).

¹⁴⁵ *A Form of Prayer and Thanksgiving, to be Used on Thursday the Seventeenth day of February next* (London, 1709).

submitting to a safe and honourable peace'.¹⁴⁶ These addresses were printed, and thus formed part of public discourse, and ministerial speeches to Parliament could be used to similar effect. Speaking for the Queen at the opening of Parliament in November 1708, Lord Chancellor Cowper called for a reduction in 'the dangerous power of France', before deploying other elements of current narratives, including those advocating liberty, protection of the Protestant interest, and the avoidance of internal dissent. Cowper drew a connection between military success and pursuing rigorous peace terms: the Queen found it inconceivable that her Parliament could think of losing the great advantages the Allies had gained by submitting to an insecure peace.¹⁴⁷

Legislation, which was printed as a matter of course, also contributed to narratives favourable to the continued prosecution of the war: the recitals to the Mutiny Act referred to the importance of maintaining the armed forces in order to protect the Protestant religion and the liberties of Europe; the Excise Act to the establishment of the balance of Europe through a safe and lasting peace; and the Recruitment Act to the objective of bringing the war to a 'speedy and happy conclusion'.¹⁴⁸ Each reinforced the theme adopted by Cowper at the beginning of the session – that the country should be in a position vigorously to pursue the war in order to secure a favourable peace.

Parliament also participated in public discourse concerning the peace through addresses on the terms on which it might be made, often at the instigation of the ministry or of its supporters; again these addresses were printed, and so were in the public domain. The principal address relating to the negotiations at The Hague was that of March 1709, made jointly by the Lords and Commons. Writing to one of Britain's diplomats in The Hague at the beginning of the month Boyle thanked him for the information which he had provided (presumably on the latest French peace overtures), and commented that the Queen had authorised Sunderland to inform the Lords, and Boyle himself the Commons, and that this had led to the address which

¹⁴⁶ *Annals*, vol. 7, 274; Chandler, vol. 4, 107.

¹⁴⁷ Printed in the *Gazette*, 22 November 1708.

¹⁴⁸ *Statutes*, vol. 9, 40, 47 and 51.

had been passed.¹⁴⁹ While Halifax claimed to have been the proposer in the Lords, Somers led the committee which undertook the drafting, and Boyle was later responsible for adding a reference to the demolition of Dunkirk when the address came to Commons.¹⁵⁰ Shaftesbury suspected that a 'friend' in the ministry (possibly Somers) had pleaded public opinion to justify the addition of the reference to Dunkirk: 'I ... am rather inclin'd to think he had for many reasons ... contriv'd that the proposal should seem to have its rise from a popular heat; rather than from the Cabinet Council, and as a deliberate thought'.¹⁵¹ If so, ministers were seeking to use public opinion (which they had themselves sought to influence) to justify the policies they wished to pursue.

The address, which was published separately, began by reciting familiar themes - the blood and treasure so far invested in the war, and the objective of 'securing the liberties of Europe' – before calling for peace to be made in concert with the Allies to ensure Europe's security and curb the power of France (an implicit reference to the balance of power).¹⁵² More specifically, Louis was to recognise the Protestant succession and the Allies were to guarantee it, the Pretender was to be expelled from France, and the fortifications at Dunkirk (from which privateers threatened British shipping) were to be demolished. Newfoundland, Hudson's Bay and wider commercial interests were not mentioned, nor was there any reference to the protection of European Protestants. These omissions were understandable in the context of a relatively short document, but the address also failed to call for 'Spain entire', a point not lost on either informed readers or the press.¹⁵³ The *Observer* believed this was immaterial: Parliament had previously made it clear that the entirety of Spain should be secured for Austria (as indeed it had,

¹⁴⁹ Boyle to J. Dayrolle, 5 March 1709, BL Add. ms 15866, f.160.

¹⁵⁰ Chandler, vol. 4, 123-124; Cobbett, vol. 6, 788.

¹⁵¹ Shaftesbury to Molesworth, 7 March 1709, J. Toland (ed.), *The Letters of Lord Shaftesbury to Molesworth* (London, 1721), 35.

¹⁵² *The Humble Address of the ... Lords ... and Commons, ... Presented to Her Majesty on Thursday the Third Day of March, 1708*, (London, 1709).

¹⁵³ Strafford to Cadogan, 9 April 1709 NS, BL Add. ms 22196, ff.206-207.

in the Lords' address of November 1708 and in the Houses' joint address of December 1707), and the point did not need repeating.¹⁵⁴

The ministry therefore participated in public discourse concerning the war and the peace through victory celebrations, sermons, speeches in Parliament, and the procuring of Parliamentary addresses. Control of the *London Gazette* also provided access to a thrice-weekly outlet in print allowing the ministry, for example, to ensure publicity for loyal addresses congratulating the Queen on the army's latest victory.¹⁵⁵ Interestingly, the *Gazette* did not refer to the prospect of peace until the beginning of April 1709, suggesting that the ministry may have been trying to manage expectations.¹⁵⁶ Two weeks later, however, it was enthusiastically supporting the narrative of French weakness: 'All our letters from France confirm the general misery of the people, by reason of the scarcity of corn'.¹⁵⁷ Once the negotiations had failed the ministry sought to use the *Gazette* to place a positive spin on the outcome: Horace Walpole wrote to under-Secretary of State George Tilson assuring him that 'the paragraph in the *Gazette* relating to our negotiations here is very well, which I am sure must be owing to the share you had ... in it'.¹⁵⁸

Evidence of ministerial influence on other periodicals is harder to identify; the Whig Richard Steele, editor the *Gazette*, might have accepted some such influence over his newly-launched *Tatler*, but there is no evidence other than the fact that the *Tatler* tended to take a firm line in relation to the peace. Addison (also a Whig) was in office (as Wharton's secretary), and one might draw similar inferences as to his work (for example, *The Present State of the War*). More intriguing (in the light of the difficulties described below) is the possibility that the ministry placed material in the *Daily Courant*. In June 1709 Walpole wrote again to Tilson: 'I sent you lately a very indifferent paper in answer to what the French King writ to the Governors of the Provinces [defending his conduct of the negotiations], but I hope the enclosed will make

¹⁵⁴ *Observer*, 5 March 1709; *The Humble Address of the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament Assembled, Presented to Her Majesty on Saturday the Twentieth day of November, 1708* (London, 1708); *HCJ*, vol. 15, 481-2.

¹⁵⁵ E.g. *Gazette*, 2 August 1708.

¹⁵⁶ *Gazette*, 4 April 1709.

¹⁵⁷ *Gazette*, 14 April 1709.

¹⁵⁸ H. Walpole to G. Tilson, 21 June 1709 NS, SP84/233 ff.114-115.

amends'.¹⁵⁹ These pieces would not have been suitable for the *Gazette*, and it is likely that they were the letters from Holland which appeared in the *Courant* on 17 and 25 June.¹⁶⁰ What is clear is that at this stage proponents of peace lacked the journalistic firepower that would later be provided by the *Examiner*, among others; in particular the *Post Boy*, which under Abel Roper would become the attack-dog of the Harley regime, was for now in more moderate hands.¹⁶¹

Contemporary commentators certainly believed the ministry were engaging in news management. The MP Anthony Henley was sceptical of the *Gazette*, writing to Jonathan Swift during the siege of Lille: 'wee have had a tedious expectation of the success of the siege of Lisle the country people begin to think there is no such thing and say the newspapers talk of it to make people bear paying taxes a year longer; I dont know how Steel will gett off of it, his veracity is att stake in Hantshire'.¹⁶² Such concerns lay in part behind Defoe's exhortation to Godolphin to discourage the practice of reprinting French news reports, fearing that it might encourage the belief that the British government were also acting 'according to the French mode', causing fake news to be printed.¹⁶³

In addition to intervening proactively, the ministry also took steps (albeit limited) to control the press through repression. In March 1709 a warrant was issued for the arrest of those involved in publishing the *Rehearsal*, which closed almost immediately. No grounds were specified, but in one of its last issues the *Rehearsal* had printed an attack on the conduct of the war.¹⁶⁴ More interesting is the case of Samuel Buckley of the *Daily Courant*, who provoked the Portuguese and Tuscan ambassadors with his musings on possible peace terms in January 1709: his arrest was ordered, and he was summoned before the Council. In the event he was not called into the meeting, instead cooling his heels outside (intimidating enough in itself) until

¹⁵⁹ Walpole to Tilson, 25 June 1709 NS, SP84/233 ff.124-125.

¹⁶⁰ *Daily Courant*, 17, 25 June 1709.

¹⁶¹ G. C. Gibbs, 'Boyer, Abel (1667?–1729)', *ODNB* [<https://doi-org.lonlib.idm.oclc.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/3122>, accessed 22 October 2021].

¹⁶² A. Henley to J. Swift, 16 September 1709, D. Woolley (ed.), *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift* (Oxford, 1999 to c. 2014), vol. 1, 209.

¹⁶³ Defoe to Godolphin, 3 August 1708, Healey, *Letters*, 261-264.

¹⁶⁴ W. Borrett to Tilson, 16 November 1708, SP34/10/83; warrant, 25 March 1709, SP44/78/49; G. Strachan to Sunderland, 31 March 1709, BL Add. ms 61608, f.126; *Rehearsal*, 12 March 1709.

dismissed by an under-secretary. Two days later the *Courant* printed a fulsome apology.¹⁶⁵ While placating the ambassadors, the action also served the ministry's objective of supporting the policy of 'Spain entire' – the *Courant's* suggested peace terms had involved a complex partition of the Spanish monarchy.

Reflecting discourse in policy

The ministry thus demonstrated its sensitivity to discourse, and the strands of opinion to which it contributed and reflected, by participating both proactively and reactively, shaping or reinforcing the prevailing narratives. Further evidence of that sensitivity can be seen in policy formation – the instructions given to the negotiators, and the final outcome – and in the ways in which ministerial interventions in discourse validated the policy choices made.

By spring 1709 ministers had come to believe that the condition of France was such that Britain could dictate the peace terms, a belief reflecting one of the principal themes of contemporary discourse. As Sunderland wrote in early May: 'the extreme misery in [France], ... must make them comply with whatever the Allies think reasonable, provided they do but stand firm'.¹⁶⁶ This belief was shared by senior generals, such as the Earl of Galway (who was fighting in the peninsula), who wrote to Marlborough of the 1708 campaign that 'tis now clear plain that France will be reduc'd by the war in Flanders...'¹⁶⁷

Ministerial confidence was further demonstrated in mid-May by Sunderland's initiative to seek advice from the Council of Trade on the terms of a prospective commercial treaty.¹⁶⁸ On 24 May Sunderland informed Galway that Torcy had taken the Preliminaries to Paris for Louis' approval: 'considering the great necessities the King of France and his people are under, we do not much doubt of his compliance'.¹⁶⁹ At his levée on that day Godolphin confidently declared that the French had agreed to all the

¹⁶⁵ Luttrell, *Brief Relation*, vol. 6, 396; *Daily Courant*, 19 January 1709.

¹⁶⁶ Sunderland to Cadogan, 3 May 1709, BL Add. ms 61651, f.162.

¹⁶⁷ Galway to Marlborough, 18 January 1709 NS, BL Add. ms 61156, f.97.

¹⁶⁸ Sunderland to the Council of Trade, 16 May 1709, HL/PO/CO/1/7 f.70. See also his letter to Marlborough of 17 May 1709, BL Add. ms 61127, f.50.

¹⁶⁹ Sunderland to Galway, 24 May 1709, BL Add. ms 61651, f.167. Also his letter to Marlborough of the same date, BL Add. ms 61127, f.54.

conditions, although the person who reported the comment noted that the peace would not be announced officially until Louis had signed.¹⁷⁰ Ministerial confidence is epitomised by the masterful understatement of Sunderland's response when told that he had refused to do so: 'wee have an account of the King of France refusing the preliminary treaty, which is a little surprizing'.¹⁷¹

Such confidence led to a firm line being taken in the negotiations, and this tendency was increased by ministerial views on the untrustworthiness of the French. These not only reflected diplomatic reports – as early as February James Dayrolle had written from The Hague that he feared the French were playing 'their usual tricks to create jealousies amongst us' - but also echoed another prominent narrative in public discourse.¹⁷² On receiving the latest offer of terms in early April Sunderland concluded that the French were acting in bad faith: they seemed to be laughing at the Allies.¹⁷³ Boyle's view in the immediate aftermath of the failure of the talks suggests this view was endemic: 'it seems very plain that the French King does not intend to give up the whole of the Spanish monarchy, and that is the bottom of almost all the chicanes that have been made upon other points'.¹⁷⁴

Ministerial confidence in the weakness of France, which was fundamental to Britain's negotiating strategy, constituted 'group think' in today's terms. In the later stages Cowper noted that in discussing the negotiations all the Council, including Godolphin and Somers, 'did ever seem confident of a peace'. Cowper questioned this orthodoxy, and for his pains was 'chid by [Godolphin] (never so much as in any other case)'. Yet he concluded: 'nothing, but seeing so many great men believe it, could ever incline me to think France reduced so low, to accept such conditions'.¹⁷⁵ Presumably due in part to intelligence reports, this confidence would have owed much to the environment in which ministers were operating (and to which they had themselves contributed), dominated as it was by narratives of French weakness and Allied military

¹⁷⁰ P. Wentworth to Raby, 24 May 1709, Cartwright, 87-88.

¹⁷¹ Sunderland to Cadogan, 31 May 1709, BL Add. ms 61651, f.171.

¹⁷² Dayrolle to Boyle, 8 March 1709 NS, BL Add. ms 15876, f.228.

¹⁷³ Sunderland to Marlborough, 5 April 1709, BL Add. ms 61127, f.44.

¹⁷⁴ Boyle to Townshend, 3 June 1709, Bodl. Eng. Hist. d.147, ff.21-22.

¹⁷⁵ E. C. Hawtrey (ed.), *The Private Diary of William, First Earl Cowper, Lord Chancellor of England* (Eton: E. Williams, 1833), 40-41.

prowess. As one pamphleteer put it in summer 1709: 'politicians suffer the under-spurs of the news-writers, to magnify the sad condition of France, to give our people heart to hold on the war 'till we can get an honourable peace'.¹⁷⁶

This confidence, and other narratives already identified, were reflected in the instructions given to the negotiators, which also demonstrated the desire of the ministry to pray in aid the support of public opinion, particularly to validate the most critical element of its policy. The initial instructions given to Marlborough in March expressed the need to secure Spain entire, citing the sentiments of the people and those 'so often expressed in the addresses of Parliament', and also emphasised the need to act alongside the States.¹⁷⁷ The instructions to Marlborough and Townshend two months later reflected the impact of the campaign which had been mounted in the Protestant interest, enclosing a memorial in favour of the French Protestants which had been submitted to the government. The Queen did not doubt the negotiators' zeal on the French Protestants' behalf, and instructed them to use their utmost endeavours to restore their religious and civil rights.¹⁷⁸ Whether the campaign had a significant effect on the approach of the ministry (or whether it would have been minded to seek the terms it did in any event), ministers were clearly sympathetic: two petitions on behalf of the foreign Protestants had been printed in the *Gazette*.¹⁷⁹

Echoes of other elements of domestic discourse can also be found in the May instructions: no peace would be acceptable unless both Hudson's Bay and Newfoundland were restored to Britain; the barrier sought by the States was explicitly linked to the protection of the Protestant succession, on the basis that each Ally would guarantee the interests of the other; and the Pretender was to be expelled from France. Though the demolition of Dunkirk's fortifications was not mentioned, the importance attached to it was

¹⁷⁶ C. Gildon, *The Golden Spy* (London, 1709), probably published in early July 1709.

¹⁷⁷ Instructions to Marlborough, March 1709, W. Coxe (ed.), *Memoirs of the Duke of Marlborough: with his Original Correspondence Collected from the Family Records at Blenheim, and other Authentic Sources* (London: Bohn, 1847-1848), vol. 2, 394-395.

¹⁷⁸ Instructions to Marlborough and Townshend, May 1709, L. G. W. Legg (ed.), *British Diplomatic Instructions, 1689-1789, vol. 2, France, 1689-1721* (London, 1925), 9-11

¹⁷⁹ *Gazette*, 23 December 1708, 24 January 1709; see also Somers to Godolphin, 10 May 1709, Bodl., Mss. Add. A.191, ff.123-124.

clear from a subsequent letter of Boyle's.¹⁸⁰ Read together, the instructions issued in March and May 1709 demonstrated a high degree of correlation with the Parliamentary addresses of the session just ended. The ministry therefore sought (implicitly, and in part explicitly) to justify its instructions by reference to public opinion, as expressed by Parliament through addresses the making of which it had procured and (at least in the case of the March 1709 address) the drafting of which it had heavily influenced.

It is unsurprising, therefore, that the final form of the Preliminaries reflected the preoccupations of Britain's domestic political discourse to a substantial degree. The future of the Spanish monarchy was addressed in six of the forty articles. Louis was to recognise Archduke Charles as King, and no part of Spain was ever to be united with France. Philip was to vacate Spain within the two months provided for the cessation of arms, and if he did not Louis was to assist in forcing him to do so; failure to comply within the two months would lead to a resumption of hostilities (article 37). These were key elements in securing the balance, and containing France, but other articles were to the same purpose. Articles 8 to 11 provided for a barrier for the Empire, and article 22 a barrier for the Dutch. The latter could be regarded as part of the security for the Protestant succession, which was specifically addressed in articles 14 (Louis' recognition of the Queen), 15 (his acknowledgement of the succession) and 18 (the expulsion of the Pretender from France). Commercial concerns were recognised in the provisions for the demolition of Dunkirk (article 17), for the return of Newfoundland (article 16), and for the negotiation of a commercial treaty with France (article 19); Hudson's Bay, however, was not addressed. As to confessional issues, article 13 provided for the repeal of article 4 of the treaty of Rijswijk, and for freedom of conscience to be addressed in the final treaty, although no reference was made to the persecution of the French Protestants.¹⁸¹

Conclusion

British political discourse concerning the conduct of war, and the making of the peace, in the period leading to the failure of the peace negotiations at

¹⁸⁰ Legg (ed.), *British Diplomatic Instructions*, 9-11, 14.

¹⁸¹ Torcy, *Memoirs*, vol. I, 354-376.

The Hague in late spring 1709 employed narratives based on ideology, and those which approached the question of the peace from a realist perspective, and appealed both to reason and emotion. These narratives, contrary to Müllenbrock's assertion, exhibited almost all of the principal strands which were to characterise discourse throughout the period leading to the finalisation of the peace at Utrecht, and into its immediate aftermath.

It is impractical, and arguably inappropriate, to try to establish whether those narratives led the ministry in terms of driving policy, or whether the ministry led discourse in seeking to articulate and justify policy – both were happening simultaneously. Discourse was a continuing phenomenon in which the ministry, reflecting its concern with wider opinion, participated through organising celebrations of military victories, procuring and disseminating Parliamentary addresses and sermons, placing press articles and exercising coercion. In doing so it contributed to, reinforced or sought to suppress narratives within the prevailing discourse.

This discourse constituted the environment in which ministers and diplomats made and implemented policy around the negotiations, as well as providing a resource on which the ministry could draw in order to validate that policy. The less material consequences of this can be detected in the confessional and commercial provisions of the Preliminaries, as well as those relating to the succession. But discourse played its most significant role in the provisions on which the Preliminaries failed – those relating to the monarchy of Spain. Given the prevailing domestic discourse, British insistence on these provisions was beyond debate. On the one hand France was a state facing near catastrophic economic, financial and military collapse, whose condition was exemplified by the moral and physical degeneration of its monarch. On the other, securing the entire monarchy of Spain for the Austrian claimant represented the apotheosis of the balance of power strategy instigated by William III, and was vital not only to preserve the peace of Europe, but to secure Britain's succession and its confessional and commercial interests.

Trevelyan saw the failure of the ministry to make peace in the early summer of 1709 as a serious error: the Preliminaries were 'preposterous', and article

37 'clumsy and barbarous'.¹⁸² He was wrong: it was not an error, but an inevitability. In the prevailing conditions of political discourse at home (to which they had themselves contributed, and on which they drew to justify the policy which they pursued) ministers had no alternative but to pursue peace on substantially the terms of the Preliminaries, and to face the consequences when peace on those terms proved to be unobtainable.

¹⁸² G. M. Trevelyan, *England under Queen Anne* (London and New York, 1930-1934), vol. 2, 400-401.

2 Regime change: the peace and the Tory ascendancy of 1710

Introduction

In August 1709 Marlborough followed the taking of Tournai with victory at Malplaquet - the war's last major engagement. The battle was hard fought; casualties, especially among the Dutch, were high, and significantly more than those of the French.¹ The Allies' subsequent capture of Mons marked the end of the year's campaign, and when fighting recommenced in 1710 there were further sieges, but no battles, in Flanders; in Spain, however, Allied armies led by General James Stanhope (a prominent Whig) and by the Imperial General Starhemberg achieved significant victories at Almenara and Saragossa.

This chapter demonstrates how, as the fighting dragged on, the contention over the war, and how to bring it to an end, intensified. This contention was fuelled, in ways not commonly addressed in the historiography, by the controversy surrounding the trial for sedition of the high-church cleric Dr Henry Sacheverell. Positions hardened, and ministerial interventions in discourse increased. At stake was not only the future of the conflict, but also political power: the twelve months following Malplaquet saw both the appointment of a new, Tory-dominated ministry focussed on achieving peace, and a substantial Tory election victory.

This political contention ran alongside continued campaigning, and renewed efforts to make peace. Negotiations to resolve the impasse over article 37 began at Geertruidenberg in March, but the French remained unwilling to concede 'Spain entire'. Instead, they proposed two alternatives: that the Spanish monarchy be partitioned, with Philip of Anjou surrendering Spain and its colonies in return for some combination of Naples, Sicily, Sardinia and parts of Tuscany; or, that the Allies make a separate peace with France and be left to conquer Spain, supported by a cash subsidy from Louis. Neither was acceptable, and the talks broke down in July.

¹ Trevelyan, *England under Queen Anne*, vol. 3, 18-19.

Just ten weeks after Malplaquet, and during the intermission in the peace talks, Dr Sacheverell preached to the Corporation of London at St Paul's on the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. Taking his text from Corinthians - 'In perils among false brethren' – he described the dangers posed by 'false brethren' in the Church, in the State and in private life; rejecting the Whig doctrine of justified resistance to the sovereign, he questioned the legitimacy of the 1689 revolution settlement, criticised toleration of Protestant non-conformism, and implicitly accused Godolphin and other ministers of peculation.² The ministry impeached the Doctor for sedition and his trial before the House of Lords in early 1710 became the political and social event of the winter, leading to riots in London.³ Although convicted, the Doctor received only a modest sentence: a three-year ban on preaching. For his partisans, this was a vindication, and he marked it with a nationwide tour during which he was greeted by celebrating crowds.

Controversy over the sermon and the trial became the catalyst for events which led to the fall of Godolphin's mainly Whig ministry, and the election of a Tory-dominated House of Commons. In April 1710, encouraged by Harley, the Queen dismissed her Lord Chamberlain, the Earl of Kent, and appointed instead the Duke of Shrewsbury, a moderate Whig who shared Harley's desire for peace. More significant were the replacement of Sunderland as Secretary of State by the Tory Earl of Dartmouth in June, and the dismissal of Godolphin in August; the Treasury was put into commission, with Harley as Chancellor of the Exchequer and the commission's principal member. Tory influence in the ministry was consolidated when Henry St John took Boyle's place as the second, but in practice principal, Secretary of State in September; ministers had by then already contacted the French with a view to commencing peace negotiations, negotiations the toxicity of whose existence and content required that they be kept a closely-guarded secret.⁴

² H. Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren in Church and State, Set Forth in a Sermon Preached before the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens of London ... on the 5th of November 1709* (London, 1709).

³ G.S. Holmes, *The Trial of Dr Sacheverell* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1973), 75.

⁴ G. M. Trevelyan, 'The 'Jersey' Period of the Negotiations Leading to the Peace of Utrecht', *English Historical Review* 49 (1934), 100-105.

The final step was the election. It appears that Harley had initially hoped to avoid a dissolution of Parliament, and to form a ministry balanced between the two parties.⁵ However, following the failure of the talks at Geertruidenberg, and Godolphin's dismissal, the pressure became too great. Parliament was dissolved in September, and the consequent election overturned the previous Whig majority in favour of a Tory majority of some 160 members.⁶ By the first anniversary of the Doctor's sermon the government was in the hands of a Tory-dominated ministry, led by Harley, which was dedicated to securing peace, which could rely on the support of the House of Commons in doing so, and which was already engaged in talks to that end.

The Sacheverell controversy, and the print literature which it generated, have commonly been seen as the main drivers of the ministerial changes of 1710 and the subsequent Tory election victory, enabling the Tories to exploit their traditional position as the defenders of the established church.⁷ Analysing the 1710 election, Speck focussed on Sacheverell, seeing the question of the peace, and related arguments over commerce, as primarily relevant to the election of 1713; for Holmes, 'the cause [Sacheverell] came to personify formed the platform for one of the most resounding electoral triumphs in British history'.⁸ In her study, Ransome identified Sacheverell, the war, and the creation of the new ministry as the issues which influenced the election's outcome, but concluded that the first was the most important.⁹

Coombs propounded an alternative view: issues concerning the war and the peace were the major factor in the political changes of 1710. While acknowledging Ransome's conclusion that the amount of election literature dedicated to the issues surrounding the Doctor's trial greatly exceeded that relating to the war, he argued that the conduct and prolongation of the war played a major part in the political crisis, and that the election result reflected

⁵ G. S. Holmes, 'Robert Harley and the Ministerial Revolution of 1710' (W.A. Speck (ed.)), *Parliamentary History* 29.3 (2010), 275, 287.

⁶ D. W. Hayton, 'Introductory Survey', *House of Commons 1690-1715* (D. W. Hayton, E. Cruickshanks, and S. Handley (ed.)) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), vol. I, 230.

⁷ E.g. M. Knights, 'Introduction: the View from 1710', *Parliamentary History* 31 (2012), 1-15.

⁸ Speck, *Tory and Whig*, 84-85; Holmes, *Trial*, prologue. Also Hayton, 'Survey', 237.

⁹ M. E. Ransome, *The General Election of 1710* (Royal Holloway, University of London thesis, 1938), 202-203.

extreme war weariness.¹⁰ Richards took a more nuanced approach – while the issue of Sacheverell was paramount, concerns over the war could not be discounted, and in suggesting that war weariness exacerbated religious and political tensions, he hinted at a relationship between the two.¹¹

This chapter examines the narratives in British political discourse in the period leading to the ministerial changes of the summer of 1710, identifying those relating respectively to the war and the peace and to the Doctor and his impeachment, and demonstrating the inter-connections between them. Having assessed the public mood in the spring of 1710, drawing on the loyal addresses which followed the outcome of the trial, it then considers how, why, and with what effect those narratives were deployed in the contention in political discourse surrounding the change in the ministry and the subsequent election. The chapter demonstrates how increased ministerial activism in discourse contributed to the intensity of that contention – an intensity which drove the incoming ministers, notwithstanding their commitment to peace, to appropriate the war to their own political ends. Finally, it challenges the existing historiography's emphasis on the role of the constitutional issues raised by Sacheverell's trial in the political upheavals of 1710, arguing that to attempt to assess whether these issues, or those relating to the war and the peace, had a greater impact is to assume a false opposition.

Discourse – war and peace

In the discursive contention over the war, familiar narratives were brought into play, beginning with those of victory and heroism. As with Oudenarde and Lille, Godolphin's ministry exploited the captures of Tournai and Mons to bolster support for the war, ordaining public celebrations in the City; perhaps significantly, there appears to have been no official celebration for Malplaquet.¹² Nonetheless, on 22 November a day of thanksgiving for the

¹⁰ Coombs, *Conduct of the Dutch*, 187-188, 214, 233.

¹¹ Richards, *Party Propaganda*, 104, 109.

¹² Letters of Boyle and Sunderland, 20 July, 30 August and 13 October 1709, SP44/108 ff.120, 146, 156; M. Schaich, 'Standards and Colours: Representing the Military in Britain During the War of the Spanish Succession', *The War of the Spanish Succession: New Perspectives* (Pohlig and Schaich (ed.)), 261.

1709 campaign was marked by church services across the country, and fireworks and illuminations in London.¹³

The *Gazette* reported Malplaquet as a 'compleat victory' and, perhaps to forestall concerns over the level of casualties, claimed that the numbers of enemy losses and prisoners were growing daily. Within days it published the City of London's address to the Queen, congratulating her on a glorious victory, and referring to Marlborough's personal courage.¹⁴ It subsequently published or referred to some forty further such addresses (although this number was disappointing, compared even with the eighty-nine submitted after Oudenarde).¹⁵ The States followed suit, with a congratulatory letter to Marlborough (printed in the *Post Man*) expressing the hope that the valour of the Allied generals and their troops would lead the French to make a general peace.¹⁶ The *Daily Courant* echoed the sentiment: 'France is becoming more open to our arms and more in need of peace'.¹⁷

Opening Parliament, the Queen hailed the glories of the 1709 campaign, including the 'remarkable victory' at Malplaquet, before stressing the importance of supply for 1710 in order finally to achieve the reduction of France.¹⁸ This familiar theme – the celebration of victory combined with the idea that 'one last push' was required to end the war – was echoed in the Commons' address to the Queen; Boyle provided ministerial input as a member of the drafting committee. She was congratulated on the victory, with Marlborough being mentioned by name, and assured that sufficient supply would be voted to ensure a lasting peace for both her and her Allies.¹⁹

However, publication of two alternative versions of a letter supposedly written by Marshall Boufflers to Louis XIV after Malplaquet demonstrated that its portrayal as an unqualified success was contested. The first, a pamphlet, emulated reports from Paris reproduced in the London press. Boufflers claimed Allied losses were three times those of the French, and assured

¹³ De l'Hermitage to the States-General, 3 December 1709 NS, BL Add. ms 17677DDD, ff.325-326.

¹⁴ *Gazette*, 8, 10, 13 September 1709.

¹⁵ Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation*, 117; *Gazette*, passim.

¹⁶ *Post Man*, 17 September 1709.

¹⁷ *Daily Courant*, 16 November 1709.

¹⁸ Chandler, vol. 4, 135-136.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 136-137.

Louis that the 'ill-success' would not cost him an inch of ground; moreover, the Allies' increased respect for France's troops might make them more tractable in future peace talks.²⁰ A pastiche followed in Steele's *Tatler*. Boufflers informed Louis that: 'to your immortal honour, ..., your troops have lost another battle'. Once the fighting had concluded, 'the enemy march'd behind us with respect, and we ran away from 'em bold as lions' – the narrative of cowardice revisited.²¹

Doubts were also expressed in *A Letter to a Lord*, which questioned why a battle had been fought when the French had more men and a strong defensive position: 'it seems to me equally surprising why we fought, as to why we were not beaten'.²² Such criticisms naturally invited accusations of disloyalty. Defoe, attacking the Tory newswriter Dyer over his account, claimed that 'the Jacobite party among us endeavour continually to cry down our victories' – here, the narrative of treachery.²³

Ambivalence and conflict over the success of the campaign came to be reflected in the narratives concerning the conflict's 'heroes', and Marlborough in particular. Notwithstanding the Commons' and the States' praise, there was mounting concern over criticism of the Duke; preaching before the Queen at November's thanksgiving, Bishop Kennett implicitly identified Marlborough's Tory critics with the nine ungrateful lepers cured by Christ.²⁴ But the fragility of the Duke's standing in royal favour was demonstrated by the Queen's reply to the Commons' address of February 1710, proposing that he participate in the forthcoming peace negotiations. The Queen deleted from Godolphin's draft a reference to the Duke as God's chief instrument of her glory, and implied that he had been slow to obey instructions to join the talks which had already been given.²⁵ As Maynwaring wrote to the Duchess, 'this is but a dry answer'.²⁶

²⁰ *The Marshal de Bouffler's Authentick Letter to the French King* ([Dublin], [1709]).

²¹ *Tatler*, 6 October 1709.

²² HMC Downshire, vol. I, part 2, 879-880.

²³ *Review*, 24 September 1709.

²⁴ W. Kennett, *Glory to God, and Gratitude to Benefactors, a Sermon Preached before the Queen on Tuesday the 22nd of November 1709* (London, 1709), 9.

²⁵ J. A. Winn, *Queen Anne: Patroness of Arts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 510.

²⁶ Maynwaring to Duchess of Marlborough, 10-20 February 1710, W. Coxe (ed.), *Private Correspondence of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, Illustrative of the Court and Times of Queen Anne, 1702-1711* (London, 1838), 296-7.

Questions over Marlborough's reputation were linked to other concerns over the conduct of the war. *The Thanksgiving*, after referring to both peace and plenty (ironically, in the light of the past winter's food shortages), continued:

'Thank Marlborough's zeal that scorn'd the proffer'd treaty;
But thank Eugene that Frenchmen did not beat ye;
Thank your own selves, that you are tax'd and sham'd;
But thank th'Almighty, if you are not damn'd.'

Three themes were thus combined: Eugene was the true hero, not Marlborough; Marlborough had prolonged the war in his own interest; and in consequence the country would continue to be excessively taxed.²⁷ This last was to become a favoured Tory narrative: as St John's newly-founded *Examiner* put it the following August, it was the landed men whose taxes had carried on the war, but others had fattened on those taxes.²⁸

Alongside contention over military victories there was continuing discussion of the weakness of France (and, to a lesser extent, Spain), and thus of their ability to wage war. The press continued to describe the privations suffered by the French, with accounts in late summer 1709 of bread riots in Paris, and of families in Lyons being reduced to begging.²⁹ France's ongoing financial difficulties were also reported. In early December the *Daily Courant* printed a French edict on the re-issue of the currency, commenting: 'those that have so manifestly the longest purse as well as the sharpest sword, will in the end be masters of the terms of peace'.³⁰ Reports of desertions and looting among French troops, and of the lack of food and funds for the Spanish army, followed in early 1710.³¹ While there were reports of France's vigorous preparations for the next campaign, these could be qualified: the *Daily Courant* noted that these were being made, 'notwithstanding all the want and poverty of the kingdom'.³²

If the conduct of the war, and the ability of the combatants to fight on, continued to be the stuff of discourse, the same now also became true of the

²⁷ *The Thanksgiving* (London, 1711), F. H. Ellis (ed.), *Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1660-1714* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963-75), vol. 7, 374-375.

²⁸ *Examiner*, 24 August 1710.

²⁹ *Daily Courant*, 29 August 1709; *Post Boy*, 22 September 1709.

³⁰ *Daily Courant*, 5 December 1709.

³¹ *Daily Courant*, 22 February, 3 April 1710.

³² *Daily Courant*, 4 January 1710.

conduct of the peace. Contention swiftly followed the breakdown of the 1709 negotiations at The Hague. Within a week one newswriter was sharing with his readers a report from Paris that the French court regarded the Allies' terms as 'shameful'.³³ This was echoed in the letter which Louis wrote to his provincial governors justifying his refusal to make peace, which was printed in the *Post Boy*. Louis accused his enemies of unreasonable jealousy of the power of France. This had led them to make increasing demands, under cover of providing for minor Allies such as the Duke of Savoy; had Louis agreed his kingdom would have been left open to invasion. In particular, it was against humanity to require him to join the Allies in removing his own grandson from Spain; peace on the terms proposed would be an offence to the honour of France.³⁴ These allegations of unreasonableness were calculated to resonate with the narrative that ministers were seeking to prolong the war, and a number of refutations followed; these included a letter from The Hague printed in the *Daily Courant* in late June, probably at the request of the ministry.³⁵ It argued that the Allies' fears of French power were well founded, that it was right that the French should assist in evicting the Duke of Anjou, given that French troops released from elsewhere might otherwise contribute to his defence, and that it was appropriate to seek barriers against France for the Duke of Savoy and the other princes of the Empire.³⁶ The Allies' position, in short, was eminently reasonable.

The unreliability of the French – another familiar narrative - was also prominent in the contention over the failure of the talks: one letter from The Hague printed in the *Daily Courant* asserted that the French court, having to choose between demonstrating their uprightness, and revealing their corruption, had chosen to do the latter; another concluded that the world would be convinced that France had become incapable of sincerity.³⁷ The Queen and her ministers agreed – the French were acting in bad faith – and this was reflected in the Queen's speech to Parliament in November.³⁸

³³ Newsletter, 7 June 1709, Bodl. Mss. Film 298, LC3404.

³⁴ *Post Boy*, 14 June 1709. The Duke of Anjou's objections to the terms were printed in the *Daily Courant*, 1 September 1709.

³⁵ Chapter 1, p.73.

³⁶ *Daily Courant*, 25 June 1709.

³⁷ *Daily Courant*, 7 June 1709; *Post Man*, 4 June 1709.

³⁸ Boyle to Townshend, 6 December 1709, SP104/75 ff.74-76.

Accusing the French of seeking to spilt the Alliance through 'deceitful insinuations' of their desire for peace, the Queen again stressed the aim of attaining a 'safe and honourable' peace for all the Allies.³⁹ The Lords' and Commons' joint address of February 1710 took a similar line: through 'crafty and insinuating designs' the French were seeking to divide the Allies, and retard their preparations for war by holding out a false prospect of peace.⁴⁰

As with the narrative of French untrustworthiness, the cry of 'no peace without Spain' retained its potency. Defoe, writing after the failure of the 1709 talks, expressed doubts over the 'bitter terms' offered to France in the 1709 Preliminaries, but nonetheless argued that peace could not be made unless Spain were secured.⁴¹ The *Post Man* asserted that one last campaign would secure the 'great blessing' of a balance of power in which the Bourbons no longer had possession of Spain.⁴² Sermons and pamphlets took same line. On the day of thanksgiving for the 1709 campaign, one preacher declared the great object of the war to be removing Spain from 'the usurping power and strength of the House of Bourbon'.⁴³ And a pamphlet published at the end of the year, setting out prescriptions for a successful peace, stipulated first the restoration of Spain and its dependencies.⁴⁴

Once the Geertruidenberg talks had broken down, the contention recommenced; competing explanations immediately surfaced in the British press. The French plenipotentiaries opened with a letter to the Dutch Pensionary; Boyle perceived this as a direct appeal to the people of England and Holland - 'an insolence and indignity beyond example'.⁴⁵ Torcy instructed French diplomats to disperse the letter widely, in order that 'the truth' be known in Holland and elsewhere.⁴⁶ The purpose was to blame the Allies: peace had been denied by their 'injustice and obstinacy', which had been calculated to frustrate the negotiations. To require Louis to procure the surrender of Spain was unreasonable, it being no longer in his power, and

³⁹ Chandler, vol. 4, 135-136.

⁴⁰ Luttrell, *Brief Relation*, vol. 6, 546.

⁴¹ *Review*, 9 June 1709.

⁴² *Post Man*, 29 December 1709.

⁴³ S. Harris, *A Blow to France. Or, a Sermon Preach'd at the Meeting in Mill-Yard, in Good-Man's-Fields; Nov 22. 1709* (London, 1709).

⁴⁴ A. Justice, *Considerations on Peace and War* (London, 1709).

⁴⁵ Boyle to Townshend, 18 July 1710, Bodl. Eng. Hist. d.147, ff.211-212.

⁴⁶ Torcy, *Memoirs*, vol. II, 90.

France's alternative proposals had not been considered seriously. Louis would 'leave it to the judgment of all Europe, even to the judgment of the people of England and Holland', who was responsible for continuing 'so bloody a war'.⁴⁷ Once again, the French intervened in British political discourse in support of the narrative that the war was being prolonged to no legitimate purpose.

The Allies replied through a resolution of the States-General; the text, agreed by British diplomats in advance, was published in the *Daily Courant*.⁴⁸ The message was again that the French had never been sincere - the fault lay wholly with them. The Allies could not agree to anything other than the restitution of Spain - 'the firm and immoveable foundation of the negotiation' - yet the French had refused to provide adequate security for the performance of that term, and proposed unacceptable alternatives. The continuing effusions of blood were due to the obstinacy of the French, who could put an end to them 'by restoring what they have invaded contrary to the good faith of the most solemn treaties'.⁴⁹ This narrative of French bad faith was reinforced by a report in early August that Louis had forged a new defensive treaty with Spain; for the *Daily Courant*, it was plain that while the French were treating with the Allies on the basis of the restitution of Spain and the Indies, they were at the same time treating with Anjou on the basis of his retention of the entire monarchy.⁵⁰

If the French were not to be trusted, what of Britain's Allies? Given the focus on the need for Allied unity in making both war and peace, stressed once again in the Queen's speech to Parliament in November 1709, the presentation of their contribution to the war effort, and of their role in the peace negotiations, mattered. While concerns over the Dutch continued to be relatively muted, perhaps due to their casualties at Malplaquet, ministers foresaw problems: in June 1709, Boyle had expressed concern that the States' scant preparations for naval operations in the Channel could cause a

⁴⁷ *Daily Courant*, 24 July 1710.

⁴⁸ Dayrolle to Boyle, 29 July 1710 NS, SP84/234 f.63.

⁴⁹ *Daily Courant*, 24 July 1710.

⁵⁰ *Daily Courant*, 12 August 1710.

ferment in Parliament.⁵¹ But greater doubts surrounded the contribution of the Empire, and these were reflected in some paradoxes printed by the *Review* at the end of 1709. In one, the Emperor loaded the peace terms with new demands, despite having contributed little to the war. Another wondered that the world was at arms to establish one of two kings on a throne, when 'it is hard to say, what ... either of them has done to deserve it'.⁵²

The response was to stress Allied dedication to the common cause. Dutch commitment was evident in the petition of the Council of State to the States-General seeking funds for the 1710 campaign (which was printed in the *Post Man*): 'it is much better to support still ... the heavy and burdensome charges of the war, ... to obtain a safe and speedy peace'.⁵³ The ensuing resolution of the States to continue the war was reported in London, and was followed by a letter to the Emperor seeking a similar commitment.⁵⁴ The *Gazette* reported in January that he had responded by resolving 'to make the most vigorous efforts' alongside his Allies in the ensuing campaign; and the *Post Boy* added that he had directed Eugene to exhort the princes of the Empire to do likewise, as the only means to attain a satisfactory peace.⁵⁵

Newspapers suggested that the States were meeting their commitments, with the *Daily Courant* reporting in March that they were diligently preparing for the coming campaign.⁵⁶ But in the case of the Empire the picture was less clear. Positive reports of the size of the Imperial forces were undermined by news of the refusal of the Elector of Hanover to take command, 'because that army is so ill provided that he can neither do service with it to the common cause, nor acquire any honour to himself'.⁵⁷ One of the final acts of Godolphin's ministry nonetheless underlined the importance of stressing continued Allied commitment. The *Daily Courant* reported the terms of a memorial from the Queen to the States assuring them that she was very content with their conduct of the Geertruidenberg negotiations, and their resolution refuting the French allegations concerning them, and committing

⁵¹ Boyle to Townshend, 24 June 1709, Bodl. Eng. Hist. d.147, ff.43-44.

⁵² *Review*, 8 December 1709.

⁵³ *Post Man*, 13 December 1709.

⁵⁴ *Post Man*, 5 January 1710.

⁵⁵ *London Gazette*, 21 January 1710; *Post Boy*, 14 January 1710.

⁵⁶ *Daily Courant*, 7 March 1710.

⁵⁷ *Daily Courant*, 28 March, 15 May 1710; *Supplement*, 1 March 1710.

herself to prosecuting the war vigorously (as they had done in that resolution).⁵⁸

Discourse – the sermon and the trial

Between the summer of 1709 and that of 1710 print media thus continued to contend over the conduct of the war, and the need for peace. Persistent emphasis on military victories and heroes, and on French weakness and bad faith, underpinned the case for fighting on to secure a lasting and honourable peace, while those seeking an end to the war questioned the narrative of military success, undermined Marlborough's reputation and cast doubt on the commitment of the Allies. Each side impugned the motives and loyalty of the other: the ministry was prolonging the war for financial gain; their opponents were French sympathisers, and even Jacobites.

If these narratives were familiar, what followed was not. Contention over the war came to be complemented by an intersecting discourse catalysed by Sacheverell, and one at least as intense. The response to the Doctor's sermon began within weeks. Preaching on the day of thanksgiving for the 1709 campaign, one cleric drew a direct connection with the conduct of the war: '... what peace can be expected, when they whose business is to preach the gospel of peace, proclaim war against it, and bid defiance to the government, even in the pulpit'.⁵⁹ On the same day, the preacher to the Commons warned that unless the country maintained its unanimity, there would be no hope of ending the war, or securing a safe and lasting peace.⁶⁰ In December, the Commons resolved that the sermon tended to create jealousies and divisions among her Majesty's subjects; it was also adverse to the Protestant succession.⁶¹ The *Observer* complained that that while engaged in 'a bloody and expensive war', the nation was being torn in pieces 'by a restless faction'.⁶² And a poem on the sermon took up the theme. After

⁵⁸ *Daily Courant*, 24 July, 10 August 1710.

⁵⁹ R. Chapman, *Publick Peace Ascertain'd; with some Cursory Reflections upon Dr. Sacheverel's two Late Sermons. In a Sermon Preach'd on Tuesday, Nov. 22. 1709* (London, 1709), 13.

⁶⁰ S. Clarke, *A Sermon Preach'd before the Honourable House of Commons, at the Church of St. Margaret Westminster, on Tuesday, Nov. 22. 1709* (London, 1709), 23, 25.

⁶¹ Chandler, vol. 4 137-138.

⁶² *Observer*, 7 January 1710.

praising Marlborough for seven years of successful campaigning, it concluded:

‘The war will soon cease,
And the French beg for peace,
Were it not for such vile correspondents as these.’⁶³

These themes of the danger of division, and of the threat to the succession, would become major elements of political discourse, and were reflected in the articles of the Doctor’s impeachment: the introduction alleged that Sacheverell had intended to undermine the succession; and Article IV claimed that the sermon tended to the destruction of the constitution and fomented destructive divisions among the Queen’s subjects.⁶⁴ The point was taken up by Stanhope in his speech at the trial: ‘... when we are to reap the fruits of a very long and expensive war, by the conclusion of a solid and lasting peace ... what does this pious son of the Church do? ... he does, to the utmost of his ability, endeavour to create ... groundless mistrusts and jealousies of the administration’.⁶⁵

This narrative of division, and its connection to the conduct of the war, led to discussion of the reception of the Sacheverell controversy overseas. In January 1710 the *Daily Courant* quoted from a French volume that suggested how the Doctor could have responded to Stanhope: ‘might [he] not have shown that the interest [Stanhope] has in the continuation of the war, and the private advantages he draws from the subsidies and immense sums furnish’d by the English, joyn’d with the zeal of a courtier, render’d his language suspect?’ Thus (in an enemy narrative) the Doctor’s trial was linked with Tory accusations of corruption in the conduct of the war. The *Courant* then reproduced a Dutch report lamenting that the sermon reflected badly on William III, the Queen, Parliament and the succession; it appeared ‘made to excite the people to rebellion’ (not what one would desire in one’s principal ally).⁶⁶ The implication was clear – the divisions engendered by the Doctor

⁶³ *On Dr Sacheverell’s Sermon Preach’d at St Paul’s, Nov 5 1709* ([London], 1709), Ellis, *Poems*, vol. 7, 371.

⁶⁴ Holmes, *Trial*, 280-281.

⁶⁵ *The Tryal of Doctor Henry Sacheverell, before the House of Peers, for High Crimes and Misdemeanors; upon an Impeachment by the Knights, Citizens ...* (Dublin, 1710), 64.

⁶⁶ *Daily Courant*, 10 June 1710.

and his supporters were encouraging the French, and instilling doubts in Britain's Allies.

The allegation that through stoking factionalism Sacheverell was inadvertently, or deliberately, undermining the war effort was naturally denied, not least by the Doctor himself. In his final speech at the trial he asserted that he had zealously sought to persuade the Queen's subjects to enter into the war.⁶⁷ In doing so he reinforced a point made a month earlier through the reprinting of a pro-war sermon he had preached in 1702: the new edition's cover made clear that it was published in support of his defence.⁶⁸ The reprinted sermon was also calculated to refute accusations of Jacobitism, through its defence of the Queen's title to the throne.⁶⁹

Nonetheless, a direct connection was made between the narrative of division and the riots which marked the trial's conclusion. Preaching in March 1710, in a sermon the printed title of which referred to the riots, one preacher lamented that: 'we have some so infatuated among us, ..., to the great joy of our common enemy'.⁷⁰ And in a *Letter from Captain Tom to the Mobb* Defoe challenged those who, now peace was at hand, 'are doing all in your power to assist the enemy of our country and religion, and to force such terms of peace upon us, as that cruel tyrant may think fit to give'.⁷¹ The breakdown in the Geertruidenberg talks was subsequently presented as vindicating these concerns: 'cursed high-flyers ... have ruined our peace'.⁷² According to the *Observer*, the French court was boasting of what Sacheverell had done, and had broken off the negotiations in expectation of what he and his party might yet achieve.⁷³

The idea that the divisions created by the controversy over Sacheverell's sermon played into the hands of the French was merged into the idea that

⁶⁷ H. Sacheverell, *The Speech of Henry Sacheverell, D.D. in Westminster Hall, on Tuesday March 7, 1709/10* (London, 1710), 10.

⁶⁸ H. Sacheverell, *A Defence of her Majesty's Title to the Crown, and a Justification of her Entering into a War with France and Spain* (London, 1710).

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

⁷⁰ J. England, *Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem. A Sermon Preach'd at Sherborne in the County of Dorset, on the Publick Fast, March 15, 1709/10 a little after the Rebellious Tumult, Occasion'd by Dr. Sacheverell's Trial* (London, 1710).

⁷¹ D. Defoe, *A Letter from Captain Tom to the Mobb, now Rais'd for Dr Sacheverell* (London, 1710).

⁷² *Review*, 22 July 1710.

⁷³ *Observer*, 29 July 1710.

the Doctor and his Tory partisans were in league with them, reinforcing the narrative of treachery. Reporting on an address made by a French Bishop to Louis XIV, the *Observer* commented that it sounded much like the language of 'our high-flyers' who were eager for peace, and who cursed Marlborough and the present ministry for continuing the war: 'I fancy there's a very good understanding betwixt many of our Tories and the French court'.⁷⁴ The accusation in the articles of impeachment that the Doctor had undermined the constitution reflected this narrative of treachery; and throughout the trial the *Daily Courant* ran a series of articles demonstrating that Roman Catholic zealots had been responsible for the destruction of France's own ancient constitution.⁷⁵

This line of attack led inevitably to an allegation that the Doctor and his supporters favoured the Pretender's restoration, an allegation founded on the sermon's passages on the 1689 settlement and on Sacheverell's assertion that the Queen's title to the throne depended on heredity, rather than law. Yet Britain's war aims included securing the succession mandated by the Act of Settlement. A pamphlet of April 1710 claimed that the Doctor's understanding of hereditary right implied that that Act was null and void; it was thus 'injurious to her present Majesty's rightful title, as well as to the farther settlement of the crown in the Protestant line'.⁷⁶ Defoe suggested hanging those advocating hereditary right, for 'entirely overthrowing her Majesty's claim, [and] exploding and ridiculing her right to rule over us'; the Queen had good title, but resting on 'power and legal right of Parliamentary limitation...'⁷⁷

These concerns over the succession were sustained by persistent rumours that the French were equipping a fleet to repeat the attempted invasion of 1708, rumours which Tory ministers believed were being fuelled by the Whigs through false intelligence from the continent.⁷⁸ Such reports appeared in the *Review* and the *Observer* in January 1710, and in the *Post Boy* in

⁷⁴ *Observer*, 15 July 1710.

⁷⁵ *Daily Courant*, 7 January 1710 and passim.

⁷⁶ *No Conquest, but the Hereditary Right of her Majesty ... Asserted* (London, 1710), 5, 7.

⁷⁷ *Review*, 20 May 1710.

⁷⁸ Jersey to Dartmouth, 8 September 1710, Staffs RO, D(W) 1778/1/ii f.148; Dartmouth to Townshend, 3 October 1710, SP104/77 f.71; Dayrolle to St John, 24 October 1710 NS, SP104/76.

June.⁷⁹ In August *Observer* asked Roger if he had heard ‘the news of the French squadrons fitting out from Dunkirk and Brest, ... with forces etc. on board to bring in the Pretender?’, to which Roger replied: ‘Yes, Master: do ye think I am deaf?’⁸⁰

The prospect of the Pretender taking the throne sustained concerns over the preservation of British liberties and freedom of conscience: in January 1710 the *Observer* attacked ‘a restless faction ... who do their utmost to revive those slavish principles that brought us formerly to popery and slavery’.⁸¹ The allegation recurred in the speech of the Whig John Dolben at the trial: after twenty years resisting tyranny and oppression, the country risked being ‘betrayed at home to a perpetual condition of bondage, by such false brethren as are at your Lordships’ bar’.⁸² Such anxieties were nourished by occasional portrayals of the war as one of religion on the part of the French and the Spanish; the *Daily Courant* noted in June 1710 that the French court had, with the clergy’s concurrence, ‘industriously impos’d upon their nation that it is a war of religion’.⁸³

These three elements of the narrative of treachery – that the Sacheverell controversy had been contrived to assist the French, the Pretender and the papists - were neatly combined in a pamphlet of May 1710, which envisaged a meeting between Louis, the Pretender and the Doctor. The Pretender thanks the Doctor for his ‘faithful services’, while Louis asserts that he would probably have been forced to make peace, had Sacheverell not put life into the French by cultivating division in England. The Pretender closes on a note calculated to arouse an Englishman’s fear of popery: once restored he will appoint Sacheverell primate of Great Britain, and the members of the Societies for Reformation ‘shall themselves be reform’d by fire, in Smithfield’.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ *Review*, 3 January 1710; *Observer*, 14 January 1710; *Post Boy*, 29 June 1710.

⁸⁰ *Observer*, 30 August 1710.

⁸¹ *Observer*, 7 January 1710.

⁸² *Trial*, 87.

⁸³ *Daily Courant*, 12 June 1710.

⁸⁴ *The Substance of a Late Conference, between the French King, the Pretender and one of their Best Friends (now in England)* (London, 1710), 13.

In addition to these narratives of the undermining of the war effort, two other themes emerged, both relevant to the issue of the peace. The first was a development of the idea that Marlborough and other members of the ministry were prolonging the war for their own ends. In attacking false brethren in the state Sacheverell mentioned 'wiley Volpones' - a reference to Godolphin – and those who had 'betray'd [their] own party for the little, sordid lucre of a place or preferment', potentially sweeping up Marlborough as well. The Doctor brought his attack to a rousing conclusion: 'thus little, thus base, thus odious, thus contemptible, thus survile, nay thus execrable is the traitor and double-dealer'.⁸⁵ Despite the Doctor's unconvincing denial that he had accused the Queen or her ministers of maladministration, this theme was later echoed in the literature surrounding the change in the ministry and the election in the summer of 1710.⁸⁶

The second theme concerned the royal prerogative. One of the sermon's main targets was the doctrine of justified resistance to the sovereign, which in the dedication of the published version Sacheverell equated with 'breaking in upon the prerogative of the crown'.⁸⁷ In early 1710 ministers provided further grounds for such an accusation: Marlborough refused to bow to the Queen's wishes in relation to the appointment of a new warden of the Tower of London and the appointment of the brother of Abigail Masham (the Queen's favourite) to a regimental command, while ministers proposed a Commons address asking the Queen to dismiss Abigail from her service.⁸⁸ Another Commons address, that of February 1710 asking the Queen to send Marlborough to the forthcoming Geertruidenberg talks, also brought the prerogative into play in relation to the peace. A Tory MP opposing the address complained that it sought to place the Duke above the Crown, and that Parliament should not encroach on the Queen's prerogative by telling her whom she should employ in diplomatic negotiations.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Sacheverell, *Perils*, 22-23.

⁸⁶ E.g. H. Sacheverell, *The Answer of Henry Sacheverell, D.D. to the Articles of Impeachment*, (London, 1710).

⁸⁷ Sacheverell, *Perils*, dedication.

⁸⁸ H. L. Snyder, 'Spencer, Charles, third earl of Sunderland (1675–1722)', *ODNB* <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26117>, accessed 8 January 2018.

⁸⁹ Wentworth to Raby, 17 February 1710, Cartwright, 110-111.

Narratives in political discourse concerning the conduct of the war and of the peace negotiations were thus complemented by, and intersected with, those generated by the trial of Sacheverell. For his opponents, advocacy of the doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance to the sovereign represented the gratuitous reopening of old debates, generating internal division in time of war. On even a benign interpretation, these divisions could and did give comfort the country's enemies; but the Doctor's opponents went further, accusing him and his supporters of deliberately seeking to aid the French and the Pretender, leading to accusations of Jacobitism, and of their posing an existential threat to British liberties. The response was not only to refute these allegations, but to turn them round, with accusations of disloyalty being thrown back at the Doctor's antagonists. Tory literature insinuated that ministers were guilty of corruption, and of prolonging the war to their own advantage, and (drawing on the Doctor's sermon) brought into the discursive contention over the war and the peace a narrative of Whig disrespect for the Queen's prerogative.

'The sense of the nation'

What, then, was 'the sense of the nation', in Defoe's terms, concerning both the war and the trial by the summer of 1710?⁹⁰ Public attitudes to the war and to the peace were ambiguous, and fluid. Immediately after the failure of the talks at The Hague, Godolphin reported to Marlborough that although a great many had found fault with the peace when it was thought a certainty, once news came of the talks being broken off, 'to show the general opinion which the public had of it, the stocks fell 14 per cent in one day'.⁹¹ Boyle concurred: 'they did not think it enough for our advantage, til they heard that the French would not agree to it'.⁹² A contemporaneous pamphlet referred to one coffee house's patrons being 'strangely divided' in their opinions.⁹³ Doubts infected Godolphin who, having reported to Marlborough in July that the general

⁹⁰ *Review*, 8 July 1710.

⁹¹ Godolphin to Marlborough, 1 June 1709, Snyder, 1271.

⁹² Boyle to Marlborough, 23 August 1709, BL Add. ms 61129, f.172.

⁹³ *The German Spie* (London, 1709), i.

feeling was in favour of the Preliminaries, was soon expressing concern that without peace, 'all falls to pieces here next winter'.⁹⁴

These ministerial fears are consistent with evidence that sentiment in favour of peace was growing in late 1709, perhaps reinforced by the reaction to Malplaquet. While one correspondent reported 'extravagant joy' during celebrations of the battle in the City, he added that these had taken place before anyone had seen 'an authentic report'.⁹⁵ When Steele visited Will's coffee house expecting a joyful atmosphere, he instead found the room 'full of sown animals', questioning reports of the battle, 'and fearful of the success of our country-men'.⁹⁶ This attitude was echoed in Somers' comment that 'ill-natured favourers of France' were doubting the completeness of the victory, although he hoped that it would undermine those wishing for an inadequate peace.⁹⁷

His hopes were ill-founded – 'the late bloody battle' had, in Harley's view, dangerously raised opinions of the courage of the French, potentially hindering the peace, 'which is so necessary for everybody'.⁹⁸ Two months later Shrewsbury wrote to Harley that he was convinced that 'the generality of the nation long for peace, ... if the nation could see how they might have a good one it is my opinion that they would be very uneasy till they had it'; public feeling should be brought to bear to ensure that future opportunities to come to terms should not 'be slipped over in silence' as others had been.⁹⁹

Ambiguity in public feeling extended to the issue of 'Spain entire'. In June 1709 de l'Hermitage reported to the States that France's rejection of the Preliminaries had been greeted with universal resentment; he anticipated that if Parliament were recalled it would pass resolutions making it difficult for the ministry to make peace without Spain.¹⁰⁰ And while the Whig director of the Bank of England, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, pressed Godolphin not to make a 'rotten peace' (one without Spain), another correspondent complained that

⁹⁴ Godolphin to Marlborough, 10 July, 4 August 1709, Snyder, 1307-1308, 1331.

⁹⁵ Bridges to Trumbull, September 1709, HMC Downshire, vol. I, part 2, 880-881.

⁹⁶ *Tatler*, 8 September 1709.

⁹⁷ Somers to Marlborough, 8 September 1709, BL Add. ms 34518, f.40; and 14 October 1709, BL Add ms 61134, ff.221-222.

⁹⁸ Harley to Newcastle, 15 September 1709, BL Add. ms 70502, ff.97-98.

⁹⁹ Shrewsbury to Harley, 3 November 1709, HMC Bath, vol. I, 197.

¹⁰⁰ De l'Hermitage to the States-General, 14 June 1709 NS, BL Add. ms 17677DDD, ff.191-192.

insistence on Spain appeared to have prevented agreement: was it reasonable to expect it to be gained through peace negotiations when it could not be held through warfare?¹⁰¹

Such ambivalence continued into 1710. Boyle wrote to Townshend towards the end of the Geertruidenberg negotiations that, given the present state of play, the French should be expected to make peace as soon as they could, 'but there are various opinions here upon this subject as there are upon all others'.¹⁰² De l'Hermitage identified three strands of opinion: those who would cease negotiating, and wait for France to concede; those who would make peace as soon as possible; and those who would force the issue by bringing the French to battle.¹⁰³ He later commented on the impact on opinion of the French plenipotentiaries' letter blaming the Allies for the failure of the Geertruidenberg talks, and the States' response: while some were persuaded of France's bad faith, others continued to believe that the Spanish monarchy was not worth the cost in blood and treasure.¹⁰⁴

This uncertainty in the public mood was probably symptomatic of the war weariness commonly ascribed to this period - one pamphlet of June 1709 describing a coffee house discussion noted that while the war and the peace had become 'the subject of common discourse', men were weary of them.¹⁰⁵ Acknowledgement of this weariness can be found in the Queen's speech of November 1709, in which she accepted that the dearth which had taken hold on the continent was now also being seen at home, and promised steps to remedy the situation.¹⁰⁶ This was surely a reflection of public concern: bread or corn riots had occurred in London, Kingston, Tewkesbury, Colchester and Portsmouth between July and October 1709, and continued into 1710, and the situation was exacerbated when three regiments mutinied in Yorkshire.¹⁰⁷ At least one near-contemporary Whig historian perceived a link to the war:

¹⁰¹ Godolphin to Marlborough, 9 September 1709, Snyder, 1370-1371; Butler to Trumbull, 20 June 1709, HMC Downshire, vol. I, part 2, 878.

¹⁰² Boyle to Townshend, 19 May 1710, Bodl. Eng. Hist. d.147, ff.123-124.

¹⁰³ De l'Hermitage to the States-General, 5 May 1710, BL Add. ms 17677DDD, ff.494-495.

¹⁰⁴ De l'Hermitage to the States-General, 25 July 1710, BL Add. ms 17677DDD, ff.554-555.

¹⁰⁵ Gildon, *Golden Spy*, 277.

¹⁰⁶ Chandler, vol. 4, 135-136.

¹⁰⁷ Letters from Sunderland to various correspondents, SP44/108, ff.116, 165-166, 178; Rebow to Somers, 13 September 1709, BL Add. ms 61609, f.38; *Post Boy*, 1 October 1709; *Observer*, 7 January, 22 February 1710; J. H. Plumb, *Sir Robert Walpole* (London: Cresset Press, 1956-60), vol. 1, 157-158.

'when the dearth grew daily more and more pressing, the ignorant multitude ... began to cry out that the war was protracted by the Duke of Marlborough, and that a famine would ensue; and this clamour, such like reproaches, were the common discourse and entertainment of the tattling gossips of both sexes'.¹⁰⁸ And while Holmes concluded that food shortages were probably not a factor in the Sacheverell riots, Tindal disagreed: dearth and scarcity 'put the vulgar in an ill humour'.¹⁰⁹ The *Observer* (Whiggish though it was) wrote of the riots: 'the present poverty, decay of trade, dearth of bread, and heavy taxes that lie upon the nation to carry on a just war, increases the ferment, and may have fatal consequences, if not obviated in time'.¹¹⁰

Recognition of public weariness can also be seen in Whig pronouncements acknowledging the war's financial and human costs, even while advocating its continuation; speaking at Sacheverell's trial both Stanhope and Dolben referred to the length and cost of the war.¹¹¹ One commentator connected concerns over the tax burden, the impact of the war on those in the countryside, and the Tory campaign to restore the 'traditional' basis of government. Writing in August 1710, a correspondent of the Countess of Lindsey claimed that the Queen's army 'was composed of those that inhabited the country, whose lives are exposed for the country's service, and you know and feel that taxes are paid heer, by which all our fortunes are imploy'd too in her service....' Government on the 'ancient basis' (that is, adhering to the principle of non-resistance) might only be the 'dull fancy of the sorry unthinking, unrefin'd country gentlefolks and clodpates', but they had lived happily under it. Now, not only were they having to fight and fund the war, but their understanding of the basis on which they were ruled was being undermined as well.¹¹²

In the circumstances, the prospect of peace came to preoccupy the public. Defoe complained in June 1709 that hopes of peace had become

¹⁰⁸ A. Cunningham, *The History of Great Britain: from the Revolution in 1688, to the Accession of George the First* (London: A. Strahan; T. Cadell, 1787), vol II, 217.

¹⁰⁹ Holmes, *Trial*, 177-178; Tindal, *History*, vol. 2, 152.

¹¹⁰ *Observer*, 1 March 1710.

¹¹¹ *Tryal*, 63-64, 87.

¹¹² Unknown to the Countess of Lindsey, 24 August 1710, HMC Ancaster, 441.

extravagant, with 'such wild stuff' filling the papers, 'but much more our discourses'; and in July he lamented that 'the noise of peace drowns all manner of relation of fact – infinite suggestions fill your discourses'.¹¹³ De l'Hermitage reported in May 1710 that the peace talks and the preparations for the campaign were occupying the attention of 'la plus part des gens'.¹¹⁴ Public absorption with peace is reflected in the titles of some of the sermons printed between autumn 1709 and spring 1710, irrespective of the side of the Sacheverell debate which they took: *Publick Peace Ascertain'd; Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem; A Return to our Former Good Old Principles and Practice, the only Way to Restore and Preserve our Peace*.¹¹⁵ In closing his sermon to the Queen in March 1710, the Reverend Clarke hoped that military success would continue 'till the war abroad be brought to its desired conclusion; and that, after that, we may be made a happy people at home, by peace and mutual confidence among ourselves'.¹¹⁶ Accusations of divisiveness and factionalism generated by Sacheverell's trial had led directly to implicit and explicit connections being made between the ideals of peace at home, and peace abroad.

This connection between domestic and foreign concord was evident in the series of some 140 loyal addresses presented to the Queen in spring and summer 1710. These did not display the unanimity of those previously submitted congratulating the Queen on the latest military victory. Prompted by the trial, they reflected the deep divisions which it had generated, while also providing an insight into opinion relating to the war and to the peace. The cover of John Morphew's collection of these addresses claimed that it demonstrated 'the sense of the kingdom, whether nobility, clergy, gentry, or commonalty...'; the addresses presented an opportunity for those subscribing to them, including those who were disenfranchised, to participate

¹¹³ *Review*, 28 June, 23 July 1709.

¹¹⁴ De l'Hermitage to the States-General, 12 May 1710, BL Add. ms 17677DDD, ff.498-499.

¹¹⁵ R. Chapman, *Publick Peace Ascertain'd; ... In a Sermon Preach'd on Tuesday, Nov. 22. 1709* (London, 1709); England, *Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem*; W. Tilly, *A Return to our Former Good Old Principles and Practice, the only Way to Restore and Preserve our Peace. A Sermon Preach'd before the University of Oxford, at St. Mary's, on Sunday, May the 14th 1710* (Oxford, 1710).

¹¹⁶ S. Clarke, *A Sermon Preach'd before the Queen at St James's Chapel, on Wednesday the 8th of March, 1709/10* (London, 1710), 22.

in political discourse.¹¹⁷ But the process of addressing was not necessarily free from influence. Not only might drafts be submitted to ministers in advance, but coercion could be involved in the next stage - a meeting to consider the document and gather signatures.¹¹⁸ The Whig John Oldmixon cautioned that it was unsafe to determine the sense of the nation from the addresses: the subscribers may have been 'caress'd by this great man, brow-beaten by that, persuaded by one, threaten'd by another, and impos'd upon by all'.¹¹⁹ The Tory-inclined, pro-Sacheverell address of Shropshire, for example, was allegedly forced through by the high sheriff, and was said to have caused a riot in Shrewsbury; Oldmixon suggested that its terms were also the result of the biased print literature to which the townspeople were exposed.¹²⁰ Another dispute followed in Nottingham, in which the mayor was supposedly forced to accept a counter-address in addition to that which had already been presented in order to avoid a riot.¹²¹ Defoe lamented the 'ragings, heats, divisions and animosities' involved in procuring addresses, and opined that: 'when both sides [pretend] to speak the sence of the place, all the effect is, to let the Queen know, the people of that place are most horribly divided, and nobody knows which side was the strongest'.¹²² Nonetheless, the fact that in a number of cases, such as Shropshire and Nottingham, conflicting addresses came from the same place, and that the addresses could be highly contentious, demonstrates the level of public engagement with the issues which they addressed, and their sheer number is such that the positions they reflect must be considered when assessing the public mood in the spring and summer of 1710.

Once subscriptions were complete, the addresses were presented to the Queen - itself a potential cause of contention. And after presentation came

¹¹⁷ Morphew, J., *A Collection of the Addresses which have been Presented to the Queen since the Impeachment of the Reverend Dr. Henry Sacheverell* (London, 1710 and 1711), part I, cover; Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation*, 139 and passim. See also the discussion in Vallance, *Loyalty, Memory and Public Opinion*, 93-119.

¹¹⁸ See chapter 4, p.202.

¹¹⁹ J. Oldmixon, *A Complete History of Addresses from their first Original under Oliver Cromwell, to this Present Year 1710* (London, 1710 and 1711), part II, 60, 77.

¹²⁰ Lawrie to Sunderland, 5 April 1710, SP 34/12, f.64; Oldmixon, *Complete History*, part II, 325.

¹²¹ Newsletter, 20 July 1710, BL Add. ms 70421, ff.169-170.

¹²² D. Defoe, *A New Test of the Sence of the Nation* (London, 1710), 82-83.

publication, also an important element of the process.¹²³ In consequence, addresses provided not only a means of expressing political positions, but also of influencing the views of others: Morphey's collection was printed a few pages at a time, so that copies could be read soon after the addresses were presented, and they also appeared in other publications – the increasingly Tory-inclined *Post Boy* printed over seventy (exclusively Tory) addresses between April and September.¹²⁴ However, by contrast with its enthusiasm for the addresses of congratulation of late 1709, the Godolphin ministry had none of the 1710 addresses printed in the *Gazette* – as Dyer wrote ironically of two of the earliest Tory addresses: 'it is believed neither ... will find place in the *Gazette*'.¹²⁵ Only under the new ministry was the policy changed, with the August address of the London clergy being the first to be included.¹²⁶ This was not a one-off: in September Harley informed Dartmouth that the Queen had forgotten to instruct him to place the Tory-inclined address of Exeter's clergy in the *Gazette*, which he should now do.¹²⁷ The addresses also contributed to discourse by provoking pamphlet responses, satirising the content of the addresses of either side, and in due course they also provided material for election literature.¹²⁸

The addresses focussed principally on issues surrounding the conviction of Sacheverell, and the majority were Tory in tone, favouring the Doctor; in Morphey's collection of 139, only twenty-one can be described as Whiggish.¹²⁹ Gloucestershire's address at the outset of the campaign was typically Tory: its authors would defend the Queen, her government and the Church of England 'against all republican, traitorous, factious and schismatical opposers at home'; they would oppose all 'seditious tenets'; and they would seek to elect to the ensuing Parliament those 'zealous for our holy Church'. It thus attacked the doctrine of resistance, and the Whigs for their

¹²³ In July 1712 the gentlemen of Whitehaven pressed Oxford to ensure that their address was printed in the *Gazette*: HMC Portland, vol. V, 205-206.

¹²⁴ E.g. *Post Boy*, 2 May 1710; advertisement in the *Supplement*, issue 365, 17 May 1710; *Post Boy*, passim. As Vallance put it, publication contributed to a 'dialogic' culture surrounding addresses: *Loyalty, Memory and Public Opinion*, 94; also Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation*, 110.

¹²⁵ Newsletter, 1 April 1710, BL Add. ms 70421, ff.77-78.

¹²⁶ *Gazette*, 24 August 1710.

¹²⁷ Harley to Dartmouth, 11 September 1710, Staffs RO, D(W) 1778/II/ii f.149; the address was printed in the *Gazette* of 12 September 1710.

¹²⁸ B. Hoadly, *The True Genuine Tory Address* (London, 1710); J. Trapp, *The True Genuine Modern Whigg-Address* ([London], 1710); *True English Advice to the Kentish Freeholders* ([London], 1710), 1-2.

¹²⁹ Morphey, *Collection*.

adherence to it, implied that the Church was in danger, and raised the prospect of a dissolution of Parliament without expressly calling for it.¹³⁰ By contrast, Whig addresses commonly denied that the Church was under threat, and raised the spectre of internal division, reinforcing an anti-Sacheverell narrative that had characterised the earliest responses to the sermon.¹³¹

But the addresses also provided their subscribers with the opportunity to take positions on issues relevant to the war and to the peace. Gloucestershire's was the first of many to offer to defend the Queen not only against domestic opposition, but also enemies abroad; references to enemies 'at home and abroad', with their implication of treachery, were to become commonplace in Tory addresses as the campaign developed, and echoed the preoccupation with the ideal of 'peace' already identified. Expressions of support for the Protestant succession were an almost universal feature of the Tory addresses. These were calculated to refute the Whig narrative that support for the Doctor implied sympathy for the Pretender, and for the French, a narrative reflected in a number of the Whiggish addresses. Hampshire's called for peace among the Queen's subjects, and noted that division 'can only advance the cause of the common enemy'; Worcestershire's, which congratulated the Queen on the suppression of the Sacheverell riots, suggested that such defiance of the judgment of Parliament at a time when Louis was suing for peace represented 'the last efforts of his friends here'.¹³²

Tory addresses also exhibited the first signs of a trend which would become more evident, and more significant, as the summer progressed – an appropriation of the war, enthusiasm for which had come to be associated with Godolphin's now Whig-dominated ministry. By congratulating the Queen on the success of the current campaign, or on previous victories, Tory addresses sought to refute a central Whig allegation of the Sacheverell controversy - that the Doctor's supporters were inadvertently, or deliberately, undermining the war effort.¹³³ These congratulations became more common as time passed, and were frequently linked to an expression of hope

¹³⁰ Morphey, *Collection*, part I, 1.

¹³¹ Gloucester and Hampshire addresses, *ibid*, part I, 4, 12.

¹³² *Ibid*, part I, 8, 12.

¹³³ County Durham, Suffolk and Lichfield addresses, *ibid*, part I, 11, 12, 14.

concerning the peace: Lincoln's address congratulated the Queen on her 'wonderful successes abroad', expressing the hope that these would lead to 'an honourable peace'.¹³⁴ Others, such as Cambridgeshire's, combined references to military success with expectations of a speedy peace.¹³⁵ This desire for an early peace was sometimes linked to references to the cost of the war, reflecting the Tories' preoccupation with the burden of the conflict. Clitheroe's address referred to the town having happily shared the cost of a long and expensive war, but hoped 'soon to enjoy the benefits of an honourable and lasting peace'; Westbury's undertook to elect to a new Parliament men willing to support the continuance of the war while it remained absolutely necessary, yet ready to concur in measures to procure a speedy, safe and lasting peace.¹³⁶

A higher proportion of Whig addresses contained congratulations on the progress of the war, and they more commonly adopted the narrative of heroism, with Stanhope featuring alongside Marlborough following his victories in Spain. Chester's address praised 'the zeal and fidelity of your general in Spain, and his love to publick liberty' – presumably a reference to his role at the trial. Favourable references to military (commonly Whig) heroes in a Tory address, such as Newcastle's, were unusual, and can be contrasted with the address presented by the London clergy in August. This concluded with a prayer that the Queen's arms and counsels should be blessed 'till they have effectually subdued the restless enemies of our peace at home and abroad, defeated the menaces of the proud, ... and scattered all the people that delight in war'.¹³⁷ A quotation from Psalm 68, referring to the defeat of God's enemies, the closing words could be read as an attack on those alleged to be prolonging the war, and on Marlborough in particular.¹³⁸ The London clergy's address also endorsed others which expressed zeal for the Queen's 'royal title and prerogative', so linking Whig adherence to the

¹³⁴ Ibid, part II, 7,

¹³⁵ Ibid, part II, 27.

¹³⁶ Ibid, part I, 17, 22.

¹³⁷ Ibid, part I, 30; part II, 29.

¹³⁸ See the discussion of the subsequent use of this phrase in chapters 3, 4 and 5. Also Winn, *Queen Anne*, 571-572.

doctrine of resistance with the accusation that the current ministry had acted in a way inimical to that prerogative.¹³⁹

The public mood through late 1709, and the first half of 1710, was thus characterised by weariness with the war, a preoccupation with the prospect of peace, and uncertainty over how that peace might best be attained. From spring 1710 that mood found expression in the loyal addresses; these drew on and reinforced not only narratives at the heart of the Sacheverell debate, but also those pertaining to the war and to the peace, and further demonstrated the interconnection between them.

The incoming ministry and the election

As the ministerial changes proceeded, and the anticipated election approached, pamphlets and periodicals capitalised on these narratives in order to exploit the feverish political atmosphere, an atmosphere to which those narratives had already made a substantial contribution. A fierce print campaign ensued. In August Dyer reported that across the country, 'pamphlets written by both parties swarm about our streets'. Swift complained that it would take a man every day from morning till night to read all the pamphlets and half sheets being published; 'and so out of perfect despair I never read any at all'.¹⁴⁰ This section considers how the narratives concerning the conduct of the war and the making of the peace, and those relating to the Doctor and his trial, were developed and became further intertwined in that campaign, the increased ministerial activism which it revealed, and the motivation behind that activism.

Print discourse in the lead-in to the election was framed by three pamphlets, all of them at least partly attributable to incoming or outgoing ministers. St John led with his *Letter to the Examiner*, which focussed on issues concerning the war; St John encouraged the *Examiner* to consider the true state of the war, and the principles on which it was commenced – the restoration of the Spanish monarchy, and the securing of a barrier for the

¹³⁹ Morphew, *Collection*, part I, 1, 7, 21.

¹⁴⁰ Newsletter, 29 August 1710, BL Add. ms 70421, 29 August 1710; Swift to Sterne, 26 September 1710, Woolley, *Correspondence*, vol. 1, 294-296.

Dutch.¹⁴¹ He sought to refute the Whig narrative ‘that the general, the quondam treasurer, and the junto are the only objects of the confidence of the allies, and of the fears of the enemies’, and that the peace talks at Geertruidenberg had failed despite the ministry’s best efforts. Indeed, he suggested that an acceptable peace could have been obtained as early as 1706, implicitly reinforcing the allegation that the old ministry had prolonged the war.¹⁴² Notwithstanding the battles won and towns taken (and the celebrations of the mobs which ‘huzzaed around bonfires’), the ministry had mismanaged the war: resources had gone to Flanders, where the French were best able to fight, rather than to Spain and elsewhere.¹⁴³ The *Letter* then considered the role of the Allies, developing a theme that would become more prominent as the war continued. Having mistakenly entered the war as a principal, not as a confederate, Britain had borne the brunt of the expense in blood and treasure, yet had not been treated with the dignity she deserved. If this continued, Britain would have conquered a larger territory for the Dutch (whose efforts were not expressly attacked), and the Emperor would have made significant gains despite his modest contribution to the war in Spain. Britain would find her future revenues anticipated, her money and men exhausted, and her trade divided between her neighbours – ‘a jest to the whole world’.¹⁴⁴

St John threw the accusation of divisiveness back at the Whigs. Distancing himself from Sacheverell, he claimed that the previous ministry had used the Doctor’s ‘rash and intemperate’ sermon as the pretext for their ‘clamours’, and had exacerbated the resulting ferment. He then combined the idea of ministers having favoured the Allies with that of an offence having been offered to the Queen’s prerogative. The old ministers had represented the interests of Europe as being inseparable from their own, with the Bank, the Dutch and the Empire all having been asked to approach the Queen to persuade her to retain them in office. In consequence, the crown had been offered a gross indignity. The *Letter* referred elsewhere to ministers having pursued the Queen ‘even into her bedchamber’ in their attempt to secure

¹⁴¹ H. St John, *A Letter to the Examiner* (London, 1710), 4.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 3-4.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

Abigail's dismissal, lest the connection with other Whig offences against the prerogative should be missed.¹⁴⁵

An Essay upon Publick Credit, probably written by Harley, or by Defoe on his behalf, complemented the *Letter to the Examiner*. A plea for moderation, the *Essay* set out to refute the Whig assertion that the change in the ministry would have an adverse impact on the national credit, and thus on the funding of the war: public credit depended entirely on the Queen and Parliament, and not on 'the well- or ill-management' of ministers. And there was no reason to fear the consequences of a dissolution: no-one could rationally believe that a new Parliament would fail to raise money to continue the war, or to protect British liberties.¹⁴⁶ Taken together, the message of the two pamphlets was clear – not that peace should be made at any price, but rather that in the hands of the new ministry the war would be continued with greater regard to British national interests than to those of the Allies, and in a manner better calculated to lead to an advantageous peace. The war was being appropriated to the Tory cause.

In his *Letter to Isaac Bickerstaff*, Cowper (still Lord Chancellor at that point) responded for the outgoing ministry. He began by noting that the author of the *Letter to the Examiner* had tried to avoid any association with the Doctor's cause, making no mention of hereditary right or the doctrine of non-resistance, and that the *Essay upon Publick Credit* had asserted that the Doctor was a lunatic - 'they would not have it in the least imagined that they owe anything to Dr Sacheverell and his friends'. Cowper then attempted to create just such a connection in the mind of the reader: the Tories had encouraged the Doctor's triumphant progress around the country, and the wave of addresses and the implicit call for a dissolution which many of them contained - the accusation of divisiveness was thus revived. A new Parliament would not be as benign as was suggested: Cowper argued that the views on the war expounded by the *Letter to the Examiner* implied that that Parliament, if it followed the wishes of the addressers, would certainly

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 7-8.

¹⁴⁶ *An Essay upon Publick Credit* (London, 1710), 20, 25-26 and passim.

not be as zealous as the present one for the liberties of Europe, the securing of which was in Britain's interest.¹⁴⁷

For Cowper, the attempt of the *Letter to the Examiner's* author to appropriate the war to the new ministry was easily dismissed: he was a Jacobite, a French sympathiser and a threat to the Allies. Cowper asserted that the *Letter* treated the management of the war by the Allies with contempt and ridicule, while the conduct of the King of France and the Duke of Anjou 'is applauded to the highest degree'. Cowper ironically suggested that, given his opinion of the enemy and the Allies, if the author had been in the ministry 'we might not now be enjoying a safe and glorious peace'. His correspondent Bickerstaff (a pseudonym for Richard Steele of the *Tatler*) should assert the Whigs' title to the narrative of military success and heroism by lauding Britain's victories from Blenheim to Saragossa; he should 'place in the clearest light those generals, who, faithful to their sovereigns, just to themselves, ... have by the sword ... recovered almost all the Spanish dominions in Europe'.¹⁴⁸

Defending the Allies, Cowper denied that they were at fault in making representations to the Queen on the changes in her ministry and on the possible dissolution of Parliament: the impact on the common cause made it a matter of essential interest to them. And seeking to turn the suggestion of an offence to the Queen's prerogative on its head, he intimated that to suggest that she was at the mercy of those who had allegedly offended her dignity was an 'audacious invention' that painted a wretched picture of her condition.¹⁴⁹

The print debate over the ministerial changes and the election elaborated on the themes of these three pamphlets, and demonstrated how narratives concerning the conduct of the war and the peace continued to intersect with those relating to the Sacheverell controversy. Whig opposition led with the idea that the new ministers would be unable, even unwilling, to conduct the war with success. *Queries* comprised a set of questions, all inimical to the

¹⁴⁷ Cowper, *A Letter to Isaac Bickerstaff* (London, 1710), 6, 9-10 and passim.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 11-12, 16.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 7, 14-15.

new regime; among them was whether the country was not, after all the endeavours of the old ministry, at risk of losing 'the good effects of this great and glorious war'.¹⁵⁰ Another pamphlet feared a 'dishonourable peace'; twenty years of war was being put at risk when a conclusion was in sight.¹⁵¹ By contrast, did the new ministers not 'intend to have peace at any rate?'¹⁵² The Tory response was to point to failings in the war effort, especially in Spain: 'some parts of it, ..., have been notoriously neglected, either with a design to spin out the war, or at least, to give the whole honour of it to the favourite general'.¹⁵³ Worse, the emphasis on continental warfare had been misplaced – greater efforts should have been made at sea. As one pamphleteer put it, the most natural way of exerting Britain's power had been through its navy. Yet not only had the navy been starved of funds as vast amounts had been directed to the army, it had also been scandalously mismanaged.¹⁵⁴ And in only its second issue the *Examiner* reminded readers of a Tory naval hero: 'what damage has our fleet done ... since Sir George Rooke left it?... And what great action has been done at sea?'¹⁵⁵

The Whig case on the conduct of the war was bolstered by the claim that a new ministry would not be able to maintain the nation's credit; it would therefore be unable to fund military operations. In *Four Letters to a Friend in North Britain* Maynwaring had asked what would be the outcome if, in response to the Doctor and the mob, the Queen were to remove Godolphin: 'our credit ... must infallibly sink'.¹⁵⁶ In late July Defoe asserted in the *Review* that credit was vital to the war effort, and that 'our divisions, our confusions at home' were giving the French confidence that it would be ruined; his later change of heart was presumably due to his return to Harley's employ.¹⁵⁷ Tory pamphleteers followed the *Essay upon Credit* in ridiculing this suggestion: the nation's credit would be as well administered by the new ministers as the

¹⁵⁰ *Queries* ([London], 1710), W. Scott (ed.), *Lord Somers' Tracts* (London, 1809-1815), vol. XII, 667-670.

¹⁵¹ B. Hoadly, *The Thoughts of an Honest Tory, upon the Present Proceedings of that Party: in a Letter to a Friend in Town* (1710), 9.

¹⁵² *Queries*.

¹⁵³ A. Boyer, *An Essay towards the History of the Last Ministry* (London, 1710), 10.

¹⁵⁴ S. Clement, *Faults on Both Sides: ...By Way of Answer to the Thoughts of an Honest Tory* (London, 1710), 17.

¹⁵⁵ *Examiner*, 10 August 1710.

¹⁵⁶ A. Maynwaring, *Four Letters to a Friend in North Britain* (London, 1710), 22.

¹⁵⁷ *Review*, 20 July 1710.

old.¹⁵⁸ Some later Tory addresses joined the argument: Norfolk's address of late July rejected the idea that only one party of men could support the nation's credit – 'an insinuation that may well give encouragement to the enemy abroad'.¹⁵⁹

The assertion that the Tories would not be qualified to conduct the war, and thus to secure a good peace, went beyond the issue of credit. In *A Letter from Mr Pett-m to Mr B-ys*, Petkum (a Holstein diplomat involved in the peace negotiations) was portrayed reporting that in his discussions with the French they had challenged his assertions concerning the strength of the Allies; he also would have doubts, 'when I saw the English General disgrac'd, or so mortify'd that he could no longer serve, the Ministry discard'd, and the Parliament dissolv'd'.¹⁶⁰ Whig literature played on the prospect of Marlborough being dismissed: one pamphlet portrayed the French king acknowledging the Tories' contribution in having belittled his victories, and 'taken comfort from the numbers of soldiers he has lost'.¹⁶¹ And Stanhope, following his victories in Spain, now joined Marlborough in the pantheon of Whig heroes. A pamphlet in support of his candidacy at the Westminster election praised his 'genius and conduct', while another made an explicit connection between his role in the war and in the trial:

'Whene'er you fought the haughty foes were broke,
The priest more haughty trembled when you spoke.
Blest Spain, while such a sword protects her cause;
Blest we, whilst such a tongue protects our laws.'¹⁶²

The notion that the French could take comfort from the ministerial changes and the dissolution played into the existing narrative of Tory treachery. Maynwaring wrote that in order to block the outgoing ministry's attempts to make peace, Sacheverell had 'commanded all his friends at home to gird their loins with a flaming sword, and to hang out the bloody flag and banner of defiance'.¹⁶³ *The French King's Thanks to the Tories of Great Britain* showed Louis recounting how his losses in the war had brought him to the

¹⁵⁸ *Counter-Queries* (London, 1710).

¹⁵⁹ Morphew, *Collection*, part II, 26.

¹⁶⁰ A. Maynwaring, *A Letter from Monsieur Pett-m to Monsieur B-ys* (London, 1710), 1.

¹⁶¹ B. Hoadly, *The French King's Thanks to the Tories of Great Britain* (London, 1710), 1.

¹⁶² *Mr Stanhope for Westminster* ([London], [1710]); *To Mr. Stanhope, one of the Managers of the House of Commons, and General of her Majesty's Forces* (London, 1710).

¹⁶³ Maynwaring, *Four Letters*, 7.

point of accepting peace upon Allied terms, until 'you [the Tories] began to renew the proofs of your ancient friendship'.¹⁶⁴ Pro-Whig election literature developed the theme, identifying a direct connection between the war and the constitutional issues raised by the Sacheverell controversy. As one pamphlet put it, 'there is one great point at hand, to guard against popery and France'. Having advised readers to consider candidates by reference to their voting record both on 'the present necessary war' and on Britons' rights and liberties, the author made an explicit link to recent Tory addresses. These represented a threat to those rights and liberties, and those responsible for them 'have rais'd such tumults, and heats, that the French king hath taken new courage'.¹⁶⁵

Running alongside allegations of Tory treachery was the accusation that the ministerial changes were being effected simply to satisfy personal ambition. One pamphlet alleged that they 'care not if the affairs of Europe be entirely confounded, so their personal ends might be answered'.¹⁶⁶ This line of attack, and the Whigs' reliance on the narrative of treachery, invited a Tory counter-attack that relied implicitly on the idea of 'false brethren' expounded by the Doctor. Echoing the section of the sermon on peculation, *An Essay towards the History of the last Ministry* noted the scale of the nation's debts, alleging that much of the money raised for the war had been diverted or embezzled; pursuing that theme, and underlining the connection with the war effort, it turned Whig accusations about the impact of the Sacheverell episode on their head by suggesting that the trial had been deliberately conceived as a means to divert the Commons from an inquiry into the misapplication of public money.¹⁶⁷ *A Letter from a Foreign Minister in England to Monsieur Pettecum* made a direct connection between the taxes under which most of the country laboured and the riches allegedly accumulated by Godolphin and Marlborough.¹⁶⁸ The theme was even reflected in a contemporary pack of cards, in which the Knave of Hearts portrayed the Duke counting his money,

¹⁶⁴ Hoadly, *The French King's Thanks*, 1.

¹⁶⁵ *A Letter of Advice to the Freeholders of England, Concerning the Election of Members to Serve in the Ensuing Parliament* (London, 1710), 1-2.

¹⁶⁶ Hoadly, *Thoughts of an Honest Tory*, 3.

¹⁶⁷ Boyer, *An Essay towards the History*, 10.

¹⁶⁸ A. Boyer, *A Letter from a Foreign Minister in England, to Monsieur Pettecum*, (London, 1710), 6.

and defending himself with the words: 'had you my post would not you, tell money over as I do'.¹⁶⁹

The outgoing ministry could also be shown to be 'false brethren' by painting them as creatures of the Allies, subordinating the national interest to theirs. Assertions that the Allies had acted improperly in representing to the Queen their opposition to the ministerial changes and the dissolution, alongside accusations that they had done so at the behest of ministers, reinforced themes of disloyalty, disregard of the prerogative, and collusion.¹⁷⁰ This narrative was amplified by claims that the Allies were simply not pulling their weight; thus, in the dialogue in *Thomas Double at Court*, Double's interlocutor questioned the Dutch contribution to the war at sea, and suggested that if the Empire had agreed to a reasonable allocation of resources after Blenheim the Habsburgs might have been in possession of Spain as early as 1706.¹⁷¹ These attacks on the Allies' commitment did not go unchallenged. At the beginning of October 1710, as the election commenced, the *Daily Courant* printed a letter from the States to the Emperor stating their intention to pursue the war with vigour and asking that he commit to do the same. In his reply, also published in the *Courant*, the Emperor promised his inviolable good faith to the Allies, and praised the States for exposing the way in which the French had 'amus'd with the shadow of a desirable peace'.¹⁷² The Allies thus sought to refute the allegation that they were not making a sufficient contribution to the war, while reinforcing the narrative of French perfidy; this would not, however, prevent the narrative of Allied failure increasing in potency over time.

The Tories' other line of defence to the allegation that they were pursuing personal ambition was imaginative, and drew on the idea that through taxation the bulk of the cost of the war had fallen on the landed. That this was the case was a constant theme, and *Thomas Double at Court* provided a contrast to the riches which a fictional Whig minister might have invested in

¹⁶⁹ F. G. Stephens, *Personal and Political Satires, Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum 1689-1733* (London: British Museum Publications, 1873), vol. 2, 330.

¹⁷⁰ F. Atterbury, *To the Wh--s Nineteen Queries, a Fair and Full answer, by an Honest Torie* ([London], 1710).

¹⁷¹ C. Davenant, *Sir Thomas Double at Court, and in High Preferments* (London, 1710).

¹⁷² *Daily Courant*, 2 October 1710.

government stocks; Double's interlocutor concluded by reflecting how the old ministry 'have made the country poor to enrich the city; how they have render'd the landed interest, in a manner vassal, and tributary to the money'd men'.¹⁷³ 'The high-church party, or the landed gentlemen, having borne the chief burden of the war', argued another pamphlet, 'it was but just and reasonable to give them an opportunity in some measure to repair their fortunes, by admitting them to places of profit'.¹⁷⁴

The Tories' reliance on their critique of the conduct of the war by the outgoing ministry, and the strength of Whig allegations that the Tories were undermining the war effort, left Tory propagandists with little alternative but to appropriate the war to their own cause, stressing their willingness and ability to pursue hostilities, and thereby achieve a good peace. This tendency was evident in both the *Letter to the Examiner* and the *Essay upon Credit* and found expression through the victory celebrations which continued during the summer of 1710 despite the ongoing ministerial changes: the guns of the Tower were fired to mark the surrender of Bethune and the victories in Spain, and those victories were subsequently marked by a day of thanksgiving.¹⁷⁵ In early August the *Examiner* claimed that the Allies need have no concern over British commitment: 'the landed men of Great Britain, and the honest merchants, will be unanimous in the support of Her Majesty's government, and the just war it is engag'd in..... The nobility and gentry, and people of all ranks, have declar'd themselves so fully and freely upon this subject in their late addresses ...'.¹⁷⁶ Two weeks later Defoe, now supporting Harley's ministry, asserted that it was Whiggish at heart - if one were to ask one of the new ministers: 'are you resolv'd to carry on the war till France is reduc'd, till an honourable peace is gain'd, till the Queen's title is recogiz'd, the Pretender banish'd France, and the Spanish monarchy restor'd? Yes; why then you are a Whig'.¹⁷⁷ *Faults on Both Sides* contained a bold statement of this appropriation: while the ministerial changes were said to have shocked the Allies, and internal divisions to have encouraged the enemy to break off

¹⁷³ Davenant, *Sir Thomas Double at Court*, 109.

¹⁷⁴ Boyer, *An Essay towards the History*, 11.

¹⁷⁵ Boyle to General Erle, 11, 22 and 26 August 1710, SP44/109, ff.110, 116; Boyle to the Archbishop of Canterbury, 15 September 1710, SP44/109 f.145; *Gazette*, 30 September 1710.

¹⁷⁶ *Examiner*, 3 August 1710.

¹⁷⁷ *Review*, 19 August 1710; the theme recurred in the issue of 26 September 1710.

negotiations, 'I hope for the better still, and that in the next more regard will be had to the trading interests of Great Britain, than these ministers had shown in the former preliminaries'.¹⁷⁸ This narrative of appropriation was not only for domestic consumption, but also for the Allies. Despite having exploited the theme of Allied failure in his *Letter to the Examiner*, St John instructed John Drummond in The Hague to assure the Dutch that: 'we are unanimous in those great points which concern the present and future happiness of Europe'.¹⁷⁹

Tory pamphleteers reinforced this appropriation by resorting to the history of the initial years of the war to allay fears of a Tory-dominated House of Commons. One responded to the first of the *Queries* (which had asked if any Parliament had ever done better than the current one) by noting that the Tory Parliament of 1702 had granted the land tax before Christmas, so contributing to early success in the war.¹⁸⁰ The *Examiner* argued that as each previous Parliament had willingly supported the war, there was no need to fear the outcome of the forthcoming election.¹⁸¹ And lest it be thought that the election of a majority of tax-paying landed gentry might imply a reluctance to do so, one pamphlet insisted: '[they] will readily grant and provide the necessary supplies for carrying on the war with the utmost vigour: for as they have borne, and are still like to bear, the greatest weight of taxes, so they will, in their own defence, exert their utmost endeavours to procure a safe honourable and lasting peace'; the landed gentry had first entered into this 'necessary war', and so should have the honour of ending it.¹⁸²

Appropriation of the war extended to the idea that peace should not be made without Spain; Defoe's characterisation of the new ministry as essentially Whiggish had relied, in part, on an assertion that it would seek the restoration of the Spanish monarchy.¹⁸³ An *Essay Towards the History of the Last Ministry* took a similar approach: after attacking the former ministry's conduct of the war in the peninsula, it predicted that the new ministry and Parliament

¹⁷⁸ *Faults on Both Sides, ... By Way of a Letter to a New Member of Parliament* (London, 1710).

¹⁷⁹ St John to Drummond, 13 October 1710, Parke, vol. 1, 3-6.

¹⁸⁰ Atterbury, *To the Wh--s Nineteen Queries*.

¹⁸¹ *Examiner*, 3 August 1710.

¹⁸² Boyer, *An Essay towards the History*, 51-52.

¹⁸³ *Review*, 19 August 1710.

would be able to restore the whole of Spain, and on more favourable terms.¹⁸⁴ And the appropriation extended to a softening of the attacks on Marlborough: the *Examiner* rejected concerns that he would resign in consequence of the change in the ministry – he was guided by ‘nobler principle’.¹⁸⁵ Others took the same line, although the author of a pamphlet setting out the reasons why Marlborough would not resign could not resist referring to the income he would lose through doing so, reminding the reader of the Tory narrative of corruption and self-interest. Following Stanhope’s success in Spain, the *Tatler* moved to prevent he too being appropriated by the Tories, claiming that: ‘the favourers of the House of Bourbon among us affirm, that this Stanhope ... must be of the anti-monarchical party’.¹⁸⁶ This goaded the *Examiner* to complain that while Stanhope should be given the praise due to him, the *Tatler* had insinuated that only Whigs had any right to commend him. A reference to Stanhope’s role in the trial nonetheless proved irresistible, with the *Examiner* suggesting that he made a better figure in the field than at the bar.¹⁸⁷ For others, however, appropriation of Stanhope was a step too far: an advertisement printed in September suggested ironically that he should stand for election alongside the Empire’s General Starhemberg, as both were in the interest of the House of Austria.¹⁸⁸

This Tory turn to appropriation had its roots in the two principal ministerial interventions in political discourse surrounding the new ministry and the election: both the *Letter to the Examiner* and the *Essay upon Credit* had sought to distance the new Tory ministry from the Doctor, making their case on the issues of war and peace. In seeking to set the terms of discursive contention, these two pamphlets epitomised the step change in the level of ministerial activism in public discourse which followed the advent of the new ministry. Defoe, who had been retained by Harley for both propagandising and intelligence-seeking when he was last in office, anticipated the change. Contacting Harley in July 1710, he offered his assistance in the pursuit of moderation: ‘I would esteem it my singular advantage to take right measures

¹⁸⁴ Boyer, *An Essay towards the History*, 52.

¹⁸⁵ *Examiner*, 3 August 1710.

¹⁸⁶ *Tatler*, 12 August 1710.

¹⁸⁷ *Examiner*, 31 August 1710.

¹⁸⁸ Newsletter, BL Add. ms 70421, ff.211-212.

by your direction'.¹⁸⁹ By August Defoe was active on Harley's behalf, offering to bring pages fresh from the press for his approval.¹⁹⁰ In addition, Harley collected about him a group of other writers, and following his accession to Jonathan Swift's lobbying on the issue of Irish church revenues also recruited him to the cause.¹⁹¹ Meanwhile the *Examiner*, St John's creation, would become an essential element of the Tory campaign to validate the change in government, and to rally support in advance of the election. While the *Examiner* came to be Swift's vehicle, early issues appear to have been the work of several other writers; nonetheless, as Swift acknowledged, the *Examiner* was 'written by [ministers'] encouragement and direction'.¹⁹² Swift himself dined frequently with Harley and St John, and acted as a commentator the authority of whose work was bolstered by the inside information to which he had access (access which Defoe did not enjoy to the same extent). Swift also coordinated the efforts of writers such as Abel Roper of the *Post Boy*, and Mrs Manley (although Manley herself was also in direct contact with Harley).¹⁹³ St John subsequently justified the ministry's role as a response to the opposition it faced: it had been obliged 'to inflame the people with a desire for peace, by showing, in the most public and solemn manner, how unequally we were burdened, and how unfairly we were treated by our allies'.¹⁹⁴

Opponents to the peace did not adopt similar levels of organisation. Oldmixon and Maynwaring founded the *Medley* in 1710 to challenge the *Examiner*, and they co-produced pamphlets with Whig authors (such as Hare) from time to time. But while inferences might be drawn from Hare's and Maynwaring's connections with the Marlboroughs, and Maynwaring's membership of the KitKat Club alongside prominent Whig politicians, there is scant evidence that they were under direction such as that which the ministry

¹⁸⁹ Defoe to Harley, 17 July 1710, HMC Portland, vol. IV, 550-551.

¹⁹⁰ Defoe to Harley, 12 August 1710, *ibid*, 562-563.

¹⁹¹ Downie, *Robert Harley and the Press*, 130; Swift to Archbishop King, 10 October 1710, Woolley, *Correspondence*, vol. 1, 303-307.

¹⁹² J. Swift, *Journal to Stella: letters to Esther Johnson and Rebecca Dingley, 1710-1713* (A. Williams (ed.)) (Cambridge, 2013), 105.

¹⁹³ Swift, *Journal*, 181; Manley to Oxford, 19 July and 2 October 1711, HMC Portland, vol. V, 55 and 95-96.

¹⁹⁴ Viscount Bolingbroke, *Defence of the Treaty of Utrecht, being Letters VI-VIII of 'The Study & Use of History'* (Cambridge, 1932), 119, 137.

gave.¹⁹⁵ St John might have suspected that Marlborough was behind Hare and other Whig writers, but the Duke consistently denied this, declaring: 'I wish the devil had the *Medley* and the *Examiner* together'. His correspondent believed him, but wished he could be as confident of the Duchess.¹⁹⁶

In intervening in discourse, ministers enjoyed not only the advantage of superior organisation, but also the ability to resort to repression to suppress narratives unhelpful to the cause. Reliance on repression followed a trend of increased press intimidation which appears to have commenced at the time of the Doctor's trial. The *Review*, the *Observer*, the *Flying Post* and the *Post Boy* all came under fire in April; of these, the first three were decidedly Whiggish, while the *Post Boy* was in the process of passing from the control of the moderate Abel Boyer.¹⁹⁷ The *Observer* had complained in March that the Doctor's supporters 'spare neither money nor pains to spread [their] poison, nor to bribe hawkers and mercuries to suppress and discourage such papers as are writ on purpose to obviate the mischief'.¹⁹⁸ Defoe wrote of similar efforts to suppress the *Review* – as a result no copies were available through either hawkers or booksellers.¹⁹⁹ In August, the authorities in Norwich prosecuted a bookseller for selling Maynwaring's *Letter from from Monsieur Pett-m to Monsieur B-ys*.²⁰⁰

By now, ministers were joining in. Dartmouth issued a warrant for the arrest of the non-juror Charles Leslie in respect of his pamphlet *The Good Old Cause*. While this was a satire aimed at the whiggish Bishop Burnet, the move was probably motivated by the extremity of Leslie's advocacy of divine right - having a Jacobite take one's side was hardly desirable in the light of the persistent Whig narrative of Tory treachery.²⁰¹ Also in August, the Duke of Beaufort sent Dartmouth a print which was for sale in London, and recommended that the author be pursued, while under-secretary Erasmus

¹⁹⁵ J. Oldmixon, *The Life and Posthumous Works of Arthur Maynwaring* (London, 1715), 10-11.

¹⁹⁶ Hoffman to Oxford, September 1711, HMC Portland, vol. V, 94-95; [Watkins] to [Drummond], 26 July 1711 NS, HMC Portland, vol. V, 49-50.

¹⁹⁷ Luttrell, *Brief Relation*, vol. 6, 572-574; newsletter, 27 April 1710, BL Add. ms 70421, ff.97-98.

¹⁹⁸ *Observer*, 1 March 1710.

¹⁹⁹ *Review*, 4, 25 April 1710.

²⁰⁰ Newsletter 15 August 1710, BL Add. ms 70421, ff.191-192.

²⁰¹ Dartmouth to Attorney-General, 5 August 1710, SP 44/110, f.128; R. D. Cornwall, 'Leslie, Charles (1650-1722)', *ODNB* [<http://www.oxforddnb.com.ezproxy.londonlibrary.co.uk/view/article/16484>, accessed 24 March 2015].

Lewis ordered the arrest of a woman for selling the *Queries* at Charing Cross.²⁰² In September, a warrant was issued for the arrest of John Billingsley, a bookseller, for high crimes and misdemeanours.²⁰³

The introduction of the new ministry thus involved a significant increase in ministerial interventionism in public discourse, both proactive and reactive. But what motivated this activism: pursuit of policy, or of political advantage? Holmes considered that Harley and Shrewsbury were acting in pursuit of a peace policy, for which they felt assured of the Queen's support.²⁰⁴ In late 1709 both men had written of their belief that peace was necessary; and as early as July 1709 Somers reported to Godolphin that Harley was plotting a return to power on the basis that there must be peace at any rate, that the current ministry would refuse to make it, and that if the Queen failed to agree she could be forced to do so by the refusal of supply.²⁰⁵ Evidence of Harley's intentions is hardly overwhelming, however: in September 1709 St John accused him of being 'so indifferent as not to trouble yourself ... about the peace'.²⁰⁶ And the document described as 'Mr Harley's plan of administration', which appears to have been the basis of a discussion with the Queen in October 1710, makes no reference to the peace.²⁰⁷

To some, however, the intention was clear. In April 1710 the Whig Sir John Cropley wrote to Somers foretelling a new ministry, which would make 'an infamous peace'; he made a direct connection to the 'addresses of a sad nature coming from all parts', which he believed had encouraged those plotting the ministerial changes.²⁰⁸ In June 1710 Godolphin told Marlborough that 'our schemers here are so impatient for [peace], that I believe they would like it any way rather [even] separate than not have it quickly'; 'they are violent for peace at any rate'.²⁰⁹ Writing to Harley in July, the Duke of Argyll

²⁰² Beaufort to Dartmouth, 21 August 1710, Staffs RO, D(W) 1778//ii f.140; P. Roberts (ed.), *The Diary of Sir David Hamilton 1709-1714* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 15, fn.54.

²⁰³ Warrant, 26 September 1710, SP44/79 f.6.

²⁰⁴ Holmes, 'Ministerial Revolution', 285.

²⁰⁵ Godolphin to Marlborough, 26 July 1709, Snyder, 1324-1326.

²⁰⁶ St John to Harley, 21 September 1709, HMC Bath, vol. I, 196.

²⁰⁷ SP34/13, f.136; there is an alternative attribution to St John.

²⁰⁸ Cropley to Somers, 23 April 1710, KHLC, U1590/C9/31.

²⁰⁹ Godolphin to Marlborough, 2 and 19 June 1710, Snyder, 1515-1517, 1535-1536.

commented that he took it for granted 'that the war and the present ministry will end together', a view corroborated by the swift initiation of peace talks.²¹⁰

The Queen's motives in initiating the ministerial changes were probably mixed. Writing after the event St John implied that she also had acted in the interests of peace: '... it was high time to make peace, when the Queen saw fit to change her ministry'; elsewhere, however, he asserted that the cause of her actions was 'the ill-usage which she received in her private life' – presumably a reference to the actions of Whig ministers, and of the Marlboroughs in particular.²¹¹ Swift took the latter view: in changing her ministers the Queen was motivated 'not from a dislike of things [presumably policies] but of persons', and particularly those persons whom she perceived to be a threat to her prerogative.²¹²

Others saw the ministerial changes in terms of party political advantage. Responding to Swift's comment that the Tories were claiming that the changes had been motivated by the necessity of peace, Archbishop King wrote: 'I do not apprehend any other secret in this affair, but to get the Whigs out of all places of profit and trust, and to get others in them'.²¹³ St John himself later claimed that the principal objective was 'to have the government of the state in our hands; that our principal views were the conservation of this power, great employments for ourselves, and great opportunities for rewarding those who had helped to raise us, and of hurting those who were in opposition to us', although he maintained that the 'good of the nation' was intermingled with considerations of private and party interest.²¹⁴

As regards the election, the issue of motivation may be more easily resolved: both sides considered a compliant Parliament vital to the prospects for peace. Through the spring of 1710 Godolphin's letters to Marlborough reflected his preoccupation with Parliament's reception of any proposed treaty. Raising

²¹⁰ Argyll to Harley, 17 July 1710 NS, HMC Portland, vol. IV, 548-549.

²¹¹ Bolingbroke, *Defence*, 119; Viscount Bolingbroke, *A Letter to Sir William Windham* (London, 1753), 12.

²¹² J. Swift, *An Enquiry into the Behaviour of the Queen's last Ministry* (1715), *Jonathan Swift, Political Tracts, 1713-1719* (H. Davis and I. Ehrenpreis (ed.)) (Oxford: Blackwell, 1973), VIII, 142; J. Swift, *Memoirs relating to that Change which happened in the Queen's ministry in the Year 1710* (1714), *ibid.*, 111-112.

²¹³ Swift to King, 9 September 1710, King to Swift, 16 September 1710, Woolley, *Correspondence*, vol. 1, 290-294.

²¹⁴ Bolingbroke, *Letter*, 12-13.

the prospect of Spain being partitioned, he reported that he and Somers had decided that the best way to proceed would be to lay the terms before Parliament. And in early June he suggested that the pressure on the ministry might be considerably eased if an acceptable peace proposal could be presented to Parliament by the Queen.²¹⁵ Just as the existing Parliament might have provided a solution to the Godolphin ministry's political difficulties surrounding the peace, so the prospect of a new one presented a substantial threat. In July Marlborough wrote to Heinsius of the rumoured dissolution: 'I fear a very great confusion'.²¹⁶ Somers wrote in similar terms to Newcastle – if there were to be a dissolution, France would be able to dictate the peace terms.²¹⁷ For his part, Harley had come to the view that only a new Parliament would be certain to approve a peace – or at least one without Spain.²¹⁸ Implicit was the recognition on both sides that Parliament had a vital role in the conclusion of peace.

Conclusion

Britain's political discourse following the failure of the peace talks at The Hague came to be preoccupied both with the conduct of the war and of the peace negotiations (and with the role of the Allies in each) and with the controversy over Sacheverell and his trial. In his study of the contention surrounding the war and the peace, Müllenbrock excluded any consideration of discourse generated by the Doctor's sermon and his trial.²¹⁹ Yet the two were inseparable: narratives concerning incompetence, corruption, factionalism and disloyalty became conjoined, and the idea of 'peace'- be it foreign or domestic – became ubiquitous.

As the ministerial changes proceeded, and the election approached, the new ministry more actively participated in the discourse which had already been fuelled by enemies and allies overseas, and by the wider public through their addresses. While incoming ministers sought to distance themselves from the Doctor and the controversy over his trial, both sides came to rely on existing

²¹⁵ Godolphin to Marlborough, 8 March and 8 June 1710, Snyder, 1431-1432, 1583-1584.

²¹⁶ Marlborough to Heinsius, 5 July 1710 NS, Hoff, *Correspondence*, 503.

²¹⁷ Somers to Newcastle, 19 August 1710, BL Add. ms 70502, f.157.

²¹⁸ Holmes, *Ministerial Revolution*, 275, 287.

²¹⁹ Müllenbrock, *Culture of Contention*, 35.

themes in political discourse, and in this way narratives generated or reinforced by the controversy over the Doctor re-entered the debate: treachery, either through Tory assistance to the French and the Pretender, or Whig subordination of national interests to those of the Allies; the Whigs' disrespect for the Queen's prerogative, as a symptom of their adherence to the doctrine of resistance; and corruption, either on the part of the outgoing ministry in prolonging the war, reflecting the Doctor's attack on the conduct of 'false brethren' in the State, or prospectively on the part of the incoming Tories, accused of being motivated by the prospect of personal gain. Whig attacks on the ability, even willingness, of the new ministers to conduct the war, and on their loyalty, forced the Tories, notwithstanding their strong desire for peace, to appropriate the war to their own cause. Tory writers consequently found themselves stressing Tory capability and enthusiasm to finance the war, expressing support for the Allies, and even (in some quarters) appropriating heroes who had come to personify the Whig ministry – Marlborough and Stanhope – and the Whig objective of securing 'Spain entire'.

While the motives of the overseas actors are self-evident, those of the domestic actors, and particularly those pursuing ministerial change and electoral victory, remain less clear. Was this a principled campaign to gain power in pursuit of a peace policy, or a cynical attempt to use the prospect of peace, and the controversy over Sacheverell, to procure 'snouts in the trough' for a landed class convinced that they had borne the burden of financing a war which had enriched the new class of moneyed men, and should now reap their reward? The answer is a combination of the two, with the case for principle powerfully supported by the evidence of the new ministry's own actions – the commencement of clandestine negotiations with France.

If motives were mixed, what was the impact of the print campaigns over the summer and early autumn of 1710? The Whig campaign to protect the ministry and the existing House of Commons was ultimately unsuccessful, but should not be discounted; it had a significant impact in provoking a trend in Tory propaganda towards the appropriation of the war, leaving the new

ministry with no alternative but to pursue its peace policy in secret. In contrast, the result of the election strongly implies that in that respect the Tory campaign was a success. Impossible to determine is which of the narratives propagated by the discourse of either side had the greater impact: those relating to issues of war and peace, or those drawing on the Saxe-Weber controversy. To seek to draw a clear distinction between the two is to attempt the impossible – the two narrative streams were closely inter-related, with each complementing, and intermingling with, the other.

3 'No Peace without Spain', revisited

Introduction

The Queen's speech to Parliament at the opening of the new session on 7th December 1711 heralded the prospect of peace, confirming that a time and place had been established for treaty negotiations.¹ Joy was not, however, unconfined. Since the disclosure of the peace talks in September it had become clear (though not officially acknowledged) that Britain and France were contemplating a partition of the Spanish monarchy, with the Duke of Anjou retaining Spain and the West Indies. Opponents of the peace, led by the Tory Earl of Nottingham in the Lords and by the Whig Robert Walpole in the Commons, moved amendments to the traditional addresses of thanks to the Queen expressing their opposition. After a 'severe closeting', the Lords resolved to add to their address: 'that no peace can be safe or honourable to Great Britain or Europe, if Spain and the West Indies are to be allotted to any branch of the House of Bourbon'.² While the Commons rejected Walpole's motion, the Lords' amendment was a serious setback for the ministry; contention and uncertainty over the prerogative, and the respective roles of the monarch and Parliament in making peace, persisted, and the amended address represented a substantial obstacle to ministerial policy.

The Queen's speech, and the ensuing debates, were the culmination of a year during much of which the ministry had pursued peace negotiations with France under conditions of almost total secrecy. This strategy was a consequence of the new ministers' approach to the previous year's election; in attacking the outgoing ministry for its conduct of the war they had appropriated it to their own cause, emphasising their ability successfully to continue the conflict, rather than their ability to make peace. As Swift wrote in his journal following a dinner with St John and Harley³ in March 1711: 'we must have peace, let it be a good or a bad one, though no-body dares talk of it'.⁴ Concern over domestic reaction was

¹ *Annals*, vol. 10, 282-283.

² C. Jones, 'The Debate in the House of Lords on "No Peace without Spain", 7 December 1711: A New Source', *Parliamentary History* 28 (2009), 191-199; *Annals*, vol. 10, 288-289.

³ Harley was ennobled as Earl of Oxford in summer 1712; throughout the balance of this thesis he is referred to as Oxford.

⁴ Swift, *Journal*, 154.

not, however, the only reason for secrecy: Shrewsbury feared that once the proposed terms were disclosed to the Allies they would complain that Britain was serving only its own interests.⁵

Focussing on the year between the first Queen's speech of the new ministry in November 1710, and her announcement of the peace congress in December 1711, this chapter commences with a discussion of Parliament's 1710-1711 session (which continued until June 1711). During this time, print discourse concerning the peace was relatively muted – certainly in comparison to what would follow – while Parliament played a more prominent role than hitherto, particularly through its investigations into alleged financial mismanagement by the previous ministry, and its conduct of the war in the peninsula. This opening section leads with the discourse which Parliament generated, and shows how that discourse, and the print responses which it provoked, drew on the narratives described in previous chapters. Parliament's increasing role in 1711, both as a participant in, and facilitator of, discourse, and in its deliberations on the peace itself, is the first of the three principal subjects of this chapter.

The second is the development of a trend identified in chapter 2: a marked increase in activism in discourse, particularly on the part of the ministry and the Allies. Ministerial activism can be seen in efforts to manipulate discourse in Parliament, to control the flow of information concerning the peace negotiations, and to manage the immediate responses once the existence and content of the negotiations became known. News management first became pressing in April 1711, when a decision to inform the States of the negotiations prompted concerns that this would lead to a leak (though it did not). The disclosure came in August, when the diplomat Matthew Prior was apprehended returning from secret negotiations in France. Having agreed outline terms, ministers shared them with the Allies; but this led to a further leak, with the Emperor's envoy Count Gallas procuring their publication. At the same time, Marlborough's taking of Bouchain presented the ministry with another problem of management: justifying peace terms which were widely perceived as inadequate in the face of military success.

⁵ Shrewsbury to St John, 27 August 1711, Parke, vol. 1, 335-337.

Finally, focussing on the intensified discourse which followed the disclosure of the negotiations, this chapter discusses the degree to which the narratives employed in that discourse represented continuity with what had gone before, and the degree to which they were novel, and demonstrates the extent to which this represented a reaction to events. Two such events occurred in April: the deaths of both the Dauphin and the Emperor Joseph. While the Duke of Anjou consequently moved lower in the French succession, Archduke Charles was now not only the ruler of Austria, but also most likely to succeed his brother as Emperor (as he did in October).⁶ This undermined the rationale for seeking to secure the entirety of Spain for the Austrian claimant – ensuring that Spain was not united in the hands of the Bourbons now involved uniting it with the Empire - leading to renewed contention over the balance of power in these changed circumstances. Yet other events tended towards continuity: an assassination attempt on Oxford in March revived the narrative of treachery, while Marlborough's success at Bouchain did likewise for that of military victory.

The chapter's closing sections, on Swift's pamphlet *The Conduct of the Allies*, and on the opening of Parliament's 1711-1712 session, bring these three themes together: the role of Parliament; the management of discourse; and the content of that discourse.

Parliament and discourse

With the Queen's speech of November 1710 the new ministry sought to frame public debate; drafted by Oxford and approved in cabinet, the speech was reproduced in the press, and also published separately.⁷ The Queen called for new supplies - 'the carrying on of the war in all its parts, and particularly in Spain, with the utmost vigour is the likeliest means, ..., to procure a safe and honourable peace for us, and all our Allies, whose support and interest I have truly at heart'.⁸ In this single sentence the speech confirmed the appropriation of the war by the new ministry, drew attention away from the prospect of Spain being partitioned (even though France had already been told that Spain would

⁶ Winn, *Queen Anne*, 556.

⁷ Cabinet minutes 22 November 1710, Staffs RO, D(W) 1778/IV/188 f.65; J. A. Downie and D. Woolley, 'Swift, Oxford, and the Composition of Queen's Speeches, 1710-1714', *British Library Journal* 8.2 (1982), 121-146; *Her Majesty's most Gracious Speech to Both Houses of Parliament* (London, 1710); *Gazette*, 28 November 1710.

⁸ Chandler, vol. 4, 169-170.

probably be given up), and affirmed solidarity with the Allies in making peace.⁹ The reference to Spain also hinted at a major narrative of discourse in the opening months of 1711: that the war in the peninsula had been neglected by the previous ministry. And the Queen's allusion to Britain's substantial debts trailed the enquiries into financial mismanagement which would follow.¹⁰

While Burnet noted that the Queen had omitted the customary reference to the successes of the year's campaign, other Whig commentators were enthusiastic – this further step in the ministry's appropriation of the war appeared to have been a success.¹¹ The *Observer* wrote that the speech would give new life to Britain's Allies, and disappoint her enemies, adding, 'Tis the entire Spanish monarchy we have been fighting for, and not a partition'.¹² St John believed it had been very well received: 'the voice of clamour and detraction is stopped, and even the Whigs, in an aukward manner, applaud it'. While no reasonable man could think that Spain could be conquered, 'a good mien is to be put on it and the war there must be kept alive'.¹³

More subtle were the implications of Parliament's addresses to the Queen, the drafting of which was led by two staunch Tories: Rochester, the Lord President, in the Lords and Sir Thomas Hanmer in the Commons.¹⁴ Adopting the appropriation narrative in expressing support for the war, both addresses also reflected the developing theme of the Allies' failure to make an adequate contribution.¹⁵ But their reassertions of the Queen's prerogative to make peace, which also echoed another theme of discourse surrounding the recent election and the summer's changes in the ministry, were more significant. The Lords' address, stressing the need vigorously to pursue the war to secure a safe and honourable peace, went on to assure the Queen that they would 'concur in all reasonable methods to that end'.¹⁶ If this was ambiguous, their further address of early January was not: they would 'entirely rely' on the Queen in her pursuit

⁹ Trevelyan, 'Jersey Period', 102.

¹⁰ Chandler, vol. 4, 169-170.

¹¹ Burnet, vol. 6, 22-23.

¹² *Observer*, 29 November 1710.

¹³ St John to Drummond, 28 November and 26 December 1710, Parke, vol. 1, 24-31, 34-38.

¹⁴ W. Pittis, *The History of the Present Parliament and Convocation* (London, 1711), 9.

¹⁵ Chandler, vol. 4, 170-172; Cobbett, vol. 6, 928-929.

¹⁶ Cobbett, vol. 6, 928-929.

of peace.¹⁷ The Commons' address spoke of 'such a peace ..., as your Majesty, in your royal wisdom, shall judge to be safe and honourable for your subjects, and all your Allies'.¹⁸ The intention was implicitly to revoke earlier addresses, principally those calling for 'no peace without Spain'. In March 1711 St John wrote to Drummond in The Hague that the objective had been to leave the peace wholly to the Queen, and to promise to acquiesce in any terms she thought reasonable; the Dutch should be told that the ministry were no longer constrained by previous addresses.¹⁹ This emphasis on the prerogative was echoed in Tory pamphlets published in early 1711: while Parliament had the right to express an opinion on matters of war and peace, 'the Crown is not ty'd up by it'.²⁰

Nonetheless, the Lords, whose address had followed the Queen's speech in specifically mentioning the war in Spain, had contributed to ministers' problems. Having already recognised that the greater part of the Spanish monarchy would need to pass to the Duke of Anjou to secure peace, they faced a military situation much improved by the Allied victories of the summer of 1710, and a Queen's speech and Lords' address which had stressed the importance of the Spanish theatre. But events were to work in the ministry's favour. Even before Parliament met, Archduke Charles had been forced to evacuate Madrid, and within weeks the Allies had suffered a major defeat at Brihuega. Allied hopes of recovering Spain militarily were now almost non-existent; by the end of December the French had been told that if Britain insisted on 'Spain entire', it would do so 'foiblement and pro forma'.²¹ However, the ground needed to be prepared before the concession could be made: the failure to secure Spain should be blamed on the previous ministry. The Lords played a key role, commencing an enquiry into the conduct of the war in the peninsula; as Rochester put it, there was to be 'warm-work on the affairs of Spain'.²² The enquiry commenced on 4 January, and over the following days the Lords questioned the Earl of Peterborough, a Tory who had commanded in Spain until

¹⁷ HLJ, vol. 19, 183.

¹⁸ Chandler, vol. 4, 170-172.

¹⁹ St John to Drummond, 30 March and 6 April 1711, Parke, vol. 1, 133-144.

²⁰ S. Clement, *A Vindication of the Faults on Both Sides from the Reflections of the Medley ...* (London, 1710).

²¹ Trevelyan, 'Jersey Period', 103.

²² W. Nicolson, *The London Diaries of William Nicolson, Bishop of Carlisle 1702-1718* (C. Jones, and G. Holmes (ed.)) (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 525.

he was withdrawn in March 1707, and his replacement Galway (a Whig).²³ Criticism of the previous ministry centred on a decision of January 1707, attributed to Sunderland and other ministers, to conduct operations in the peninsula on an offensive rather than defensive basis.²⁴ Pamphlets and periodicals joined in. Dr Freind's 1707 account of Peterborough's conduct in Spain, a lengthy piece of hagiography dedicated to Peterborough himself, was re-advertised in January 1711.²⁵ This was followed by an account of the conduct of Galway; having served his nation 'with unblemish'd honour and integrity', he had nonetheless been censured.²⁶ The *Tatler* added a florid poem in Galway's praise, comparing him to Pompey and Caesar.²⁷

The initial stage of the enquiry culminated in a 'strong debate' on 12 January, in which the Lords resolved that the defeat at Almanza in 1707 could be attributed to ministerial strategy, and exonerated Peterborough; had his advice been taken, that and subsequent misfortunes would probably have been avoided.²⁸ St John had criticised the conduct of the war in Spain in the *Letter to the Examiner* the previous summer, and ministerial approval of the outcome of the Lords' enquiry was confirmed by the subsequent speech of thanks to Peterborough, delivered by Simon Harcourt, the Lord Keeper. Harcourt praised his 'wonderful success' in Spain, and also contrived an aside at Marlborough's expense which invoked the continuing narrative of his greed and self-interest: the Lords' appreciation would be all the more acceptable to Peterborough, as it was 'pure and unmix'd, ... unattended with other reward'.²⁹

The Lords returned to the subject of Spain within weeks, undertaking an enquiry into the shortfall in the number of troops available at the time of Almanza.³⁰ On 10 February they made a representation to the Queen, referring to the shortfall and reciting the resolution which they had passed: 'by not supplying the deficiencies of the men given by Parliament for the war in Spain, the ministers have greatly neglected that service, which was of the greatest importance'. The

²³ Nicolson, *Diaries*, 539-530.

²⁴ Cobbett, vol. 6, 961-969; *An Impartial View of the Two Late Parliaments* (1711), 282.

²⁵ Dr J. Freind, *An Account of the Earl of Peterborow's Conduct in Spain* (London, 1707); *Daily Courant*, 10 January 1711.

²⁶ *An Account of the Earl of Galway's Conduct in Spain and Portugal* (London, 1711).

²⁷ *Tatler*, 13 January 1711.

²⁸ Nicolson, *Diaries*, 532-533; Cobbett, vol. 6, 969-993.

²⁹ Pittis, *History of the Present Parliament*, 61-63.

³⁰ Cobbett, vol. 6, 993-994.

document, which was published, had been drawn up by a committee including Shrewsbury (who was aware of the peace negotiations) and no fewer than four other ministers, and was aimed squarely at the Whigs: Sunderland, Stanhope and Galway were at fault.³¹ Burnet saw the enquiry as a continuation of the opprobrium directed at the previous ministry: something had to be done to justify their dismissal.³² But in the light of the peace negotiations it had greater significance. As Maynwaring subsequently suggested, military failure in Spain was used by the ministry to justify giving up the Spanish monarchy in the negotiations, and the enquiry was a smokescreen: 'I am now convinc'd [the war in Spain] was never neglected till this year'.³³

A smokescreen it may have been, but the Lords' enquiry inevitably generated a response: the four *Letters to a Tory Member* of March 1711 vindicated the previous ministry's conduct both of the war and of the failed peace negotiations. Written by Hare, with Maynwaring's input, and published by Oldmixon, the letters (at least according to one sympathetic commentator) 'met with general approbation'.³⁴ Hare recognised that the criticisms of the conduct of the war in Spain were the most plausible of those which he needed to address, and devoted much of his first *Letter* to doing so.³⁵ As for the way in which Spain had been dealt with in the peace negotiations, Hare argued that ministers had been right to insist on Article 37, echoing key arguments made in favour of 'Spain entire' in 1709, and anticipating those of the following autumn.

Hare's defence did not go unanswered. Both *Remarks on Dr Hare's Four Letters* and *An Examination of the Conduct of the War* drew heavily on the Lords' representation to refute Hare's case on the conduct of the war in Spain; Parliament thus influenced print discourse both by provoking Hare's rebuttal, and providing material for his opponents.³⁶ *Remarks* played down the risk of

³¹ *HLJ*, vol. 19, 213; Cobbett, vol. 6, 995-997; *The Humble Representation of the Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament Assembled, Presented to Her Majesty on Saturday the Tenth Day of February, 1710* (London, 1711).

³² Burnet, vol. 6, 27-29.

³³ A. Maynwaring, *Remarks upon the Present Negotiations of Peace* (London, 1711), 27.

³⁴ F. Hare, *The Management of the War, in Four Letters to a Tory Member* (London, 1711) (comprising four parts, with various titles, which are referred to here by the title of the first); J. Oldmixon, *Memoirs of the Press, Historical and Political, for Thirty Years Past, from 1710 to 1740* (London, 1742), 19-20; *Political State*, vol. 1-2, 148.

³⁵ Hare, *Management of the War I*, 19 onwards.

³⁶ *Remarks upon Dr Hare's Four Letters to a Tory Member* (London, 1711); *An Examination of the Management of the War. In a Letter to my Lord **** (London, 1711).

Spain passing to Anjou, asserting that in arguing against that outcome, Hare had shown a 'mean conceit' of Britain's naval power.³⁷ This reflected the Tory contention that Britain should have concentrated its war effort on naval operations, an argument earlier made in advance of the previous year's election. Another pamphlet of early 1711 took up the point: it flew in the face of the sense of the nation for Britain to fight the enemy 'in foreign parts ... with great land armies', rather than maintain a superior naval strength.³⁸

These land armies were Marlborough's, and the argument over the respective merits of operations on land and at sea formed part of the continuing contention over his role and character. As has already been seen in chapter 1, this mattered: the Duke had come to personify the war strategy of the previous ministry, and its approach to the peace. Yet the new ministers' attitude to Marlborough was ambivalent; he remained commander-in-chief and, while the peace negotiations were undisclosed, they must appear committed to the war. Thus Swift, commenting on Hare's *Four Letters* in the *Examiner*, wrote that nobody would dispute the Duke's courage, conduct or success - 'the nation only wished to see him taken out of ill hands and into better'; Swift preferred to concentrate on his personal greed.³⁹ Parliament itself, if only by default, contributed to the opprobrium directed at the Duke. In late 1710 the customary resolution of thanks to Marlborough was not put to the newly elected Commons, apparently for fear it might be defeated.⁴⁰ The incident prompted a pamphlet explaining why: while progress had been made in the 1710 campaign, it amounted only to the taking of 'some few towns, at the expense of more blood and treasure than the possession of them is said to be worth'.⁴¹ In playing down Allied military successes, it again foreshadowed themes which would feature in the autumn.

As in 1710, discussion of the conduct of the war also addressed the role of the Allies. While the Queen's speech to Parliament of November 1710 had stressed that she had the interests of her Allies at heart, each House's address in

³⁷ *Remarks upon Dr Hare's Four Letters*, 11.

³⁸ Clement, *Vindication*, 18.

³⁹ *Examiner*, 15 February, 23 November 1711.

⁴⁰ *Annals*, vol. 9, 284.

⁴¹ *Reasons why a Certain Great G---I has not yet Received the Thanks of either of the Houses of Parliament* ([London], 1710), 6.

response reflected the narrative of Allied failure by hinting that they were showing insufficient commitment.⁴² As Britain was engaged in secret negotiations with France in breach of the Grand Alliance, expressing solidarity with the Allies, while casting doubt on their contribution to the war effort, was a necessary part of ministerial strategy. On 8 December 1710 St John wrote to Townshend and Marlborough in The Hague (presumably intending that the message be relayed to the Dutch) that Parliament had noted that the Allies were not pulling their weight, and might in due course make representations to the throne on the point.⁴³ The Dutch, well aware of the importance of opinion in Britain, had themselves already taken steps to refute the suggestion, which reflected similar allegations made in 1710.⁴⁴ The Council of State's recommendation to the States-General (published in the *British Mercury* on the day of the Commons' address, and a day after that of the Lords) called for all measures to carry on the war to be taken 'with zeal, dispatch and vigour'.⁴⁵ The ministry continued, however, to draw on the narrative of inequitable contributions to the war effort in diplomatic communications. In May the envoy to Vienna was instructed to represent 'very modestly, yet very plainly', Britain's substantial efforts over the course of the war.⁴⁶

If, in the 1710-1711 session, Parliament's contribution to discursive narratives adverse to the Allies (and to Marlborough) were modest, this was not the case in relation to the narrative of financial mismanagement. The Lords had taken the lead in investigating the conduct of the war in Spain; the Commons followed the money, and in doing so reflected themes prominent in the print discourse justifying the summer's ministerial changes, and hinted at in the Queen's speech and the Parliamentary addresses of November 1710. The Commons embarked on various enquiries into the financing of the war, culminating in the passing of an Act to revive the Commission of Accounts to investigate the public finances, and to ensure that the Queen and the nation could be satisfied that

⁴² Chandler, vol. 4, 169-172; Cobbett, vol. 6, 928-929.

⁴³ St John to Townshend and Marlborough, 8 December 1710, BL Add. ms 61132, ff.182-183.

⁴⁴ Writing to the States in 1709 a Dutch diplomat had recommended placing pro-Dutch reports from The Hague in the sympathetic *Post Man*: D. Haks, 'War, Government and the News', *News and Politics in Early Modern Europe 1500-1800* (J. Koopmans (ed.)) (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), 173.

⁴⁵ *British Mercury*, 29 November 1710.

⁴⁶ Instructions to Whitworth, 29 May 1711, BL Add. ms 22205, ff.120-123.

the substantial amounts raised for the war had been properly spent.⁴⁷ The investigations were apparently made on the initiative of the October Club of Tory backbenchers; Swift believed they were keener to have past faults enquired into than the ministry, yet the enquiries had at least St John's tacit approval.⁴⁸ The October Club may simply have been buying for blood; for ministers the prospect of combining validation of the appointment of the new ministry, with a narrative that suggested that the failure to succeed in war, and the need to make peace, could be laid at the door of the old, would have been compelling.

The Commons' deliberations culminated in a representation to the Queen, drafted by a committee led by Hanmer, in which they recited the financial irregularities they had identified; the most striking claim was that £35 million of the money raised for the war remained unaccounted for. The late ministers were guilty of 'evil practices, and worse designs'.⁴⁹ The representation, and the Queen's response – in which she welcomed the Commons' zeal for the nation's affairs - were printed by order of the Commons, and the *Examiner* provided a summary, further reinforcing the narrative of financial mismanagement which was already a feature of public discourse.⁵⁰ This narrative was reflected in the Queen's speech closing the session in June 1711.⁵¹ Noting the 'heavy debts' which had been incurred, she added pointedly that she would take care to preserve the public credit by frugal management, a phrase inserted by Oxford at the suggestion of Bromley (the Tory speaker); while he might have disapproved of the October Club's witch-hunt, Oxford was not above appropriating it to his own cause.⁵² And he did so again in the patent for his ennoblement. Written either by Oxford himself, or by Dr Freind, the patent claimed he had been responsible for ending the embezzlement of public money.⁵³

The narrative of financial mismanagement did not go unchallenged, however; *The Re-representation* set out to refute the claims made by the Commons'

⁴⁷ HCJ, vol. 16, 426 and passim; Public Accounts Act, *Statutes of the Realm*, vol. 9, 475.

⁴⁸ Swift, *Journal*, 115; St John to Drummond, 5 January 1711, Parke, vol. 1, 58-62; H. T. Dickinson, 'The October Club', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 33.2 (1970), 163.

⁴⁹ *The Humble Representation of the House of Commons to the Queen. With Her Majesty's Most Gracious Answer thereunto* (Dublin, 1711).

⁵⁰ *Examiner*, 10 May 1711.

⁵¹ *The Humble Representation*.

⁵² Chandler, vol. 4, 225-226; Bromley to Harley, 28 May 1711, HMC Portland, vol. IV, 696.

⁵³ Burnet, vol. 6, 68-69; *Annals*, vol. 9, 381-384; Pittis, *History of the Present Parliament*, 156.

representation.⁵⁴ The items identified were not the fault of the old ministry, and there was no evidence of misappropriation.⁵⁵ In particular, the £35 million was not 'missing'; the accounts for it had simply not been completed.⁵⁶ And this latter point was later taken up by Maynwaring (with Walpole's assistance).⁵⁷ Nonetheless, the representation struck home. Burnet wrote that it had been 'artfully spread through the nation, by which weaker minds were so possessed, that it was not easy to undeceive them; ... the nation ... seemed infatuated beyond the power of conviction'.⁵⁸ And its impact was not purely domestic. Drummond reported to Oxford from The Hague that he had had it translated into French and Dutch – an abstract had been printed in the Dutch *Gazette*, 'and it has very much opened people's eyes'.⁵⁹

It was not only the nation's finances which were under strain. By ordering its publication the Commons implicitly endorsed the picture of the human cost of the conflict painted by the sermon preached to the House by the Reverend Snape in March 1711. Taking his text from the book of Amos ('your young men I have slain with the sword; and have taken away your horses, and I have made the stink of your camps to come up into your nostrils...'), he spoke of 'the misery of a devouring war', describing the effect on widows, parents and children, and on commerce.⁶⁰ Parliament's contribution to discourse was manifested more subtly in the legislation to establish the South Sea Company, Oxford's scheme to provide for the repayment of some £7 million of the national debt through the capitalisation of a company to exploit trading rights to South America (on the assumption that the government would secure them). The recitals to the Act once again reflected ministerial appropriation of the war: the objective was to secure the nation's credit to enable the conflict to be prosecuted with 'utmost vigour', in pursuit of a safe and honourable peace.⁶¹ In the defence of the proposal which he produced for Oxford, Boyer made a

⁵⁴ *The Re-representation; or, a Modest Search after the Great Plunderers of the Nation* (London, 1711); ESTC attributes this to Defoe, but this seems questionable given its content.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 40.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 20-21.

⁵⁷ A. Maynwaring, *A State of the Five and Thirty Millions in the Report of a Committee of the House of Commons* (London, 1711); Oldmixon, *Life*, 299.

⁵⁸ Burnet, vol. 6, 58-59.

⁵⁹ Drummond to [Oxford], 14 July 1711 NS, HMC Portland, vol. V, 28-29.

⁶⁰ A. Snape, *A Sermon Preach'd before the Honourable House of Commons, on Wednesday the 28th of March, 1711* (London, 1711).

⁶¹ South Sea Act, *Statutes of the Realm*, vol. 9, 428.

second point – since France’s trade to the Spanish colonies had enabled France to continue the war, a lasting peace required that France be deprived of that trade in future; the wealth and trade of Europe would then be in balance.⁶² As with the Commons’ representation, Drummond arranged publication of the South Sea Act in The Hague; Torcy inferred (probably correctly) that the move had been designed to alert the Dutch to Britain’s aspirations to the trade, and put pressure on them to make peace.⁶³

During the session of November 1710 to June 1711, Parliament thus made a significant contribution to political discourse relating to the peace. It was the venue for the Queen’s speeches, the source of addresses, the driver of pamphlet contention, and the forum for enquiries into the alleged failings of the previous ministry. Through its contribution Parliament reinforced narratives concerning the extent of the royal prerogative, the military and financial mismanagement of the previous ministry and the shortcomings of the Allies that had been prominent in the contention surrounding the ministerial changes and election of 1710; in doing so it generated print material which could be used not only to influence opinion at home, but also to exert pressure on Allies abroad.

Four leaks and a victory

In their pursuit of peace, ministers either managed, or subsequently appropriated, much of Parliament’s contribution to political discourse - this was just one manifestation of the increased ministerial activism in the management of discourse which characterised the new ministry’s first year in office. The secrecy of the continuing negotiations with France placed a premium on ministers’ news management skills, and these were brought into play following the cabinet’s decision on 26 April 1711 to disclose the negotiations to the Dutch; this step was the catalyst for events which would generate contributions to political discourse from opponents of the peace both at home and abroad, and, ultimately, to a loss of ministerial control.⁶⁴ Concerns over maintaining secrecy would already have been raised by reports of a possible peace published in late

⁶² A. Boyer, *A True Account of the Design, and Advantages of the South-Sea Trade* ([London, 1711]), 9. The attribution to Boyer is in Bialuschewski, ‘A True Account’.

⁶³ Drummond to [Oxford], 14 July 1711 NS, HMC Portland, vol. V, 28-29; report of Prior’s journey to France, HMC Portland, vol. V, 34-42.

⁶⁴ Cabinet minutes, 26 April 1711, Staffs RO, D(W) 1778/V/188 f.153.

March and early April, reports over which the Dutch politician and diplomat Willem Buys had challenged the Earl of Strafford⁶⁵ (who had replaced Townshend in The Hague).⁶⁶ Hence, when sending the outline terms to Strafford, St John instructed him to stress to the Dutch the importance of secrecy.⁶⁷

The ministry also acted pre-emptively. On the day of the cabinet meeting, Swift floated the idea of a partition of the Spanish monarchy in the *Examiner*, and attacked the Parliamentary addresses on 'no peace without Spain': 'what must we do, in case we find it impossible to recover Spain?' – the only option would be to 'recant that precipitate address'.⁶⁸ The article was almost certainly a ministerial attempt to control the narrative should a leak occur; Swift had dined with St John as recently as 22 April, and Boyer cited the article as an example of the *Examiner's* obedience to ministerial instructions.⁶⁹ Another pamphleteer saw further into the plot: 'Nor is this a new scheme set on foot since the late Emperor's death; which some will pretend was the occasion of the present measures: this peace was projected long before he died, as appear'd ... by the weekly *Examiner*'.⁷⁰ The possibility of partition was not novel, having been canvassed by the *Review* earlier in April. But this had made little impact, probably because at that point the *Examiner* was more closely associated with the ministry.⁷¹

The *Observer* responded to the *Examiner's* article by invoking the Queen's own speeches: it would be necessary to raise a mob 'to force her Majesty to eat her words from the throne, against making peace with France without the entire restitution of Spain'.⁷² Two pamphlets followed: *A Letter to a Member of the October Club* (attributed by Boyer to Hare) and *Reflections upon the Examiner's*

⁶⁵ The diplomat Thomas Raby became Earl of Strafford in June 1711, and is referred to by that title throughout this thesis.

⁶⁶ *Post Man*, 27 March 1711; *Daily Courant*, 3 April 1711; Strafford to St John, 21 April 1711 NS, BL Add. ms 22205, ff.15-18.

⁶⁷ St John to Strafford, 27 April 1711, SP84/241, f.80.

⁶⁸ *Examiner*, 26 April 1711.

⁶⁹ Swift, *Journal*, 153, 190; A. Boyer, *An Account of the State and Progress of the Present Negotiation of Peace* (London, 1711), 26-27.

⁷⁰ *An Account of the Occasion and End of the War, with Remarks on the Present Treaty of Peace* (London, 1711), 27.

⁷¹ *Review*, 10 April 1711.

⁷² *Observer*, 28 April 1711.

Scandalous Peace, published in June and July respectively.⁷³ The latter accused the *Examiner* of being in the pocket of the ministry and attacked the construction put on the Parliamentary addresses: they were advice to the Queen, not restrictions on her, and she herself had declared on more than one occasion that she was of the same opinion regarding Spain.⁷⁴ The former focussed on the successes of the war to date, and the weakness of France. Anticipating elements of the balance of power debate which would develop in the autumn, it argued that giving Spain to the Duke of Anjou would be tantamount to giving it to Louis. This would damage Britain's trade, to the detriment of all classes in society - 'our poverty would be inevitable'. Responding to the Tories' appeal to the landed, it forecast a crash in land values, and that countrymen might have to feed their horses to their hounds.⁷⁵

Yet ministerial fears of a serious leak occurring in spring 1711 proved unfounded. Despite occasional rumours in the press the negotiations continued in secret; Prior visited Paris in the summer for further talks, returning in early August. On his arrival in Dover, however, he and two French agents were apprehended, a development which soon became public knowledge.⁷⁶ As *Mat's Peace*, attributed to Maynwaring, put it:

'The news from abroad doth a secret reveal
Which has been confirmed both at Dover and Deal.'⁷⁷

The disclosure prompted what was probably a further deliberate leak: on 23 August the *Post Boy* printed a report from The Hague of a 'general whisper' that peace talks were in progress.⁷⁸ Writing of the incident, Boyer described Roper as being 'privately countenanced' by ministers, and suggested that the style of the piece indicated that Swift himself had written it. For him the motivation was clear: to place a favourable construction on the clandestine negotiations

⁷³ *Reflections upon the Examiner's Scandalous Peace* (London, 1711); F. Hare, *A Letter to a Member of the October Club* (London, 1711) – the attribution is in Boyer, *State and Progress; Post Man*, 19 June 1711; *Daily Courant*, 13 July 1711.

⁷⁴ *Reflections*, 3, 17, 20.

⁷⁵ Hare, *Letter to a Member*, passim.

⁷⁶ *Supplement*, 30 May 1711; *British Mercury*, 22 June 1711, *Annals*, vol. 10, 231-232. It has been suggested that the disclosure of Prior's return was deliberate, but this seems unlikely: J. D. Alsop, 'The Detection of Matthew Prior's Peace Mission of 1711', *British Journal for Eighteenth Century Studies* 7 (1984), 61-67.

⁷⁷ A. Maynwaring, *An Excellent New Song, Call'd Mat's Peace* ([London], [1711]), Ellis, *Poems*, vol. 7, 504-513.

⁷⁸ *Annals*, vol. 10, 232-233.

between France and Britain, which could no longer be kept secret, and 'to feel the pulse of the nation', about the proposed schemes for peace.⁷⁹

If that was the intention, it was unsuccessful – Swift wrote of 'railings against the peace', and conceived the idea of defusing the situation with a fictional account of Prior's activities: a 'way of furnishing fools with something to talk of'.⁸⁰ While it is unclear whether Swift's *A New Journey to Paris* had ministerial approval, Boyer for one drew a connection between the pamphlet and the negative response to recent leaks in the *Post Boy* concerning a possible partition of Spain.⁸¹ *A New Journey* purported to be an account of Prior's mission (though he was not named) by his French servant; delivered to the printer on 5 September, it sold 1,000 copies in a week, with a further 500 being printed, and Swift wrote of its 'very great effect'.⁸² There were three principal messages, the first being that the French had initiated the peace talks, and only recently, thereby seeking to pre-empt an attack on the manner in which the talks had been conducted. The second posed a more difficult challenge: Swift on the one hand emphasised the continuing strength of France, preparing readers for the concessions to come. Yet the anonymous diplomat also commented on the extreme misery he had observed among the population. This may have been intended to reinforce the final message – that Prior had been a relentless negotiator. The account records one French diplomat complaining that the demands made of Louis were such that one would think the Allies were at the gates of Paris, implying that Prior was still demanding 'Spain entire'. In his final audience Louis begs Prior to reconsider, but Prior replies that he has told him before: 'all or none'.⁸³

Despite St John's complaint, in mid-September, that news of Prior's mission had 'everywhere [been] propagated with great industry', public discussion of the peace had not yet slipped out ministerial control.⁸⁴ Military success would change that. The fall of Bouchain to the Allies, reported in the *Gazette* on 13 September, fuelled the argument that now was simply not the time to be

⁷⁹ *Annals*, vol. 10, 234-235.

⁸⁰ Swift to King, 1 October 1711, Woolley, *Correspondence*, vol. 1, 383-386; Swift, *Journal*, 256-267.

⁸¹ *Annals*, vol. 10, 235-236.

⁸² Swift, *Journal*, 278; Swift to King, 1 October 1711, Woolley, *Correspondence*, vol. 1, 383-386.

⁸³ J. Swift, *A New Journey to Paris*, ... (London, 1711), passim and 6, 10, 12, 14.

⁸⁴ St John to Peterborough, 18 September 1711, Parke, vol. 1, 361.

seeking peace on inadequate terms. Consistently with the ministry's appropriation of the war, the victory was marked by the firing of cannon at Westminster and the Tower; de l'Hermitage noted that the news was marked 'with much joy', which may explain why some writers sought to minimise its significance.⁸⁵

Hare marked what the *Observer* hailed as 'another glorious exploit' by Marlborough with two pamphlets, both published around the end of September: *The Charge of God to Joshua*, the text of a sermon preached by Hare before Marlborough earlier in the month; and *Bouchain*, a purported dialogue between the *Medley* and the *Examiner*.⁸⁶ Hare initially claimed that he had not been responsible for arranging the printing of the sermon and denied writing *Bouchain*; Oldmixon attributed both actions to Maynwaring.⁸⁷ In the dialogue the *Medley* extolled the virtues of the Duke; the *Examiner* was forced to recant, accepting that the Duke was a great general, and revealing that he had never really believed what he had written of him, but rather wrote 'what best served the purposes of those that employ'd me'.⁸⁸ For Hare, *Bouchain* had dispelled the clouds gathering over the war effort: 'all is again clear'd up into a bright and glorious day'.⁸⁹ The text for his sermon was God's instruction to Joshua to be strong and of good courage, and for Hare the lesson of *Bouchain* was clear: Britain should fight on until a good peace could be obtained.⁹⁰

St John betrayed his frustration as control of public discourse slipped from his grasp: 'the licence of the press in Britain, and the licence of the tongue everywhere, is at present employed about the supposed negotiations of peace'. As for Hare: 'my Lord Marlborough's stupid chaplain continues to spoil paper'. While Marlborough had sought to dissociate himself from the pamphlets, St John clearly did not believe him, adding that those responsible: 'had best for their patron's sake, as well as their own, be quiet', he threatened to have them

⁸⁵ De l'Hermitage to States General, 25 September 1711 NS, BL Add. ms 17677EEE ff.311-312.

⁸⁶ F. Hare, *The Charge of God to Joshua, in a Sermon Preach'd before his Grace the Duke of Marlborough ... 9 September 1711* (London, 1711); F. Hare, *Bouchain, in a Dialogue between the Late Medley and Examiner* (London, 1711).

⁸⁷ Oldmixon, *Life*, 324.

⁸⁸ Hare, *Bouchain*, 35.

⁸⁹ Hare, *Charge*, 17-19.

⁹⁰ Hare, *Charge*, 6.

in the pillory, and to revive the *Examiner* (which had closed in the summer) to 'write them to death'.⁹¹

Ministerial reaction was indeed rapid, comprising a commentary on Hare's sermon, and a response to *Bouchain* entitled *The Duke of M---h's Vindication*; both are attributed to Mrs Manley, though Swift probably had a hand in the former, and Manley sent a draft of it to Oxford, from whom she had been seeking patronage.⁹² Manley belittled the passing of Bouchain's defensive lines earlier in the summer, and claimed Bouchain itself was of no importance – 'a minor fortress'. Following Swift's approach, she did not dispute the Duke's prowess, but ridiculed Hare for raising him to unprecedented heights. The greatest victories had been won more by the courage of the soldiers than by the skill of their commander; yet he had all the riches as a result, and placed no value on 'the blood of those poor wretches'.⁹³

The ministry's problems increased in early October, once the seven principal terms agreed with France had been relayed to the Allies' ministers in London. Gallas delivered them to the *Courant*, which printed them on 13 October.⁹⁴ Provision was made for the recognition of the Protestant succession, barriers (undetermined) for the States and the Empire, the demolition of Dunkirk and the restoration of commerce for Britain and the States. As to the Spanish monarchy, the terms simply provided that the crowns of France and Spain should never be united under the same prince, with no indication of which ruler should have Spain (or any part of it, were it to be partitioned). Two days later the *British Mercury* reported that the intention was for Anjou to have Spain and the Indies, with Spain's Italian possessions passing to Austria. This suggestion was confirmed by the *Post Boy* the following day when, before printing the terms and a detailed justification of them, it reproduced another six articles to which it claimed France had agreed. Whether this move was prompted by the ministry in order to bolster their position is impossible to say, but given the paper in which the additional terms appeared it seems highly likely.

⁹¹ St John to the Queen, 17 October 1711, Parke, vol. 1, 412-413; St John to Harrison, 21 September 1711, *ibid.*, 362-364.

⁹² D. Manley, *A Learned Comment on Dr Hare's Excellent Sermon* (London, 1711); D. Manley, *The D. of M---h's Vindication* (London, 1711); Swift, *Journal*, 305; Manley to Oxford, 19 July, 2 October 1711, HMC Portland, vol. V, 55, 95-96.

⁹³ Manley, *Vindication*, 14.

⁹⁴ *Daily Courant*, 13 October 1711.

In a masterful understatement, ministers were said to have found Gallas's leak 'not to be helpful', and it seems to have been public knowledge that Gallas had submitted what one correspondent described as a 'blistering memorial' against the terms.⁹⁵ The disclosure of the terms had indeed prompted a furious reaction, with opposition initially focussing on their inadequacy.⁹⁶ On 16 October the Whiggish *Flying Post* printed them alongside the text of the 1709 Preliminaries with no further comment; readers could draw their own conclusions.⁹⁷ De l'Hermitage reported that new pamphlets were appearing daily criticising the peace.⁹⁸ *A Vindication of the Present M-----y* (possibly the work of Maynwaring) adopted an ironic tone: the terms were obviously spurious, as nobody could think something so loose and ambiguous the result of any negotiation. Comparing the current terms and the 1709 Preliminaries, the pamphlet satirised the ultimatum attributed to Prior in the *New Journey* – if the choice was 'all or nothing', it seemed Britain was to have nothing.⁹⁹ Maynwaring's *Remarks on the Preliminary Articles*, published within a week of the initial disclosure, again drew unfavourable comparisons to the previous preliminaries.¹⁰⁰ Having recited the Allies' recent victories, Maynwaring questioned what could have induced France to think that the Allies would accept the proposals.¹⁰¹

The *Spectator* wrote of a visit to a coffee house just after the terms were published: 'several preliminaries to the peace were proposed by some, and rejected by others; the demolishing of Dunkirk was so eagerly insisted upon, and so warmly controverted, as had like to have produced a challenge'.¹⁰² De l'Hermitage also reported coffee house reaction: the terms had not been found palatable ('fort goûté'), even among those who might have been expected to approve them.¹⁰³ Boyer commented that even adherents of the ministry saw them as 'captious, insidious and insufficient to found a treaty upon'.¹⁰⁴ He dismissed the *Post Boy's* attempt to address the initial unfavourable reaction by printing the six additional provisions; these had not, he claimed, been seen by

⁹⁵ Bridges to Trumbull, 22 October 1711, BL Add. ms 72494, f.101.

⁹⁶ Swift, *Journal*, 308.

⁹⁷ *Flying Post*, 16 October 1711.

⁹⁸ De l'Hermitage to the States, 6 November 1711 NS, BL Add. ms 17677EEE, ff.348-349.

⁹⁹ A. Maynwaring, *A Vindication of the Present M-----y* (London, 1711).

¹⁰⁰ A. Maynwaring, *Remarks on the Preliminary Articles Offer'd by the French King* (London, 1711).

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, 21.

¹⁰² *Spectator*, 16 October 1711.

¹⁰³ De l'Hermitage to the States, 27 October 1711 NS, BL Add. ms 17677EEE, ff.338-340.

¹⁰⁴ *Political State*, vol. 1-2, 579-580.

any of the foreign ministers, 'nor had any great effect upon the generality of the nation, who continued to entertain great jealousies about the present negotiation'.¹⁰⁵ Two weeks later St John complained of 'the great noise which is very industriously made everywhere against the ... peace', but claimed that 'this does not give the least shock to [the Queen's] resolutions'.¹⁰⁶ Boyer was less convinced, believing that the difficulties the ministry faced both at home and abroad gave them pause.¹⁰⁷

The ministry turned to repression to regain control, arresting the *Courant's* printer and demanding to know who had provided the leaked document.¹⁰⁸ Action was also taken against Gallas, who was excluded from court; the incident was probably a significant factor in his dismissal.¹⁰⁹ Repression did not stop there. On 17 October St John boasted to the Queen that he had discovered fifteen people responsible for 'scandalous libels', and had thirteen in custody.¹¹⁰ These 'libels' included Boyer's *Account of the State and Progress of the Present Negotiation* and Maynwaring's *Mat's Peace*, alongside the *Observer* and the *Protestant Post Boy*. The impact on those arrested can be inferred from the scale of the bail bonds: Boyer was required to provide £200 himself, and bonds of a further £100 each from two others.¹¹¹ But the repression had little effect: the number of pamphlets continued to grow, and 'the pens of both parties were still busy'.¹¹²

It was not only writers against the peace who fell victim to ministerial sanction. In mid-October Gallas had submitted a memorial to St John complaining of the liberties taken by the *Post Boy*, apparently relating to a report of the peace negotiations which Roper had printed on 20 September; Roper was questioned, but no further action seems to have been taken.¹¹³ He again overstepped the mark on 10 November, when the *Post Boy* described the Duke of Savoy as 'void of all moral probity', and claimed that the King of Portugal had entered into

¹⁰⁵ *Annals*, vol. 10, 249-250; *Post Boy* 16 October 1711.

¹⁰⁶ St John to Strafford, 30 October 1711, SP84/241, ff.188-190.

¹⁰⁷ *Political State*, vol. 1-2, 658.

¹⁰⁸ De l'Hermitage to the States, 3 November 1711 NS, BL Add. ms 17677EEE, ff.346-347.

¹⁰⁹ *Daily Courant*, 1 November 1711; De l'Hermitage to the States, 10 November 1711 NS, BL Add. ms 17677EEE, ff.346-347; Burnet, vol. 6, 71; alternatively, Swift, *Journal*, 310.

¹¹⁰ St John to the Queen, 17 October 1711, Parke, vol. 1, 410-412.

¹¹¹ SP44/77, ff.126-129; *Annals*, vol. 10, 264.

¹¹² *Political State*, vol. 1-2, 646.

¹¹³ *Annals*, vol. 10, 241-242.

the war on the basis that 'if the bear's skin must be divided, he should have a pouch'.¹¹⁴ He apologised in print, and on the intercession of the Portuguese and Savoyard ministers the case against him was dropped. These incidents revealed just what a loose cannon Roper could be, although Boyer claimed that they substantiated the view of many that he was 'favour'd and countenanc'd by some great men'.¹¹⁵ Others agreed, with a one Tory writing that he had not expected the punishment to be very great, 'for all the world concedes [the *Post Boy*] is too good a paper for him to be the author of, and too much the sence of our present m----- for him to fear being left in the lurch'.¹¹⁶

Roper was just one of the players as, in the period leading up to, and immediately following, the ultimate disclosure of the peace terms the ministry sought to manage public discourse. They did so through generating and managing leaks, through responding to opponents of the peace and through repression, with mixed success. The Allies participated too, through Gallas's disclosure of the terms and by encouraging the ministry to suppress material of which they did not approve. Opponents of the peace were also active, although whether their efforts were as coordinated as St John, in his darker moments, chose to believe is questionable.

Themes and narratives

The disclosure of Prior's diplomatic mission to France, and of the terms, provoked a further increase in the intensity of contention over the peace during the autumn of 1711. This focussed on the terms on which the peace should be made, its timing, and the manner in which the negotiations had been, and should be, conducted. Of the narratives employed, some were novel, such as those which related to the legality and advisability of the process adopted in pursuing peace. And that concerning the balance of power, while central to the discussion of the failed negotiations of 1709 and 1710, was conducted on the basis of an apparently fundamental change in circumstances – the death of the

¹¹⁴ *Post Boy*, 10 November 1711, quoted in *Political State*, vol. 1-2, 671-675.

¹¹⁵ *Annals*, vol. 10, 280

¹¹⁶ Wentworth to Strafford, 25 November 1711, Cartwright, 211-213.

Emperor.¹¹⁷ Meanwhile, other familiar narratives, including those of victory, tyranny and treachery, continued to have currency, and the debate over the respective capabilities of Britain and France to fight on was revisited.

Opponents of the peace constructed new grounds for their opposition on the basis of legality and process: the peace failed to satisfy the nation's original war aims, as set out in Britain's alliances; it was inconsistent with Parliament's addresses against peace without Spain; and the manner in which the negotiations had been (and were proposed to be) conducted was unsafe, and again inconsistent with Britain's treaty obligations. Maynwaring asserted that the aims of the war had been not only to recover Spain, but also to curb the exorbitant power of France and to secure Britain's colonies and commerce; the proposed peace fell short in all respects.¹¹⁸ For Maynwaring, the 1709 Preliminaries demonstrated that the Allies considered themselves mutually bound to secure the entirety of Spain for the Austrian claimant, as agreed when Portugal joined the Grand Alliance in 1703, and Hare even suggested that they represented a binding obligation to do so.¹¹⁹ Those advocating the peace either ignored the 1703 treaty, or suggested that, as a modification of the Alliance's original objectives, it was somehow less binding; and, in any event, the Emperor's death was a material change in circumstances which meant that 'Spain entire' should now be abandoned.¹²⁰

This contention over the treaties brought Parliament back into play. The *Observer* asserted that the Queen would do nothing contrary to the Grand Alliance without the consent of Parliament, as it had approved the treaty.¹²¹ And the addresses against 'peace without Spain' needed to be overcome, as did the Queen's replies to them and her speeches to Parliament on the same subject.¹²² The Queen's honour thus also came into the calculation – anyone

¹¹⁷ Even before the death of Emperor Joseph I (aged 42) it was likely that his brother, Archduke Charles, would succeed him: Joseph had no surviving sons, and his empress was probably infertile. Yet only his death seems to have focussed attention on the significance of Charles's accession to the balance of power.

¹¹⁸ Maynwaring, *Remarks on the Preliminary Articles*, 9-10.

¹¹⁹ Maynwaring, *Remarks upon the Present Negotiations*, 6; F. Hare, *A Caveat to the Treaters; or, the Modern Schemes of Partition Examined* (London, 1711), 45-46.

¹²⁰ D. Defoe, *Reasons why this Nation Ought to Put a Speedy End to this Expensive War* (London, 1711), 27-31.

¹²¹ *Observer*, 24 October 1711.

¹²² Maynwaring, *Remarks upon the Present Negotiations*, 5.

negotiating peace on the proposed terms had no regard for her character.¹²³ Counter-arguments focussed on the change in circumstances since the addresses were made, with Defoe suggesting (wrongly, as it happened) that following the Emperor's death no Parliament would make an address calling for 'Spain entire'. For other advocates of the peace, invoking the addresses was to challenge the Queen's prerogative.¹²⁴ The point that the addresses at the opening of the 1710-1711 session had been intended to override the previous ones appears to have been overlooked, allowing Maynwaring to declare that those earlier addresses 'must be revers'd before our ministers can proceed in safety'.¹²⁵

Opponents of the ministry also portrayed the manner in which the talks had been conducted as a breach of Britain's obligation to make peace in concert with her Allies.¹²⁶ Their supporters responded that all that was under discussion was a set of proposals from the enemy; indeed, this was the line St John had taken when challenged in the Commons.¹²⁷ But this defence was widely questioned, on the basis that the terms represented the result of a secret negotiation; and that, like the abandonment of 'Spain entire', represented a breach of the terms of the Alliance. Alongside the assertion that the ministry had simply received proposals ran a second line of defence: Britain had borne the greatest burden during the war, and could be trusted with the conduct of the peace as well as the Dutch.¹²⁸ In this way, the dispute over the way in which the negotiations had been conducted nodded to earlier assertions that the Allies were not meeting their obligations to contribute to the war effort, and foreshadowed a key ground of contention in the latter stages of the print debate.

The third ground of attack on the ministry's conduct of the negotiations, prominent in the immediate reaction to the disclosure of the terms, was that those terms were simply insufficient as the basis on which peace could

¹²³ Ibid, 9.

¹²⁴ *Reasons why a Party among us, and also among the Confederates, are Obstinate Bent against a Treaty of Peace with France at this Time* (London, 1711), 38-39.

¹²⁵ D. Defoe, *An Essay at a Plain Exposition* (London, 1711), 28; Maynwaring, *Remarks upon the Present Negotiations*, 25.

¹²⁶ Maynwaring, *Remarks on the Preliminary Articles*, 11.

¹²⁷ *Reasons why a Party among us*, 39-40; contrast the *Post Boy*, 16 October 1711, which printed them as 'preliminaries on the part of France'; De l'Hermitage to the States, 22 December 1711 NS, BL Add. ms 17677EEE, ff.388-392.

¹²⁸ Defoe, *Reasons why*, 33.

prudently be discussed – France sought a congress in order to sow discord between the Allies.¹²⁹ And this narrative of French untrustworthiness linked back to the argument that the guarantees given by France in any treaty would be of no value – those who relied on the French king to honour his obligations would be grossly deceiving themselves.¹³⁰ For Defoe, however, such concerns had become irrelevant. Why not negotiate; if the talks failed, one could simply recommence the war.¹³¹ And as for the argument that Louis could not be relied upon to keep his word: if one could not trust the French, must the two nations fight forever?¹³²

If questions of legality and process were novel, the issue of the balance of power, and whether Britain should persist in seeking to secure the entire Spanish monarchy for Austria, was not. But now, *The Ballance of Europe* argued, the election of the Archduke as Emperor had caused a change in the terms of the debate: rather than combining Spain with the Empire, might it not now be safer for Spain to pass to the Duke of Anjou under the partition the ministry was pursuing?¹³³ In *Reasons why this Nation Ought to Put a Speedy End to this Expensive War*, Defoe, now advocating partition and the peace, addressed the question of how the balance should be assessed if Anjou were to have Spain: the competing interests of France and Spain were such that they would be incapable of union – partition would not result in an accretion to French power. And, with proper guarantees, there was no reason why Britain should not have a satisfactory trade with a Spain ruled by Anjou.¹³⁴ Those opposing the peace, and continuing to promote ‘Spain entire’, took the opposite view. Maynwaring argued that as King of Spain Philip would be dependent on Louis for the protection of his colonies and the conduct of his trade, and would be ‘govern’d by the councils of France’. Guarantees in a peace treaty could not mitigate the risks; given France’s record of duplicity, no power in Europe would be able to force Louis to comply.¹³⁵

¹²⁹ Maynwaring, *Remarks upon the Present Negotiations*, 24.

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, 22.

¹³¹ *Review*, 27 October 1711.

¹³² *Review*, 1 November 1711.

¹³³ *The Ballance of Europe, or an Enquiry into the Respective Dangers of Giving the Spanish Monarchy etc* (London, 1711), 5-6.

¹³⁴ Defoe, *Reasons why*.

¹³⁵ Maynwaring, *Remarks on the Present Negotiations*, 13-14, 23.

The question of what was meant by the balance tended to be lost in the heat of debate. *The Ballance of Power* came closest to addressing the issue, contending that the balance to one powerful state would ideally be provided by another of equal or near-equal power (not an alliance), so that a smaller state could ally itself with either to achieve equilibrium.¹³⁶ In practice, the print debate proceeded in straightforward terms, assuming that the concept of the balance was understood, and asking simply whether that balance would be best served by 'Spain entire' passing to the Emperor, or by a partition in which Spain and the Indies were held by Anjou. That being so, what criteria were to be employed in assessing the balance? The first was military power, reflected in a dispute between the *Observer* and the *Review* over the number of troops the Emperor would be able to raise.¹³⁷ Defoe sought to bolster his argument on the scale of the Emperor's forces by taking account of the number of titles he would have if he were to have all of Spain, inviting the scorn of the *Observer*.¹³⁸ But Defoe was making an appeal to history: the current Emperor would have even more titles than Charles V, 'a terror to Europe, ... fatal to the peace of Christendom for 40 years'.¹³⁹ The *Observer* was dismissive: subsequent wars had so weakened the Empire that no comparison could be made.¹⁴⁰

Military power went hand in hand with commercial power. As Defoe had put it when describing the connection between trade and war: 'one great reason we carry on the last, is to preserve the first; and one great means by which we are made able to carry on the last, is our success in the first'.¹⁴¹ *The Ballance of Power* implicitly drew on this analysis in arguing against the peace, and in favour of 'Spain entire': if the Emperor were to have Spain his power would be constrained by the Empire's lack of manufacturing capacity to take advantage of the commodities to which it would have access. By contrast, the bullion which France would gain through trading with Spain's colonies would enable her debts to be paid off in ten years, and then provide substantial sums to re-establish her

¹³⁶ *The Ballance of Power: or, a Comparison of the Strength of the Emperor and the French King* (London, 1711), 9-10.

¹³⁷ *Observer*, 31 October and 10 November 1711; *Review*, 3 November 1711.

¹³⁸ *Review*, 18 October 1711; *Observer*, 27 October 1711.

¹³⁹ *Review*, 18 October 1711.

¹⁴⁰ *Observer*, 24 October 1711.

¹⁴¹ *Review*, 10 April 1711.

land and sea forces.¹⁴² In Hare's view, the Bourbons would then become 'too powerful for all the rest of the world'.¹⁴³

The debate over the balance was coloured by assessments of the condition of France. *The Ballance of Europe* argued that the war had so reduced the country that 'the exorbitance of [Louis'] power, seem'd to be effectually removed'.¹⁴⁴ But this argument raised a paradox: if France had been so weakened that Spain being ruled by a Bourbon would not disturb the balance of power, why did Britain not insist on more rigorous terms? Commenting on Defoe's *Reasons why*, Hare wrote: 'when our author says ... that the exorbitant power of France is so broken and reduc'd by this long war, as to put their King out of condition to turn his thoughts to universal monarchy for a hundred years to come, [he] is contradicted by himself ... when he insinuates that it was a delusion to say that the King of France was in a greater exigence: and that peace was more necessary to him than to the Allies'.¹⁴⁵

Determining where the balance lay was not an abstract exercise. What mattered were the implications if France or Austria were to have exorbitant power in Europe. It was implicit that either would be inimical to the objective of a safe and lasting peace, but there were other considerations. One was the effect on commerce, with opponents of the ministry's acceptance of partition asserting that it would enable France to deny Britain the commercial advantages which it sought. Hare claimed that there would be a loss of £1.6 million annually in trade to the colonies, and of £600,000 on the East Indies trade, and that the combined French and Spanish fleets would exclude Britain from the slave trade.¹⁴⁶ Proponents of partition countered that adequate protection for British commerce could be provided by the peace terms, although thereby exposed themselves to arguments drawing on the longstanding narrative of French bad faith.¹⁴⁷

More serious, however, were the implications for political and religious liberty; here the familiar narratives of tyranny and treachery came into play. Those

¹⁴² *Ballance of Power*, 10-13.

¹⁴³ Hare, *Caveat*, 55.

¹⁴⁴ *Ballance of Europe*, 10.

¹⁴⁵ Hare, *Caveat*, 43.

¹⁴⁶ Hare, *Caveat*, 58-60.

¹⁴⁷ *Review*, 13 October 1711.

favouring partition pointed to the risk to Protestantism posed by the Emperor, with Defoe (drawing on his parallel with Charles V) claiming that no-one with the Protestant interest at heart could approve of giving him the whole of Spain; only through partition would Protestantism be secured 'beyond the insults of popery'.¹⁴⁸ Yet Hare and others made precisely the opposite point – the advocates of partition had no regard to the Protestant interest. Preaching on 5 November 1711, one cleric followed a lengthy history of Britain's narrow escapes from Catholicism with this warning: 'Turn but your eyes, I say, to the Protestants in France. See their miseries! Hear their groans! Behold them in dungeons! See them in gallies, fed with the bread and water of affliction, and loaden every day with stripes'.¹⁴⁹ And it was not simply Louis' professed Catholicism which was at issue (the Queen was, after all, allied to the Emperor) but the threat which he posed to all Christendom.¹⁵⁰

Such confessional arguments had greater appeal to Whig opponents of the peace, and were closely linked to their concerns over the Protestant succession, and the implications for the succession should France's power be enhanced; in arguing for 'Spain entire', the *Observer* asserted that this was the way to protect liberty and religion at home.¹⁵¹ Hare weighed in: 'If we give Spain and the Indies to the King of France, he will be sure to give us as good a thing for it, a prince bred from the cradle in ... Italian bigotry and French tyranny'.¹⁵² The proponents of the current terms, it was implied, were traitors, in league with France, the Pope and the Pretender. As one ballad put it when anticipating the peace:

'The Hanover House God preserve,
And blast the Pretender's hope:
The Protestant cause let's preserve
And give to the Devil the Pope.'¹⁵³

Such narratives played on fears of Jacobitism which had persisted through 1711. Reflected in a revival of the 'warming-pan' plot – the allegation that the Pretender was not the son of James II – these had been exacerbated by

¹⁴⁸ *Review*, 18 October, 13 November 1711.

¹⁴⁹ G. Dent, *A Thanksgiving Sermon, Preach'd November 5 1711* (London, 1711), 30.

¹⁵⁰ E.g. *The Most Christian Turk: or, a View of the Life and Bloody Reign of Lewis XIV* (London, 1690). See also discussion in Claydon, 'The Revolution in Foreign Policy', 231-235.

¹⁵¹ *Observer*, 31 October 1711.

¹⁵² Hare, *Management of the War IV*, 70.

¹⁵³ *The Thanksgiving*.

continuing rumours of an invasion fleet gathering in Brest or Dunkirk, and by the attempted assassination of Oxford by a Frenchman, Guiscard.¹⁵⁴ Addresses of both Houses of Parliament made it clear that they blamed Guiscard's attempt on papists and the French, implicitly negating any suggestion that the ministry was in league with the Pretender. However, the *Observer* drew a connection between Guiscard's actions and the threat of invasion, musing on the possibility of a cadre of assassins poised to murder the Privy Council should the Pretender come over.¹⁵⁵

Concerns over Jacobitism had been raised further by the controversy surrounding the Duchess of Gordon's presentation of a medal to the Faculty of Actuaries in Edinburgh in July. Showing an image of the kingdom on one side, and the Pretender on the other, it carried a legend anticipating his return.¹⁵⁶ The event led the *Observer* to accuse the newswriter Dyer of Jacobitism, for describing the medal as a 'handsome present'. And the *Examiner* was also drawn into the attack: 'everyone knows what hopes the *Examiner* gave the French court by his weekly libels, that they might have peace on easier terms than formerly; and that the faction encourag'd them to insist on inthroning the Pretender, is now above board, by their libels, their medals and their military songs'.¹⁵⁷ *A Welcome to the Medal*, which probably appeared in October, also made a direct link between the medal, Jacobitism and the prospects of a bad peace:

'The Dutch shall be ruin'd, the Whiggs shall be damn'd,
And Austria's House be confounded,
The Gauls shall rejoyce, while our Allies are shamm'd,
And our quarrels with France are compounded.'

It went on to refer to friends of the Pretender being 'in high reputations', presumably the reason for it being caught up in St John's crackdown on libels.¹⁵⁸

Accusations of treachery were not, however, limited to Whig charges that the Tories were undermining the Protestant succession. At the time of the Guiscard

¹⁵⁴ *Observer*, 14, 28 March 1711; *Post Boy*, 31 May 1711; *Gazette*, 4 August 1711.

¹⁵⁵ *Observer*, 14 March 1711.

¹⁵⁶ *Review*, 31 July 1711.

¹⁵⁷ *Observer*, 8 August, 15 September 1711.

¹⁵⁸ *A Welcome to the Medal, or an Excellent New Song* (Oxford, 1711).

incident the *Observer* had complained that papists and Jacobites were using the *Examiner* and the *Post Boy* to insinuate that the Whigs and French assassins were conspiring together against the ministry.¹⁵⁹ And the Commons' representation had described those Whig ministers who had been responsible for admitting some 12,000 Palatine refugees to the country in 1709 as enemies of the Queen and the kingdom.¹⁶⁰ Mrs Manley now made a connection to military casualties: these had been used as the excuse for accepting the refugees, 'as it were to fill up the chasm of war'; British women would be forced to take 'these wretched strangers' as husbands, and 'the British name may be endanger'd once more to be lost in the German'.¹⁶¹ She weighed in again in November after Dartmouth prevented a procession in London celebrating Queen Elizabeth's birthday, in which it was allegedly planned to burn the Pope, the Pretender, Oxford and Dr Sacheverell in effigy. For Manley, this was a Whig plot against the government, built around a rumour that the Queen was dead, and Oxford's assassination. She implicated opponents of the peace: the mob would lead Marlborough through the streets, and 'at their several bonfires, ... the preliminary articles were to be burnt, with a cry of, "no peace"'.¹⁶²

The Duke's record and character thus continued to be contested. As before, his champions drew one conclusion from past victories – that Britain should be able to extract a good peace from France. Otherwise, 'what is the fruit of our ten battles, and of our thirty sieges, ... cancell'd at the dash of a pen?'¹⁶³ And if France would not concede, there was no alternative but to fight on, as Hare had advocated in the *Charge to Joshua*. Yet Manley complained that if Hare's approach were to be followed, each victory would be a justification to continue the war, and there would be no peace until Britain had suffered a defeat. This led back to the suggestion that Marlborough was prolonging the war for his own ends, and that the previous ministry had done so in order to enrich themselves, echoing the accusations of corruption made by the Commons earlier in the year.¹⁶⁴ And the prolongation of the war was having a devastating effect on the

¹⁵⁹ *Observer*, 21 March 1711.

¹⁶⁰ Pittis, *History of the Present Parliament*, 171-173.

¹⁶¹ Manley, *Learned Comment*, 15.

¹⁶² D. Manley, *True Relation of Several Facts and Circumstances of the Intended Riot and Tumult on Queen Elizabeth's Birthday* (London, 1711), passim.

¹⁶³ Maynwaring, *Remarks on the Present Negotiations*, 19.

¹⁶⁴ Manley, *Learned Comment*, 7-8.

condition of the nation: in urging a continuation of the conflict, Hare was unmindful of 'the decay of trade, increase of taxes, dearness of necessaries ... and the lives of our countrymen'.¹⁶⁵ The burden had fallen particularly on the landed: Manley referred her readers to 'the penury of country-gentlemen with small estates' – 'let use there enquire ... how indispensable peace is'.¹⁶⁶ This theme of the discourse of 1710 - that wartime impositions on the landed gentry, principally the land tax, had accrued to the advantage of the moneyed - would become more prominent as 1711 wore on. Hence the *Examiner's* complaint that all the best carriages in town were owned by officers, and those 'whose whole fortunes lie in funds and stocks; ... if the war continues ..., a landed man will be little better than a farmer at a rack rent, to the army, and to the public funds' - power was passing from land to money.¹⁶⁷

Yet Defoe argued that even continued high land taxes could not save the nation's finances: 'all duties and customs are stretch'd to the extremity'. If the country was to fight on it would be necessary either to stop payments of interest and principal on existing debts, or to impose an excise duty on all goods; these were, deliberately, deeply unpalatable alternatives.¹⁶⁸ By contrast, *The Taxes not Grievous* argued that while the burden on some, including the landed, had been heavy, the prospective commercial advantages of a good peace were such that the nation was well able to bear another year's campaigning.¹⁶⁹ This discussion of taxation exemplified the tension between the landed and the moneyed classes, the latter being portrayed by Tory pamphlets as the supporters, and beneficiaries, of the old ministry. One accused the moneyed of threatening the new ministry by undermining the government's credit, and refusing to advance further funds, yet at the same time opposing the peace; the purpose was to force the Oxford ministry to give up the administration, so that the Whigs could replace them.¹⁷⁰ Hare also saw the contention over the nation's finances as part of a struggle for power, but drew different conclusions. The stop on the exchequer proposed by Defoe would be robbery of those who had advanced money: 'this will certainly be a very effectual method to give the

¹⁶⁵ Manley, *Vindication*, 15.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁶⁷ *Examiner*, 2 November 1711.

¹⁶⁸ Defoe, *Reasons why*, 17-23.

¹⁶⁹ *The Taxes not Grievous, and therefore not a Reason for an Unsafe Peace* (London, 1711), passim.

¹⁷⁰ *Reasons why a Party among us*, 27-36.

landed men ... a very great ascendent over those who have the money, which of late has been a darling project of the [Tory] party'.¹⁷¹

There was, of course, another side to the question: Britain might (or might not) be bending under the burdens of war, but the need for peace, and Britain's bargaining power, could properly be understood only by reference also to the condition of France. As in 1710, the messages were ambiguous – an ambiguity reflected in Swift's *New Journey*. In his *Letter to a High-Churchman*, responding to Defoe's *Reasons why*, Maynwaring pointed to the high level of taxes in France, and the fact that the Duke of Anjou had demanded all the church plate in Spain, as evidence of the very low condition to which both France and Spain were reduced. Yet he was faced with the opposing paradox to that facing those advocating the peace: in order to argue against partition, he needed to plead the rising power of France.¹⁷² Ultimately, however, it was difficult to draw clear conclusions as to the respective conditions of the two principal protagonists. Hare believed Britain should fight on: 'we are not so much exhausted as [France], and are ... in a better condition to continue the war'.¹⁷³ Defoe also adopted a moderate tone, but came to the opposite conclusion: while Britain was not in such need as to stoop to unsafe or dishonourable terms, and the enemy's need was greater, Britain should nonetheless seek to agree a peace even if the conditions were not all that might be desired.¹⁷⁴

This discussion of the respective capabilities of Britain and France to fight on reflected narratives of earlier discourse concerning the conduct of the war and the making of the peace; similarly the narratives of victory, tyranny and treachery. Contention over the balance of power had also continued, although in this case the terms of the debate were significantly modified following the death of the Emperor. These familiar narratives were complemented by novel elements: the legality and management of the ministry's peace policy came into play. For opponents of the peace, all the issues under discussion went to the question of 'Spain entire': a partition of Spain would disturb the balance of power, leading to an insecure peace and the destruction of Britain's commercial

¹⁷¹ Hare, *Caveat*, 37.

¹⁷² A. Maynwaring, *A Letter to a High-Churchman, in Answer to the Pamphlet Intituled, Reasons why this Nation Ought to Put a Speedy End to this Expensive War* (London, 1711).

¹⁷³ Hare, *Caveat*, 4.

¹⁷⁴ *Review*, 11 October 1711.

and confessional interests; it would carry with it grave risks to the Protestant succession (risks which were implied not to be unwelcome to Tory ministers); it would offend against the settled will of Parliament and the Queen; it would breach the nation's obligations to its Allies; and it exemplified the inadequacy of the terms in comparison to the 1709 Preliminaries.

The Conduct of the Allies

By 27 November 1711 one correspondent was complaining that the pamphlet war had grown fiercer than ever.¹⁷⁵ Yet it was only on that day, shortly before the opening of the new Parliamentary session, that Swift's *Conduct of the Allies* was published; this was possibly the most influential contribution to the debate, and marked a further increase in its intensity.¹⁷⁶ Its publication, and the events surrounding it, bring together the three principal themes of this chapter: the significance of the role of Parliament; the employment of long-standing and developing narratives in the cases for and against the peace; and the increasing interventionism, especially of the ministry and the Allies, in political discourse.

As to Parliament, contention over the prerogative recommenced as the session approached. The *Observer* noted that Roper had dedicated a recent issue of his *Supplement* to the subject, but asserted that monarchs had always thought it wise to take the advice of Parliament in exercising the prerogative, 'even as to peace and war'. Complaining that to argue otherwise was to advocate passive obedience, the paper recalled the contention over Sacheverell.¹⁷⁷ That the extent of the Queen's prerogative, and of the role of Parliament in approving the peace, remained a live issue is clear from Oxford's frantic efforts to bring his supporters to London in time for Parliament's opening, and the several deferrals of its intended date.¹⁷⁸ These deferrals had an incidental advantage in relation to *Conduct*: while its primary purpose may have been to lay the groundwork for a debate on the Allies which ultimately took place the following February, it was also calculated to influence the contention over the peace terms which could be

¹⁷⁵ Wentworth to Strafford, 27 November 1711, Cartwright, 215-216.

¹⁷⁶ J. Swift, *The Conduct of the Allies and of the Late Ministry in the Beginning and Carrying on of the Present War* (London, 1711).

¹⁷⁷ *Observer*, 24 October 1711.

¹⁷⁸ Bromley to Oxford, various dates, BL Add. ms 70214 and 70278; de l'Hermitage to the States, 13 October 1711 NS, BL Add. ms 17677EEE, ff.322-323.

expected as soon as the Parliamentary session began, and had ten days in which to do so.¹⁷⁹

Conduct's genesis provides a case study for the way in which the ministry influenced discourse. As early as 30 October, Swift wrote of a pamphlet which ministers believed 'would do an abundance of good, and open the eyes of the nation, who are half-bewitched against a peace'. Ministers commented on the draft, ensuring there were no errors of fact, and by 24 November Swift anticipated that the pamphlet would be published in three or four days, 'when the Parliament begins sitting', although the opening was subsequently again deferred until 7 December.¹⁸⁰ Supported by intensive advertising, and promoted by the *Post Boy*, the pamphlet was in great demand: within two days 1,000 copies had been sold, and a new edition was required.¹⁸¹ In all, four editions were published before Parliament met, with Oxford continuing to provide comments, and by that point a smaller format fifth edition was in preparation, so that it might more easily be distributed around the country.¹⁸²

Conduct had three distinguishing features: a high factual content, derived from the ministry and giving it an air of authority; a strong structural framework; and a refusal to enter into dialogue with previous pamphlets, while weaving familiar themes and narratives into the structure Swift had adopted. That structure had, in turn, three elements. In the first Swift asked why Britain had originally gone to war; an examination of the country's war aims disclosed nothing specific to Britain other than the requirement that Louis renounce the Pretender. Britain should therefore have fought as an auxiliary, but instead had become a principal alongside Allies 'whose share in the quarrel was, beyond all proportion, greater than ours'.¹⁸³ This led to his next point, that the war had been fought in Flanders where the enemy was best able to defend himself, and where success would simply enlarge the territories of the Dutch.¹⁸⁴ Resources should instead have been dedicated to the war in Spain and Portugal, yet Britain's armies there

¹⁷⁹ J. A. Downie, 'The Conduct of the Allies – the Question of Influence', C. T. Probyn, (ed.), *The Art of Jonathan Swift* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1978), 85.

¹⁸⁰ Swift, *Journal*, 330.

¹⁸¹ At least fifteen advertisements appeared in various periodicals between 24 November and 6 December; *Post Boy*, 29 November 1711; Swift, *Journal*, 332.

¹⁸² Swift, *Journal*, 340.

¹⁸³ Swift, *Conduct*, 12, 14.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 16-17.

had been sacrificed to ‘avarice, ill-conduct or treachery’ – an echo of the discourse generated by the Parliamentary enquiries earlier in the year.¹⁸⁵ Picking up on another established theme, Swift argued that Britain should have fought the war at sea – ‘a noble field of honour and profit’. What a misfortune it was, Swift lamented, that the sea was not Marlborough’s element. Britain had thus expended resources for the benefit of her Allies, and yet had suffered those Allies to break all their treaty obligations: ‘no nation was ever ... treated with so much insolence, injustice and ingratitude by its foreign friends’.¹⁸⁶ This assertion was supported by a detailed account of the failure of both the Dutch and the Empire adequately to contribute to the war effort, much of the evidence for which would have come from the ministry.¹⁸⁷ Particular concern arose from the barrier treaty of 1709, in which Britain had made concessions to the Dutch in return for a guarantee of the Protestant succession. In October, Strafford had been instructed to warn the Dutch they should not expect a barrier of the extent promised in 1709, and to stress that only by keeping the terms secret had ministers prevented ‘universal indignation’ against the treaty; the implied threat of public disclosure was intended to ensure Dutch compliance.¹⁸⁸ Swift now made good on that threat by discussing the barrier treaty, discounting the Dutch guarantee of the succession it contained, and noting ironically that: ‘in order to deserve these mighty advantages from the States, the rest of the treaty is wholly taken up in directing what we are to do for them’.¹⁸⁹

In the second element, Swift questioned why the war had been begun contrary to reason, and had been conducted so badly. The answer was familiar: the true motive was the aggrandizement of Godolphin, Marlborough and their associates. This was ‘a war of the general and the ministry, and not of the prince or people’; the result of a conspiracy between the Whigs, the moneyed and the Allies to keep the former in power, which would ‘go off in a peace’. Swift took the opportunity to resume his attack on Marlborough’s ambition and love of wealth, even returning to the idea that he had sought the throne, and raised the spectre

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 12, 18, 19.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 45-55.

¹⁸⁸ St John to Strafford, 19 April 1711, Parke, vol. 1, 153-154; instructions to Strafford, 1 October 1711, BL Add. ms 22204, ff.53-57.

¹⁸⁹ Swift, *Conduct*, 33-34, 39.

of the civil war by speaking of a 'solemn league and covenant' between the Whigs and the moneyed men.¹⁹⁰

Finally, Swift asked why some opposed peace without 'Spain entire', and gave reasons why they were wrong to do so. The first, reflecting earlier contention over Britain's war aims, was that the idea of 'Spain entire' was 'a new incident, grafted upon the original quarrel'. This was linked to a critique of the conduct of the peace negotiations of 1709 and 1710 – some of the articles proposed were so extravagant that even a war of forty years would probably not have achieved them. Secondly, in a brief engagement with the balance of power debate, he asserted that the death of the Emperor was a critical development, and that to combine the Empire and the Spanish monarchy in the same person would be a 'dreadful consideration', contrary to the terms of the Alliance. Thirdly, Swift focussed on the present condition of the nation, opening with a claim to authority based on his having special knowledge of the facts. The argument was simple: with the country raising £2.5 million a year from the land and malt taxes, and spending £6 million on the war, it was impossible to continue. One should not mistake the cry of the coffee houses in favour of continuing the war as the 'voice of the kingdom', for they were full of moneyed men. Yet all the debt they held had been raised on the revenue earned from the landed, and it would be they who would bear the burden of repaying it. He resisted the victory narrative, and the implicit idea that one more campaign would secure Spain: even after a war of 'miraculous victories', that had proved impracticable. It was therefore time to make peace, and the idea that Britain had borne an unfair share of the burden of the war again came into play: 'We who bore the burthen of the war, ought, in reason, to have the greatest share in making the peace'.¹⁹¹

This discussion of Britain's condition naturally led Swift to a consideration of that of France: it was not as adverse as often presented. He argued that this was due in part to the fact that proponents of the war had misjudged Allied successes, enabling him again to contest the victory narrative, and to satirise the public for their celebrations: 'when our armies take a town in Flanders ... we at home make bonfires. I have sometimes pitied the deluded people, to see

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 57-64.

¹⁹¹ Ibid, 67, 72, 74-75, 77-87.

them squandering away their fewel to so little purpose'.¹⁹² Noting that if it had served the old ministry to prolong the war, the same could as well be said of the present one, Swift closed with what appears a ministerial manifesto. Ministers' proceedings were in the interest of their country, not their own: 'they think it infinitely better, to accept such terms as will secure our trade, find a sufficient barrier for the States, give reasonable satisfaction to the Emperor, and restore the tranquillity of Europe, though without adding Spain to the Empire'.¹⁹³

The strength of *Conduct* lay not in the novelty of the themes which it employed. These would all have been familiar to contemporary readers, albeit that some (principally those concerning the landed and moneyed interests, and the failures of the Allies) received particular attention, and others (such as the balance of power) were under-played. *Conduct* instead relied on the strength of the structure within which its argument was made, and on the detailed factual base on which it was constructed; and in order to claim the credibility that this base would provide, Swift thought it worthwhile to risk his credibility in another way – by implicitly associating himself with the ministry in a way that undermined his claim to independence.

What impact did *Conduct* have? It has been suggested that Swift was preaching to the converted – not attempting to convert Whigs to the cause, but rather convincing Tories that what they already believed was correct through the marshalling of facts in support; however, it is impossible to know if that assessment is correct, and in his preface Swift claimed to be addressing all reasonable men of either party.¹⁹⁴ *Conduct's* quality was certainly appreciated, if only by Tories, one of whom sent his correspondent a copy, commenting that it 'is esteemed the best written for a peace'.¹⁹⁵ Swift himself claimed it made an 'extraordinary' noise.¹⁹⁶ The level of sales, the speed with which new editions were required, and the rapidity and nature of the responses provide more objective evidence.

¹⁹² Ibid, 88-90.

¹⁹³ Ibid, 95-96.

¹⁹⁴ Downie, 'Question of Influence', 112; Swift, *Conduct*, preface.

¹⁹⁵ Bridges to Trumbull, 30 November 1711, BL Add. ms 72494, ff.55-56.

¹⁹⁶ Swift, *Journal*, 337.

On 4 December Swift noted that those responses were beginning to appear, and by the 7th (the day Parliament opened) the first part of Hare's *The Allies and the Late Ministry Defended* (in which Maynwaring was apparently heavily involved), Oldmixon's *Remarks on a False, Scandalous and Malicious Libel*, and *Remarks on the Tories' New Idol* had all been published.¹⁹⁷ In addition, and following a trend that pre-dated the publication of *Conduct*, reissues or new editions of earlier pamphlets were being advertised, including a third edition of *Bouchain* (advertised on 5 and 6 December), with the second edition of Mrs Manley's response being advertised on the 6th. *Reasons why* (by now in at least its third edition) was advertised again at the beginning of December, while *A Letter to a High-Churchman*, Maynwaring's rejoinder, was re-advertised on the 6th, alongside the third edition of Swift's *New Journey*. On the same day the *Examiner* (now under the authorship of Mrs Manley) reappeared, having been dormant since August. The *Examiner* explained that its revival was timed to coincide with the opening of Parliament, and the *Post Boy* added that it was due to the 'great height of insolence' to which the Whigs had grown to since it had ceased publication in the summer – St John was making good, albeit belatedly, on his threat to write Whig opponents of the peace to death.¹⁹⁸ This period of ten days between the initial publication of *Conduct* and Parliament's opening was thus characterised by a further intensification of the print debate: one Tory described how London now 'swarmed with pamphlets pro and con', with discourse dominated by peace and war.¹⁹⁹

The responses to *Conduct* commenced with its analysis of the basis on Britain had entered the war. Was not Britain 'as immediately concern'd to prevent the exorbitant power of France as any other of the confederates?'²⁰⁰ And it was wrong to suggest that in seeking a sufficient barrier for the States, Britain was acting only in the interests of the Dutch: the barrier would also guarantee the Protestant succession, and with it British liberty.²⁰¹ As regards securing 'Spain entire', Hare noted that *Conduct* deliberately omitted to mention that the 1703

¹⁹⁷ F. Hare, *The Allies and the Late Ministry Defended against France and the Present Friends of France* (London, 1711); J. Oldmixon, *Remarks on a False, Scandalous, and Seditious Libel* (London, 1711); *A Defence of the Allies and the Late Ministry: or, Remarks on the Tories' New Idol* (London, 1711); Oldmixon, *Life*, 202.

¹⁹⁸ *Examiner*, 6 December 1711; *Post Boy*, 6 December 1711.

¹⁹⁹ Bridges to Trumbull, 30 November and 5 December 1711, BL Add. ms 72494, ff.55-56, ff.108-109.

²⁰⁰ *Tories' New Idol*, 9-10.

²⁰¹ Oldmixon, *Remarks*, 33.

treaty with Portugal stated that as an Allied objective, and that it had frequently been referred to by the Queen and Parliament – even the Lords’ representation of February 1711 had included a reference to the right of the House of Austria to the Spanish monarchy. He thus sought to hoist the ministry on the petard of its own appropriation of the war.²⁰²

The responses engaged only half-heartedly, however, with Swift’s allegations concerning the Allies’ shortcomings, suggesting that their authors recognised the weight of the evidence he had provided. Hare did so briefly, and only on the part of the Dutch: they were the best allies the British could have had, and had outdone themselves during the war.²⁰³ The responses were on safer ground, however, when attacking the motivation behind *Conduct*. As Swift had anticipated, the information on which he had relied was cited as evidence that he was writing for the ministry; this, alongside comments associating him with Roper, implied that *Conduct* was not to be trusted.²⁰⁴ Rather, its aim was to influence the opening debates of the Parliamentary session, on the first resolutions of which, Hare asserted, ‘the welfare or misery of this nation depends’.²⁰⁵ Oldmixon agreed – this work of ‘faction and darkness’ was the consequence of the ministry needing, as the new session opened, ‘to have a master genius take the work in hand’.²⁰⁶ Here also was the familiar suggestion of treason: Swift’s ridiculing of Allied victories demonstrated his disloyalty.²⁰⁷ He was writing in the interest of France and of the Pretender, an accusation enhanced by a Whig attempt to have the pamphlet condemned in Parliament; the objection was to a sentence which implied that the laws governing the succession might be altered, and led to a change in the fourth edition.²⁰⁸ And as for his conclusion – that Britain should make peace alone if need be – this would ‘render ourselves contemptible to the whole world’.²⁰⁹

As the opening of Parliament approached, the Allies also intervened in public discourse, with the Dutch envoy threatening to make a complaint against

²⁰² Hare, *The Allies ... Defended, part I*, 13-14, 34.

²⁰³ *Ibid*, 33.

²⁰⁴ *Tories’ New Idol*, 31.

²⁰⁵ Hare, *The Allies ... Defended, part I*, 4.

²⁰⁶ Oldmixon, *Remarks*, preface, 2.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 19.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 8; Hare, *The Allies ... Defended, part I*, 32; Swift, *Journal*, 337-338.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 27-28.

Conduct.²¹⁰ More telling was the Emperor's letter to the states of the Empire, which was printed in a number of papers at the beginning of December.²¹¹ The Emperor's minister had given advance notice of the publication to Strafford, who advised against it - a move which self-evidently failed.²¹² The letter emphasised the Allies' obligations not to make a separate peace, argued that leaving Spain and the Indies with the Bourbons would represent a threat to European security, and concluded that France intended simply to create discord – all themes already prevalent in discourse. The Emperor called on the states of the Empire to persevere; he would not be sending representatives to a negotiation which would be 'entirely ruinous to our dear country, and the liberties of Europe'.²¹³ This theme, that the Allies were willing to fight on, echoed the memorial of the Dutch Council of State which appeared in the *Courant* on 30 November: 'one good exploit more, and with God's assistance, the enemy will be compelled to yield to all the wished for terms of a safe and lasting peace'.²¹⁴ As one commentator noted: 'one may judge by the preamble of the Dutch to the raising of supplies for the next year, ..., that their sentiments are strongly against peace, and as to the Emperor, he has already declar'd himself sufficiently on that side'.²¹⁵ In this context a brief letter purporting to be from the Queen to the Allies inviting them to the peace congress, and which appeared in the *Courant* on 3 December, provided only a limited response, containing little more than an assurance of her continued commitment to make a peace satisfactory to them all.²¹⁶

A further Allied intervention came with the publication of a memorial to ministers from Bothmer, the Elector of Hanover's envoy, criticising the peace proposals. How the memorial came to be written and to be published is unclear – Swift suggested that it had been produced in concert with Whig opponents of the peace.²¹⁷ It was printed in the *Courant* on 5 December, reproduced in other papers, and published as a pamphlet, of which Boyer claimed 'many thousands'

²¹⁰ Swift, *Journal*, 337-338.

²¹¹ E.g. *British Mercury*, 3 December 1711, *Daily Courant*, 3 December 1711.

²¹² Strafford to St John, 24 November 1711 NS, SP84/240, ff.114-120.

²¹³ *British Mercury*, 3 December 1711.

²¹⁴ *Daily Courant*, 30 November 1711.

²¹⁵ Bridges to Trumbull, 30 November 1711, BL Add. ms 72491, ff.55-56.

²¹⁶ *Daily Courant*, 3 December 1711.

²¹⁷ Swift, *History*, 24.

were sold in a few days.²¹⁸ The memorial asserted the importance of ensuring that Anjou did not have Spain and the Indies, pointing out that the Queen had herself, in her speech to Parliament in November 1710, stressed the importance of the war in Spain to Britain. If the Bourbons were to have Spain, France would dictate Spanish affairs, and there could be no guarantee that the French and Spanish crowns would not in future be united; Louis would then have the resources he needed to bring in the Pretender. Bothmer also attacked the failure properly to address the Dutch barrier – this was a protection not just for the Dutch, but for Britain and the Empire as well. As for the process of making peace, he emphasised the need for the Allies to remain united; while the British had borne the greater part of the burden of the war, the best way to secure recognition of that in the peace terms was to negotiate together, not separately. A congress on the present ‘captious and obscure’ terms would allow France to ‘practise her usual intrigues and chicanes’; hope of a satisfactory peace lay in preparing to continue the war.²¹⁹

Burnet noted that the memorial’s publication was ‘to the great satisfaction’ of the opponents of the peace.²²⁰ De l’Hermitage agreed that the memorial had had a significant effect on the public: never had such a document been read more avidly. And while he initially reserved judgment on its influence on Parliament, in his subsequent report on the debates on the peace he reported that it had been much referred to, and had made a great impression.²²¹ St John agreed: ‘it is inconceivable how much mankind is alarmed at Bothmer’s memorial’.²²²

Endgame: the opening of Parliament

The stage was set for the opening of Parliament. A year before, in her speech to Parliament of November 1710, the Queen had committed herself to the continuation of the war. She now declared: ‘I can ... tell you, that notwithstanding the arts of those who delight in war, both place and time are appointed for opening the treaty of a general peace’. She again took note of the

²¹⁸ *Political State*, vol. 1-2, 678-680; *Daily Courant*, 5 December 1711; Stratford to E. Harley, 6 December 1711, HMC Portland, vol. VII, 80.

²¹⁹ *Daily Courant*, 5 December 1711.

²²⁰ Burnet, vol. 6, 75

²²¹ De l’Hermitage to the States, 18 and 22 December 1711 NS, BL Add. ms 17677EEE, ff.384-385 and ff.388-392.

²²² St John to Strafford, Parke, vol. 2, 48-54.

sufferings of her people, restated her commitment to the Protestant succession and to obtaining satisfaction for her Allies, and undertook to pay particular regard to the commercial interests of the nation.²²³

The speech was written by Oxford and approved by ministers, who would have been aware of its potential impact – it was printed the following day.²²⁴ Commentators focussed on the reference to ‘those that delight in war’.²²⁵ While the *Observer* read this as referring to Louis; others adopted a more sinister interpretation, noting that it echoed a phrase used by the French King in a letter to Cardinal Noailles. Cowper complained that it was a reflection on Marlborough, and that it made the Queen look ‘like a libeller in a garret’.²²⁶ Burnet also perceived a slight on the Duke, adding that the Queen’s reference to the Allies having expressed their entire confidence in her amazed all those who knew the true position: the Emperor was opposed to the peace congress and the States were reluctant participants.²²⁷ The speech was satirized on both counts: the Queen was portrayed as threatening to ‘hang up’ those who had served her with success; and, now France was her ally:

‘The princes and states that engag’d in the war.
I have wisely left of themselves to take care.’²²⁸

The Lords immediately commenced a debate on their customary address of thanks. The ministry anticipated opposition from Nottingham, who was known to have reached an accommodation with the Whigs under the terms of which he would oppose the peace in exchange for Whig support for a bill against the practice of occasional conformity. Nottingham should be ridiculed, and Oxford hinted to Swift that he would like a ballad written.²²⁹ The result was *An Excellent New Song*, published on 6 December, in which Nottingham was portrayed as having chosen to oppose the peace in return for the promise of office for himself and his family, and claimed to be paying only 18 pence tax in the pound (a figure calculated to outrage landed Tories paying the standard

²²³ *Annals*, vol. 10, 282-283.

²²⁴ Buckingham to Oxford, 1 December 1711, HMC Portland, vol. V, 120; Shrewsbury to Oxford, HMC Bath, I, 217; Downie and Woolley, ‘Composition of Queen’s Speeches’; *Evening Post and Gazette*, 8 December 1711.

²²⁵ Wentworth to Strafford, 7 December 1711, Cartwright, 222-224.

²²⁶ Roberts, *Hamilton’s Diary*, 32-33.

²²⁷ Burnet, vol. 6, 78-79.

²²⁸ *The Queen’s Speech; to the Tune of Packington’s Pound* ([London], [1711]).

²²⁹ Bridges to Trumbull, 26 November 1711, BL Add. ms 72494, ff.106-107; Swift, *Journal*, 339.

land tax of 48 pence).²³⁰ On the same day the *Post Boy* printed an advertisement offering a £10 reward for the return of a tall man of between 60 and 70 who 'has recently withdrawn himself from his friends, being seduc'd by ill fellows to follow ill courses'.²³¹

Nottingham spoke at length in favour of amending the address to advise that the peace should secure 'Spain entire', reflecting Britain's treaty obligations. Addressing the issue of the cost of the war, he offered, notwithstanding his large family, to contribute half (or, in one account, all) of his income to support the war effort. He did not, however, entirely abandon more traditional Tory narratives: he was critical of the conduct of the war, and echoed the central theme of *Conduct*, that the Allies were not pulling their weight.²³² Just as he was ridiculed beforehand, so he was treated afterwards, with one pamphlet combining an attack on his own ambition (suggesting that he hoped to succeed Oxford as Lord Treasurer) with a return to the familiar theme of the corruption of the previous ministry: Nottingham had been moved, it was suggested, by fear that if peace were to be made, those who had enriched themselves through 'the plunder of their native land' would be exposed to the rage of their countrymen.²³³

Following a heated debate, the Lords narrowly passed the amendment expressing their opposition to Spain and the West Indies being in the hands of the Bourbons; the terms (no doubt deliberately) closely reflected an earlier joint address of both Houses.²³⁴ Some Lords protested that the address was an invasion of the prerogative, and this theme was taken up by the *Post Boy*; it reprinted the Lords' address of January 1711, in which they had indicated that

²³⁰ J. Swift, *An Excellent New Song, Being the Intended Speech of a Great Orator* ([London], [1712]), Ellis, *Poems*, vol. 7, 524-529.

²³¹ *Post Boy*, 6 December 1711.

²³² Reconstructing Nottingham's speech is problematic, not least because the draft among his own papers is marked 'not spoken as here': Leics RO, Finch papers, DG7, box 4959, PP-135. This summary is based on *Annals*, vol. 10, 284-285, W. Pittis, *History of the Proceedings of the Second Session of the Present Parliament* (London, [1712]), 4 and Oxford to Strafford, 7 December 1711, NYPL, Montague collection, box 10. There is also a pamphlet purporting to be the text of the speech in HMC HoL, vol. IX, 368-369, but this may have been another attempt to discredit Nottingham: M. J. Quinlan, 'Swift and the Prosecuted Nottingham Speech', *Harvard Library Bulletin* 11 (1957), 296-302.

²³³ *Some Reasons, which May Serve as a Vindication of a Certain Pat--t for Leaving his Friends in Relation to a Peace* ([London], [1711]).

²³⁴ W. C. Dickinson, *Sidney Godolphin, Lord Treasurer, 1702-1710* (Lewiston, 1990), 160. *HLJ*, vol. 18, 398-399; *H CJ*, vol. 15, 481-482.

they would 'entirely rely' on the Queen in the making peace.²³⁵ Contention over the prerogative also featured in the Commons debate over a similar amendment to their address (put forward by Walpole), which was heavily defeated. It was clear from this address, which was proposed by St John, that the Commons had no intention of offending the prerogative by commenting on the terms. Their expression of their 'entire confidence' in the Queen's wisdom, and of their satisfaction with the terms, earned the praise of the *Examiner* for leaving the peace wholly to the Queen 'as her undoubted prerogative'.²³⁶ Echoing the Queen's speech, and leaving no doubt at whom the phrase was directed, the Commons went on to undertake to disappoint 'the arts and designs of those who, for private views, may delight in war...'²³⁷

Both the addresses were printed, as was a pamphlet which enabled its readers to see which 'true English patriots' in the Commons were in favour of ending the war (i.e. those who had voted against Walpole's amendment). The Queen's replies to the addresses were markedly different. To the Lords, she disingenuously responded that she should be sorry that anyone should think she would not 'do her utmost' to recover Spain and the West Indies from the Bourbons.²³⁸ To the Commons, however, she expressed her 'hearty thanks for the confidence you have in me'; and she further demonstrated her approval by inviting the Commons to present their address first.²³⁹

Despite their success in the Commons, the ministry's defeat in the Lords was serious. The Whigs were energised, and Swift complained that the Chief Justice had moved rapidly against those who were writing in support of the ministry; indeed, he reported concerns that the ministry could fall.²⁴⁰ The Lords' address also had diplomatic consequences: Buys told St John that it would now be hard for Britain to give up Spain, and that the British should share with the States the advantages (presumably commercial) stipulated in the peace terms in order to secure Dutch co-operation to extract themselves from the difficulty they were now in. The *Post Boy* saw the Lords' address as further evidence of Dutch

²³⁵ *Annals*, vol. 10, 284-285; *Post Boy*, 13 December 1711.

²³⁶ *Examiner* 13 December 1711; *Annals*, vol. 10, 284-285, 290-292.

²³⁷ *Annals*, vol. 10, 290-292.

²³⁸ *Ibid*, vol. 10, 288-289.

²³⁹ *Ibid*, vol. 10, 290-292; Wentworth to Strafford, 11 December 1711, Cartwright, 222-224.

²⁴⁰ Swift, *History*, 18-19; Swift, *Journal*, 344.

interference in domestic politics, echoing the complaints over the representations made to the Queen in the summer of 1710 over the appointment of the new ministry and the dissolution of Parliament. And St John's response to Buys reflected his assessment of the role the Allies had played: 'the resolution ... was in great measure due to foreign ministers intermeddling in our affairs'.²⁴¹ In a later interview with Buys, St John substituted a simple untruth for the evasiveness of the Queen's reply to the Lords' address: 'that the Queen intended to insist that neither Spain nor the West Indies should be allotted to any branch of the House of Bourbon'.²⁴² And the seriousness of the situation can be gauged from the extremity of the reaction: the appointment of twelve new peers at the turn of the year in a bid to ensure that there should be no recurrence.

Conclusion

British political discourse surrounding the peace in the year between the first Queen's speech of the new ministry in November 1710, and her announcement of the peace congress in December 1711, was marked by its intensity – particularly as the opening of Parliament approached – by the evolution of the narratives employed, and by a significant increase in ministerial interventionism. Deployed in pursuit of a peace which, at least initially, ministers had no option but to negotiate in secret, that interventionism ultimately met its nemesis in the House of Lords' refusal to countenance peace without Spain.

The narratives which characterised that discourse exhibited both continuities and discontinuities. Contention over the conduct of the war and of the failed peace negotiations (for both of which Marlborough stood as proxy), the burden of debt and taxes and the issue of the prerogative, with its echoes of the Sacheverell trial, reflected narratives surrounding the change in the ministry and the election victory of 1710; discussion of the balance of power and of the nation's commercial and confessional interests, competing assessments of the respective strengths of Britain and France, assertions of Louis' bad faith, and allegations of treachery echoed broader themes concerning the war and the

²⁴¹ St John to Strafford, 18 December 1711, BL Add. ms 31136, ff.117-118. This assessment was reflected in print: *Post Boy*, 10 January 1712.

²⁴² St John to Strafford, 28 December 1711, BL Add. ms 31136, ff.129-132.

peace comprised in discourse in both 1709 and 1710. Yet there were also elements of novelty, particularly in the arguments over the legality of the peace and the manner of its negotiation. The discussion of the balance of power, while familiar, evolved to reflect the change in circumstances arising on the death of the Emperor, while other issues, such as the tension between the interests of the landed and moneyed, gained greater currency.

Discourse exhibited greater intensity, but also increasing activism, particularly on the part of the ministry and the Allies. Ministers sought to control discourse through judicious leaks, resorting to repression when this failed, and to make the case for the peace; and a group of Whig writers, though less organised, responded. Tory domination of the Commons in particular allowed Parliament to be used to the same end: through making addresses and pursuing enquiries into military and financial mismanagement, members (not infrequently directed by ministers) contributed to discourse supportive of the peace; and Parliament also acted as forum – for the Queen’s speeches, and for sermons which, if politically acceptable, it ordered to be published for wider dissemination. The narratives generated were reflected in diplomatic interactions with the Allies which, alongside threats of future disclosures (for example, of the terms of the barrier treaty), were intended to pressurise the Allies to acquiesce in the peace which Britain alone was negotiating – a tactic which ministers would subsequently employ more aggressively as the negotiations progressed. The Allies were not, however, passive. Gallas’s disclosure of the peace terms, and the publications of the Emperor’s letter to the electors and of the Bothmer memorial two months later, were calculated to galvanize opposition to the peace, and had a significant impact.

But what was the objective? The continuing currency of the issue of the prerogative, alongside the increasing urgency of the print debate as the new Parliamentary session approached, demonstrated the importance attached to Parliament’s deliberative role. Reflecting this, ministerial interventions in discourse were calculated to have an impact on the deliberations of Parliament – through addressing not only Parliamentarians, but also the wider class of the politically engaged who might exercise influence over them. The passing of the Lords’ address on ‘Spain entire’ was thus a significant failure, representing as it

did a substantial obstacle to ministers' peace policy. Raising the possibility of the fall of the Oxford ministry, it offered the prospect of the policy being abandoned completely, and its significance was underlined by the speed and extremity of the government's reaction: the appointment of twelve new Tory peers.

In September 1711 Oxford had been advised to 'retrieve the prerogative': Parliament should not be allowed to stand in the way of peace.²⁴³ But the ministry had failed on both counts: it had tried, yet been unable, to reassert the prerogative, and concerted participation in discourse through the year had not overcome – in the Lords at least – the continuing potency of 'no peace without Spain'.

²⁴³ Lawton to Oxford, 30 September 1711, HMC Portland, vol. V, 94.

4 The interests of the Allies

Introduction

Announcing the coming peace congress to Parliament in December 1711, the Queen had stressed that she regarded the interests of her Allies, especially the States, as inseparable from her own.¹ And when, opening Parliament in April 1713, she revealed that the peace had been signed, she asserted that all the Allies had had sufficient opportunity to adjust their interests.² While the Emperor had nonetheless refused to join in the peace, the States (alongside Savoy and Portugal) had done so. This chapter demonstrates the central role of British political discourse in attempting to induce the States to cooperate, while conditioning domestic opinion to accept a peace made without one (or both) of Britain's principal Allies.

The fifteen months of diplomacy which culminated in the peace began in January 1712 with the opening of the congress of Utrecht; Britain was represented by Strafford and John Robinson, Bishop of Bristol. Just two months later, frustration with the Allies, epitomised by a dispute over whether negotiations should proceed orally or in writing, had caused British ministers to open direct negotiations with France. By late May the ministry had sufficient confidence in the outcome to order the Duke of Ormond, commander of the army since Marlborough's dismissal in January, to refrain from further military action.

On 6 June 1712 the Queen addressed Parliament on the proposed terms, which were substantially the same as those ultimately concluded in 1713: France would acknowledge Britain's Protestant succession; the union of France and Spain would be prevented by the Duke of Anjou renouncing the French crown, with similar arrangements to regulate the Spanish succession, so fixing the balance of power in Europe; trade would be addressed through possessions in the Mediterranean, a commerce treaty with France and the *asiento* (a thirty year contract to supply slaves to Spain's south American colonies); France would concede to Britain St Kitts, Hudson's Bay, and other north American

¹ *Annals*, vol. 10, 282-283.

² *HCB*, vol. 17, 278.

territories; and Dunkirk's fortifications would be demolished. The Queen had not, she said, settled the interests of the Allies; however, she summarised the principal terms proposed for them.³

Britain and France commenced a four month ceasefire in August, under the terms of which Britain took possession of Dunkirk as security; meanwhile, the withdrawal of British troops had enabled the French to inflict a serious defeat on the remaining Allies at Denain in July.

Having failed to persuade the States and the Empire to join the truce, the ministry then faced a greater challenge – to bring them into a general peace alongside Britain. For the Emperor the issue was primarily territorial: the proposals did not satisfy his demand that Spain pass to the House of Austria, offering instead the Spanish Netherlands, and territories in Italy. This demand was maintained even though it had become clear by May 1712 that Britain had abandoned 'Spain entire', intending instead to address the issue of the Spanish monarchy through renunciations. The States sought the advantages promised in the barrier treaty agreed with the previous British ministry in 1709: in exchange for guaranteeing the Protestant succession, they would have an extensive barrier in the Spanish Netherlands against French aggression, and would share equally in any commercial advantages which Britain secured from Spain – principally the *asiento*. While by mid-1712 the States appeared to have dropped their pursuit of the *asiento*, the issue of the towns to be included (or not) in the barrier – principally Tournai, Lille and Condé - was finally settled only in February 1713. The States also wished to trade on France's favourable 1664 tariff; France would agree, but only with the same exclusion for certain goods which had been agreed with Britain. This point, again, remained outstanding until the final stages.

In this context, the question of whether Britain would make a general or separate peace became central to British politics, and this chapter focusses on how the ministry employed political discourse surrounding its principal Allies to seek to resolve a conundrum at the heart of its policy: while attempting to convince the public that it was pursuing a general peace through regular

³ Chandler, vol. 4, 313-317.

assertions of its attachment to Allied interests, it was nonetheless negotiating bilaterally with France. In doing so it provides fresh insights into the inter-connection between the discursive strategies adopted by ministers towards their principal Allies, and ministers' diplomatic and political objectives, and fills a lacuna in the historiography; recent studies of Anglo-Imperial diplomacy during the war and of the Empire's treatment in British public discourse provide limited discussion of the topic, and over six decades have passed since Coombs analysed how British ministers deployed discourse in their diplomacy with the Dutch.⁴

Drawing on discourse across a broad categorisation, this chapter demonstrates how the ministry continued to exploit the narrative of Allied failure exemplified by the publication of *Conduct* in November 1711, while denying the merits and practicality of attaining 'Spain entire'. The objective was to prepare domestic opinion for a peace made without the Emperor, while also priming it for a peace without the Dutch. Alongside the attacks on Allied shortcomings, the Dutch were exposed to a programme of vilification specific to them, and the barrier treaty was condemned. The rationale here was different – to convince the Dutch that they could not rely on domestic opposition to prevent Britain making peace without them, and so to induce them to come to terms.

Narratives and ministerial management

Ministers' management of discourse to promote favourable narratives would be essential to the vindication of their policy, and the Queen's speech of December 1711 provided an early opportunity to emphasise the narrative vital to the initial stages of that policy's implementation: Britain would only make peace alongside the Allies. Nonetheless, the House of Lords echoed persistent fears of a separate peace by following their address on 'no peace without Spain' with one calling on the Queen to instruct her plenipotentiaries to work alongside the Allies to procure satisfaction for each of them, and to seek mutual Allied guarantees of the peace. Recalling the half-hearted response to the Lords' address on Spain, the Queen's flaccid reply was that the diplomats at Utrecht

⁴ P. R. Hitchings, *Anglo-Habsburg Relations in the War of the Spanish Succession, 1701-14* (University of Cambridge thesis, 2019); A-K. Rühl, *Enemy and Ally, Bulwark and Mis-shapen Monster: Perceptions and Reflections on the Empire of Germany in the English Press, 1618-1713* (Bangor University thesis, 2019).

were already so instructed.⁵ The ministry sought to regain the initiative through the Queen's message to Parliament in mid-January 1712: undertaking to seek satisfaction for the Allies, she dismissed rumours of a separate peace.⁶

This stance came under further pressure in early March, when the Allies responded to France's proposed terms; under these, the Emperor would renounce his claim to the Spanish throne in exchange for territories in Italy and the Spanish Netherlands, and alternative measures would ensure the separation of the French and Spanish crowns.⁷ Resisting the idea that the Allies should make a joint response (as the Emperor would insist on his rights to Spain) Britain nonetheless joined the States in calling for 'just and reasonable satisfaction' to all the Allies - paying lip-service to continued pursuit of 'Spain entire', without expressly committing to it.⁸ Britain's subsequent decision to open direct negotiations with France dictated a change in ministers' approach. In what seems a pre-emptive strike against anticipated allegations of double-dealing, the *Examiner* accused the Dutch of themselves treating separately with the French, and reported that they were no longer insisting on the restoration of Spain; they would instead support Britain in advocating partition in exchange for sharing the *asiento*.⁹ Both these facts were known to St John,¹⁰ and their being leaked to the paper strongly suggests that the report was intended to pave the way should the ministry need to abandon the Allies.¹¹ This was certainly the assessment of the *Protestant Post Boy*, which claimed that ministers had directed the *Examiner* to try 'the pulse of the people', and prepare them for a separate peace.¹²

Ministerial policy – doing one thing while saying another – faced another challenge when, on 10 May, the ministry ordered Ormond to refrain from further military action; he was not to inform the Allies. The *Flying Post* reported that the minister of one of the Allies (unnamed, but not difficult to identify – it was

⁵ *Annals*, vol. 10, 288-289, 299-300; *Political State*, vol. 2, 694.

⁶ Chandler, vol. 4, 242-244.

⁷ *British Mercury*, 13, 15 February 1712.

⁸ *Ibid*, 7 March 1712.

⁹ *Examiner*, 13 March 1712.

¹⁰ St John was ennobled as Viscount Bolingbroke in summer 1712; throughout the balance of this thesis he is referred to as Bolingbroke.

¹¹ Bolingbroke to Strafford, 18 December 1711, BL Add. ms 31136, ff.117-118; Robinson and Strafford to Bolingbroke, 12 Feb 1712 NS, SP84/244, ff.42-43.

¹² *Protestant Post Boy*, 15 March 1712.

Robinson) had declared that his sovereign no longer considered himself under any treaty obligation to the States; the previous autumn's allegations of the ministry's improper conduct of the negotiations were thus revived.¹³ When news of the orders reached London, de l'Hermitage reported surprise and astonishment; many believed something else lay behind it.¹⁴ Defoe warned Oxford of 'a mighty popular clamour' and recommended a justification, which initially appeared in the *Review* of 31 May.¹⁵ Oxford probably did no more than give his assent: instead of denying that a separate peace was at hand, Defoe embraced the possibility - what if it were? 'Would you then have had the Queen have murther'd ten thousand men in a battle?'¹⁶

When the Queen outlined the proposed peace in June 1712, it became clear that while the principal terms had been agreed between Britain and France, terms for the Allies had not; however, the implication remained that this should happen, and that a general peace would follow. Members of both Lords and Commons attempted to highlight the apparent faultline by proposing amendments to their respective addresses of thanks referring to the need for mutual Allied guarantees.¹⁷ Neither passed; indeed, the Lords' address thanked the Queen for her efforts to 'procure to your Allies what is due to them by treaties'.¹⁸ Within days Defoe was reinforcing the ministerial message: 'no separate peace is ... concluded, as to withdraw from the confederacy, and leave the enemy to fall upon our Allies, to force them into it'.¹⁹ The *Examiner* concurred: the Queen could no longer be accused of seeking a separate peace.²⁰

Yet, as the Allies had not agreed terms, a separate peace remained possible. What, one pamphlet asked, if the Allies acted unreasonably? Must Britain be reduced to poverty and misery just to please them?²¹ Obviously not; but in that case domestic opinion needed to be prepared for at least the possibility of a

¹³ *Flying Post*, 3 June 1712.

¹⁴ De l'Hermitage to the States, 7 June 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677FFF, ff.214-215.

¹⁵ Defoe to Oxford, 27 May 1712, HMC Portland, vol. V, 177-178.

¹⁶ *Review*, 31 May 1712.

¹⁷ Cobbett, vol. 6, 1146-1148.

¹⁸ Lords' address, BL Add. ms 61358, ff.57-58.

¹⁹ *Review*, 10 June 1712.

²⁰ *Examiner*, 12 June 1712.

²¹ T. Trueman, *A Letter to a Friend Occasioned by the Bishop of St Asaph's Preface* (London, 1712), 22-24.

separate peace. This involved consolidating the narrative developed in 1711: the Allies had failed to pull their weight. *Conduct* continued to make a substantial contribution to this: the sixth edition sold 3,000 copies in January 1712, and a seventh had appeared by February.²² Pamphlets and periodicals both rehearsed and disputed its arguments, and the seventh edition was still being advertised in early 1713.²³ In Swift's (admittedly conflicted) view *Conduct* 'did a world of mischief ... and so went on through the kingdom'.²⁴ An observer commented that 'all the people in the country' had a copy, and that (together with another anti-Dutch pamphlet) it had 'exasperated the counties of England against the late ministry and our Allies'.²⁵

Some of the criticism was levelled specifically at the Empire, with Defoe (a long-standing partisan of the Dutch) taking a lead. Commenting in December 1711 on the Emperor's latest promise vigorously to prosecute the war, he reflected that it would have ended many years before, had previous Emperors exerted themselves as they had promised.²⁶ Two months later, in *Imperial Gratitude*, Defoe dismissed the argument that Britain was bound not to make peace without Allied (and thus the Emperor's) consent. Having expended money, blood and lives in the Emperor's quarrel, why should Britain not make peace without him; all he had been promised by the Grand Alliance was 'reasonable satisfaction' in relation to the Spanish monarchy.²⁷ And so the argument returned to the objective of 'Spain entire', and the yet to be acknowledged central plank of ministerial policy – its abandonment.

The restraining orders issued to Ormond provided the ministry with further reason to impugn the Allies; Defoe proposed to Oxford that they should be justified by reference to Allied conduct.²⁸ The result was probably *Reasons against Fighting*, which rehearsed the familiar litany of Allied shortcomings. Referring to how the Dutch had frequently obstructed Marlborough, Defoe asked how it could now be the case that 'British forces must bleed, and die, and

²² Swift, *Journal*, 377; *Post Boy*, 19 February 1712.

²³ Hare, *The Allies ... Defended*, part IV (London, 1712); *Medley*, 10 March 1712; *Plain Dealer*, 19 July 1713; *Examiner*, 5 January 1713.

²⁴ J. Swift, *Remarks on the Barrier Treaty* (London, 1712), 18.

²⁵ 'Mrs White' to 'Mr Watson', February 1712, Macpherson, *Original papers*, 269-271.

²⁶ *Review*, 18 December 1711.

²⁷ D. Defoe, *Imperial Gratitude, Drawn from a Modest View of the Conduct of the Emperor Charles VI* (London, 1712), 3, 37-38, 74-76.

²⁸ Defoe to Oxford, 27 May 1712, HMC Portland, vol. V, 177-178.

march, and fight', as the Allies directed? Linking the Allies with violent opposition to the ministry at home, Defoe asserted that the orders had been absolutely necessary to secure Britain's interests.²⁹ The *Plain Dealer* made a connection with Allied conduct at the negotiations: the Allies' refusal to act alongside the British plenipotentiaries justified the order not to fight.³⁰

The separation of Britain's army from the Allied forces yielded further ammunition for proponents of the peace. The refusal of some Allied troops in British pay to remain with Ormond led the *Examiner* to describe them as mercenaries, whose dishonourable conduct the Allies had encouraged.³¹ This intervention was probably inspired by Bolingbroke, who had used the term 'mercenary' in describing the incident to Hanmer, adding: 'the matter will be carried high here'.³² Boyer reported rumours that German generals planned to seize Ormond for unpaid arrears of pay, and even disarm the British troops; these were being spread by friends of the ministry 'to render the Allies ... more odious to the people'.³³ The *London Gazette* claimed that the Allies had prevented the British army entering certain cities on its march through Flanders; these included Bouchain and Douai, which the British had helped capture.³⁴ Such reports occasioned 'bitter reflections against the Dutch'.³⁵

While both the Empire and the States were castigated in public discourse, the States came under the fiercest fire as the negotiations approached their conclusion. As Swift observed following the close of the 1712 Parliamentary session: 'we rayl all now against the Dutch'.³⁶ Dr Arbuthnot, an intimate of Swift who was in Oxford's circle, made a significant contribution: between March and July 1712 he published *Law is a Bottomless Pit*, a series of four allegorical pamphlets in which Swift was actively involved.³⁷ These featured the hapless John Bull (Britain), who was embroiled in a lawsuit with Lewis Baboon (Louis XIV); the dispute, conducted at great cost to Bull, had come to be pursued in

²⁹ D. Defoe, *Reasons against Fighting* (London, 1712), 3, 32, passim.

³⁰ *Plain Dealer*, 28 June 1712.

³¹ *Examiner*, 17 July, 4 September 1712.

³² Bolingbroke to Hanmer, 11 July 1712, HMC Portland, vol. V, 201.

³³ *Political State*, vol. 4, 18-21.

³⁴ *Gazette*, 15, 22 July 1712

³⁵ *Political State*, vol. 4, 76.

³⁶ Swift, *Journal*, 434.

³⁷ A. Ross, 'Arbuthnot, John (1667–1735)', *ODNB*

[<https://doi-org.ezproxy2.londonlibrary.co.uk/10.1093/ref:odnb/610>, accessed 29 April 2020]; D. Oakleaf, *A Political Biography of Jonathan Swift* (London: Routledge, 2008) (e-book), 125.

the interests of his neighbours Nicholas Frog (the Dutch) and Squire South (the Emperor) – principally the Squire's claim to the estate of Lord Strutt (Spain).³⁸ These pamphlets found a ready market: the first three parts went to at least four editions, and the fourth to at least two.

The premise - that the lawsuit (the war) had continued for longer, and cost far more, than was ever anticipated – was familiar, but the allegory also illustrated many of the themes deployed against the Dutch. The first was the idea of the States as potent commercial competitors. As Bolingbroke wrote to Robinson and Strafford, when complaining of Buys' attempts to block the peace in January 1712, anti-Dutch feeling due to rivalry in commerce had only recently subsided, and the States would be unwise to cause those jealousies to be revived – but, for the ministry, reviving them was all too tempting.³⁹ These jealousies were exploited by *Bottomless Pit*: Frog had acquired great riches through covetousness and frugality.⁴⁰ As another had written, the Dutch had become rich and insolent at Britain's expense.⁴¹ They were objecting to the proposed terms, 'because it admits us to some degree of privilege and commerce with themselves'.⁴² In the fourth part of *Bottomless Pit*, published as the ceasefire was being agreed, Bull and Baboon agree that Bull should have possession of Eccleston Castle (Dunkirk), causing Frog to complain that he is not to share in it. Bull rebuffs him: many benefits had gone to Frog alone.⁴³ Another writer observed: 'so great is the malice of these murderers of us at Amboyna, that they would massacre us again, rather than let us have Dunkirk'.⁴⁴

That reference to Amboyna highlighted a darker aspect of Dutch commercial ambition. Pamphlets described in lurid terms events at Amboyna in the East Indies in 1623, when the Dutch tortured and executed several Englishmen as

³⁸ J. Arbuthnot, *Law is a Bottomless Pit, parts I to IV* (London, 1712); the parts have various titles, but are referred to here by that of the first.

³⁹ Bolingbroke to Robinson and Strafford, 27 January 1712, BL Add. ms 22205, ff.232-235.

⁴⁰ Arbuthnot, *Bottomless Pit, I*, 10-11.

⁴¹ R. Ferguson, *An Account of the Obligations the States of Holland Have to Great Britain* (London, 1711), 9, 12.

⁴² *The History of the Dutch Usurpations ... and their Remarkable Ingratitude to England* (London, 1712), 27.

⁴³ Arbuthnot, *Bottomless Pit, IV*, 25.

⁴⁴ *The Dutch Won't Let us Have Dunkirk* ([London], 1712), 8.

rebels.⁴⁵ And the destruction of the British fleet in the Medway in 1667 provided another example of Dutch bad faith. Having promised not to mount an attack during peace negotiations, the Dutch 'took the opportunity of burning his Majesty's ships in their harbour at Chatham, and committing other treacherous hostilities'.⁴⁶ The message was clear: the Dutch were ingrates, and not to be relied upon.

The Dutch were also accused of bad faith in obstructing the peace which Britain had properly taken the lead in negotiating. After initially being reluctant to join the congress, in March 1712 the Dutch insisted on oral negotiations, in the face of France's proposal to answer in writing the Allies' responses to her peace offer. As the *Post Boy* observed: 'this is one of the punctilios by which the enemies of peace would break off the present treaty'.⁴⁷ *Bottomless Pit* described how, when the parties agreed to discuss a settlement, Frog initially failed to attend; when he did, he was unable to speak.⁴⁸ Indeed, it was worse: the *Examiner* accused the Dutch of making direct approaches to France; it was they, not the British, who proposed to abandon the Allies by making a separate peace.⁴⁹ In *Bottomless Pit* Frog approaches Baboon behind Bull's back, and the two are seen whispering together in a corner.⁵⁰

As further evidence of bad faith, the Dutch were (justifiably) alleged to be colluding with the Whigs to stymie the peace. This accusation, made against Buys at the turn of the year, resurfaced six months later: the Junto Whigs had reportedly assured the States that if they would block the peace, the Junto would reduce Britain to a condition such that the Dutch would be able to dictate the terms.⁵¹ *Bottomless Pit* portrayed Frog fomenting domestic division: he attempts to unsettle Bull's family and corrupt his servants, telling them that Bull has sold his wife and children (the Allies), disinherited his heir, and settled his estate on a parish boy (the Pretender).⁵² Indeed, the States were charged with going further, seeking to assist the Whigs to recover power, and even to

⁴⁵ E.g. J. Beaumont, *Dutch Alliances, or, a Plain Proof of their Observance of Treaties* (London, 1712).

⁴⁶ *Dutch Usurpations*, 30.

⁴⁷ Defoe, *Reasons against Fighting*, 23; *Post Boy*, 8 April 1712.

⁴⁸ Arbuthnot, *Bottomless Pit*, III, 43-46.

⁴⁹ *Examiner*, 13 March 1712.

⁵⁰ Arbuthnot, *Bottomless Pit*, II, 14; III, 47; IV, 7.

⁵¹ *Post Boy*, 10 January 1712; *The Dutch Won't Let us Have Dunkirk*, 7.

⁵² Arbuthnot, *Bottomless Pit*, IV, 15-16.

overthrow the constitution: support for Dutch enthusiasm to continue the war was linked to Dutch support of the 'good old cause' of Parliament in the civil war – '41 was to come yet again.⁵³

This suggestion that the Whigs planned, with Dutch collusion, to overturn the government resonated with persistent conspiracy theories. One manifestation was the discourse surrounding the November 1712 duel between the Tory Duke of Hamilton, newly-appointed ambassador to France, and the Whig Lord Mohun, in which Hamilton was killed; Mohun later died of his injuries. Swift prepared a report for the *Post Boy* - 'as malicious as possible'.⁵⁴ In this account, the Whigs were responsible for Hamilton's death; the dispute was an old one, and it was implied that the killing had occurred now because of Hamilton's appointment.⁵⁵ This was explicit in a contemporary poem, in which Mohun's ghost spoke of the coming peace:

'Did I not try ...,
To stop the approach of that auspicious day?'⁵⁶

The *Examiner* went on to implicate Marlborough in the killing, reinforcing both the idea of a conspiracy, and a connection to the continuation of the war.⁵⁷

Completing the picture, by July 1712 the *Review* was producing a 'torrent of words' to show the necessity of war with the Dutch if they and the Emperor would not join the peace.⁵⁸ The point was pursued in *The Justice and Necessity of a War with Holland*, allegedly written under the direction of 'very great men'.⁵⁹ While not advocating it, the pamphlet warned that it might be necessary to oppose the States if they continued to fight alongside the Empire – the object would be to secure Spain for the Emperor, and war would be necessary to preserve the balance of power.⁶⁰ News of the defeat at Denain took the force out of this element of the narrative, but prompted a final insult from John Bull. The fourth part of *Bottomless Pit* closes with Bull mocking Frog: 'I hope the

⁵³ Ferguson, *Account of the Obligations*, 40.

⁵⁴ Swift, *Journal*, 460.

⁵⁵ *Post Boy*, 20 November 1712.

⁵⁶ *The Lord M---n's Ghost to the D---of R----nd on Sunday Night Last* (London, 1712).

⁵⁷ *Examiner*, 20 November 1712.

⁵⁸ *Medley*, 14 July 1712; e.g. *Review*, 5 July 1712.

⁵⁹ *The Justice and Necessity of a War with Holland...* (London, 1712); T. Burnet, *A Certain Information of a Certain Discourse...* (London, 1712).

⁶⁰ *Justice and Necessity*, 19.

cause goes on swimmingly Nick ... how coms't thou to go with thy arm ty'd up? Has old Lewis given thee a rap over the finger-ends?'⁶¹ The *Post Boy* was still gloating over the defeat in November.⁶²

These powerful anti-Dutch narratives, pursued by or on behalf of the ministry, had a further purpose beyond preparing domestic opinion for the possibility that the States might not join in the peace: to secure revisions to the 1709 barrier treaty, which stood in the way of them doing so. This objective was established at the outset; Robinson was instructed as he left for Utrecht that terms for the States were not to be agreed until the barrier treaty had been revised to address Britain's concerns.⁶³

Under the treaty the States undertook, using force if necessary, to guarantee the title of the Queen and her successors to the British throne; in return, Britain agreed that 'all the Spanish Low Countries, and what else may be found necessary, ..., shall serve as a barrier to the States' – implicitly against France.⁶⁴ A further term guaranteed British and Dutch merchants equal trading privileges in Spain, the Spanish Netherlands and Spain's other possessions. There were two problems. First, France was offering a less extensive barrier, insisting in particular on retaining Lille as an 'equivalent' for their undertaking to demolish Dunkirk's fortifications. Second, having secured the *asiento* as the principal commercial advantage of the peace, Britain would not share it.

Swift had commenced his critique on behalf of the ministry in *Conduct* in November 1711, and followed this with *Remarks on the Barrier Treaty*; published in February 1712, with ministerial input, this complemented Parliament's contemporaneous review of the treaty.⁶⁵ Swift asserted that the States had been promised possession of the richest part of Flanders; and if they thought that the Spanish Netherlands was not a sufficient barrier for them, '... the Queen is obliged ... to procure for them whatever shall be thought necessary besides'.⁶⁶ *Bottomless Pit* echoed the objection: Bull had agreed to purchase for Frog 'a landed estate, with parks, gardens, palaces, rivers, fields,

⁶¹ Arbuthnot, *Bottomless Pit*, IV, 30.

⁶² *Post Boy*, 13 November 1712.

⁶³ Diplomatic instructions, 23 December 1711, BL Add. ms 70189.

⁶⁴ Annexed to Swift, *Barrier Treaty*.

⁶⁵ Swift, *Conduct*, 39; Swift, *Barrier Treaty*; Swift, *Journal*, 387, 391.

⁶⁶ Swift, *Barrier Treaty*, 8, 11.

and outlets', as large as Frog should think fit.⁶⁷ Another pamphlet claimed that to insist on equal access to Spanish commerce (and a share in the *asiento*) was the height of ingratitude; the Dutch would not only deny the Queen the honour of making peace, but also the consequent trading advantages.⁶⁸ The case was enhanced by the fact that correspondence relating to the original negotiations, which Parliament had published, demonstrated that the commercial terms went beyond the mandate of Townshend, who had negotiated them.⁶⁹

The provisions guaranteeing the succession were also challenged. For Swift, their value was negligible, compared to the benefits promised to the Dutch.⁷⁰ The guarantee was also a humiliation: one writer likened it to Britain begging the Dutch for their protection.⁷¹ For another, it revealed 'the abominable designs [of] those who delight in war' – the object was not to safeguard the Queen or the succession, but to secure the Whigs in power.⁷² In *Bottomless Pit*, the promise of military support became an open invitation to invade: to keep the peace in Bull's family, Frog could 'enter his house at any hour of the day or night, break open bars, bolts and doors, chests of drawers and strong boxes'.⁷³ The *Examiner* revisited the point later in the year: if other nations had joined in the guarantee, the country would have been prey to 'the whole rabble of Europe, like Egyptian locusts, covering our country, more zealous for plunder than religion, Germans, Dutchmen, Prussians, Savoyards, nay, Turks, Muscovites and barbarians'.⁷⁴ Heaven forbid.

Opposition responses

The ministry thus took a leading role in promoting key narratives of political discourse as the conclusion of the peace approached, employing a variety of media: the Queen's speeches and messages to Parliament, pamphlets – such as Swift's on the barrier treaty – and the press, to which information could be leaked, and in which articles could be procured. The media were also employed

⁶⁷ Arbuthnot, *Bottomless Pit*, II, 12-13.

⁶⁸ *Dutch Usurpations*, 27.

⁶⁹ *Some Remarks on the Letters between L—d T---nd and Mr Secretary B—le ...* (London, 1712), 9.

⁷⁰ Swift, *Barrier Treaty*, 5-6.

⁷¹ D. Defoe, *A Further Search into the Conduct of the Allies* (London, 1712), 17-18.

⁷² *Some Remarks*, 9.

⁷³ Arbuthnot, *Bottomless Pit*, II, 12-13.

⁷⁴ *Examiner*, 11 December 1712.

reactively, as with Defoe's attempts to quell concerns arising from the disclosure of the restraining orders.

These actions had an impact; the tendency of opponents of the peace to revert to a favoured topic – the threat to the succession – indicates that the ministry was on the front foot. Concern over the succession had continued to increase, and had become more closely linked to the issue of the peace. As Defoe observed: 'we think there is no danger of the Pretender, but what is to be found in the consequences of the peace'.⁷⁵ Questioning of the States' guarantee of the succession by proponents of the peace offered their antagonists a tempting counter-narrative, particularly when combined with the contention that France, made exorbitantly powerful by the failure to secure 'Spain entire', would be able to impose the Pretender.⁷⁶ In this context, Swift's suggestion in the initial editions of *Conduct* that Parliament might modify the succession continued to provide ammunition.⁷⁷ One pamphlet, purporting to be a letter to a Tory MP, adduced *Conduct* as evidence that ministers wished to bring over the Pretender; the author had (it was said) argued for a change in the succession; yet 'instead of meeting with such a rebuke as his proposition deserv'd, his book is hugg'd by all your party'.⁷⁸

Just as the discussions over the replacement for the barrier treaty continued until it was finalised in late December 1712, so did the contention in print.⁷⁹ This was consistent with the increasing pressure being exerted by the ministry on the Dutch as the peace negotiations approached their conclusion; shortly before Strafford returned to Utrecht in late November 1712, to give the Dutch an ultimatum to enter into the replacement treaty, and to agree to join in the peace, the *Examiner* dedicated two issues to refuting the arguments made in *The Barrier Treaty Vindicated*.⁸⁰ Published in November 1712, this was the latest of a number of pamphlets defending the 1709 treaty.⁸¹ The principal argument can be inferred from the title of Oldmixon's pamphlet of March 1712, *The Dutch*

⁷⁵ *Review*, 4 November 1712.

⁷⁶ E.g. A. Maynwaring, *The French King's Promise to the Pretender* (London, 1712), 19-20.

⁷⁷ Swift, *Conduct*, 4th edition.

⁷⁸ *A Letter from a Tory Freeholder to his Representative in Parliament* (London, 1712), 14.

⁷⁹ *Gazette*, 20 December 1712.

⁸⁰ Strafford and Robinson to Bolingbroke, 9 December 1712 NS, SP84/243, ff.292-293; *Examiner*, 11, 18 December 1712.

⁸¹ S. Poyntz, *The Barrier Treaty Vindicated* (London, 1712).

Barrier Ours: the barrier protected not only the States, but also Britain, therefore the larger the better.⁸² And if Britain was not adequately defended against France, that came back to the succession – the prospect that France could impose the Pretender. Accordingly, it was necessary and appropriate to seek protection for the succession through a foreign alliance. As *The Barrier Treaty Vindicated* observed, the securing of the Protestant succession, and a barrier for the Dutch, were essential to the preservation of Britons' religion and liberties - no Englishman should think it possible for the States to be too well secured.⁸³

The contention continued even after the new treaty had been finalised: in January 1713 the *Flying Post* published, without comment, its clauses concerning the succession.⁸⁴ Defoe told Oxford that the paper was being sent around Lincolnshire like a circular letter; it was being said that as the Dutch were only to intervene if requested by the British ministry, a Jacobite administration could circumvent the terms.⁸⁵ Bolingbroke was incensed at the leak, attributing it to the States and the Whigs; at the least, the ministry had been deprived of the opportunity to put their own spin on the new terms.⁸⁶ The States, however, apologised, claiming that the leak had not been deliberate.⁸⁷

Such advocacy for the existing barrier treaty formed only part of the print defence of the Dutch. Hare claimed, in his response to *Conduct*, that the Dutch were the best ally Britain could have, and had outdone themselves; yet it seemed that Britain was now to make peace with the enemy and war with her Allies.⁸⁸ Responding to allegations of Dutch ingratitude, and echoing the debate over the succession, opponents of the peace instead emphasised the debt owed to the Dutch, particularly in relation to the events of 1688. They were the obliging neighbours who had come to the rescue of British liberties; why, then, this treatment of an Ally which had every reason to expect better?⁸⁹

⁸² J. Oldmixon, *The Dutch Barrier Ours: or, the Interest of England and Holland Inseparable* (London, 1712).

⁸³ Poyntz, *Barrier Treaty*, 1, 57-58.

⁸⁴ *Flying Post*, 6 January 1713.

⁸⁵ Defoe to Oxford, 14 February 1713, HMC Portland, vol. V, 266-267.

⁸⁶ Bolingbroke to Robinson and Strafford, 7 January 1713, BL Add. ms 22206, ff.93-110.

⁸⁷ Strafford and Robinson to Bolingbroke, 30 January 1713 NS, SP84/246, ff.72-74.

⁸⁸ Hare, *The Allies ... Defended, part I* (London, 1711), 2, 32.

⁸⁹ *Dutch Generosity and English Gratitude* (London, 1712), 3, 36.

Advocates for the States nonetheless faced difficulties addressing attacks on Dutch conduct at Amboyna; the attempted justifications were unconvincing, and recollection of the Dutch attack on the English fleet in 1667 hardly helped.⁹⁰ However, other approaches were possible; it was argued that England had acted no better when, in 1672, her navy had attacked the Dutch Smyrna convoy at a time when there was understood to be a truce.⁹¹ And the French provided some relief when, in summer 1712, they attacked the Leeward Islands despite the ceasefire. Here was bad faith on the part of the enemy, not an ally, demonstrating that the French could 'still be reckon'd among the people who delight in war'.⁹² Bolingbroke bemoaned the impact it would have: 'it gives a theme to the Whigs, and serves to awaken passions which were almost lulled asleep'.⁹³

Addressing those proposing that peace be made without Dutch agreement, opponents stressed the Queen's frequent statements of the commonality of the two nations' interests, illustrating the precariousness of the tightrope ministers were attempting to walk. Oldmixon noted in March 1712 that the Queen had convinced her subjects that British and Dutch interests were inseparable (paraphrasing her speech of December 1711).⁹⁴ And, later in the year, another pamphlet upbraided ministers whose endeavours seemed to be directed to overcoming Allied objections to France's proposals, despite the Queen's declared commitment to procure for the Allies what was due to them by treaties, and necessary for their security.⁹⁵

This argument, that Britain was acting in bad faith in relation to the Dutch (as well as the other Allies), responded to allegations of Dutch bad faith, and of collusion with a political faction in Britain, made by those promoting the peace. It also offered the opposition an alternative explanation of events, drawing on the narratives of treachery already described: ministers were colluding with France and the Pretender. In this way, defenders of the Dutch found another route back to the issue of the succession. For Hare, the ministry were destroying Britain

⁹⁰ E.g. A. Van Golt, *The Hollander always in the English Interest* (London, 1712); *Dutch Usurpations*, 30.

⁹¹ *Dutch Generosity*, 38-39.

⁹² *Flying Post*, 4 October 1712.

⁹³ Bolingbroke to Prior, 19 September 1712, Parke, vol. 3, 76-79.

⁹⁴ Oldmixon, *Dutch Barrier Ours*, 11.

⁹⁵ *A Dialogue between a New Courtier and a Country Gentleman* ([London], 1712), 19.

and the Allies 'to serve themselves and their new French friends'.⁹⁶ As another pamphlet observed, to be 'a friend of France' meant not only to be for peace, but also for the Pretender: 'I desire of the reader, if he knows anybody who is a friend to France, to observe whether he is not also a friend to the Pretender, to arbitrary power, to persecution; and an enemy to the Dutch, to moderation, to liberty, and the Revolution'.⁹⁷ Oxford and Bolingbroke were acting not as ministers of the crown, but as counsellors to Louis.⁹⁸

In this context, Bolingbroke's negotiations in France in summer 1712 provided plenty of material. Whiggish periodicals gleefully described his lavish apartments at Fontainebleau, the entertainments he enjoyed, and the jewel he received from the King (valued at £4,000, according to Boyer).⁹⁹ One Whig pamphlet written (ironically) in support of the Pretender made an explicit accusation of corruption in its dedication to Bolingbroke: a patriot, he had refused all France's bribes, and accepted only diamonds.¹⁰⁰ A report that Bolingbroke had visited James II's queen implied Jacobite sympathies, as did an account of him sitting near the Pretender at the opera.¹⁰¹ In the latter case, a link was made to reports in Paris of Britain and France together forcing the Allies into a peace, and that the Pretender was to be 'associated' with the Queen in sovereignty.¹⁰² The peace and the succession were again entwined.

The ministry continued in their efforts to repress these unhelpful narratives, but their frustration was revealed by the Queen's message to Parliament of January 1712: complaining of the 'false and scandalous libels' being published, she asked that a remedy be found.¹⁰³ Parliament subsequently passed the Stamp Act, under which duty was applied to each copy of a newspaper or pamphlet of a half or single sheet, while those exceeding one sheet paid two shillings per sheet, but on a single copy; duty was also applied to advertisements in periodicals. In addition, pamphlets were required to disclose the name and

⁹⁶ Hare, *The Allies ... Defended*, part IV, 76-77

⁹⁷ *The Friendship of King Lewis, Always Fatal...* (London, 1712), 72.

⁹⁸ *The King of France's Letter to the Cardinal de Noailles, Archbishop of Paris ...* ([London], [1712]).

⁹⁹ *Daily Courant*, 21 August, 5 September 1712; *Political State*, vol. 4, 97-99.

¹⁰⁰ T. Burnet, *Some New Proofs by which it Appears that the Pretender is Truly James the Third* (London, 1713), dedication.

¹⁰¹ *Flying Post*, 6 September 1712.

¹⁰² *Flying Post*, 28 August 1712.

¹⁰³ Chandler, vol. 4, 242-244

address of the printer or publisher.¹⁰⁴ While Fredrick Siebert acknowledged that discerning the motivation for the Act was almost impossible, his conclusion (and Downie's) seems convincing: while the additional revenue would have been welcome, the Act was primarily intended as a form of censorship.¹⁰⁵ Defoe certainly believed that was the case, and shortly before the Act came into force Swift (who had the ministerial ear) gloated that Grub Street 'has but ten days to live'.¹⁰⁶

If censorship was the Act's objective, it enjoyed initial success. The *Daily Courant*, *Observer* and *Protestant Post Boy* all closed. Of the Whig-inclined papers, only the *Flying Post* (now incorporating the *Medley*) remained to, as Boyer put it, take on the Tory papers. For the ministry, the *Examiner*, *Post Boy* and *Review* all survived.¹⁰⁷ However, William Hurt and George Ridpath (publisher and writer of the *Flying Post*) embraced the role of principal thorns in the ministerial flesh, experiencing several brushes with the law commencing within months of the passing of the Act.¹⁰⁸ Swift was probably reflecting ministers' (and the Queen's) frustration when he complained that Ridpath would not stop attacking the ministry (and him). When offenders were prosecuted: 'they get out on bail, and write on ... and so it goes round'.¹⁰⁹

The Act failed, in particular, to quash the drumbeat of print discourse linking the peace, the French, the ministry and the Pretender, which continued into 1713. In *The Br---h Embassadress's Speech*, published by Hurt, the Duchess of Shrewsbury (whose Duke was now ambassador to France) purportedly praised Louis XIV for having outmanoeuvred Britain in the negotiations. Having suggested that Parliament, the priesthood and even the Queen were in Louis' pocket, she went on to refer to the favours Louis had done for both James II and his son.¹¹⁰

Hurt and Ridpath were, however, to meet their nemeses. Hurt suffered exemplary punishment for *The Br---h Embassadress's Speech*: an hour in the

¹⁰⁴ *Statutes of the Realm*, vol. 9, 617-619.

¹⁰⁵ F. Siebert, *Freedom of the Press in England, 1476-1776* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1952), 309, 312; Downie, *Harley and the Press*, 149.

¹⁰⁶ *Review*, 26 April 1712; Swift, *Journal*, 439.

¹⁰⁷ *Political State*, vol. 4, 176.

¹⁰⁸ Bolingbroke to Strafford, 23 July 1712, Parke, vol. 2, 482-487.

¹⁰⁹ Swift, *Journal*, 455; Bolingbroke to LCJ Parker, 3 March 1713, SP44/114, ff.118-119.

¹¹⁰ *The Br---h Embassadress's Speech* ([London], [1713]).

stocks on three successive Saturdays, two years' imprisonment, a £50 fine and provision of a bond to secure future compliance. Unusually, the sentence was advertised in the *London Gazette*, 'in order to deter others'.¹¹¹ Meanwhile, in February 1713 Ridpath was tried on charges relating to three issues of the *Flying Post*, two of which touched on subjects of particular sensitivity for the ministry: a claim that the Pretender would come over as heir presumptive once peace was declared; and (in September 1712) that the Allies had been given four months to agree terms, failing which the Queen would make peace alone. Convicted, Ridpath fled the country.¹¹² Hurt and Ridpath had been punished, but their cases, and others, showed that they had not been deterred. Swift concluded that the Act had not curbed the excesses of the press, and at the opening of Parliament in April 1713 the Queen declared that further legislation was required to control the growing evil; the Stamp Act had failed.¹¹³

Parliament, and the management of Parliamentary discourse

While the ministry's management of print discourse through repression did not match its success in promoting its favoured narratives, ministers were on firmer ground when employing Parliament to drive those narratives. Following the setback of the Lords' vote on 'no peace without Spain' at the opening of the 1711/1712 session, ministers set out to exploit the potential of Parliamentary proceedings to influence public discourse for policy ends.

Ministerial influence was apparent in the Queen's message to Parliament of January 1712, which acknowledged both the points on which opponents of the peace had forced addresses the previous month.¹¹⁴ The Queen would make peace 'in strict union' with the Allies – the prospect of a separate peace was 'spread abroad by men of evil intentions' – and seek 'just satisfaction' for them according to the treaties, particularly as they concerned Spain and the West Indies. Further, she committed to communicate the peace terms to Parliament in advance, while carefully not undertaking to seek its approval.¹¹⁵ Both Lords

¹¹¹ *Gazette*, 4 July 1713.

¹¹² *Political State*, vol. 5, 97-100; *Review*, 7 May 1713.

¹¹³ Swift, *Four Last Years*, 103-105; *H CJ*, vol. 17, 278. Siebert expressed reservations as to Swift's conclusion: *Freedom of the Press*, 313. Snyder identified a significant fall in periodicals' circulations: *Circulation*, 215.

¹¹⁴ Oxford was certainly involved in the drafting: draft message, BL Add. ms 70330, ff.193-194.

¹¹⁵ Chandler, vol. 4, 242-244.

and Commons presented compliant addresses of thanks, though the Commons' address was amended to include a specific reference to the Allies' expectations in relation to Spain and the West Indies.¹¹⁶ Anticipating that the Dutch might seek to exploit this (as Buys had attempted to exploit the Lords' address of December) Bolingbroke told Strafford that the amendment had been allowed to pass as it simply reflected the Queen's original message and the terms of the Alliance. Strafford should therefore reject any suggestion that the amendment reflected Whig strength in the Commons (presumably because such strength would encourage Dutch resistance to the peace), or that the words had the same import as those concerning Spain which had been added to the Lords' address in December.¹¹⁷ His concern was justified: de l'Hermitage reported the debate to the States, enclosing a copy of the *Votes* which included the Commons' address.¹¹⁸

The Queen's message was a curtain-raiser for what followed; when writing to Strafford about the Commons' address, Bolingbroke added that the Commons would next be considering the entire conduct of the war. The outcome was preordained: 'the court will be at the head of the country interest, and ... such scandalous impositions upon the nation will be brought to light'. This was not without risk, but the imperative of pressurising the Allies made it worthwhile to risk weakening the Alliance in the eyes of France; the Allies would have only themselves to blame, for making common cause with the Whigs.¹¹⁹

The Commons began on 25 January by requesting that the 1709 barrier treaty be laid before them; Bolingbroke obliged four days later.¹²⁰ There followed disclosure of all the treaties with the Allies for quotas (contributions to forces), and additional information on the conflict's cost.¹²¹ Thus equipped, the Commons debated the conduct of the war, passing eleven resolutions condemning the Allies and their contribution to the war effort. Much of the resolutions' content was derivative of the criticisms levelled by *Conduct*; one noted that the purpose of the war in Spain had been to recover the Spanish

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, 247-248; Cobbett, vol. 6, 1064.

¹¹⁷ Bolingbroke to Strafford, 18 January 1712, Parke, vol. 2, 161-166; *Annals*, vol 10, 290-292.

¹¹⁸ De l'Hermitage to the States, 2 February 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677FFF, ff.32-34.

¹¹⁹ Bolingbroke to Strafford, 18 January 1712, Parke, vol. 2, 161-166.

¹²⁰ Chandler, vol. 4, 251; Burnet, vol. 6, 110.

¹²¹ *Annals*, vol. 10, 341.

monarchy for the House of Austria, yet the Empire had deployed no troops there till the previous year, and then only 2,000 infantry.¹²² Walpole later suggested that the debate had been stage-managed: the eleven resolutions were 'brought into the House ready pen'd, ... and put into the hands of proper persons'.¹²³

Once passed, the resolutions appeared in the *Votes*, and were publicised through pamphlets based on them. One of these emphasised the principal point by exaggerating the resolutions' terms; the first became a resolution that 'no nation, no, not a petty conquer'd province, was ever treated with more contempt, or more infamously bubbl'd and abus'd, than Great Britain has been by its Al---s, especially the D---h'.¹²⁴ Defoe also weighed in: while he was reluctant to criticise the States, the resolutions showed that the Allies had withheld their shares of men, ships, and money, and laid the burden of the war on Britain.¹²⁵ Another commentator wrote that the resolutions' exposure of Allied failings made it plain that the ministry 'do not intend to have any more of the same dealings with them', and that peace was certain, adding: 'Parliament is to go on the barrier treaty: that will lay a great scene open'.¹²⁶

During the ensuing Commons debate on the treaty, in which Bolingbroke took a leading role, Swift took satisfaction in seeing the influence of *Conduct* on MPs: 'those who spoke, drew all their arguments from my book, and their votes confirm all I writ'.¹²⁷ The *Examiner* concurred: the Commons had indeed confirmed the truths set out in *Conduct*, which should now be considered undeniable.¹²⁸ The debate again closed with the passing of resolutions for public consumption in the *Votes*: the treaty contained articles destructive of the trade and interest of Britain, and highly dishonourable to the Queen; and Townshend, and those who advised its ratification, were 'enemies to the Queen and the kingdom' – the narrative of Whig treachery revived in a new context.¹²⁹ Within two weeks the Commons had ordered the treaty to be printed, although

¹²² Chandler, vol. 4, 253-254.

¹²³ R. Walpole, *A Short History of the Parliament* (London, 1713), 10-11.

¹²⁴ *Resolutions without Doors, upon the Resolutions within Doors* ([London], [1712]); also *An Explanation of the Eleven Resolves* (London, 1712).

¹²⁵ *Review*, 9 February 1712.

¹²⁶ 'Mrs White' to 'Mr Watson', February 1712, Macpherson, *Original papers*, 269-271.

¹²⁷ Wentworth to Strafford, 19 February 1712, Cartwright, 267-269; Swift, *Journal*, 382.

¹²⁸ *Examiner*, 14 February 1712.

¹²⁹ Chandler, vol. 4, 256.

by this time Swift's *Remarks* on it had been published, annexing a copy of its text which he could only have obtained from the ministry.¹³⁰

Ministers were not, however, satisfied. In early March the Commons approved what Burnet described as 'a well-composed, inflaming representation' addressed to the Queen detailing the Allies' failings, and their reservations concerning the barrier treaty. An issue of the *Votes* was dedicated to it, and it was sold as a separate pamphlet.¹³¹ The loyalist Hanmer led the document's preparation, but the ministry had substantial input, with Bolingbroke attending lengthy drafting meetings.¹³² For one pamphleteer, the objective was clear. The Dutch had hitherto been subjected to 'only pamphlets and general clamours'; by making the representation, and causing it and their resolutions to be printed, the Commons had silenced those who 'made it their business to ridicule all that had been said of these matters'.¹³³ One Londoner assured a correspondent in the country that the representation, which he assumed his correspondent would have seen, should satisfy all who meant well to their country of the need for peace.¹³⁴

Thus, under ministerial direction, the Commons' proceedings, and their published output, validated critical anti-Allied narratives in print discourse which the ministry had themselves propagated. Indeed, in Swift's analysis the impact was greater: the Commons had revealed that whatever print discourse had alleged against the late ministry and the Allies was much less than the truth.¹³⁵ The *Examiner* cited both the representation and *Conduct* as establishing that the Allies had exploited Britain's wealth to put the Emperor on the throne of Spain and to expand the territories of the States.¹³⁶

Ministers were not, however, alone in using Parliament to influence public discourse. Just as writers opposing the peace survived the impact of the Stamp Act, so Parliamentary opposition followed the example of the ministry in seeking

¹³⁰ *Political State*, vol. 3, 103-104; de l'Hermitage to the States, 4 March 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677FFF, ff.69-71.

¹³¹ Burnet, vol. 6, 112; Chandler, vol. 4, 262-273; *Votes 1711*, issue 56; advertisement in *Evening Post*, 8 March 1712.

¹³² Swift, *Journal*, 391, 393.

¹³³ Defoe, *Further Search*, 48-49.

¹³⁴ Bridges to Trumbull, 21 March 1712, BL Add. ms 72491, ff.91-92.

¹³⁵ Swift, *Four Last Years*, 78-79.

¹³⁶ *Examiner*, 20 March 1712.

to bring Parliament's authority to bear on their side of the argument. The disclosure of detailed (and disappointing) French proposals in February 1712 provided an early opportunity to disrupt the peace process.¹³⁷ The chosen issue was France's offer to recognise the Queen's title, and the Protestant succession, only once the peace was finalised. Halifax proposed, and the Lords approved, an address accusing the French of 'dishonourable treatment' by not acknowledging the Queen immediately. The address also raised the spectre of a separate peace: France intended only 'to amuse and divide the Allies'.¹³⁸ The ministry would ideally have opposed the move, but decided that its support in the Lords was insufficient.¹³⁹ The address was certainly well received by one Whiggish paper, which exulted that the blood of Crecy and Agincourt was not wasted in the Lords' veins.¹⁴⁰

Rumours of the restraining orders provided the next opening for Parliamentary opposition; on 28 May, in the Lords, Halifax proposed an address asking the Queen to lay her orders before them, and to instruct Ormond to act offensively. The motion failed, but the ministry could not prevent the dissenting Lords passing a 'protestation' which, while deleted from the official record, circulated in print, at home and abroad, and in several languages.¹⁴¹ The protestation declared that the orders must exist - there was no other explanation for Ormond's conduct. This was a breach of faith to the Allies, and dishonoured the Queen; the apparent intention was to force the Allies into a cessation to which they had not agreed. If no general peace had yet been made, and the ministry were to be believed that no separate peace was contemplated (a 'foolish, knavish and villainous idea') there was no alternative but to continue the war.¹⁴²

A similar proposal for a Commons address was also defeated, but with no equivalent of the Lords' protestation. The ministry instead procured an address in which the Commons expressed confidence in the Queen's promise to communicate the terms of the peace to Parliament before concluding it (implicitly reinforcing the idea that the peace lay within her prerogative, there

¹³⁷ Berkeley to Strafford, 15 February 1712, Cartwright, 264-265.

¹³⁸ Cobbett, vol. 6, 1108-1109.

¹³⁹ Swift, *Journal*, 389.

¹⁴⁰ *Protestant Post Boy*, 21 February 1712.

¹⁴¹ Cobbett, vol. 6, 1135-1141; de l'Hermitage to the States, 24 June 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677FFF, ff.243-245.

¹⁴² Cobbett, vol. 6, 1139-1141.

being no suggestion that approval should be sought), and pledged their support against all those at home or abroad seeking to obstruct her (exploiting the narrative of the Allies' obstructionism, and their collusion with domestic opponents of the peace).¹⁴³

The Queen's speech to Parliament on 6 June 1712 outlining the peace terms marked the beginning of the final stage of the contest to influence public discourse through Parliamentary proceedings; first blood went to the ministry - the speech was reproduced in periodicals, in the *Votes*, and as a separate pamphlet. The speech formed part of an ongoing process of accustomising the public to the idea that peace *would* be made with France, and if necessary without the Allies. In Boyer's analysis: 'if such a plan had been communicated to the Parliament, before a majority had been secured in both Houses, and the minds of the people prepared, by a long train of artful and plausible insinuations, to receive it, it would, in all probability, have been unanimously exploded'.¹⁴⁴ But the speech was not the culmination of the process of accustomisation; from now on the ministry would portray peace as an inevitability, beyond challenge in Parliament, in print, or by the Allies. The Queen's opening words set the tone: 'the making peace and war is the undoubted prerogative of the Crown'. Peace had been made despite 'other obstructions, artfully contrived', a phrase comprehending both domestic and Allied opposition. While the Queen had not agreed terms for the Allies, she summarised those contemplated, and stressed her commitment to procuring just and reasonable satisfaction for them.¹⁴⁵ The *Examiner* was clear that the Queen could no longer be accused of seeking a separate peace, and even one Whig-sympathising paper took comfort from the comments concerning satisfaction for the Allies. Yet the implication seemed clear – Britain and France had come to terms, and would conclude a bilateral peace if need be.¹⁴⁶

Both Houses immediately approved addresses of thanks to the Queen, with that of the Lords emphasising the care she had taken of her Allies' interests.¹⁴⁷ It may have been this that led Bolingbroke to conclude that, at least as far as

¹⁴³ Chandler, vol. 4, 310-311; Bolingbroke to Ormond, 27 May 1712, Parke, vol. 2, 341-346.

¹⁴⁴ *Political State*, vol. 3, 336.

¹⁴⁵ Chandler, vol. 4, 313-317.

¹⁴⁶ *Examiner*, 12 June 1712; *Medley*, 13 June 1712.

¹⁴⁷ Lords' address, BL Add. ms 61358, ff.57-58; Chandler, vol. 4, 318.

internal politics were concerned, the speech had achieved its purpose: the Queen was now absolute mistress of her own conduct, and the hopes of those opposing her measures were so reduced, 'that we hope to find, ... more ease and compliance than we have hitherto met with'.¹⁴⁸ He was evidently unconcerned by the actions of those Lords who had dissented from the Lords' address, and had attempted to insert a request that the Queen join with the Allies in a mutual guarantee – implicitly, a call for a general peace. Having failed, the dissentients issued another protestation: the terms had been negotiated without reference to the Allies, in breach of the Queen's earlier undertaking; the proposal of a guarantee was intended to address this; and Allied cooperation should continue. The protestation criticised the terms: the proposed barriers for the States and the Empire were insufficient to provide security to Britain, and the arrangements to keep separate the French and Spanish thrones were inadequate to preserve the balance of power. Like the first, this second protestation was deleted from the record, but circulated in print, including in a collection which contained them both.¹⁴⁹ According to Burnet, copies were found across the country, but 'nothing could break through the insensibility which had stupefied the people' – the ministry's approach was, it appeared, succeeding.¹⁵⁰ Nonetheless, action was taken to suppress both protestations: the Lords appointed a committee to find the printer and publisher and, when this failed, rewards of £50 and £100 pounds were offered to anyone identifying them.¹⁵¹

Rejecting a separate peace, the second protestation had revived the idea of the Allies giving mutual guarantees in any treaty; the Commons took up the most important aspect of this, with a motion to address the Queen to seek an Allied guarantee of the succession. The proposal was defeated, and an address instead made expressing confidence that the Queen would take proper measures to secure it.¹⁵² But the proposal may have been a trap, intended to draw attention to the fact that the succession had not been mentioned in the Commons' original address on the speech - one pamphleteer described zealous

¹⁴⁸ Bolingbroke to Ormond, 11 June 1712, Parke, vol. 2, 376-377.

¹⁴⁹ *A Collection of Papers* (London, 1712), 10-13.

¹⁵⁰ Burnet, vol. 6, 133.

¹⁵¹ Cobbett, vol. 6, 1151; *Gazette*, 28 June 1712.

¹⁵² Chandler, vol. 4, 331-332.

Hanoverians having ‘a feigned sadness on their countenances’.¹⁵³ Bolingbroke believed the aim had been to suggest that the Protestant succession had not been sufficiently taken care of, and also to vindicate the original barrier treaty, by showing the necessity of having such guarantees.¹⁵⁴ Even a failure to secure an address could, therefore, have discursive value.

It may have been these developments in the Lords and Commons which led Swift to believe that the ministry’s attempt to use the Queen’s speech to consolidate their control of the narrative had misfired, with the opposition hopeful, and the court party despondent: ‘the necessity of laying the proposals before Parliament drew us into all this; for, now we are in a manner pinned down, and cannot go back an inch with any good grace’.¹⁵⁵ Whatever the truth of this, for the ministry the session had outlived its usefulness; Parliament’s potential to drive public discourse had been exhausted, and the Queen’s prerogative reasserted. Parliament was prorogued on 8 July 1712, and would not meet again until 9 April 1713, when the Queen announced that peace had been made. To present such a *fait accompli* was ministerial policy: Bolingbroke declared in January 1713 that if Parliament met while the negotiations continued he could not answer for the consequences.¹⁵⁶ The concluding of the Parliamentary session, and the act of continued prorogation, were themselves interventions in discourse, designed, like the Stamp Act, to deny opponents of the peace the oxygen of publicity.

The public: audience and actors

Once Parliament had been prorogued, all that remained for Parliamentarians, as the Queen asked in her final speech of the 1711/1712 session, was to return to their respective counties, and obstruct those sowing sedition – presumably the opponents of peace.¹⁵⁷ Lords and MPs were thus implicitly invited to join the continuing effort to accustomise the public to the idea that peace would be made; the more convinced the Dutch were of an acceptance in Britain that peace should (or inevitably would) be made, the more likely they were to

¹⁵³ D. Defoe, *The Validity of the Renunciations of Former Powers* (London, 1712), preface.

¹⁵⁴ Bolingbroke to T. Harley, 18 June 1712, HMC Portland, vol. V, 184.

¹⁵⁵ Swift to King, 26 June 1712, Woolley, *Correspondence*, 426-429.

¹⁵⁶ Bolingbroke to Torcy, 30 January 1713, Parke, vol. 3, 589-590.

¹⁵⁷ Chandler, vol. 4, 334.

recognise that continued refusal to join in the Queen's measures would be fruitless. Initially the role of the public was as subjects of this process of accustomisation, but following the Queen's speech on the proposed peace they became active participants through the submission of numerous loyal addresses; unanimous in congratulating the Queen on achieving peace, these drew on many of the prevailing narratives of contemporary discourse.

The ministry's efforts at accustomisation had long been evident: the Queen's announcement of the opening of the peace congress had represented an early step. That the process was necessary is suggested by de l'Hermitage's report to the States a few weeks later: the number opposed to the peace was growing daily, with most believing that the Bourbons having Spain would weaken the Queen and the Church.¹⁵⁸ Another observer attributed this to the impact of the Lords' resolution on 'no peace without Spain': 'tis probable we shall have no peace after the sentiments of the Lords'.¹⁵⁹

The process continued, however; a day of fasting for peace was celebrated on 16 January 1712 amid reports of the diplomats gathering at Utrecht. The ministry took a close interest, with the Archbishop of Canterbury submitting the intended prayers to Oxford for the Queen's approval.¹⁶⁰ These generated a degree of cynicism, with one Whiggish Bishop noting that some considered that they implied the peace was already signed, thereby 'mocking God, and deceiving the people'.¹⁶¹ The fast-day was, however, an opportunity to preach sermons extolling the virtues of peace, and many were published; these included the sermon made before the Commons, which was printed on the House's order. The preacher urged prayers for the ministry: 'those councils which must remove us from the calamities of war, and restore to us the blessings of peace'.¹⁶²

As with the fast-day prayers, cynicism also greeted reports in Abel Roper's *Post Boy* that the regular prayers in the Queen's chapel for success in the war had

¹⁵⁸ De l'Hermitage to the States, 8 January 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677FFF, ff.15-16.

¹⁵⁹ Parker to Perceval, 1 January 1712, BL Add. ms 47025, f.103.

¹⁶⁰ Archbishop of Canterbury to Oxford, 24 December 1711, SP34/17/26.

¹⁶¹ E.g. *Gazette*, 12 January 1712; Bishop Kennett's journal, BL Lansdowne 1024, f.252.

¹⁶² R. Altham, *A Sermon Preach'd before the Honourable House of Commons ...on Wednesday the 16th of January 1712* (London, 1712).

been discontinued, a move taken as confirming that peace was imminent.¹⁶³ The *Flying Post* asked why Roper's masters (i.e. the ministry) had made the decision, and instructed him to publicise it. Printing the text, the *Flying Post* suggested several explanations, noting that the prayers included one begging God 'to continue the union betwixt her Majesty and her Allies'. Alternatively, perhaps it was because of a section condemning those who had joined with the common enemy in 'his mischievous imaginations'. Two ideas were thus combined – ministers were colluding with the enemy, and were ready to abandon the Allies.¹⁶⁴

The effect of these attempts at accustomisation is difficult to assess. By April 1712, de l'Hermitage had detected a shift in the ministry's favour: the growing rumours of peace were well received, though some remained concerned over the position of the Allies.¹⁶⁵ Yet in mid-May he reported that there continued to be strongly opposing views.¹⁶⁶ Boyer's assessment following the Queen's speech of 6 June seemed nonetheless to vindicate the ministry's approach: the speech would have had a much less favourable reception had the public not been conditioned in advance.¹⁶⁷

But if the process of accustomisation prepared the ground for the Queen's speech, the speech was also part of that process. While Swift was uneasy, Defoe assured Oxford that, after the speech, 'many of the wisest begin to open their eyes and be easy'; the rest raged that they could no longer hope to obstruct the peace.¹⁶⁸ De l'Hermitage reported that feelings were now running more against the Allies than against France; while sensible people had reservations about the peace, the majority had been brought by the daily papers to support those who would force it through.¹⁶⁹ Bromley assured Oxford that he had 'the hearts of the people', and Oxford was confident, telling Strafford in

¹⁶³ *Post Boy*, 19 April 1712; e.g. Bridges to Lady Trumbull, 19 April 1712, BL Add. ms 72495, ff.136-137.

¹⁶⁴ *Flying Post*, 26 April 1712.

¹⁶⁵ De l'Hermitage to the States, 22 April 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677FFF, ff.154-156.

¹⁶⁶ De l'Hermitage to the States, 17 May 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677FFF, ff.182-184.

¹⁶⁷ *Political State*, vol. 3, 336.

¹⁶⁸ Swift to King, 26 June 1712, Woolley, *Correspondence*, 426-429; Defoe to Oxford, 16 June 1712, HMC Portland, vol. V, 183.

¹⁶⁹ De l'Hermitage to the States, 15 July, 5 August 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677FFF, ff.273-274, ff.296-297.

August that it would now be impossible to put a stop to the peace 'without turning the entire nation against us'.¹⁷⁰

Time was not, however, on the ministry's side; in the early autumn, as negotiations dragged on, Defoe was sending Oxford pessimistic assessments of opinion from the east of England.¹⁷¹ And in November Sunderland told Nottingham that if reports from around the country were correct, 'there begins to be a great alteration in the minds of the people': they were becoming less enamoured of the peace. Sunderland concluded that opponents should prepare people's minds for the time when Parliament was again sitting; a view which, if shared, would explain the continuing flow of print discourse against, and for, the peace, and also vindicate the ministry's determination to keep Parliament prorogued.¹⁷² Yet de l'Hermitage's assessment at the end of 1712 seems persuasive: people's attitudes either for against the peace remained largely unchanged, but a very great number expected it - an outcome the ministry would surely have settled for.¹⁷³

If the Dutch were convinced of that expectation, or (better still) of widespread support for the peace, inducing them to join that peace would be easier, and the threat to proceed without them more credible. In that context, the flow of almost 300 loyal addresses following the Queen's speech of June 1712 had a significant role to play, bolstering the ministry's position alongside the addresses which the two Houses of Parliament had made following the speech; here the public were not the passive recipients of discourse, but active participants. Unlike the Sacheverell addresses of 1710, while the 1712 addresses differed in tone and emphasis, they were unanimous on the central issue: thanking the Queen for negotiating the peace. Dissent was indicated by silence, rather than a contrary address: a letter to Oxford expressed concern that he might have noticed that there had been no address from Rutland, 'but we are chiefly swayed by some great men who are enemies to peace'.¹⁷⁴ The *Examiner* highlighted the absence of opposing addresses, and even proposed a

¹⁷⁰ Bromley to Oxford, 30 July 1712 HMC Portland, vol. V, 209-210; Oxford to Strafford, 2 August 1712, BL Add. ms 70189.

¹⁷¹ Defoe to Oxford, 20 September, 3 October 1712, HMC Portland, vol. V, 223-225, 229-230.

¹⁷² Sunderland to Nottingham, 12 November 1712, Leics RO, Finch papers, DG7, box 4950, bundle 24.

¹⁷³ De l'Hermitage to the States, 27 December 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677GGG, ff.7-8.

¹⁷⁴ Peale to Oxford, 16 August 1712, BL Add. ms, 70251.

draft, in which the addressers declared themselves to be republicans and dissenters, and quoted in their support Myn Heer van Herring, ‘who was never known to deceive, ... or to promote his own interest by any false colours, and misrepresentations’ – those opposed to peace were enemies of the constitution, and in the pockets of the Dutch.¹⁷⁵

As in 1710, doubt was expressed as to the weight to be attached to the addresses. Burnet, admittedly a Whig, dismissed them as ‘full of gross flattery’.¹⁷⁶ Boyer, another sceptic, believed they were ‘procured by the agents and friends of the ministry’ in order to justify their measures; they deserved the public’s attention, but because they revealed the sentiments of those in charge, not because they reflected the national mood.¹⁷⁷ De l’Hermitage observed that it was believed that the addresses were for the most part ‘made’ in London, and then in each corporation pushed through by three or four men able to do as they pleased.¹⁷⁸

There was certainly scope for influence: a draft of the Lincoln address was first sent to Oxford and Dartmouth for approval, following which their correspondent would submit it to the Grand Jury for consideration.¹⁷⁹ The Duke of Atholl, writing to Oxford with the Perth address, explained that he would have submitted it sooner, but had wanted to collect more subscribers.¹⁸⁰ Like other promoters, he was motivated in part by a desire to ingratiate himself; the Bishop of Durham, sending Oxford the county’s address, boasted that it had been ‘soe unanimous’.¹⁸¹

Compliance was not, however, guaranteed. Atholl intended to force the hand of the University of St Andrews by signing its address before submitting it for additional subscriptions, yet only four of the ‘hot-headed ungrateful rogues’ joined him.¹⁸² Such problems were not unique: Whig members of the corporation of London objected to any address being made, and the *Post Boy*

¹⁷⁵ *Examiner*, 21 August 1712.

¹⁷⁶ Burnet, vol. 6, 133.

¹⁷⁷ *Political State*, vol. 4, 32.

¹⁷⁸ De l’Hermitage to the States, 24 June 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677FFF, ff.243-245, 6 January 1713 NS, BL Add. ms 17677GGG, ff.19-20.

¹⁷⁹ Caldecott to Oxford, 7 July 1712, BL Add. ms 70215.

¹⁸⁰ Atholl to [Oxford], 27 October 1712, HMC Portland, vol. V, 240.

¹⁸¹ E.g. Fleetwood to [], 14 July 1712, SP34/19, ff.17-18; Bishop of Durham to Oxford, 18 July 1712, BL Add. ms 70221.

¹⁸² Lyon to Oxford, 20 October 1712, HMC Portland, vol. V, 238.

reported that the Mayor of Newcastle-under-Lyme, and some 'poor deluded brethren', had refused to sign the address presented to them.¹⁸³ This mattered, because the number and quality of the subscribers dictated the weight to be attached to the address: the *Flying Post* claimed that the Edinburgh address had been 'sign'd by the most inconsiderable people of [the] city, and for the most part by strangers'.¹⁸⁴

Despite such carping, the addresses of 1712 had a significant advantage over those generated by the Sacheverell controversy: all were printed in the *Gazette* (up to 23 in a single issue). This both conferred an implicit ministerial imprimatur, and enabled ministers to demonstrate that their policy had widespread support. It also ensured that the addresses formed part of the political dialogue: writing to inform the States of the first of the addresses, from the City of London, de l'Hermitage offered no judgment on the point of ministerial influence, but commented that he expected most corporations to follow suit. In 1712 this was true in the sense that London took the lead, and the London addresses provided a set of themes which would subsequently be repeated, developed and supplemented. As Boyer observed: 'the example of the metropolis was, as usual, follow'd by all the corporations of England; which seem'd to vie who should be the most forward in applauding the present measures'.¹⁸⁵ Many of the themes were relevant to the position of the Allies, and demonstrated the influence of the discourse which preceded them, not least in the Queen's speech on the peace to which they were responding. By replicating these and other narratives the addresses formed part of an ongoing dialogue, and not simply as passive echo chambers; decisions were made over which themes to embrace, and how (and, indeed, over whether to address at all).

The address of London's Lieutenancy, one of the first to be presented, adopted one of the most common themes: gratitude for the care the Queen had taken to seek satisfaction for the Allies, echoing a point made in her speech. The address of the City's Common Council, presented on the same day, did not do so, but the reply (probably drafted by Oxford, and also printed in the *Gazette*)

¹⁸³ Tindal, *History*, vol. 2, 273; *Post Boy*, 19 August 1712.

¹⁸⁴ *Flying Post*, 27 December 1712.

¹⁸⁵ *Political State*, vol. 3, 369.

made good the deficiency.¹⁸⁶ These references to Allied interests should be read in the context of the ways in which the addresses echoed another of the passages in the speech, in which the Queen had spoken of the ‘obstructions artfully contrived’ which had been overcome.¹⁸⁷ In many this was reflected in allusions to domestic opposition; Honiton’s address was not alone in speaking of the ‘artful contrivances of those who delight in war’ – a phrase derived from the Queen’s speech of December 1711, and understood to be directed at Marlborough and the previous ministry.¹⁸⁸ But domestic opposition was portrayed as going alongside that of the Allies, with the Ilchester address referring to opposition ‘from abroad ... and from a restless turbulent faction at home’; and the authors of Shaftesbury’s address demonstrated their familiarity with the prevailing disloyalty narrative by describing domestic opponents of the peace as having ‘love for a Dutch commonwealth’.¹⁸⁹ Echoing the themes of *Conduct*, Cambridge’s address noted the obstructions of the Allies, who had let Britain bear the burden of the war, yet would reap all the advantages of a peace.¹⁹⁰ The Montrose address trusted that the defeat at Denain would bring the Allies to their senses; while ‘sensibly touch’d’ by Allied losses, they could bear them more easily, hopeful that they would convince the Allies to join in the peace. After all, they had only themselves to blame; Ormond’s withdrawal had been due to their obstinate resistance to the Queen’s measures.¹⁹¹

Alongside denigration of domestic and foreign opposition, frequent references to the prerogative contained another message for the Dutch. Commencing her speech, the Queen had reasserted that the making of peace was her prerogative; she had promised to communicate the terms to Parliament, but no more than that. This approach, which opened the way to the prolonged prorogation, and to Parliament being presented with a *fait accompli* in April 1713, was endorsed by many of the addresses: Windsor’s acknowledged ‘the sole power of peace and war to be the most undoubted prerogative of the

¹⁸⁶ *Gazette*, 17 June 1712; draft response, 13 June 1712, BL Add. ms 70330, f.43.

¹⁸⁷ Chandler, vol. 4, 313-317.

¹⁸⁸ *Gazette*, 1 July 1712.

¹⁸⁹ *Gazette*, 10 July, 24 September 1712.

¹⁹⁰ *Gazette*, 8 July 1712.

¹⁹¹ *Gazette*, 30 September 1712.

crown'.¹⁹² The Dutch could no longer hope that by conniving with domestic opponents of the peace they could use Parliament to frustrate the ministry.

The addresses were also calculated to refute any suggestion of lingering public attachment to 'Spain entire' – this mattered not only for the Emperor, but also for the Dutch, dashing any hope that they might use Spain as a lever against the British, as they had tried to do at the beginning of the year. The Queen had spoken of France and Spain being 'more effectually divided than ever', thereby fixing the balance of power in Europe. The Thetford address echoed this, claiming the provisions for the Spanish monarchy were the most effectual that prudence could conceive; and there were frequent references elsewhere to a balance of power having been achieved.¹⁹³

This was all positive for the ministry, but there was an Achilles heel. The Queen had spoken of the care she had taken of the Protestant succession, and a significant majority of the addresses expressed support. But the *Flying Post* was keeping count of those which had not.¹⁹⁴ The *Examiner* tried to excuse the omissions, suggesting that they demonstrated a reluctance to contemplate the Queen's death, but allowing the *Flying Post* to claim that the *Examiner* (close to the ministry as it was) had actively encouraged them.¹⁹⁵ The problem became more acute in some later Scottish addresses, reaching its zenith with the Perth address of January 1713; making no reference to the Protestant succession, the address instead expressed loyalty to the House of Stuart, adding 'may your royal diadem peaceably fall upon their head, who by the laws of God and the nation have the right to inherit it'.¹⁹⁶

These later addresses nourished the opposition narrative of ministerial collusion with the Pretender. One pamphlet of early 1713 wondered, in light of them, 'can any man think there's no danger of the Pretender?', before observing that the Perth address had been presented by Oxford's son-in-law, on Oxford's introduction.¹⁹⁷ Similarly, the *Flying Post* asked, of the Edinburgh address (which referred to hereditary right), how 'such a ... traitorous libel against the

¹⁹² *Gazette*, 24 June 1712.

¹⁹³ *Gazette*, 22 July 1712.

¹⁹⁴ *Flying Post*, 30 June, 4 July 1712.

¹⁹⁵ *Examiner*, 3 July 1712; *Flying Post*, 9 August 1712.

¹⁹⁶ *Gazette*, 31 January 1713.

¹⁹⁷ J. S. Barrington, *A Dissuasive from Jacobitism* (London, 1713), 29.

revolution' had come to be inserted in an official publication – the *London Gazette*.¹⁹⁸ These later addresses thus played into the hands of opponents of the peace who sought to exploit fear of Jacobitism, constructing an unholy trinity of ministerial collusion with the Pretender, and with France, and the prospect of a peace which would place the nation at the mercy of both.

The activism of the Allies

Nonetheless, the process of accustomisation had borne fruit: the addresses demonstrated to the Allies not only the appetite for peace in Britain, but also that narratives in political discourse concerning them had taken hold: that they had been obstructing the peace; that their interests had been protected; and that the proposals for the Spanish monarchy established an acceptable balance of power. In the face of this, as well as being the subjects and recipients of discourse, the Allies continued to participate in it. The apparent success of their interventions in advance of the Parliamentary session in December 1711 pointed the way to continued activism into 1712 as the stakes increased; the ministry and its supporters, caught off-guard by the Lords' address on 'no peace without Spain', were ready to respond.

The initial move was the Emperor's: perceiving Britain's determination to commence negotiations in Utrecht, he proposed to send Prince Eugene to London to represent his interests. The ministry feared the Whigs would exploit the visit to provoke popular opposition; Strafford assured Bolingbroke that he had tried to dissuade Eugene, lest he should 'come amongst you unawares ... when faction runs so high'.¹⁹⁹ Concern that Eugene's arrival might prompt demonstrations proved well-founded: he was reportedly greeted by cheering crowds wherever he went.²⁰⁰

Eugene's purpose was to convince the ministry, and the British public, of the Emperor's commitment to provide the resources needed to continue the war, and to persuade Britain to do likewise. To that end he submitted two memoranda to ministers; the second was published in March 1712 in the *Flying*

¹⁹⁸ *Flying Post*, 17 January 1713.

¹⁹⁹ Strafford to Bolingbroke to, 22 December 1711 NS, SP84/240, ff.213-226.

²⁰⁰ *Annals*, vol. 10, 336-337.

Post, and as a separate pamphlet, presumably with his approval.²⁰¹ He promised that the Emperor would now put over 100,000 men in the field, and stressed the importance of actively pursuing the war to secure a safe and honourable peace. The initiative did not go unchallenged; even before Eugene had embarked, Strafford proposed to Oxford that he should procure 'some under-scribbler' to write a pamphlet reciting the failures of the Empire.²⁰² The result may have been an article in the *Post Boy* in early January, which satirised, through gross exaggeration, the promises which Eugene was expected to make on the Emperor's behalf.²⁰³ The *Examiner*, again probably on ministerial instruction, asked of the promise of 100,000 men: 'who can forbear laughing ...?'²⁰⁴ Following publication of Eugene's memorial, *Bottomless Pit* joined in, with Squire South proposing to John Bull that he, South, provide pen, ink and £5 10s annually towards the costs of the lawsuit.²⁰⁵

Eugene's was not the last Imperial intervention. In March, after the French had submitted their proposals at Utrecht, a letter from the Emperor to the States was printed in London. The letter derided the French offer and, echoing Eugene's memorandum, stressed the Empire's readiness to make yet greater efforts in prosecuting the war.²⁰⁶ This prompted a backlash from one Tory pamphleteer, who bracketed it with the Bothmer memorial as an attempt to side with the Queen's opponents, asking if it was customary for diplomats to print the memorials they submitted to governments.²⁰⁷ But at the beginning of July, following the Queen's speech, the *Flying Post* printed a summary of what purported to be a memorandum of Sinzendorf (the Emperor's minister at Utrecht) to the States. Noting the content of the speech, the restraining orders and Robinson's declaration in respect of them, Sinzendorf implicitly rejected the idea of a separate peace, and called for a continuation of the Alliance to secure

²⁰¹ *Flying Post*, 1 March 1712; Eugene had discussed with Godolphin, Marlborough and Bothmer the possibility of a public intervention: reports, 29 January, 1 February 1712 NS, Parke, vol. 2, 146-148.

²⁰² Strafford to Oxford, 18 December 1711, HMC Portland, vol. IX, 307-309.

²⁰³ *Post Boy*, 1 January 1712.

²⁰⁴ *Examiner*, 24 January 1712.

²⁰⁵ *Bottomless Pit*, I, 23.

²⁰⁶ *Daily Courant*, 26 March 1712.

²⁰⁷ C. Leslie, *Natural Reflections upon the Present Debates about War and Peace* (London, 1712), 34.

Spain for the House of Austria; to that end, the Emperor would furnish 108,000 troops.²⁰⁸

Sinzendorf's hand was also suspected in the production of one of the principal pamphlets against the peace prompted by the Queen's speech of June 1712, the *Sighs of Europe*, although its provenance was contested.²⁰⁹ At the heart of *Sighs* was the complaint that the Queen had been negotiating behind the backs of the Allies. The pamphlet analysed the proposed terms, with a focus on Imperial concerns: the arrangements for separating the French and Spanish crowns were insufficient; the peace failed to recover the whole of the Spanish monarchy for the Emperor (a common cause of the Allies, and one which both Britain and the States were said implicitly to have supported in their response to France's proposals in March); and the proposed barrier for the Empire was inadequate. In short, the Queen could hardly claim (as she had) that she had omitted nothing to procure for the Allies what was due to them. Rejecting a separate peace, *Sighs* held firm to 'Spain entire' - an idea which was proving remarkably resilient given that it had become clear by May 1712 that the ministry were seeking to address the Spanish monarchy through renunciations.²¹⁰ *Sighs* seems to have provoked a ministerial response - the *Post Boy* printed a reply over five issues. This was highly unusual, and raises the possibility that Swift was the author.²¹¹

Such Imperial interventions were, however, surpassed by those of the States. These began in February 1712 with a letter to the ministry, which appeared in the press just before the Allies were due to submit their responses to the French proposals. Noting that they had agreed to join the Queen in the negotiations, and describing the barrier treaty as the firm basis of the understanding between the two nations, the letter expressed a willingness to accommodate Britain's desire to renegotiate its terms.²¹² Boyer believed it was intended to head off the anticipated Commons' assault on the treaty, and claimed that it was well

²⁰⁸ *Flying Post*, 1 July 1712.

²⁰⁹ Prior to Oxford, 9 September 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 70253; Strafford to Oxford, 13 September 1712 NS, HMC Portland vol. IX, 340-346.

²¹⁰ J. Dumont, *The Sighs of Europe* ([London], 1713), passim. 'Spain entire' was still being contested in print in early 1713: J. A. d'Archambaud, *The Bait of Europe: or, the Duke of Anjou's Renunciation* (London, 1713).

²¹¹ *Post Boy*, 11, 13, 15, 20, 22 November 1712.

²¹² *Daily Courant*, 3 March 1712.

received by the public, showing the States ready to rectify anything in the treaty prejudicial to British trade. But he acknowledged that the letter ‘had little or no effect where it was intended’, a conclusion borne out by the outcome of the Commons’ debate.²¹³

This letter did not provoke a response, probably due to its conciliatory tone; not so the States’ next interventions. Aggrieved by the Commons’ votes criticising the Allies, and the Commons’ representation, the States passed a resolution complaining of their treatment: ‘by the said votes and address, publicly printed and dispers’d thro’ the world’, they had been condemned without being heard. Von Borsele, their minister in London, submitted a memorial to the Queen, refuting the charges in detail, and seeking to maintain the union between the nations – Britain should not make a separate peace. The position on the barrier treaty was less accommodating than before: the States stood by its terms, while accepting that there were continuing negotiations to address issues raised by the British. Stated to be printed with the authority of the States-General, the two documents were published together in English.²¹⁴

Their reception depended on one’s political outlook. The Tory William Pittis considered them ‘verbose, empty and insignificant’, but nonetheless produced a pamphlet satirising the States as piscine members of an animal alliance in which they excused their failure to send troops: ‘fishes were never us’d to march by land’.²¹⁵ De l’Hermitage, however, assured the States that the documents were favourably received, and the *Daily Courant*, in which they were printed, claimed that they answered the greater part of the Commons’ criticisms.²¹⁶ Ministerial reaction was swift. It was first suggested that the documents were forgeries, and the Commons then moved to arrest Samuel Buckley, who had had the memorial translated and then printed in the *Courant*; he had previously printed both the States’ February letter, and the Imperial memorandum of the same month.²¹⁷ The ministry’s response was published a

²¹³ *Annals*, vol. 10, 348-351.

²¹⁴ *The Resolutions, Memorial and Vouchers of their High Mightinesses* ([The Hague], 1712).

²¹⁵ Pittis, *History of the Second Session*, 82-83; W. Pittis, *The Fable of the Cods-heads...* (London, 1712).

²¹⁶ De l’Hermitage to the States, 19 April 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677FFF, ff.147-149; *Daily Courant*, 8 April 1712.

²¹⁷ *Political State*, vol. 3, 234; Chandler, vol. 4, 297.

few weeks later.²¹⁸ This briefly refuted the Dutch arguments and repeated the key point – the Queen had done all in her power to satisfy the States, and wished to act (i.e. to make peace) alongside them.²¹⁹ The ministers in Utrecht also remonstrated directly with their Dutch counterparts: such appeals to the Queen were futile.²²⁰

This did not, however, prevent a recurrence: the restraining orders prompted a further Dutch intervention on the eve of the Queen's speech on the peace in June. Published as a pamphlet, the States' letter to the Queen complained of both the orders given to Ormond, and Robinson's declaration at Utrecht that if the Dutch did not join the peace, Britain would act alone; British conduct was hardly consistent with the requirement that the Allies act in concert. The Dutch had agreed to a peace congress, even though uncertain of the basis on which it was founded, especially in relation to the *asiento* and their barrier. The union between the nations should be maintained for the protection of the liberties of Europe and the Protestant interest; implicitly, no separate peace should be made.²²¹ De l'Hermitage, unsurprisingly, believed the letter had hit home: he found no-one who did not find it well written, and 'plus honneste'.²²² Even one Tory pamphleteer reported that the letter had been generally applauded, and numerous copies sold.²²³ Halifax sought, without success, to have it read in the Lords at the opening of the debate on the Queen's speech.²²⁴

The Commons, reportedly on the ministry's initiative, responded, approving an address to the Queen noting the indignity that the letter offered her, and recommending that she not reply.²²⁵ A reply, drafted by ministers, was nonetheless sent.²²⁶ It was reproduced in a report from The Hague in the *Flying Post*, possibly as a result of a leak by a British diplomat there - the ministry would have been content to see it in the public domain - and also published

²¹⁸ E.g. *Evening Post*, 27 May 1712.

²¹⁹ *Political State*, vol. 3, 301-302.

²²⁰ Bolingbroke to Strafford and Robinson, 8 April 1712 OS, BL Add. ms 22205, ff.373-376.

²²¹ *A Letter from the States-General to the Queen of Great Britain about the Duke of Ormond's Orders not to Fight* (London, 1712).

²²² De l'Hermitage to the States, 21 June 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677FFF, ff.236-240.

²²³ Pittis, *History of the Second Session*, 116-118.

²²⁴ Cobbett, vol. 6, 1146-1148.

²²⁵ Pittis, *History of the Second Session*, 116-118; Chandler, *History*, vol. 4, 322-329.

²²⁶ Bolingbroke to Oxford, June 1712, HMC Portland, vol. V, 195.

separately.²²⁷ The themes were familiar: the Queen reasserted her commitment to the two nations acting in union; she trusted that the controversies over the restraining orders, and Robinson's declaration, were now at an end; and she reminded the States that it would be their own fault if her measures were not taken in concert with them. Thus, again, the Queen committed herself not to make peace without the States, while threatening that their future failure to cooperate might justify her doing so. In closing, the Queen rebuked the Dutch for making a direct appeal to her subjects, the document having been published almost as soon as she received it: 'tis a remonstrance, instead of a representation, and an appeal to the people, instead of an address to the sovereign'.²²⁸

Whether these Dutch interventions shifted opinion is questionable; they generated the ministerial and Parliamentary responses described, and may have provoked some of the anti-Dutch pamphleteering of the second half of 1712. Defoe claimed that the various letters and memorials of the Allies had been concerted with the domestic opponents of the peace; and the author of one of the first pamphlets to focus on the Amboyna incident claimed that the States' recent actions, 'with their memorials and letters in vindication of themselves', made it necessary 'to set their old practices in view'.²²⁹

Before the Queen's speech, the Dutch might nonetheless have hoped to secure a change of direction; afterwards, it was a different matter. By the time of the final public exchanges with the States, in December 1712 and January 1713, the British held the initiative. In a final throw of the dice, at the end of December the States wrote to inform ministers that they wished to raise issues on the barrier treaty and on the peace proposals delivered (with the British ultimatum) by Strafford the previous month; these were then submitted by von Borsele. Bolingbroke's detailed response, to Strafford and Robinson, rejected almost all the points, and expressed annoyance that the States' letter had appeared in the *Flying Post* at the same time as it had been delivered – once again they were to

²²⁷ *Flying Post*, 1 July 1712; *Her Majesties Letter to the States of Holland, Occasion'd by the Late Differences* (London, 1712).

²²⁸ *Flying Post*, 1 July 1712.

²²⁹ Defoe, *Justice and Necessity*, 31; Beaumont, *Dutch Alliances*, preface.

make clear that such conduct was an affront to the Queen.²³⁰ A few weeks later, however, Bolingbroke was writing to congratulate Strafford on the terms of a further letter from the States (which he implied Strafford had procured) signalling their intention to come into the Queen's measures. The Dutch capitulation appeared complete, and Bolingbroke celebrated the beneficial effect on domestic political discourse: it should 'silence those who might pretend to deplore the hard fate of the Dutch'.²³¹

Discourse and diplomacy

Britain's principal Allies thus intervened actively in British political discourse as the peace negotiations approached their conclusion; the ministry, their attempts to forestall such interventions having failed, responded through the press, pamphlets and leaked diplomatic communications. But how did the ministry seek, in negotiations, to exploit their own efforts to influence that discourse? In the case of the Emperor, hardly at all – his adherence to the recovery of Spain made him a lost cause, and ministers' objective was to convince the public of the unreasonableness of his position. In contrast, their conduct towards the Dutch establishes that manipulation of domestic opinion was at the heart of this element of their negotiating strategy: it was a means of bringing pressure to bear not only on the States-General, but also on the assemblies of the seven Dutch provinces, which had a significant role to play in the approval of any peace.

The Dutch would have been aware of the course of political discussion both in Parliament and more broadly, not least from reports in continental newspapers. Diplomats were another source; de l'Hermitage sent the States regular reports of Parliamentary proceedings, including the debates on the conduct of the war and the barrier treaty, and provided copies of the *Votes*.²³² And he mentioned, and occasionally commented on, political pamphlets, including both Swift's

²³⁰ Bolingbroke to Strafford and Robinson, 7 January 1713, BL Add. ms 22206, ff.93-110; the States' letter appeared in the *Flying Post* of 3 January 1713, which has not been located, though the paper printed a summary of the letter on 15 January 1713.

²³¹ Bolingbroke to Strafford, 20 February 1713, Parke, vol. 3, 452-454; no published copy of this further letter has been identified.

²³² De l'Hermitage to the States, 3 June 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677FFF, ff.209-211.

Remarks on the Barrier Treaty and, as pressure on the Dutch to finalise the new barrier treaty intensified, *The Barrier Treaty Vindicated*.²³³

This was not, however, sufficient: ministers ensured that relevant elements of discourse were specifically drawn to the attention of the Dutch, either to influence their negotiating position, or to dissuade them from further interventions of their own. In late December 1711, Strafford showed Eugene and the States the Commons' resolutions calling for the treaties for the Allies' quotas, the curtain-raiser for the House's investigation into the conduct of the war: 'both seem'd equally displeas'd at it, thinking nothing of that sort could appear'.²³⁴ Strafford then warned Buys that if the Dutch continued to insist on sharing the *asiento*, the Queen might also lay the 1709 barrier treaty before Parliament; and what might then become of their friends (the former Whig ministers) who made it?²³⁵ The Commons having requested the treaty, Bolingbroke told Strafford and Robinson that the States should brace themselves: 'I am afraid our friends in Holland will find the national sense express'd in harder terms upon this subject than ever the sense of the Queen or her ministers', and the resolutions to follow would 'be likely to make a good deal of noise among the Allies'.²³⁶ Once the Commons' resolutions had been passed, he wrote again. '[The States] cannot fail now to see, ... that the sense of the nation agreed with the sense of her Majesty'; if the Commons' proceedings had made any impression on the Dutch, they should conclude negotiations on the new barrier treaty.²³⁷ Thomas Harley, passing through The Hague with instructions for the British negotiators, was told to press the point with the Pensionary – Parliament had shown its resentment of the Allies' interference which had (allegedly) contributed to the Lords' address on 'no peace without Spain'; the only road to redemption was for the States now to make peace alongside the Queen.²³⁸ Pressure increased with the issue of the Commons' representation. Bolingbroke sent a copy to Strafford and Robinson in early March 1712; it was 'likely to make much noise in the world, and to have great

²³³ De l'Hermitage to the States, 4 March, 25 November 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 17677FFF, ff. 69-71, ff.410-411.

²³⁴ Strafford to Bolingbroke, 5 January 1712 NS, SP84/243 ff.23-28.

²³⁵ Strafford to Oxford, 26 January 1712 NS, HMC Portland, vol. IX, 323-324.

²³⁶ Bolingbroke to Strafford and Robinson, 27 January 1712, 6 February 1712, BL Add. ms 22205, ff.232-235, ff.262-263.

²³⁷ Bolingbroke to Strafford and Robinson, 16 February 1712, BL Add. ms 22205, ff.282-286.

²³⁸ Instructions to T. Harley, February 1712, Parke, vol. 2, 181-183; Swift, *Four Last Years*, 119.

influence on foreign as well as domestick affairs'.²³⁹ It was reported to Oxford that it had made Pensionary 'very melancholy'; he had made the connection between the representation and British efforts to force the States into a peace.²⁴⁰

Shortly before the Queen's speech on the peace terms, Robinson became concerned that level of the opposition in the Lords during the restraining orders debate had 'turn'd the heads' of the Dutch, but considered that once the dust had settled they would join in the Queen's measures.²⁴¹ In his view the addresses made by both Lords and Commons after their respective debates on the orders had prepared the ground for what was to follow – apparently because they would disabuse the Allies' ministers in Utrecht of the hopes they may have entertained of the level of opposition in Britain.²⁴² Once made, the Queen's speech provided ministers with the opportunity to draw a line under the negotiations to date, at the cost of acknowledging that they had been negotiating separately with France. Strafford, echoing Bolingbroke's view that following the speech the Queen would be able to overcome opposition to the peace, considered that the Dutch would be humbled - they would see that Parliament would accept whatever peace the Queen chose to make.²⁴³ The ensuing loyal addresses can only have confirmed this impression of compliance.

Underlining the message, Britain's negotiators in Utrecht were sent the Queen's speech, and the Parliamentary addresses in response to it. They were instructed that when meeting the Allies they should follow the terms of the speech, which would assume an almost canonical significance over the coming months - it brought the negotiations to 'a narrow compass'. As for the Dutch, they should be told that as they had not instructed their ministers to cooperate, 'this is the best that can be done short of breaking off the peace'.²⁴⁴ Robinson reported the States' alarm at the reversal of the gains of the last three years, and at the prospect of losing Lille and Tournai from their barrier.²⁴⁵ Meanwhile,

²³⁹ Bolingbroke to Strafford and Robinson, 4 March 1712, BL Add. ms 22205, f.305.

²⁴⁰ Drummond to Oxford, 29 March 1712 NS, HMC Portland, vol. V, 152-153.

²⁴¹ Robinson to Ormond, 17 June 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 31136, ff.376-377.

²⁴² Robinson to Bolingbroke, 17 June 1712 NS, SP84/244, ff.294-295.

²⁴³ Bolingbroke to Ormond, 11 June 1712, Parke, vol. 2, 376-377; Strafford to Robinson, 8 June 1712 NS, Bodl. Mss. Rawl. A.286, ff. 173-174.

²⁴⁴ Instructions to Strafford and Robinson, 20 June 1712, BL Add. ms 22204, ff.82-85.

²⁴⁵ Robinson to Bolingbroke, 24 June 1712 NS, SP84/244, ff.302-305.

Bolingbroke instructed Strafford, who was to visit the army on his journey back to the Netherlands, that, should he come across Eugene or the Dutch deputies, he should plainly represent to them the provocations the British had received, and the grounds for Britain's present conduct – again a reflection of domestic political discourse.²⁴⁶

As the year went on, so the diplomatic pressure on the Dutch continued. British and French interests were here aligned: Prior reported that Torcy was very desirous that the Dutch should be managed, as Britain had more power over them, and they were more likely to want a speedy peace than the Empire.²⁴⁷ In November 1712 the British negotiators were instructed to press the Dutch to sign the new barrier treaty, with domestic discourse again being cited; 'the sense of the nation' had declared the existing treaty dishonourable and disadvantageous, and if the Dutch insisted on retaining it, this 'would nourish jealousys and ill-will'. Britain would try to secure Tournai for their barrier, but only if they demonstrated an immediate concurrence in concluding the peace, without further objections or demands. The Dutch were to be reminded of the critical discourse surrounding the existing treaty earlier in the year; the implicit threat was that the ministry might encourage more of the same if they did not comply.²⁴⁸

Dutch perceptions of British politics did not, however, drive in only one direction; the persistent discourse concerning the succession was unhelpful to the ministry. In late September 1712 Oxford received a report that the Dutch, presumably influenced in part by that discourse, believed that the Pretender was to return, and that accordingly they had no alternative but to stand alongside the Emperor.²⁴⁹ Nonetheless, British pressure on the States continued to build, with Strafford delivering his ultimatum to them in December: they had two or three weeks to come into the Queen's measures.²⁵⁰ This was confirmed by the *Post Boy*: Strafford had gone to the Dutch not as an angel of revelation, but as a dove of peace, making proposals which (it was reported)

²⁴⁶ Bolingbroke to Strafford, 21 June 1712, BL Add. ms 22204, ff.86-87.

²⁴⁷ Prior to Oxford, 9 September 1712 NS, BL Add. ms 70253.

²⁴⁸ Instructions to Strafford and Robinson, 11 November 1712, BL Add. ms 22204, ff.88-92.

²⁴⁹ Drummond to Oxford, 1 October 1712 NS, HMC Portland, vol. V, 225-226.

²⁵⁰ Strafford to Bolingbroke, 9 December 1712 NS, SP84/243 ff.292-293.

they could hardly refuse.²⁵¹ This effort to undermine domestic support for continued resistance by the States was reinforced by the publication of Strafford's speech to the Dutch. According to the text, the speech opened with a threat: the Dutch had suffered by not joining in the cessation (through the defeat at Denain), and they should fear much worse if they failed to make peace jointly with the Queen.²⁵² Concerned that the publication of extracts of the replacement barrier treaty in the *Flying Post* in early January 1713 presaged further Dutch foot-dragging, Bolingbroke issued a final injunction to apply pressure: the States should be told that any such attempt to interfere in the Queen's affairs would have the same ill success as those which had gone before.²⁵³ He need not have worried – the new treaty was exchanged within a fortnight.²⁵⁴

While it may have provided little comfort to the Dutch as they endured this onslaught, British ministers were also deploying British political discourse for their benefit in negotiations with France. From the outset the British had stressed to the French the importance of the Queen's speech; writing to Torcy on the day it was delivered, Bolingbroke explained how, by seeking 'the unanimous vote of this nation for the peace', the Queen had deprived her opponents of the power to obstruct it.²⁵⁵ That the British considered the speech a memorial of the terms agreed with France was clear in Bolingbroke's instructions to Prior when the French attempted to exclude Tournai from the Dutch barrier – they would find it hard to resile from those terms, especially if they tried to argue that they were entitled to retain Tournai. While Bolingbroke was frustrated with the Dutch, if France insisted, and in consequence the States refused to agree terms, the French should not assume that Parliament would be compliant. Once what had happened came to be known – 'and it is not possible the secret should be kept', as Bolingbroke disingenuously put it – 'some of our best friends among the Tories would ... join to condemn us'. In that case the Queen would have no option but to side with the States, 'and then appeal to her people', implicitly through an election.²⁵⁶ The French duly conceded Tournai.

²⁵¹ *Post Boy*, 6 December 1712.

²⁵² *The Earl of Strafford's Speech to the High & Mighty States of Holland*, ... (Dublin, 1713).

²⁵³ Bolingbroke to Strafford and Robinson, 7 January 1712, BL Add. ms 22206, ff.93-110.

²⁵⁴ Strafford and Robinson to Bolingbroke, 30 January 1712 NS, SP84/246, ff.72-74.

²⁵⁵ Bolingbroke to Torcy, 6 June 1712, Parke, vol. 2, 582-584.

²⁵⁶ Bolingbroke to Prior, 29 September 1712, Parke, vol. 3, 111-125.

Once the States had agreed the new barrier treaty, ministerial pressure on France increased. In January 1713, Bolingbroke instructed Shrewsbury to stress to Torcy 'what confusion may arise', if the negotiations appeared still to be open, and it became known that it was because the French were reneging on the agreed terms.²⁵⁷ And in February, Strafford was instructed to apply the final turn of the screw to both the States and the French. If the States would concede the two remaining points (excluding Condé from the barrier, and deferring some outstanding commercial issues), France 'must chicane no more'; if they did so, the Queen would convene Parliament and disclose the true state of the negotiations 'and let mankind be the judges at whose door the delay is to be fixed'.²⁵⁸

For British ministers, therefore, domestic political discourse played a crucial role in the diplomatic manoeuvring involved in finalising the peace. While the Emperor's insistence on securing the entire Spanish monarchy spared him, repeated recourse to domestic discourse was calculated to have a direct impact on the Dutch. And threats to the French of disclosure of the details of the talks, and of the consequent impact on domestic opinion, were deployed to bring the negotiations over the line.

Conclusion

The outline peace terms agreed between Britain and France in advance of the congress in Utrecht were inconsistent with the aspirations of Britain's principal Allies: the Emperor remained wedded to 'Spain entire', and the States sought the extensive barrier agreed in the 1709 barrier treaty, and a share in the *asiento*. These aspirations could not be accommodated in the proposed peace, presenting the ministry with three options: to make peace without either Ally; to induce both to make peace; or to induce one to do so, while abandoning the other. It chose the third.

This implied four imperatives in relation to discourse: to convince the public that peace was inevitable; to reassure them that the ministry was pursuing a general peace in which the Allies' interests would be protected; to emphasise the

²⁵⁷ Bolingbroke to Shrewsbury, 19 January 1713, Parke, vol. 3, 306-324.

²⁵⁸ Bolingbroke to Strafford, 3 February 1713, Parke, vol. 3, 362-366.

failures of the Allies, justifying a separate peace should it prove impossible to secure their agreement; and to focus attacks on the Dutch, and on the barrier treaty, to convince the Dutch that they had no option but to modify their demands, and make peace alongside the Queen.

The ministry pursued these imperatives through its influence over periodicals, principally the *Examiner* and the *Post Boy*, and through pamphlets. And it exploited the authority of Parliament to validate its preferred narratives - as a source of resolutions, addresses and the Commons' representation, and as the forum for the Queen's speeches and messages. These reflected public discourse, and public discourse, in particular the loyal addresses, came to reflect them. The ministry did not, however, have matters all its own way. Both principal Allies intervened in discourse to defend their interests, generating ministerial responses. And the ministry also had to respond to domestically generated discourse in opposition to the peace – including through prosecution and the introduction of the Stamp Act.

Nonetheless, domestic discourse ran sufficiently strongly in the channels favoured by ministers for them to be able to exploit it in their diplomacy. Taking that discourse and its diplomatic exploitation together, the primary focus fell on the Dutch – why? Because they were in a weaker position than the Empire, and so more likely to concede; and because the Emperor insisted on 'Spain entire', while Dutch objections might more easily be overcome. But was there another reason?

Ministers sought to convince the Dutch that the public was reconciled to the making of peace; and that anti-Dutch feeling was such that for them to attempt to use Parliament, or to appeal to opinion, to prevent the peace would be fruitless. The primary purpose of the ministry's interventions might therefore be said to have been to induce the Dutch to overcome their objections and join in the peace. The reason may have been one of foreign policy – a concern that if the Dutch and the Empire continued the war they might secure 'Spain entire' for the Emperor, and so disturb the balance of power. Yet this seems unlikely in the light of ministerial scepticism over the Emperor's commitment to the war, and especially after the defeat at Denain. More convincing is that domestic matters

were at the heart of ministerial thinking: Dutch agreement should make the public more likely to accept a peace widely thought to be underwhelming. Thus domestic opinion was employed to induce the Dutch to enter the peace, an objective itself pursued for reasons of domestic policy.

A commentator wrote in January 1713 that 'people of all sorts and sizes ... are so spiteful as to say, that either the King of France is tricking us, or the peace he has given us is such as dare not appear, without the Dutch, or the Emperor, or both, to keep it in countenance'.²⁵⁹ He was right, and the ministry knew it.

²⁵⁹ Dr Gibson to William Nicholson, 23 January 1713, Bodl. Mss. Add. A.269, ff.20-21.

5 Aftermath: the immediate legacy of the treaties of peace and commerce

Introduction

Joseph Trapp, in a poem published shortly after the Queen announced the signing of the peace in April 1713, celebrated the death of faction: 'While that dire fiend expires; ... Britain exults, and joy unbounded reigns'.¹ But within weeks Defoe was complaining that while Britain had peace with France, 'we have no peace among ourselves'.² He was closer to the mark.

Peace having been declared, the ministry embarked on a concerted campaign to build support, through celebrations, sermons and poems; this generated significant public participation, not least through a further round of loyal addresses congratulating the Queen. But Parliament grew restive, and the initiative was lost. Opposition coalesced around four principal themes, each of which played a prominent role in discourse: a perceived failure to secure the balance of power; the consequent threat to the succession; the danger to the Protestant interest at home and abroad; and the risks posed by the treaty of commerce agreed with France alongside the peace.

While the peace treaty, once signed, could not be undone, two forthcoming political events drove contention over its legacy. The first concerned the commerce treaty. While the ministry had constructed the case that the making of peace was within the Queen's prerogative, and so could be presented to Parliament as a *fait accompli*, implementation of the commerce treaty's principal provisions required legislation. Opponents of the peace thus had an opportunity to inflict a defeat on the ministry, if not over the peace itself, then over a proxy for it – a proxy the importance of which the ministry had itself stressed. On 18 June 1713 the House of Commons duly rejected the bill implementing the commerce treaty.

The second of those political events - the approaching autumn election - provided the ministry with the opportunity to recover the position: a favourable

¹ J. Trapp, *Peace: a Poem* (1713).

² *Review*, 28 May 1713.

outcome would permit the reintroduction of the bill, with a greater prospect of success. Accordingly, contention over commerce intensified over the summer, amplified by discussion of the motives of those responsible for the bill's defeat. But the bill's revival was not ministers' principal reason for seeking electoral success: consolidating the Tory majority secured in 1710 would tighten their hold on power. Conversely, the election offered the Whigs the opportunity of loosening it. In consequence, the election campaign spanned a range of issues beyond that of commerce alone.

These issues lie at the heart of this chapter's analysis of the contention over the legacy of the peace in discourse, alongside the identity of the participants in that contention, and the means which they deployed in pursuing it. While much recent commentary on British politics in 1713 has focussed on the controversy over the commerce treaty, this chapter will, through analysing political discourse, demonstrate that that controversy was not discrete.³ Rejecting a tendency in accounts of discourse concerning the peace to neglect its immediate aftermath, it shows how the contention over the commerce treaty drew on a broader set of inter-related narratives reflecting the peace discourse of the previous years.⁴ Simultaneously, it suggests that accounts which draw on contemporary discourse to identify a clear ideological divide between Whig and Tory may be overplayed.⁵

This analysis is important not only in understanding the rejection of the commerce bill, but also the substantial Tory victory in the election. Speck identified the peace and the commerce treaty as the deciding issues for the electorate; and Gauci, whose concentration on merchants and trade naturally led him to focus on commercial concerns, also cited the succession, the balance of power and the question of religion.⁶ Richards, while seeing electoral interest as a primary driver of the result, regarded the peace as the principal

³ P. Gauci, *The Politics of Trade: the Overseas Merchant in State and Society, 1660-1720* (Oxford, 2001), 234-270; D. Coleman, 'Politics and Economics in the Age of Anne: the Case of the Anglo-French Trade Treaty of 1713', *Trade, Government and Economy in Pre-Industrial England* (D. Coleman and A. H. John (ed.)) (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976), 181-211; D. Ahn, 'The Anglo-French Treaty of Commerce of 1713: Tory Trade Politics and the Question of Dutch Decline', *History of European Ideas* 36:2 (2010), 167-80.

⁴ E.g. Müllenbrock, *Culture of Contention*.

⁵ E.g. S. C. A. Pincus, 'Rethinking Mercantilism: Political Economy, the British Empire, and the Atlantic World in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *William and Mary Quarterly* 69.1 (2012).

⁶ Speck, *Tory and Whig*, 90-91; Gauci, *Politics of Trade*, 257.

issue.⁷ This chapter argues for a more nuanced approach: voters' appreciation of the issues can only be understood in the context of the interconnections between them.

Seizing the initiative

The Queen's speech to Parliament of 9 April 1713 announcing the peace initiated a sustained effort to propagandise in its favour; ministerially-led, it encompassed a broad range of media, and generated considerable public engagement. The Queen celebrated the end of 'a long and burdensome war', and called for unity and the cultivation of the 'arts of peace' – recalling her attack in December 1711 on those delighting in the art of war. The speech not only made the case for peace, envisaging advantages for both overseas trade and domestic manufacturing, but also pre-empted the more obvious lines of attack: although the Emperor had not joined in the peace, the Queen asserted that the Allies had had sufficient opportunity to protect their interests; and she anticipated concerns that the peace threatened the succession by declaring 'a perfect friendship' between herself and the House of Hanover.⁸

Both Houses made addresses of thanks; as well as drafting the speech, Oxford had, with Swift, drafted at least one of these, and the loyalist Hanmer was the first-named member of the committee drafting that of the Commons.⁹ Fulsome in its praise, this echoed the speech in two significant respects: the Queen had procured reasonable satisfaction for her Allies, and had amply demonstrated her care for the Protestant succession.¹⁰ Action reinforced acclamation: later in April the Commons reflected ministerial rhetoric on the financial burden of the war, voting to reduce the land tax from four shillings in the pound to two; this 'pleas'd a great part of the nation', with both parties claiming the credit.¹¹ The Queen gave her assent to the Land Tax Act – setting the reduced rate – the day before the formal proclamation of peace; though not explicit, the connection was self-evident.¹²

⁷ Richards, *Party Propaganda*, 129.

⁸ *HCJ*, vol. 17, 278.

⁹ Draft speech, BL Add. ms 70330, ff.87-88; Swift, *Journal*, 505-515.

¹⁰ *HCJ*, vol. 17, 278, 280-281.

¹¹ Berkeley to Strafford, 24 April 1713, BL Add. ms 22220, ff.64-66.

¹² *Flying Post*, 7 May 1713.

Numerous celebratory poems were published. Trapp's was commissioned in advance of the Queen's speech by Bolingbroke (its dedicatee), and Swift was asked to comment on it ('good for nothing', he complained).¹³ Praising the peace at length, the poem repeated familiar pro-peace narratives: the war had been continued to serve Dutch avarice and Imperial pride; domestic opponents of peace had been enjoying 'their bleeding country's toils'; and the Queen now held the balance of Europe in her hands. Other poems also featured well-worn themes. Thomas Tickell's, dedicated to Robinson, proclaimed the humbling of 'the haughty Gaul', and the Queen's possession of the balance of power, before anticipating the flowering of commerce:

'Fearless our merchant now pursues his gain,
And roams securely o'er the boundless main.'

With an eye to balance, and reflecting the Tory ministry's earlier appropriation of the war, both Trapp's and Tickell's poems celebrated Britain's early victories, and echoed the persistent narrative of heroism by praising Marlborough and Ormond alike – in Ormond's case for his 'heroic obedience' to his orders not to fight.¹⁴

The peace was also acclaimed from the pulpit. Sacheverell's sermon to the Commons of 29 May, which was printed on the Commons' order, reflected on the obstruction of the peace by domestic opposition, before making a barely disguised appeal to voters – the Queen's achievement in ending the 'deluge of blood and treasure' had been accomplished alongside a wise and steady ministry, and a Parliament dedicated to the public good.¹⁵ Many other sermons lauding the peace were printed, again reflecting the themes and language of prevailing discourse. The vicar of Abbotsham in Devon grieved over the 'mangling and mauling' inherent in war, celebrated the anticipated advantages to trade, and echoed the Queen's hopes for the cultivation of the arts of peace.¹⁶ Most prominent, however, was Bishop Hooper's sermon to the

¹³ Swift, *Journal*, 515-525.

¹⁴ Trapp, *Peace*, 3, 7, 4, 9, 10; T. Tickell, *A Poem, to His Excellency the Lord Privy-Seal, on the Prospect of Peace* (London, 1713), 1, 4, 9, 10, 14.

¹⁵ H. Sacheverell, *False Notions of Liberty in Religion and Government, Destructive of Both. A Sermon Preach'd before the Honourable House of Commons, at St. Margaret's Westminster, on Friday, May 29. 1713* (London, 1713), 16, 21.

¹⁶ W. Bear, *The Blessing of Peace. Set forth in a Sermon, Preached on Tuesday July the 7th, 1713* (London, 1713), 8, 10, 23.

thanksgiving service at St Paul's on 7 July, which was published by the Queen's order.¹⁷ His text ('Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces') inspired a moderately expressed plea for unity, but he nonetheless adopted the pro-peace narrative of *Conduct*: reciting Britain's expenditure of lives and money, he asserted that the burden of the war, initially shared equally, had become 'the heavy labour of the one'.¹⁸

This thanksgiving service was the centrepiece of the formal celebrations. The procession beforehand passed a choir of 4,000 charity children singing hymns in praise of the peace; copies were available for purchase.¹⁹ The service itself featured music composed for the occasion by Handel, and was marked by the firing of guns at the Tower and St James's. Fireworks, bonfires and illuminations followed.²⁰ Ministers did not, however, have it all their own way. Boyer reported that few Whig Parliamentarians attended St Paul's; they could hardly be expected to give thanks for a peace which they had opposed, and of which they disapproved – their absence was itself a contribution to discourse.²¹ Ridpath encouraged similar abstentions from thanksgivings in Scotland: the peace terms were such that the Church of Scotland should not think to approve them.²² At least some clerics agreed: the Duke of Atholl complained to Oxford that in Perthshire several had refused to participate.²³

The day of thanksgiving was not the first official marking of the treaty. On 5 May formal proclamations of peace in London, at St James's, Temple Bar and the Royal Exchange, were attended by heralds, and troops of horse guards and grenadiers – the guns were fired, and 'there were extraordinary illuminations, bonfires, and other rejoycings at night'.²⁴ On the proclamation in Edinburgh, the health of the Queen was drunk and cannon were fired.²⁵ The day of

¹⁷ G. Hooper, *A Sermon Preach'd before Both Houses of Parliament, in the Cathedral Church of St Paul, on Tuesday 7th of July 1713* (London, 1713).

¹⁸ Hooper, *Sermon*, 9.

¹⁹ Advertised in the *Post Boy*, 14 July 1713.

²⁰ *Political State*, vol. 6, 15, 21-23; de l'Hermitage to the States, 21 July 1713 NS, BL Add. ms 17767GGG, ff.271-272.

²¹ *Political State*, vol. 6, 15.

²² G. Ridpath, *Some Thoughts Concerning the Peace, and the Thanksgiving Appointed by Authority to be Observed for it* (London, 1713), 24.

²³ Atholl to Oxford, 1 July 1713, HMC Portland, vol. V, 302-303.

²⁴ *British Mercury*, 6 May 1713; Bateman to Trumbull, 6 May 1713, BL Add. ms 72500, f.164.

²⁵ *Daily Courant*, 21 May 1713.

thanksgiving itself was celebrated in Oxford's opera house, where Trapp's poem was inflicted on 'an innumerable concourse of persons of distinction'.²⁶

The public also acted spontaneously. The arrival of the French ambassador, d'Aumont, in January had offered the public an early opportunity to express its opinion; the ambassador could be seen as a symbol of the anticipated peace. His initial reception was enthusiastic, perhaps due to his throwing coins to the crowd; once he desisted, a mob followed his carriage shouting 'no papist, no Pretender', vandalised his house, and threw dead cats and dogs into his garden. On d'Aumont's visiting the theatre to see *Sir Fopling Flutter*, which mocked French manners, audience reaction was divided, but most clapped in approval of the joke at his expense; as he left his servants were attacked by the crowd.²⁷

Once the peace was formally announced, the reaction was immediate: the *Evening Post* reported 'bonfires, illuminations, and other demonstrations of joy' throughout London.²⁸ Public response to the official celebrations was also reported to be positive, though not unanimously so. Swift claimed that the proclamation had been met with 'more extraordinary rejoicings' than could be recalled on any similar occasion; the mob's enthusiasm led them to break the windows of those who had not illuminated them.²⁹ On the day of thanksgiving Boyer reported 'great crowds' for the procession through London, and one commentator noted that, on this occasion, no insult was offered to those who had not participated in the illuminations – probably, he surmised, because they were so widespread.³⁰ The *Post Boy* and other periodicals carried many reports of celebrations outside the capital. Calculated to reinforce a positive view of the treaty, these could not go unchallenged; the *Flying Post* accused the *Post Boy* of exaggerating public joy, and overlooking 'the visible unconcernedness of the spectators of the cavalcade, the unusual silence of the mob, who on our thanksgiving for victories, were used to rend the air with huzza's'.³¹ Thus the

²⁶ *British Mercury*, 15 July 1713.

²⁷ *Political State*, vol. 5, 20-21; de l'Hermitage to the States, 20 January, 3 February 1713 NS, BL Add. ms 17767GGG, ff.30-32, 49-50.

²⁸ *Evening Post*, 4 April 1713.

²⁹ Swift, *Four Last Years*, 167; Berkeley to Strafford, 12 May 1713, BL Add. ms 22220, ff.70-71.

³⁰ *Political State*, vol. 6, 21-23; de l'Hermitage to the States, 21 July 1713 NS, BL Add. ms 17677GGG, ff.271-272.

³¹ *Flying Post*, 25 July 1713.

level of public support for the peace, demonstrated through participation in the celebrations, was itself contested.

As in 1710 and 1712, loyal addresses provided another medium for public participation in political discourse; the Queen's speech announcing the peace prompted some 240. These shared a key characteristic with the addresses of 1712: unlike those of 1710, which reflected the divisions over Sacheverell, they were unanimous in acclaiming the end of the war. And, again like those of 1712, almost all appeared in the *London Gazette*, which published up to thirteen an issue. Nonetheless, some addresses again caused contention, sometimes reflecting elements of the constitutional arguments of 1710. An opponent of the ministry objected to references to 'hereditary right' and to the suppression of anti-monarchical principles in the first draft of Carlisle's address, leading to an address in 'a much lower style'.³² The Church's convocation also tussled over their address, with the lower clergy rejecting the bishops' draft as expressing insufficient joy for the blessings of peace, and preparing their own more fulsome version for presentation to the Queen.³³

Between them the addresses touched on most of the themes of contemporary discourse concerning the peace, including those in the Queen's speech. Devon's address referred to the Queen's 'undoubted prerogative to be the arbiter of peace', which the Queen had implicitly asserted by informing Parliament only after the peace had been signed.³⁴ Others noted (as the Queen had) the opposition she had faced, with Amersham's praising her for overcoming 'the wicked designs ... of men that delight in war'.³⁵ Recalling the Queen's earlier attack on opponents of the peace, the phrase also nodded to her desire for the cultivation of the arts of peace, a sentiment repeated in many of the addresses.³⁶ Other echoes of the speech included references to 'a tedious, expensive and bloody war' (Middlesex) and to the Queen's care for the interests of the Allies and for the nation's trade and manufactures (Penzance).³⁷ And the great majority of the addresses thanked the Queen for her attention to

³² Todd to Oxford, 18 July 1713, HMC Portland, vol. V, 304-305.

³³ Bishop Kennett's journal, BL Lansdowne 1024, ff.410-415; *Gazette*, 19 May 1713.

³⁴ *Gazette*, 2 May 1713.

³⁵ *Gazette*, 16 May 1713.

³⁶ E.g. Middlesex address, *Gazette*, 21 April 1713.

³⁷ *Gazette*, 2, 19 May 1713.

the security of the Protestant succession.³⁸ These themes could be amplified in the Queen's replies, such that to the City of London's address (one of the few replies to be printed); drafted by Oxford, it claimed that God had blessed the Queen's efforts to secure the Protestant succession, and also to enlarge trade to the City's benefit.³⁹

This echoing of themes from the Queen's speech (and of other themes prominent in pro-peace discourse) again raises the question of whether there was a centrally coordinated addressing 'campaign'. There is no evidence of this, and the commonality of themes between the addresses is more likely to be due to the prevalence of those themes in the discourse to which those drafting them were exposed, and to those individuals using as precedents addresses already printed in the *Gazette*, and thus widely disseminated. There was also, as in 1712, an element of approval seeking; when Hanmer informed Oxford of the unanimous adoption of the Suffolk address, he presumably intended to garner some of the credit.⁴⁰ And Dr Todd, who sent Oxford his original draft of the Carlisle address, wanted to assure him that much of the town favoured an address along these lines, more fulsome than the one finally approved; he need not have worried, as the original version had already been presented.⁴¹

The making of peace thus triggered a concerted, ministry-inspired programme of discourse encompassing Parliament, religious and military ceremonial and print discourse, designed to generate support for the peace. This objective was furthered by the participation of a wider public – through minor clergy preaching to their parishioners (and publishing their sermons), crowds joining in spontaneous and organised celebrations, and counties, boroughs and other institutions presenting addresses. Reporting of public participation in the celebrations, and publication of the addresses, were calculated to consolidate an impression of a public firmly behind the peace. While this discourse featured many of the pro-peace narratives familiar from previous chapters, at the heart of it lay one simple fact: peace had been made.

³⁸ E.g. City of Westminster address, *Gazette*, 14 April 1713.

³⁹ Draft reply, BL Add. ms 70330, ff.107-108.

⁴⁰ Hanmer to Oxford, 27 July 1713, BL Add. ms 70230.

⁴¹ Todd to Oxford, 18 July 1713, HMC Portland, vol. V, 304-305; *Gazette*, 14 July 1713.

Losing control

This programme did not, however, carry all before it; not everyone joined in the celebrations, and the unanimity of the loyal addresses masked both the contention that lay behind some of them, and the fact that, as in 1712, dissent might be signalled by making no address at all – there were at least fifty fewer addresses in 1713 than in 1712.⁴² Such ambivalence should be unsurprising, given opposition attempts to undermine the ministerial narrative of successful peace-making; these can be traced back to at least January 1713, and formed a continuum with the anti-peace discourse of previous years. But it was Parliament's reaction that should have alerted ministers that the narrative of successful peace-making was under significant challenge.

The first signs of trouble came during the debates over the two Houses' addresses thanking the Queen for her speech announcing the peace. In the Lords, it was proposed (unsuccessfully) to remove the words congratulating the Queen on concluding a general peace, apparently because (the Emperor not having agreed) the peace was not 'general'.⁴³ However, a proposal to seek the laying of the treaties before the House also suggested a reluctance to sanction a peace on undisclosed terms.⁴⁴ This reluctance was more apparent in the Commons, where Whig MPs proposed an address requesting production of the treaties, arguing that the House could hardly be expected to approve the peace without seeing them. The ministry, perhaps bowing to the inevitable, allowed this address to pass, but with the qualification (possibly proposed by Hanmer on its behalf) that it be done 'in due time'.⁴⁵ De l'Hermitage noted that the peace terms were being kept secret, and it seems likely that the ministry was thereby attempting to restrain public discourse; in late April, Robinson and Strafford assured Bolingbroke that they had asked the French not to print the treaties immediately following ratification.⁴⁶ The request for their disclosure certainly irritated both the Queen and her ministers; the texts provided to Parliament on 9 May were accompanied by a grudging message reasserting the Queen's

⁴² Knights, *Representation and Misrepresentation*, 117.

⁴³ *HLJ*, vol. 19, 512-513; W. Pittis, *The History of the Third Session of the Last Parliament* (London, [1713]), 5.

⁴⁴ Burnet, vol. 6, 153-154.

⁴⁵ Pittis, *History of the Third Session*, 13; *HCJ*, vol. 17, 282.

⁴⁶ De l'Hermitage to the States, 28 April 1713 NS, BL Add. ms 17677GGG, ff.134-135; Robinson and Strafford to Bolingbroke, 10 May 1713 NS, SP84/247, ff.36-38.

‘undoubted prerogative’ to make peace.⁴⁷ Bolingbroke sought a silver lining, hoping that producing, and publishing, the treaties would reassure those who had been induced to believe the worst; Boyer was unconvinced, describing the ‘general clamour’ which followed.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, the ministry could take satisfaction from these initial skirmishes. Opposition attempts to amend the addresses responding to the Queen’s speech had failed, and their published texts reinforced key elements of the ministry’s pro-peace messaging: divisions had been overcome; a long and expensive war had been concluded; the Allies had been satisfied; and the Protestant succession had been secured.⁴⁹

But the situation deteriorated. Ministerial efforts at news management suffered a further blow when the Commons requested sight of the new Barrier Treaty, and the related diplomatic instructions.⁵⁰ Worryingly, the motion was proposed by two Tory MPs, including Arthur Moore, who was close to the ministry – ‘it was the court party which made the demand’.⁵¹ But this was only the beginning: over the following months both Lords and Commons submitted numerous requests for documents, with a focus on trade and commerce.⁵² These constant requests were, at the least, an irritant: Bolingbroke complained that days would be wasted reading all the papers the Lords had demanded. But he also perceived an attempt to influence wider political discourse: ‘the benefit [the Whigs] expect from hence, is to be able to clamour at the elections, and to leave it a moot point, whether the bargain made by the Queen be good or not’.⁵³

Loss of ministerial control was further manifested in a Parliamentary defeat over the treaty’s provisions concerning Dunkirk. The French were required, at their expense, and within a few months, to fill in the harbour, and demolish the town’s seaward and landward fortifications, conditionally on an (unspecified) ‘equivalent’ being delivered.⁵⁴ A Commons address forced the ministry to acknowledge that the equivalent was Lille, which the Dutch had been compelled to accept should not form part of their barrier, and which was already in French

⁴⁷ Roberts, *Hamilton’s Diary*, 53; *HCJ*, vol. 17, 319-344.

⁴⁸ Bolingbroke to Shrewsbury, 29 May 1713, Parke, vol. 4, 137-142; *Political State*, vol. 5, 311.

⁴⁹ *HLJ*, vol. 19, 515; *HCJ*, vol. 17, 280-281.

⁵⁰ Chandler, vol. 5, 6.

⁵¹ De l’Hermitage to the States, 16 May 1713 NS, BL Add. ms 17677GGG, ff.157-158.

⁵² E.g. *HLJ*, vol. 19, 543; *HCJ*, vol. 17, 387.

⁵³ Bolingbroke to Shrewsbury, 29 May 1713, Parke, vol. 4, 137-142

⁵⁴ *General Collection of Treatys*, vol. III (London, 1732), 430.

hands; the embarrassing implication was that there was no security for the performance of France's obligations.⁵⁵ And this was simply the prelude to the rejection of the commerce bill, which followed two weeks later.

The landscape of contention

These Parliamentary reverses had implications beyond provoking ministerial irritation: they contributed to wider political discourse. In addition to seeing the Houses' addresses in print, informed members of the public were aware of dissent in Parliament; Parliamentary proceedings were contributing to the developing political contention over the legacy of the peace, while simultaneously reflecting it.⁵⁶ The foundations of this contention were laid in Nottingham's *Observations upon the State of the Nation*; published in January 1713, it went to at least three editions.⁵⁷ This was a commentary on the peace 'now concluded'; not an attempt to influence negotiations, but an opening shot in the battle over the treaty's legacy.⁵⁸ Nottingham outlined the principal themes of the coming debate: the balance of power; the succession; the threat to the Protestant interest; and the question of trade.

Addressing the balance of power, Nottingham returned to 'Spain entire': if the Duke of Anjou were to have Spain, France would dominate Europe.⁵⁹ In March Defoe responded, reiterating the ministerial line: exorbitant power would have been the Emperor's had Spain instead been ceded to Austria.⁶⁰ The *Examiner* followed, mocking Nottingham in a dialogue in which he insisted on the continuing danger to the balance of power; his interlocutor asked what, then, was to be done - 'must the devouring sword pass through the land?' Here, repeated, was the argument that Spain could not be secured militarily.⁶¹ And while, when announcing the peace, the Queen referred neither to curbing French power, nor to the balance of Europe, several addresses made good the

⁵⁵ *H CJ*, vol. 17, 390, 434-435; de l'Hermitage to the States, 16 June 1713 NS, BL Add. ms 17677GGG, ff.208-211.

⁵⁶ E.g. de l'Hermitage to the States, 25 April 1713 NS, BL Add. ms 17677GGG, ff.129-130.

⁵⁷ D. Finch, Earl of Nottingham, *Observations upon the State of the Nation, in January 1712/3* (London, 1713).

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 3.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 10.

⁶⁰ *Review*, 26 March 1713.

⁶¹ *Examiner*, 6 April 1713

well in mind, and accordingly was prey to it. Opinion mattered to Parliamentarians too, particularly those facing election, but discourse was also calculated to appeal to them directly, and could do so successfully. And it could be deployed for diplomatic ends – for example, to in exert pressure on the Dutch in the final stages of the negotiations.

These insights into the central role played by political discourse in the shaping and the validation of British foreign policy in the making of the peace of Utrecht amply vindicate the approach and methodology adopted. While that approach (and the related methodology) could be applied in extending the time period covered by this study – for example to include the initial diplomatic approaches of 1706, and the later political exploitation of the peace – it also offers significant potential for application in other periods and contexts.

