News reporting in the service of the Crown or for the readers? *The London Gazette's* content and reporting about the Great Northern War 1709-1717

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Tiivistelmä: Tutkielmassa selvitetään, kuinka Britannian kruunu käytti sanomalehti *The London Gazettea* vallankäytön välineenä vaikuttaakseen Britannian lukijayleisöön suuren pohjan sodan aikana vuosina 1709–1717. Tutkimuksessa käsitellään kolmea sodan vaihetta: Ruotsin sotaretkeä Venäjälle vuonna 1709, Britannian Itämerelle lähettämiä laivastoja vuosina 1715–1716 ja Ruotsin ja jakobiittikapinallisten salajuonta vuonna 1717. Kussakin vaiheessa sota läheni Britannian politiikkaa, mikä mahdollisti kruunun tavoitteiden mahdollisen muuttuvan vaikutuksen tutkimisen.

Laadullinen analyysi ja sanomalehtiaineistojen kontekstualisointi tutkimuskirjallisuuden avulla osoittaa, että lehti edisti kruunun etua vain rajatusti. Tämä oli huomattavinta sensuurissa, jolla kruunua yritettiin suojella kasvavalta lukevan porvariston kritiikiltä ja yksityiseltä lehdistöltä. Työn hypoteesi, jonka mukaan sensuurin ja propagandan rooli kasvoi sodan lähetessä Britannian sisäisiä asioita, osoittautui todeksi vain osittain, koska sanomalehti pysyi sensuurista huolimatta erossa propagandasta, jota esiintyi muualla lehdistössä. Samalla lehti palveli lukijakuntaansa jakamalla tietoa, tosin vain silloin kun tämä ei vahingoittanut kruunua tai sen tavoitteita. Kasvavan, joskin rajatusti vapaan, yksityisen lehdistön vaikutus selitti osan tutkielman havainnoista.

Tutkielma vahvistaa, mutta osin myös kyseenalaistaa, edellisiä huomioita aikakauden lehdistöstä. Varhaismodernin ajan Euroopan kasvavan porvariston ja monarkioiden monimutkaista suhdetta olisi mahdollista tutkia lisää uusia teemoja käsittelemällä ja omaksumalla erilaisia lähestymistapoja.

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Abstract: This master's thesis focuses on how the newspaper of the British Crown, *The London Gazette,* was used as a tool of power by the Crown to influence the British reading public during some important stages of the Great Northern War in 1709-1717. Three selected themes were chosen: The Swedish campaign against Russia in 1709, the British Baltic fleets in 1715-1716, and the Swedish Jacobite plot of 1717. In these cases, the war became closer to British politics and this enabled investigation of the possibly changing effect of political goals of the Crown.

The qualitative analysis and the contextualisation of the newspaper's content with the knowledge from research literature showed that the paper functioned only partially to the Crown's direct benefit. This was mostly seen as censorship aimed to protect the Crown against criticism of an increasingly critical bourgeoisie public sphere and of the private press. The hypothesis that the role of censorship or propaganda became stronger when the war was more connected to British internal affairs was only partially proven because, despite this censorship, the newspaper remained separate from propaganda campaigns emerging in other press. At the same time, the paper served its readership to a degree by sharing information, but only when this information did not harm the Crown or its various political objectives. The background of the growing and limitedly liberal private press explained some of the findings.

Many previous findings of the press in this period were confirmed, yet some also challenged by the results. The complex relationship between monarchies and the growing public sphere of Europe in the early modern period could be studied more with other themes and approaches.

Keywords: public sphere, early modern press, war reporting, political conflicts, sovereign power.

Table of Content

List of Appendices

1. Introduction

1.1 *The Gazette* as a paper of the Crown amidst growing private press and an increasingly critical reading public

The modern newspaper began to take form in the 17th century in Western Europe. England was one of the early European regions with considerable newspapers. Several forms of news publications were printed and in modern terms, it remains difficult to make a clear distinction between different periodicals, pamphlets, and journals of this period. However, from the middle of the 17th century, a simpler pamphlet style gave way to a regular newspaper with a consistent structure. By 1700 the newspaper had been firmly established.[1]

In the latter half of the 17th century, *The London Gazette* was the first newspaper with modern newspaper text layout that became the British, and soon also international, standard. In many ways, *The London Gazette*'s influence on the development of the newspaper press has been considered enormous.[2] The paper was published as the official news source of the British Crown after the Restoration of the Monarchy in 1665 and it remained the official public record of the court and the government, even after the Glorious Revolution of 1688-1689 and the decrease of the royal authority over the Parliament. The original title of the paper was *The Oxford Gazette,*[3] but this changed within a year to *The London Gazette,* and soon the paper was simply known as *The Gazette.*[4] The paper was a tool that supported the Crown very directly, for example by publishing the proclamations and any statutes directly given by the monarch or his or her supporters. The paper's staff changed according to political currents and ministers, but its role as a Crown's paper continued. [5]

The Gazette focused mostly on foreign news, in addition to the Crown's proclamations and advertisements, and was avoiding regional politics of the kingdom on purpose. Regional issues were covered elsewhere, either outside the written press or by various occasional smaller newsletters. Foreign news dominated all the newspapers during the 17th and early 18th

[1] Black 1991, 1-23; Clark 1994, 15-31.
[2] Harris 1978, 82-83.
[3] The reason was the court's retirement to Oxford to avoid the plague of London in 1665. See e.g. Handover 1965, 9-13.
[4] From now on term *The Gazette* will be used to refer to *The London Gazette.*
[5] Black 1991, 1-23; Clark 1994, 15-31; Handover 1965, 11-52; Harris 1978, 82-83.

centuries. Especially foreign news content with a military and diplomatic focus was common content of the papers, including *The Gazette*. One reason for this was censorship that forced papers to avoid local commentary or news coverage. Also, the readers were generally already familiar with their home region's local news through local networks and informal gossips.[6]

Originally, *The Gazette*, which was generally published twice a week, held an official monopoly of news. From the middle of the 17th century, several laws about printing were made by the Parliament, with the idea in mind that an unsupervised press would harm the society and the government. The real turning point came shortly after the Glorious Revolution, when the designed Act of 1695, regarding censorship and press control, was not accepted in the Parliament. From that stage onwards, the government had to tolerate the existence of the private press, but it did not lose its interest in press censorship. In 1712, the development of the press was hindered by the introduction of a stamp tax, but this caused only temporary setbacks for the press. The new atmosphere at the turn of the 18th century resulted in rapid growth in the newspaper press and the publication of many new titles.[7] The new development started to push *The Gazette* gradually aside.[8]

The Gazette remained still a notable publication especially in the field of foreign news and news with military focus up to the 19th century. The material of *The Gazette* was often used in the provincial press throughout the kingdom and thus the information was indirectly available to a larger audience outside the capital.[9] However, as other prints and papers were also available, the role of *The Gazette* should not be overestimated.[10]

As was the case for any other early modern newspaper, the readership of the paper was still limited.[11] The 17th and early 18th centuries have been called the time of the "elite press" due to

[6] Black 1991, 1-23, 197; Clark 1994, 15-31; Handover 1965, 22; Harris 1978, 82-83; Kortti 2016, 69.
[7] For example, the first known daily newspaper in Great Britain and the world was *The Daily Courant* that was founded in 1702.
[8] Black 1991, 1-23, 93-94; Habermas 1991, 57-67; Harris 1978, 82-83; Hoppit 2002, 178.
[9] Also, at the end of the 17th century, for example, *The Gazette*'s proclamations were used like posters in public places to inform the populace. Handover 1960, 25.
[10] Black 1991, 1-23, 93-95; Handover 1965, 29-42; Harris 1978, 82-83; Hoppit 2002, 178; Kortti 2016, 69, 92-94.
[11] The limited nature of the reading public was illustrated by the fact that for example, *The Gazette* was not sold at the streets; instead it was ordered and delivered by mail to the subscribers. See: *A history of The Gazette*. https://www.thegazette.co.uk/history/timeline. Access date: 20.11.2018.

the role of the reading public.[12] Indeed, since its early days *The Gazette,* for example, was read mainly by members of a limited male elite, such as officers, state officials, and merchants, rather than by workers, let alone peasants.[13] According, to the German social theorist Jürgen Habermas, in the period 1680-1730 the first "publicity" sphere was created in Britain, Germany, and France. Britain was ahead of the continent in the development of this public sphere. This happened through the formation of coffee houses for the members of the rising bourgeoisie class. In the coffee houses, newspapers and news, domestic and foreign, were subjects of sharing, discussion, and debate.[14] The new network of foreign news was creating new identities and spreading knowledge.[15]

Because they were places of critical discussion, the coffee houses were places that could incite political unrest. Their political nature, together with the role of the private press, was notably transforming British society during this era. Because of this development in Britain, there appeared notable newspapers for the political opposition in the 1720s. The early 18th century was thus a transformation period in which the governmental authority was increasingly challenged. This was also an era of the slowly growing bourgeoisie what was not only visible in the formation of the coffee house culture, but also in the ownership changes in the private press.[16]

This study focuses on *The Gazette* in this crucial period. Here the focus is to study how the Crown attempted to counter the new development with the paper. The Great Northern War (1700-1721) is the selected theme for this study because it has a complicated nature from the British perspective which offers various opportunities for the research.

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[12] This was caused already by the limited amount of literacy among the populace, even though this should not be overestimated as an explanatory factor. The level if literacy in Britain has been a difficult question for many researchers and even the best estimates suffer from a lot of uncertainty. However, it has been concluded that in the 18th century, at least a modest majority of both men and women was able to read. In England it has been estimated that illiteracy was about 40% around the middle of the century, which is reasonably close to the period under study. Scotland had lower levels illiteracy, possibly around 35%. The ability to write was less often possessed than the reading ability. Cameron 2015, 156-157.

[13] Handover 1960, 12.

[14] See Appendix 4 for the period impression of the coffee house culture.

[15] Black 1991, 1-23, 93-95; Habermas 1991, 57-67; Handover 1965, 29-42; Harris 1978, 82-83; Hoppit 2002, 178; Kortti 2016, 69, 92-94.

[16] Black 1991, 1-23, 93-95, 286; Handover 1965, 29-42; Habermas 1991, 57-67; Harris 1978, 82-83; Hoppit 2002, 178; Kortti 2016, 69, 92-94. The ownership changed from merely printer-controlled papers towards ownership by shareholders around 1720. Black 1991, 286. For more details and analysis about the new political influence of the press and public sphere see Habermas 1991, 57-67.

1.2 The Great Northern War from the British perspective

The early 18th century was a time of wars in Europe between different kingdoms and states. When the power balance in western parts of Europe changed in consequence of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1701-1714 and subsequent treaties and wars (for example the War of the Quadruple Alliance in 1718-1720) during this time, Eastern and Northern Europe were transformed in another series of conflicts, the Great Northern War in 1700-1721. The more western conflicts of 1701-1714 and 1718-1720 on the one hand, and the Great Northern War, on the other hand, remained mostly separate from each other, even while during the wars this was far from clear.[17]

The Great Northern War started in 1700 with the formation of an anti-Swedish coalition that included Russia, Denmark, and Saxony (and later also Poland-Lithuania which was in a personal union with Saxony). In the conflict that lasted about 20 years, these states fought against Sweden out of their own motivations, which were generally territorial. The war has been known especially as a "duel" of two absolute monarchs, Charles XII of Sweden and Czar Peter I the Great of Russia. At first, it appeared that Sweden could win all the enemy states. This was the case when the Swedish army forced Denmark temporarily out of the war in 1700, won against the Russians at Narva in modern Estonia in 1700 and had several victories in Poland in 1701-1708 against Saxony-Poland. Yet, the collapse of Sweden started with a military defeat in the Ukrainian town of Poltava, after an attempt by the Swedish army under King Charles XII to march to Moscow in 1709. The Swedish King escaped to Ottoman Turkish territory and he returned to Sweden only in 1714. The war continued until 1721. Peter the Great's Russia was the victor of the war, while for example, Denmark ruled by King Frederic IV gained very little. The Great Northern war has been remembered as the war that created the Russian Empire.[18]

However, not only factions like Sweden, Russia, and Denmark were involved in the war, it ultimately affected or included many other regions and kingdoms as well. Other European powers, including states like Britain, had interests in the Great Northern War due to, for example, their economic ties to the Baltic Sea. Britain became an active player already in the first year of the war, when, due to defence treaties signed in the previous century, an Anglo-

[17] Wolf 1962, 54-125; Young 2004, 5-7, 303-330, 414-415, 448-467.
[18] Wolf 1962, 54-125; Young 2004, 414-415, 448-467.

Dutch naval force assisted Swedish actions against Denmark, mostly because of Denmark's occupation of the neutral Hollstein-Gottorp duchy. This British support for Sweden in 1700 was brief and matters changed quickly in the northern affairs. As the war progressed, the western countries feared especially that Sweden would intervene in the War of the Spanish Succession because matters like the Swedish-Saxon hostilities had also broader significance. Saxony, under Augustus II the Strong, was a member of the Holy Roman Empire, and fears existed among Imperial allies like Britain, that Charles XII might meddle more into the continental politics, which he ultimately chose not to do. Such factors meant that the Great Northern War was not fully separate from other European politics. All of the wars in this period were part of the same European power struggle, with several connections between politics of eastern and western parts of Europe. [19]

The relationship of many nations towards the war changed after the Battle of Poltava. Sweden was soon effectually opposed by nearly all parties in the northern parts of Europe. Hanover and Prussia joined Sweden's enemies in 1715. These two German states had complicated interests towards Swedish possessions in German areas. With a new Hanoverian monarch George I, who maintained his role as the elector of Hanover while taking the Crown of Great Britain and Ireland, also Britain's interests in the Baltic grew after 1714.[20] George I wanted to secure Bremen and Verden, which Denmark had conquered from Sweden, to Hanover. Dealings over these regions with Denmark convinced him to join the anti-Swedish coalition as the elector of Hanover. Swedish commercial raiding, privateering[21] of all ships trading with its enemies caused Britain to send Royal Navy fleets to the Baltic from 1715 onwards, to secure the interests of the British traders and also of the Hanoverian monarch. These fleets were used to pressure Sweden politically.[22]

[19] Aldridge 2009, 36-62; Kirby 1990, 295-315; Wolf 1962. 54-125; Young 2004. 414-415, 448-467.
[20] Aldridge 2009, 36-62; Kirby 1990, 295-315; Wolf 1962. 54-125; Young 2004. 414-415, 448-467.
[21] Privateers were private individuals, or ships, that had a governmental legal authority to raid enemies of a certain country at sea. Giving a privateering license called "Letters of Marque" to captains or owners of private ships allowed governments to wage an early form of economic warfare without needing to use their own navies or armies. The difference between an illegal pirate and a privateer was sometimes hard to tell despite the legal difference.
[22] Aldridge 2009, 36-62; Hoppit 2002, 322; Hughes 2002, 86-87; Kirby 1990, 295-321; Wolf 1962. 54-125; Young 2004. 414-415, 448-467.

In order to keep Britain out of the anti-Swedish coalition, as well as to acquire money for their tiring empire, Swedish envoys planned to cooperate with British Jacobite rebels.[23] Ultimately these plans remained insignificant, despite the beliefs and scandalous rumours that this planning set in motion. After Charles XII died in 1718, British politics changed once more towards supporting Sweden. During the later phase of the war, the British supported the country again, at that time against an ever-growing Russia. This has been generally agreed to be an indicator firstly, of the British need for a Baltic status quo, or at least some form of power balance in the area, and secondly, of allied Hanover's Russophobia. Even though Britain was never officially an active combatant in the war on any side, the country was firmly connected to the war in other ways.[24]

1.3 Research questions and methods

By studying *The Gazette* during the Great Northern War, the aim is to understand the early history of the press and the spread of foreign news, as well as the use of information as a tool of power. The aim of this dissertation is to study the way *The Gazette*, as being a newspaper controlled by the Crown, was used to inform the British reading public about the series of European conflicts known as the Great Northern War. Instead of concentrating on all war events, the focus will be on several specific battles or other incidents during the war that had a special meaning for Britain. While the first links between Britain and the war can be traced already to the year 1700, the selected period of this study starts in 1709, when Sweden lost at Poltava, resulting in a rather dramatic change of the international situation. Especially from that time onwards, the Baltic politics became more important from the British perspective.

Here power is understood in Foucauldian terms. Michel Foucault defined power as something that was everywhere, it was not just one faction influencing another. He also explains how

[23] Jacobites were followers of Jacobitism that was a notable political rebellious movement in Britain in the first half of the 18th century, causing notable rebellion especially in 1715 and 1745. Their aim was a revolution in which a strong Catholic monarch James II Stuart, "The Old Pretender" or his dynasty would inherit the British throne. Jacobites are most often associated with Scotland, but support existed also elsewhere in Britain. As summarized by historian Costel Coroban: "*They were those English, Scots, Irish and Welsh who were still loyal to the dynasty of James II Stuart of England, exiled during the Glorious Revolution of 1688 – 1689."* Coroban, 2010, 131.

[24] Aldridge 2009, 36-62; Hoppit 2002, 322; Hughes 2002, 86-87; Kirby 1990, 295-321; Wolf 1962. 54-125; Young 2004. 414-415, 448-467.

power in the western world changed from medieval sovereign power of the king or the prince, over more discreet and faceless forms of disciplinary power, ultimately to a very concrete and personal kind of bio-power.[25] This process of change started in the early modern period, but for the most part, the power visible in this study has still the form of the medieval sovereign power, yet with some notable alterations (for example, the decreasing role of the English monarch in his relation to the parliament after the Glorious Revolution). Thus, the concept of disciplinary power is also related to this study. Bio-power is not a useful concept in this study because it would be anachronistic to apply it to the early modern period. The especially notable idea in this study is the very close relationship between knowledge and power, as described by Foucault:

> *"No body of knowledge can be formed without a system of communications, records, accumulation and displacement which is in itself a form of power and which is linked, in its existence and functioning, to the other forms of power. Conversely, no power can be exercised without the extraction, appropriation, distribution or retention of knowledge. On this level, there is not knowledge on one side and society on the other, or science and the state, but only the fundamental forms of knowledge/power."*[26]

Even while this study shares this basic understanding of a gradual change of different forms of power and the idea of power's all-pervasive nature, the plan here is still to study mainly one form of power relation and to see how the power of a sovereign, the Crown, was practised towards a powerful part of his subjects (the readers of *The Gazette*). The focus is more on the intentions of the users of power than on more obscure structures. Thematically this approach sees the paper and its staff as early instruments of disciplinary power in some sense. Even while the formation of proper disciplinary power took place only in the 19th century, this development is relevant for the study period as a contrast against the medieval sovereign power that does not fully explain the power structure either, due to changes caused by several developments, such as the emergence of the private press.

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[25] This interpretation was based on following works on Foucault: Elden 2017, 63-81, 115-119, 178; Sheridan 1990, 111-161. It should be noted that Foucault himself never focused much on themes like the press or information networks, instead he wrote about power, for example, in relation to the human body and health. His theories are indeed somewhat simplified here.

[26] Foucault, quoted in Sheridan 1990, 129. Elden 2017, 69 provided another yet rather similar translation of this quotation.

By including the point of view of the subjects of the bourgeoisie reading public, the idea of the power being diversely present merges well with the Habermas' vision of the growing bourgeoisie society that was increasingly challenging the old power system and thus decreasing the power of the sovereign. This approach gives thus a role to the subjects of this sovereign power as seen in the third research question below. Thus, power is seen as something that is not only exercised by one faction towards others, but some power is possessed by both ends of the Crown-reader relationship.

The first research question of this study is: *Did the British Crown's political objectives, both domestic and foreign, affect* The Gazette *in its content about different events of the Great Northern War?*

In this study, the Crown is understood broadly as an institution formed by the monarch and his or her closest ministers. The Crown is especially understood here as an institution separate from the Parliament and other citizens of the kingdom. The relationship between the Crown and *The Gazette* is discussed further in the different chapters. The context of press development in competition with the Crown's paper of the era is given some special attention.

The aim is to inspect how the Crown searched for support for its policies and objectives and assess if the newspaper functioned as a tool of propaganda. For each selected war event, some similar and some more case-specific governmental interests of the Crown are discussed. The idea is then to research to what extent the changing relationship of the Crown towards the war possibly affected the content of the paper.

Domestic objectives are understood as governmental objectives that seek to use power to influence the citizens and the political scene within the kingdom. Foreign objectives, on the other hand, relate to the position of the kingdom in relation to other states. Because domestic objectives include such a vast variety of subjects, only the domestic objectives that are somehow be connected to foreign politics are discussed. In many cases, these objectives cannot be fully separated from each other, and therefore a strict division would be artificial. Especially when discussing how the foreign policy of the Crown was presented to the citizens of the reading public within a domestic context, the theme is a mixture of both types of objectives.

The second research question, which takes the first question further, is: *If there was indeed an effect that can be linked to these objectives of the Crown, how was the effect different in the case of the different war events?*

The hypothesis in this study is that there was possibly a difference in the news reporting in a Crown paper when the conflicts came closer to Britain's own domestic politics and the interests became more refined. The critical press development gives this a special background, because at that stage, even more than before, the Crown needed to report about the war events in a way that could not benefit the opposition.

The idea is to get information about the general phenomena by using three specific examples. Even while the Crown's governmental objectives vary in each of the selected cases, the relationship between the Crown, the paper, and the reading public is a connecting factor for all three. The aim is to get a larger picture of the war and the developments of *The Gazette* trough these three examples.

The different time periods and events of the war are selected from the British perspective, including both military and diplomatic events. The selection of the Crown's interests derives from the research tradition, as discussed below, but space is given to any interests that might arise from source material during the analysis. More details about the selected cases are provided below.

1. In this chapter the focus in on a selected event in which Britain was only an observer and not directly involved in the war viz. the Battle of Poltava and military campaign of Sweden in Eastern Europe in 1709.

   Interests inspected in this section are:

   I. the wish to maintaining a status quo in the Baltic Sea region[27]
   II. the protection of the position of the Monarch Queen Anne
   III. the attempt to control the press and information transfer[28]
   IV. any notable miscellaneous objectives, if they can be observed

[27] Aldridge 2009, 36-62.
[28] Black 1991, 1-23.

2. The second selected event is the trade warfare in the Baltic in the 1710s, in which British economic interests were threatened.

   Interests inspected in this section are:

   I. the wish to maintain a relative status quo in the Baltic Sea region
   II. the support of the monarchs, Queen Anne and later George I[29]
   III. the attempt to control the press and information transfer
   IV. the protection of the British merchants in the Baltic and wish to convince readers that this objective was important for the Crown [30]
   V. any notable miscellaneous objectives, if they can be observed

3. The final chapter deals with the plotting of Sweden with the Jacobite rebels to possibly overthrown George I in Great Britain.

   Interests inspected in this section are:

   I. the support of the monarch and protection George I's throne from Jacobite rebellions
   II. the attempt to control the press and information transfer
   III. any notable miscellaneous objectives, if they can be observed

The reading public is considered in this study. Thus, the final research question is: *How and to what extent the editors of The* Gazette *considered their reading public when determining the content of the newspaper regarding the events of the war?* Here it is observed if the reading public, besides the Crown's objectives, had a role in the formation of the newspaper's content. The aim is to find out whether the paper did serve its readers well, or only the Crown, or indeed both at the same time.

The focus of the news that is analysed is on military actions and news of alliances and treaties of the selected specific years. Through these focus periods and selected themes, which represent different situations of the war from the British perspective, the state-controlled information transfer is put into a larger context.

[29] Hoppit 2002, 383-417.
[30] About the motivation for trade protection see Aldridge 2009, 36-62.

As mentioned, the first focus point is the Battle of Poltava and the military campaigns leading to this battle in 1709. The Battle of Poltava was a military disaster for Sweden that very radically changed the balance of power in the north-eastern areas of Europe, resulting also in rather quick western European reactions. The chosen year for analysis is 1709. This year represents the earlier British governmental attitudes, as the war was not affecting British politics directly. Since the Battle of Poltava took place in the middle of the year, the papers include information from before and after the battle, thus showing if some changes of the British attitudes or interests happened when previously victorious Swedes were defeated. The focus is mainly on news regarding the military campaigns of that year, but some of the related diplomatic pieces of news gain attention in the context as well.

The second point of focus is the trade warfare in the Baltic after the Battle of Poltava in the 1710s and Sweden's failed defence of her Baltic provinces. This warfare greatly affected British interests in the region resulting in several Royal Navy expeditions to the Baltic Sea. In this context, the policy of King George I, the king of Great Britain after 1714, receives special attention. The interests of the Hanoverian king were not necessarily the same as those of the commercial classes of Great Britain, and this might have resulted in a small conflict of interests. Changes in policy and the possible justification of these new diplomatic and military actions in *The Gazette* is another special focus. The chosen years are 1714 when the first notable Swedish privateers began to harass the British, and the years of the first two Royal Navy Baltic fleets under Admiral Sir John Norris in 1715 and 1716.

The third point of focus is the Swedish plotting with British Jacobite rebels around the period 1716-1718. The year 1717 is the period chosen for the analysis. The Swedish-Jacobite plans resulted in a situation in which Sweden might have tried to support Jacobites to overthrow the new Hanoverian monarchy and to influence British internal affairs deeply. The possible reaction to these events in *The Gazette* is given specific attention. The focus in this section is on the diplomatic news related to the topic and other relevant content in the paper. In this chapter, the relationship between the Crown paper and the private press is also given special attention. While the theme of the private press is discussed already in the previous sections, the role of previously researched propaganda campaigns of 1717 gives this study of the Crown paper a unique background.

When these topics and periods are studied, the evidence for the conclusions comes from the analysis of the source content that is contextualised with secondary literature to create a probable chain of causation between the governmental objectives and the paper's content. The used methods in this paper are qualitative content analysis and comparison. In this case, this means an analysis in which the picture of known historical events, provided by the research literature, is compared with the image or information given in *The Gazette*. The qualitative content analysis gives understanding regarding the newspaper texts and helps to establish what is actually communicated." *Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences* [conclusions] *from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use."*[31] This analysis helps to see the used codes in the paper and reveals the meanings that are not necessarily visible otherwise.[32] By comparing these results about the paper with the information given in historical research, it is investigated how the information was most likely altered in the published paper and how the governmental control is most likely present in the text.

Specific attention is given to inaccuracies of the information that is presented and the amount of relevant content. The role is especially given to pieces of information which have been most likely intentionally removed or excluded from the source content. The focus is on the messages presented in the Crown newspaper. The idea is not to force the texts into some predetermined theory and instead the categories for the analysis are delivered mostly from the source material, the newspaper texts. This analysis will be done, however, with the selected themes determined with the help of the research literature as discussed before, so the research tradition and previous knowledge give this framework to the study.

Besides the analysis and the comparison between the relevant historical research about the selected themes and the newspaper content, another tool that is used is the understanding of the nature of the period's press and reading public established by the previous research. This is accomplished by using theories and previous case studies about the early modern European and English public sphere. This material helps to explain who the readers of the news were and how the public developed or acted. The readers were the audience to whom the newspaper texts

[31] Krippendorff 2004, 18.
[32] In the media research context codes are tools with which the meanings are transferred in a text. For more about research and terminology see e.g. Krippendorff 2004.

were presented and as such, they form a key factor in the analysis together with the governmental approach.

There are several challenges in the selected methodology which deserve to be mentioned. In general, these challenges arise from the topic of the early modern press. The newspaper historian Michael Harris has noted about the newspaper history of the period 1620-1780:

> *"*[…] *the early history of the newspaper press is obscured by a range of practical problems of which wastage of copies, lack of associated manuscript material, and far-flung and isolated library holdings are a representative example."*[33]

Among these problems, the access to the newspapers themselves has been made easier after Harris wrote this text in 1978, thanks to digitalisation, but the theme remains challenging in various ways.

Most of the practical problems of this study arise from the limited information given by the source material and there are various challenges connected to this. The fact that this study uses the newspapers as the only primary source category means that some of the more detailed facts about the phenomena under study remain obscure. For example, the study can only limitedly investigate the newspaper editing process, as will be discussed below. At some instances, this approach even produces cases where some form of speculation is needed to build up the argumentation. Even while this is certainly something one must perform in a historical study in any case, it deserves to be mentioned here explicitly. However, these sections of reasoning are always explained, and the limits of this kind of reasoning are noted. The use of the research tradition from previous relevant studies, together with a source-based approach protects the study from too speculative reasoning, in which especially anachronistic attitudes might further colour the analysis. Because of the study's heavy reliance on previous research, a critical approach towards the research literature is naturally implemented. This is generally accomplished, for example, by using various studies and interpretations in research and weighing them against each other.

[33] Harris 1978. 82.

The idea of this study is not to deconstruct in detail the process of editing or printing a newspaper, while this important theme is discussed with the support of the research literature. The editing of the early modern newspaper is a topic that has received only a little attention in research, and this cannot be fully corrected here.[34] The focus will be on the final product, the newspaper, and the possible influence of governmental politics in this final product. This focus was selected because especially primary sources about the production of a newspaper printing are rare, possibly non-existent, and hardly accessible, as hinted to already in Harris' quote mentioned above. Moreover, also the scope of the study might become too wide. Obviously, it is not claimed that no other sources can be found, but that they are sparse and highly fragmented. The use of the previous studies, based on other types of source material, helps to balance this reliance on the newspapers as the only source material.

Some other characteristics of the source material create other specific challenges, but these are mostly easy to overcome. The notices of *The Gazette* are used in digital form. The issues since the year 1665 are found in the online archive of *The Gazette* (https://www.thegazette.co.uk/). All the existing papers are available in readable PDF-file format and are copies made in black and white. The papers are generally well preserved, despite occasional practical issues such as torn pages or splattered ink that can be seen in the documents. Very occasionally the archives suffer from problems related to the digitalization process. For example, duplicates of some issues are included and some of the links do not lead to the correct issue of the paper. In general, however, the material is well available, abundant and complete. In general, less than one issue a year is lacking while some of the mentioned problems are found for each year. Also, the specific spelling and grammar of the period, as well as, for example, the use of calendars and chronology, form only some small hindrances as well.[35]

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[34] Black 1991, 28.

[35] A detailed note that deserves attention is the use of dates in the papers. The difference in dates and calendars was especially notable in this period. Britain, together with Sweden (for most of the period) and Russia, used the Julian calendar, unlike most other parts of Europe where the Gregorian calendar was used. In Britain the year started officially on Lady Day, 25th of March, and not in January. Thus, for example the newspaper issues from January till late March show the previous year. For example, papers dated in January 1708 correspond to January 1709 accordingly to modern calendar. In many newspaper articles coming from Continental Europe, the papers often included "N.S." (New Style) to note that the news from that region was dated accordingly to Gregorian calendar. The Julian calendar was 11 days behind the Gregorian one. A further complication was caused by the fact that from 1716 the paper adopted the continental tradition of starting the year in January. In this study year begins in January and dates are generally given in the Julian Calendar (like done for example by Aldridge 2009, 33) if not mentioned otherwise. The dates for any given *The Gazette* issue are those used in the archive site of the paper. In this study it was observed that *The Gazette* issues were originally dated always in style *"From Tuesday April 26 to Saturday April 30, 1715"*. It appears, because the papers had frequently content dated between these dates (in the same calendar), the actual newspaper was probably published only on the last of the mentioned days.

1.4 The research tradition, research motivation, and research literature

The approach of this study makes this a part of media history and the history of news reporting. However, the selected approach is thematically also closely connected to the field of political history and the history of international relations, especially due to the governmental focus. These themes have not often been combined in historical research concerning the chosen era, because especially political history of the early modern period has stayed more focused on the reconstruction of the actual political treaties or wars instead of focusing on the early press, the spread of news and information regarding these topics, or the use of the early press as a means of propaganda.

The relatively limited amount of previous research about the topic is one main motivation for this study, but some motivation for this study arises from the present time as well. The subject of this study is understood critically with the terms and context of the period that is the focus here. Yet, this does not mean that there is no overlap between what has happened 300 years ago and the situation at the present day. Because the researcher is always a product of his or her own time, it is better to mention some of this relevancy explicitly.

The role of media and state censorship remains still an important topic in national or international discussions. For example, such themes are internet censorship attempts in Russia, censorship in China, “fake news”, and media discourse in the USA, discussions of media as well as free information transfer and national security in many other countries, like the civilian intelligence legislation discussed in Finland. This study focuses on the era of the first proper media publicity in world history and one of the earliest periods, if not the earliest period, of systematic governmental propaganda usage. Possibly, this study can give some limited perspective to the situation of the present day, at least by explaining something about the background of the development that has led to the present situation. This study is also handling the history of British-European relations and internal British governmental affairs, making this

Thus, the real publication date for the mentioned issue should most likely be April 30 rather than the earlier date April 26 given in the archive. But since the date given in the online archive goes always with the preceding date, this is the date given in the footnotes. This method of referring has been used previously for example in the works Coroban 2011 and Coroban 2013. About the confusion of the calendars see, for example, notes in Aldridge 2009, 33.

not completely disconnected to the theme of the United Kingdom's resignation process from the European Union in 2019.

Because of the selected approach, the literature of this study consists mostly of works dealing with the press of the early modern period, British history and relevant political history of the Great Northern War.

The press has often been studied merely in a national context, but studies of foreign reporting exist even when discussing the early 18th-century British press. Historian Jeremy Black has been one of the few researchers who has given considerable attention to the matter. His book *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* and especially the chapter "*The Press and Europe"* handles the question, focusing slightly more on the first half of the 18th century than on the second. This benefits this study greatly. Black's study and his analysis of the relation of the British press and the European news form a good basis for this research, even while the book offers a general view on the subject and focuses only very briefly on the case of *The Gazette*. While the study is very convincing, it has some drawbacks too: Black does not only stay on a general level but moreover his approach deals only with the press development, without much governmental focus or further contextualization. Naturally, the work deals with the political developments related to the press, but the point of view is still limited.

The Gazette itself has received some attention in different historical studies[36], but a careful search reveals that all in all, studies about the paper do not seem to be common. The reason is probably the limited usefulness of the paper for studies that do not have the governmental focus that is selected here. Due to its governmental ties or to its focus on foreign news or advertisements, it does not fit well in studies that want to focus on the press as purely independent "fourth estate" or the traditional histories with a national focus that has little interest in connections between countries and geographical regions. Despite this, there is still very useful research about *The Gazette* available for this study. Phyllis Handover's *A history of the London Gazette, 1665-1965* is the most influential work, but it is a descriptive historical

[36] For example, Solar 2011 noted in his study *The English cotton spinning industry, 1780–1840, as revealed in the columns of the London Gazette* that the paper has merits in economic historical research and that its new online availability makes it especially useful. O'Malley 1986 used the paper's governmental role to explain religious life in England in his work *Religion and the newspaper press, 1660-1685: A study of the London Gazette.*

work rather than a profound piece of academic research. This is considered in the critical approach of this study.

Research about the press supported by the Crown in the early 18th century and regarding the theme of the Great Northern War has been done very little concerning any countries. An exception to this rule is Sarah L. Pasay's master's thesis at Uppsala University: *A loyal public against an evil enemy?: Comparing how Russia, Denmark, and Poland were communicated as the other in the Swedish Posttidningar during times of war, 1699–1743*. The work focuses on the image of the enemy, but essentially it has a similar approach as this study. In both works, the fact that the newspaper was under governmental control is used as a special way to understand what was communicated to a limited, but growing and already influential, reading public. Pasay's work is comparable to this study, already because of the used source material. The used *Posttidningar* newspaper was, according to the study, a direct Swedish Crown's equivalent to the British *Gazette*. Another important, while already somewhat aged piece of previous research dealing with the propaganda of the era and regarding the Great Northern War is John J. Murray's *George I, the Baltic and the Whig Split of 1717: A Study in Diplomacy and Propaganda.* The work focuses on diplomacy and the role of British governmental propaganda is smaller. The study is very helpful even while this work does not handle the case of *The Gazette* at all.

Besides previous studies about the theme of foreign news, several works have a special significance to this study. Denice Bates' work *Historical Research Using British Newspapers* plays a guiding role regarding some practical issues related to the use of electronic archives. This book is published in 2016 and it is up to date with the current possibilities of newspaper research using online archive material. For the methodological point of view, several other works have special merit in this study. For example, the method of content analysis is mostly understood according to Klaus Krippendorff's *Content analysis an introduction to its methodology.*

The concept of the reading "public" is essential for this study. Inspired by works like the above referred Pasay's thesis, theories and studies of Jürgen Habermas are used, especially his work: *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. Like any literature, this is approached in a critical manner. Habermas' theories have received critique because of his simplifications of facts. This is noticed in this approach.

Therefore, other studies are used as well to understand the nature of the early modern public sphere.

The political history of the Great Northern War has been covered for a long time and it does not require much introduction here. Recently, in the 2010s, Costel Coroban in Romania has studied Swedish-British relations in detail, for example, in his book *Britain and Charles XII of Sweden, 1709-1719*. In his works, Coroban has used individual issues of *The Gazette,* but the paper is used merely to illustrate the fact that the British reacted to actions of Charles XII in this period. No governmental or media approach is used, which offers an opportunity to take the analysis much further from this point of view. These studies overlap only slightly, particularly in the discussion of the Jacobite plots of 1716-1718.

2. The Battle of Poltava 1709: Britain as a bystander of a distant conflict

2.1 The "neutral" Crown's paper in 1709

To understand how the Crown fulfilled its objectives with the paper and how the reading public was served by the newspaper, it is necessary to look first into the practical realities of the editing and printing of *The Gazette,* in and around the year 1709. The characterisation of the paper accordingly to previous research is presented here, and this is tested in the subsequent subchapters.

During Queen Anne's rule, in the first decade of the 18th century, *The Gazette* was a considerable newspaper in Britain. The most successful times for the newspaper were the years between 1705 and 1707 when it was the most widely circulated newspaper in the country. The development quickly changed to a worse direction for the paper as the next decade approached. In 1704 circa 6,000 copies of the paper were circulated, but in 1710 this was reduced to circa 5,400 copies. [37]

Despite initial success, the paper suffered from various issues already at this stage, as it was accused of factual inaccuracies by writers like Daniel Defoe. Because of a lack of trust and

[37] Black 1991,93; Handover 1965, 33-42.

support, a notable British military commander John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, redirected his own reports about the ongoing War of the Spanish Succession to another paper, viz. *The Post Man*. This meant that *The Gazette* had to cope with what the War Office was ready to give them about the ongoing war. At the same time, new papers, especially the new *Daily Courant*, that started to appear in early 1703, challenged biweekly *The Gazette.* To mimic the development in the private press, *The Gazette* began experimenting with three numbers a week in June 1709.[38]

Because it was an official newspaper, it was difficult for the editors to control *The Gazette*'s content during this time, but they certainly tried to balance their material and include regular reports and intelligence from home and abroad in the Crown's newspaper. In the early years of the century, the foreign news and content were supplied by letters, and in 1706 the secretaries were formally advised by the Crown to apply a form of self-censorship and *"to communicate such parts of their letters as they think fit to be published".*[39] This wish was likely given so that the letters, which the paper received, could be published with only minor editing by the paper's staff. The role of the diplomats supplying material was especially important in the case of *The Gazette.*[40] Besides the different international letters, the content, especially for proclamations, was received from official governmental sources, for example, the War Office, the Admiralty, the Privy Council, and the Treasury.[41]

Some significant changes in *The Gazette's* staff happened just before 1709. A minister of the queen, Robert Harley, who did not strictly fall into the lines of party politics, but was officially a Tory, wanted to make the paper as factual and neutral as possible while it still had to support the Crown and the upper part of the government simultaneously. Already in 1702, he wanted to have accurate but "[…] *discreet writers of the Government's side* […]".[42] This goal was notable as the political competition among different parties, including of the Tory and Whig parties, caused heated debates in the increasing political press around this time. The printer of *The Gazette* Edward Jones (who had been in charge since 1688) died in 1706 and the printing

[38] Black 1991,93; Handover 1965, 33-42.
[39] Handover 1965, 36. Handover did not specify if the wish came from the Crown of from the editors, but probably the wish was given by the former.
[40] Black 1991, 93.
[41] Handover 1965, 33-42.
[42] Handover 1965, 34. in this context Handover quoted Harley's letter to minister Godolphin in a rather unclear way.

moved to a publisher and bookseller named Jacob Tonson. Tonson was a Whig supporter and he even belonged to the so-called Kit-Kat Club[43] of Whigs.[44]

In May 1707, the paper also received a new gazetteer, Captain Richard Steele, who was a former military man and who belonged to the Whigs of the Kit-Kat Club as well. He has been considered as the most notable individual editor in the history of *The Gazette* because of his motivation. Steele had several helpers, notably Jonathan Swift and the previous gazetteer Charles Delafaye, and together they tried to improve the Crown's paper in the difficult circumstances and against the pressure coming from politicians and other competing newspapers. It has been said that Steele kept *The Gazette* "[…] *very innocent and very insipid*"[45]. However, despite his committed work for *The Gazette*, Steele started his own newspaper in 1709, named *Tatler*.

The aforementioned Whigs were recruited slightly before the 1708 elections that resulted in a Whig majority in the House of Commons (both 1705 and 1710 elections led to a Tory majority in the Commons). The party affiliation of the staff was likely not of great significance because both Queen Anne and Harley were eager not to fall too deep in the party division when searching support for the Crown. Yet, especially Harley's role in the recruitment of Steele remains unclear. He did recruit Steele himself, but it seems he might have selected Steele at least partly due to a lack of information regarding the man.[46] Harley, one of the Queen Anne's favourite advisors and ministers, was a controversial figure in the eyes of many persons active in the political scene around this time, for example, due to his fondness for power, but he was known as a man who searched support wherever it was to be found, without taking into account the exact party division.[47]

The Gazette still told the story the Crown wanted it to tell, but, at least accordingly to Handover, it did not become a place of direct comment or critique of any factions within the government.

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[43] The Kit-Kat Club was a club of some notable Whigs founded at end of the 17th century by Tonson. The Club was dedicated to Whig objectives and its exact nature has remained elusive to historians. See: Schoenberg, Thomas J. (Ed.). *The Kit-Cat Club - Introduction*. Literary Criticism (1400-1800) Vol. 71. Gale Cengage 2002 eNotes.com. http://www.enotes.com/topics/kit-cat-club#critical-essays-introduction. Access date: 29.04.2019.
[44] Handover 1965, 33-42.
[45] Handover 1965, 33-42.
[46] Downie 1976, 145.
[47] Handover 1965, 33-42. Harley's previous background explains some of this as he had been a Whig in his earlier years before changing to favour Tories. For more about politics see for example: Hoppit 2002, 278-312.

While the staff of the paper was connected to the political scene, the content of *The Gazette* was kept neutral from the party politics, meaning that it supported the Crown's structure and ministry's actions in more general terms, rather than supporting specific politicians. Through his actions, Harley ensured that *The Gazette* with its content remained officially outside the party division, even while he has been remembered more generally for his creation of propaganda.[48] Historian J. A. Downie noted, *"*The Gazette*, under the editorship of Richard Steele, was hardly the vehicle for Harleyite views"*[49]. Harley was temporarily out of the Queen's ministry in 1708-1710[50], but this incident seemed not to affect the Crown paper, at least this was not mentioned by Handover.[51] The paper was not altogether neutral, as the Crown never was, but at least individual politicians and their private interests were not strongly or regularly influencing the paper's content in detail. The paper was thus communicating some kind of governmental consensus of the Monarch and her closest ministers around 1709.[52]

Despite this, the individuals in the government had still much to say and this was why Steele's work in the Crown paper did not last for long. Steele criticized Harley in his *Tatler* in 1710, when Harley had just regained his political importance. This created distrust among the two men. Steele lost his role in *The Gazette,* despite his notable efforts to maintain the quality of the paper. It could thus be noted that Harley did not want to have unsporting men in *The Gazette*, even if they were good at their work and kept their own comments outside the Crown's paper. It could be argued that this reveals something of the actual neutrality of *The Gazette*. The paper's staff had to be personally loyal to the Crown's ministers also outside the paper in some sense. It was not enough that the paper's staff was dedicated to their work.[53]

In the end, the role of *The Gazette* through this, at least relative, neutrality was likely to support the Crown by not giving too much space for disagreement that was growing in the private press in this era. Disagreements happened in any case because even while arguments were kept outside the paper, the paper itself caused arguments with other press of the time. The editors' use of the material did not always please all different governmental personnel, as it became

[48] Highlighted for example in: Habermas 1991, 59.
[49] Downie 1976, 215. It should also be noted that several other personalities, like Under-Secretary Joseph Addison instructed Steele around this time. Handover 1965, 33-42.
[50] Hoppit 2002, 295-301.
[51] Handover 1965, 33-42.
[52] Downie 1976, 214-215; Handover 1965, 33-42; Hoppit 2002, 295-301.
[53] Handover 1965, 33-42.

clear in the case of the Marlborough's correspondence mentioned above. There were voices in the public departments who wanted to restrict the information given to the people.[54] *The Gazette* was firmly a Crown's paper, but because the government was made of different personalities with different goals, the paper, even with the relative neutral approach, could not please everyone.[55]

In this chapter, the aim is to test this characterisation of *The Gazette* from previous research, as a paper striving for relative neutrality, and ask if the Crown's governmental objectives can be seen in a specific case of foreign news, being Charles XII's military campaigns in Eastern Europe in 1709. This image of *The Gazette* from previous studies is reconsidered and possibly also corrected.

2.2 *The Gazette* and Charles XII's Russian campaign in early 1709

In the first half of 1709, *The Gazette* regularly published news, often letters that they received, about the Russian campaign of the Swedish army.[56] The news content about any court personnel in Sweden, Denmark, Saxony, Poland, and Russia was common as well, often accompanying the news focused on military affairs.[57] Following the European court culture was a notable trait of the press in the period and indeed, much of the content was about royal

[54] Black 1991, 93; Handover 1965, 36-37. Hoppit 2002,181. It was illustrative about this general atmosphere that there were fifteen bills considered in the Parliament about tightening the regulation about printing of books and papers at the turn of the century. Hoppit 2002, 181.
[55] Handover 1965, 33-42; Hoppit 2002, 295-301.
[56] Charles XII's Russian campaign, which had started in the previous year, slowed down due to harsh winter months at the turn of 1708 and 1709. The first Snow fell already in late September and early October during a battle in Lesnaya where Swedish reinforcement and supply detachment was successfully attacked by the Russians. Because of this the Swedish main army in Eastern Europe did not receive proper supplies or reinforcements for the harsh winter ahead of them. After this, only smaller battles and skirmishes were fought between Russian and Swedish forces in the winter. The Russians succeeded to hinder the Swedish forces greatly, especially by preventing their food supply by burning the countryside and avoiding large-scale actions. Many men in the Swedish army literally froze to death. Sweden pushed south to modern Ukraine hoping for provisions and support from a local Cossack rebellion against the Czar. Later, in the summer, Charles XII's army besieged the town of Poltava, which ultimately resulted in the Battle of Poltava on the 27th of June. The battle led to the annihilation of the Swedish army by the Russian forces, accompanied by the Czar himself. Most of the remaining Swedes surrendered after the battle and Charles XII escaped into Turkish territory in modern Moldova, together with a small military escort. Hughes 2002, 82; Larson 2013, 190-204; Palmer 2005, 133-135. For more about the military campaigns see for example the works of Larson 2013 and Englund 2018.
[57] *The London Gazette*. Issues: 4503- 4634. 3 January 1708- 30 December 1709.

affairs of European courts. The news of the Swedish warrior king and his Russian campaign was given room together with more peaceful royal affairs.[58]

Inspection of issues of *The Gazette* during early months of 1709 shows keen observation of the events of that campaign. The news was always late, certainly due to distances and harsh winter condition and in especially in January little was published.[59] Yet, shortly after reports like the following began to appear constantly:

> *"Hamburg, Febr. 8. N.S. We have been four Months without any Letters from the Swedish Army, which as 'tis supposed, remains still in Ukraina. Those from Lemberg of the 11th, and Breslaw of the 25th past, confirm the Advices, that about the end of December last, three Swedish Regiments, having been detached from their Army to get some provisions, were surrounded by a body of Muscovites, under the Command of General Renne; and after a vigorous Resistance, obliged to surrender upon Diserection; and that the Czar himself, upon Intelligence that the Swedish Army intended to repass the Dnieper had marched up with his best Troops, with design to dispute that Passage; and accordingly to those advices, a general Engagement was expected between those two Armies. We have some Reports from Konigsberg of a total Defeat of the Muscovites, but no mention made either of the Place or Day of the battel.* […]"[60]

Letters published in *The Gazette* came generally from large European centres, where British contacts received letters, at least according to their own words, sometimes from the personnel of the actual campaigning armies.[61] In many cases, news reports were often accompanied by other material from the continent, meaning that a letter from European centres, like Vienna or Berlin, included various news besides reports of these battles or events.[62]

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[58] See for example the works of Dean 2006 and Black 1985.
[59] In January, only the news about royal affairs of the northern countries made it to the newspaper and information about military campaigns was lacking. Court news for example in *The London Gazette*. Issue 4507. 17 January 1708, 1.
[60] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4513. 7 February 1708, 1. This 1709 piece of news appears to be based on rumors, about actions around Dnieper around July of 1708. See details of the battles in Brown 2012, 110.
[61] The map in Appendix 5 gives some idea of the long distances.
[62] *The London Gazette*. Issues: 4503- 4634. 3 January 1708- 30 December 1709.

When trying to estimate the governmental effect on the paper, it is best to inspect the news accuracy and also the amount of interest that the paper showed towards different topics. The reports about the military actions of the armies during the winter and spring are generally based on facts with some heavy inaccuracies, as will be discussed below, but their existence shows a keen interest in the war events of Russian and Swedish armies in eastern Europe at the turn of 1709. The paper obviously wanted a constant supply of news from the region and it preferred to include rumours, sometimes very contradictory rumours (as seen in examples below). Clearly, there was no need to wait for, for example, only the official proclamation or correspondence from the faction leaders like Charles XII or the Czar. Such pieces of news from more official sources would be published later that year after the Battle of Poltava, as discussed below.[63]

The published rumours were often corrected afterwards, which shows that the paper staff had no problem to admit that they had been wrong before.[64] The readers of *The Gazette* received information from both warring factions besides more neutral sources. Yet, what the exact sources were remained a mystery since often only the location of the information was mentioned and not who was telling the news. In any case, the need for confirmation of facts from various sources was present constantly. For example, after saying that there had been a battle between Russians and Swedes, the paper presented the following notification:

> *"Hamburg, February 8. N. S.* […] *They write from Poland* […] *Those letters add, that the Account we have lately had of a Battel between the Sweden and Muscovites is not confirmed.* […]"[65]

Many of the news reports were almost certainly untrue. Thus, it should be inspected in what ways they were untrue and whether this was somehow related to the Crown's interests. For example, another report of a similar or possibly the same battle as referred to in the previous citation showed very unlikely high numbers of casualties of both factions in a battle that must have occurred in January or before. It told about a Swedish victory with Russian casualties of

[63] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 4574. 13 August 1709, 1.
[64] The London Gazette. Issue: 4516. 17 February 17, 1708, 1; *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4517. 21 February 1708, 1.
[65] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4516. 17 February 1708, 1.

18,000 and Swedish casualties of 13,000.[66] The same piece of news even gave an inaccurate impression that the Swedes were advancing towards Moscow, by mentioning that the Swedes continued their march towards that city. Interestingly, less than a month later, a battle, with no clear time given, was described. It had reportedly 8,000 Russian casualties and the number of 3,000 was given for the Swedish casualties.[67]

Both previously mentioned reports came to London from Berlin, the first was information that had arrived in Berlin from a town or village called Novogrodeck, the latter one was from Wilda. It cannot be known for sure if this was the same action in both news pieces but considering the timing of the news and the similarity of the numbers, it seems reasonable to assume that this might be the same action. At least, the readers following the news coverage could have easily assumed so and thought that the earlier piece of news was corrected in the latter report. Thus, a battle seemed to have taken place resulting in 3,000 Swedish casualties and 8,000 Russian casualties, rather than 13,000 and 18,000 respectively. As the winter of 1709 was harsh, and only allowed limited military operations, it seems much more likely that smaller losses of a few thousand men were more accurate.[68]

However, as forces used in the winter operations were often smaller, even these numbers of several thousands of losses seem somewhat dubious.[69] The turn of 1709 included very little actual large-scale fighting because of the Russians' deliberate tactical retreats. For example, in December 1708 the Swedes attacked a settlement only to discover that the Russians had left the settlements together with any provisions.[70] The battle mentioned in the early 1709 papers might be an older occurrence of late 1708 and thus have taken place before the winter. Yet, any proper comparison between modern historiography and the news is difficult because the news remains vague about the timing of the actions. One candidate for the event that the reports were describing was an engagement of the Russian fort of Veprik, in early January 1709. The Swedish numbers for this battle are known with some accuracy. The battle had 3,000 Swedes involved (noticeably the same number given as the casualties reported before), and the losses

[66] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4517. 21 February 1708, 1.
[67] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4520. 3 March 1708, 1.
[68] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4517. 21 February 1708, 1; *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4520. 3 March 1708, 1.
[69] Small forces appear to be common in many winter operations of the Swedish Caroleans. Charles XII commanded in total just about 800 men, his vanguard, in January 1708 in an action against Russian controlled Grodno. Larson 2013, 184; Konstam 2009, 55-56.
[70] Konstam 2009, 55.

of the Swedish army were 400 dead and 600 wounded. This was, in any case, greatly different from what has been described in the vague pieces of news. *The Gazette's* numerical information or speculation about a large full-scale battle which was assumed to have occurred in the winter of 1709, was simply inaccurate. Making a comparison like this is easier in the case of the actual full-scale battle of Poltava, as discussed below. [71]

News received corrections steadily and gradually became more accurate. Clearly, there was no attempt to give just one official version of the events. For example, after reports about the grand engagements of the two armies mentioned above, more truthful news arrived, informing the readers that the armies were not actively fighting in the winter months, but that they were in fact in their winter quarters.[72]

Despite the improvement of the news accuracy, no piece of news that appeared in *The Gazette* in early 1709 reflect, for instance, the harsh realities that the Swedish army faced. This was probably the case already because Swedish officers or observers in the army were the informants and they could hardly be considered neutral or willing to share information about the military setbacks. Indeed, a report from Swedish Riga, which was sent to London via Hamburg, even told that the Swedish army was in *"a very good condition"*. The report did not say if this referred to the garrison in Riga, or the main army resting in Ukraine, but the news did give the impression that it referred to the main army by saying that the letter came to Riga from the Swedish army. In the paper "Swedish army" usually meant the army led by Charles XII in Ukraine.[73] In any case, the readers received a wrong image of the situation, as in reality, the Swedish army had lost its strength since 1707, predominantly due to the winter conditions. The campaign had started with about 40,000 men in 1707, but by the summer of 1709, only about 25,000 or less remained. The winter at the turn of 1709 was especially disastrous.[74]

So, many of such inaccuracies were never truly corrected, and it was left up to the readers to understand what was true and what was not. For instance, it was told that the Czar was wounded in a battle, which the Swedes won, and that many Russian officers, including one of the Czar's chief commanders, Prince Menshikov, had been captured. This was reported by *The Gazette* in

[71] For example: Hughes 2002, 82; Larson 2013, 184-195.
[72] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 4517. 21 February 1708,1; *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4520. 3 March 1708, 1.
[73] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4524. 17 March 1708, 1.
[74] Oakley 1993, 109-110.

early February when it published a letter from Berlin, which was based on information that was sent from Mihilow, Grodno, and Riga in mid-January. However, despite relying on various sources, this news had nothing that was truthful and soon the readers would see this as well, when, for example, news about Prince Menshikov appeared later with the news of the Poltava campaign (see the next chapter). Possibly, such inaccurate news pieces were much older and perhaps even based on outdated and exaggerated rumours following the Swedish victory of Holowczyn in July 1708, or the previously mentioned battle of Veprik in January 1709.[75] Apparently, the paper and its contacts wanted a steady flow of news, and even greatly inaccurate reports were better than no news content at all.

These false pieces of news were most likely based on similar inaccurate rumours which were received from various parts of Eastern Europe, and they were published by *The Gazette* without much editing, resulting in untrue news reports. The news was always outdated when it arrived, and the information had gone through many persons and interpretations, certainly also some translations, as seen in these examples that came from various European towns. It was likely that similar reasons might explain the various inaccuracies, especially those accounts that favoured Sweden during the winter when the Swedish army was starving rather than claiming victories.[76]

Despite these factual errors, which appeared to be more than common, there was still notable want for accuracy in most of the pieces of news. The reports showed the paper's insistence for truth and its wish to know what both warring factions had to say. During the winter and the spring of 1709, letters were reportedly received from both the Czar's camp and that of the Swedes.[77] This explains also how the news became more accurate with time. As the winter and spring progressed and the image of the actions became more balanced:

[75] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4514. 10 February 1708, 1.
[76] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 4514. 10 February 1708,1.
[77] A letter via Moscow from the Russian camp: *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4530. 7 April 1709, 1. Information from the Swedish camp that arrived via Berlin: *The London Gazette*. Issue 4523. 14 March 1708, 1.

> *"Hamburg, February 22. N.S. […] The Accounts we have had of late from Stetin of two great Victories obtained by the Swedes about the end of November last, and that the King of Sweden was marching directly to Moscow, are confirmed neither by the Letters from Moscow, or any other Parts; and 'tis supposed, that both the Swedes and Muscovites keep their Winter-Quarters in Ukrania."*[78]

The Gazette clearly aimed for neutrality or at least news accuracy and it wanted to show that the informants were clearly searching for the best possible information in the European towns. This can be seen through other cases of confirmation seeking and the use of various sources in the published letters and news. The last quote was included in the same paper in which the large casualty numbers, mentioned before, were presented. It cannot be known to what action it precisely referred. In any case, the reader might get the impression that this was about the same battle. The same issue of the paper seems to contradict itself by telling about a battle in one report, and then telling that there was no confirmation for the information in another.[79]

Most likely the governmental interests were not determining much of these news inaccuracies in early 1709. At least, the need for correctness was present constantly and no motives affecting the news could be observed. Similarly, considering how difficult the information transfer was until the summer, it was evident that nothing was, on purpose, left out of the paper as was seen in the habit to publish contradictory information. Steele's staff clearly just wanted to share the information that they received, without the need to establish one single truth. Even while it was a governmental paper, even mentioning the words *"published by authority"*[80] present in each issue, *The Gazette* adopted a critical approach and did not aspire to present one unique truth. Despite the paper being generally clear of all direct commentary, the letters published in it did speculate, however, because no better information was available. So, the paper's content showed some personal touch of the editors or informants, but not much else.

Compared to these early actions of the Swedish Russian campaign in Russia in 1709, the battle of Poltava happened in a time of better news transportation. It was also something that touched the political scene of Europe more deeply than the minor occurrences in the winter, referred to

[78] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4517. 21 February 1708, 1.
[79] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4517. 21 February 1708, 1.
[80] See for example the Appendix 1.

above. As seen below, this was also understood at the time. At this stage, the British Crown or more generally the state, was more involved in the diplomacy of the war.

2.3 The Battle of Poltava in *The Gazette*

In an issue of September, a detailed account was given from Moscow that confirmed some earlier pieces of news regarding a pivotal battle between Russian and Swedish armies near the town Poltava. It was confirmed that the Russian victory was at least as notable as had been previously stated in news:

> *"Mosco*[w], *July 31. N.S. There has been already given in general Account, that the Army of his Czarish Majesty had entirely routed that of the King of Sweden. We have since received the following particulars:* […]"[81]

The first news about the Battle of Poltava, about the subsequent Swedish retreat and surrender, and about Charles XII's escape further from his army, appeared about a month after the battle that took place on the 27th of June[82] and details continued to be published when more information became available. After a few months of confirmations, the news supply about the battle or the Swedish retreat, ended by late November, and in the final months of the year, the paper focused mostly on determining the location of Charles XII, or whether he was about to return to Sweden from his exile in the Ottoman town of Bender. Besides this, several other news reports about the northern warfare were published in the latter part of 1709, including details about Denmark declaring a new war on Sweden in the autumn of 1709.[83]

An inspection of *The Gazette* indicates that the Battle of Poltava in the summer of 1709 was clearly the most notable piece of news, which was not directly involving Britain, that was published in *The Gazette* in the year of 1709. The War of the Spanish Succession filled often the first sections and received most of the attention, but any pieces of news about the Battle of

[81] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4590. 20 September 1709, 1. To see the paper and get a general idea of the layout of the paper see Appendices 1 and 2.
[82]The first clear account of the battle was a few sentences long note from the Hague, dated August 6th accordingly to the Gregorian Calendar, meaning that it had arrived there in less than a month because the battle took place on the 8th of July in the Gregorian system. *The London Gazette.* Issue: 4568. 30 July 1709, 1.
[83] *The London Gazette*. Issues: 4503- 4634. 3 January 1708- 30 December 1709.

Poltava were published with clear interest. Most notably on the 20th of September, almost the entire first page of *The Gazette* was covered with battle reports from Moscow and detailed prisoner lists of captured Swedish officers. Only a short royal proclamation from Whitehall, taking less than a quarter of the first page, was presented before. News reports about the battle continued even in the second page (which was the last page of that issue), meaning that an entire issue of the paper was practically reserved for the battle and one short unrelated proclamation.[84] Already before, on the 27th of August, reports about the Battle of Poltava and Russian reactions to their victory from Moscow covered more than half of the first page of *The Gazette's* and were the first reports of the paper.[85] No other incident, apart from the War of the Spanish Succession or the Queen's royal proclamations, received as much space in any of *The Gazette's* issues of that year. It seems thus clear that no reader of the paper could have missed the news and significance of the battle of Poltava. Indeed, in the news reports, the battle was even described with words like *"Important"*[86]. Handover noted that around the last decade of the 17th century, news which seen as important was published in special issues and at least in the case of *The Gazette* in 1709, this special issue meant that a regular weekly issue paper was nearly reserved for the battle news.[87]

Besides this, during the weeks before and after these issues, nearly every issue of *The Gazette* included information about either the actual battle or other news about the Czar or Charles XII. Issues with no news about the subjects, were usually issues with little foreign news at all, meaning that the lack of news was probably due to the lack of any arrived foreign material in the press, rather than to a lack of interest.[88]

The news sources in early 1709 had been often, while not always, Swedish if any sources had been mentioned at all, but now the battle reports about Poltava came from Moscow. Probably this was not caused by any change in governmental focus, but rather by realities of information transfer when Charles XII's routed or captured army was now certainly unreachable. The

[84] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4590. 20 September 1709, 1-2.
[85] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4580. 27 August 1709, 1.
[86] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4586. 10 September 1709, 1.
[87] Handover 1965, 30; *The London Gazette.* Issues: 4503- 4634. 3 January 1708- 30 December 1709.
[88] For example, in September, when much of the notable news arrived, only 6 of the month's 13 issues had nothing related to the battle or the war. Two other issues included news related to the theme of Baltic Sea politics and the Great Northern War, but these did not have direct information about the Battle of Poltava. Thus only 4 issues out of 13 had no news about the war. *The London Gazette*. Issues: 4582- 4594. 1 September – 29 September 1709.

Swedish retreat further south must have worsened the communication with the remains of the army, but possibly some other factors played a role as well. *The Gazette* reported in the autumn that the British envoy to Charles XII, John Robinson, arrived in the Hague after leaving Hamburg in the summer of 1709.[89] Robinson had been a British envoy to the Swedish court for many years and he was an experienced diplomat in northern affairs. Apparently, Robinson had not met with the Charles XII in person for some time[90], but his stay in Hamburg until the summer of 1709, indicates that he might have been one of the sources of foreign news regarding the Swedish and Russian conflicts, at least from that city earlier in 1709. However, since the news sources remain unmentioned, this cannot be proven.[91] Yet, losing such contact personnel certainly affected the apparent decrease of news received from the Swedish army and explain why most news about the battle arrived from Moscow.[92]

The published details had surely a notable level of accuracy, especially if the source of the report was reliable, like an officer who had actually seen the battle, and not mere rumours circulating in different towns. Perhaps this accuracy was best illustrated in the case of Swedish retreat after the battle. For example, the prisoner list in the paper of the 20th of September, clearly provided by Russians, included many Swedes who were indeed captured after the fight at Perovolochna near Poltava. The paper correctly also identifies that this capture happened after the battle and the place was named correctly.[93]

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[89] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 4607. 29 October 1709. The paper mentioned only Mr. Robinson, but he was certainly John Robinson who was the English envoy to Charles XII at the turn of the century. See Kirby, 1990. 232-233 and the article of Milne 1947 for more details about Robinson's career.

[90] The Swedes valued Robinson and they even wanted him to return to England because they thought he would be able to help the Swedish interest better there by informing the British government. Milne 1947, 90-92.

[91] Possibly a man named James Jeffryes was the only Englishman to witness the Battle of Poltava. He was observing Charles XII's campaign and he sent letters from the Swedish army to the Secretary of State in Whitehall between 1707 and 1709. Comparison shows that the information from these particular letters was not used in *The Gazette* in 1709. These apparently remained within a smaller circle of Whitehall. More about the letters see Hatton 1954.

[92] *The London Gazette*. Issues: 4503- 4634. 3 January 1708- 30 December 1709.

[93] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4590. 20 September 1709, 1-2. The paper reported that a total of about 15,000 Swedes was captured, but only the officers were named. Several officers on the published list, including Count Lewenhaupt and General Creutz were indeed captured with a considerable force of troops. The detailed list of the paper is not directly comparable with numbers given by research, for example by Konstam 2013, due to different terminologies regarding military ranks and parts of text that are not visible, but the list is clearly a Russian estimation and thus the best possible information *The Gazette* might have had. *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4576. 18 August 1709, 1. informed the readers already before that a Russian major had reported to the Duke of Marlborough about the Russian victory and capture of more than 16, 000 Swedes. These numbers fit relatively well with the Konstam's estimates of 20,000, meaning that the paper had received most likely correct information already then. Konstam 2013, 86.

When inspecting the factuality level of the news, the accuracy appears rather decent and most likely little alterations were made regarding much of the content. Minor errors were still present even in the best reports, but they were something to be expected from the information transfer of the period. For example, when the paper described Charles XII's role in the battle, it was not really told or highlighted how he was mostly laying on a stretcher carried by horses. This was a result of his foot injury which he had sustained in a small action before the battle. This made his chances to encourage and lead his army limited, which has been considered one reason for the defeat.[94] Instead of revealing this, in a report from Brussels, it was said that a horse was shot "under" Charles XII during the battle, giving the reader the impression that he was on horseback during most of the action.[95] The report mentioned only that it was believed that the king had sustained a wound at his side, after which he was given a new horse by one of his officers. It was true that a horse carrying his stretcher was killed during the battle and the rumour was probably based on this fact. The last claim of the paper was correct as one of the Swedish officers indeed gave his own horse to Charles XII so that he could escape from the Russians. However, Charles XII's actual role was hardly the same as the impression created through the depiction of the king on horseback.[96] Even the more refined descriptions were certainly partially inaccurate, as even the Czar's personal description, which was given in a later issue of the paper, showed only his interpretation of the action that was certainly hardly neutral.[97]

The descriptions of many other similar details of the battle in the current research on the on one hand and in *The Gazette*, on the other hand, could be compared, but it is clear already now that the accuracy level seems to be somewhat similar as it was with the winter news. In the summer there was just more news material due to better conditions of information transfer. This resulted in slightly more accurate reports. The same level of criticism and need for objectivity as seen before was present even in the notable September issue, dominated by the Russian reports, mentioned above. While the first part was information given by victorious Russians in Moscow, the paper clearly presented how the Russian sources were just

[94] Several other details explaining the defeat of Swedish forces, like the fact that the winter had ruined much of the gunpowder of the Swedes, were not really mentioned. This seems very reasonable, however, as these kinds of factors were only revealed after a historical analysis of the primary sources about the battle. See for example the work of Englund 2018 for details about the battle.
[95] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 4573. 11 August 1709, 1-2.
[96] Englund 2018, 248-250.
[97] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4574. 13 August 1709, 1.

comparable to any other letters when speaking of Charles XII's retreat and alleged death after the battle:

> *"Dresden, September 16. N.S. […] We have received repeated Advices from the Muscovite Army, of the Death of the King of Sweden; but some Letters say that he died at Oczikow, and others that it was at Bender."*[98]

Some clear ways that were used to convince the reading public to trust the Crown's paper can be observed. The paper wanted to give a good accurate account of the battle. In this process, it established the confirmation for its credibility by presenting eyewitness testimonies of the battle, besides mere second-hand reports. Perhaps this was present most notably in an issue that had a published description, written by a Prussian officer in the Swedish service.[99] The Prussian officer, writing from Berlin, had:

> *"*[…] *attended the King of Sweden in his unhappy Expedition against Muscovy. He was present at the Battle of Pultowa and confirms all the Particulars which we have already received of that important Action*."[100]

The paper published the Czar's letter in one issue already in August, illustrating again how the paper provided information from both warring sides, just like it had done in earlier that year.[101] Use of other material that could be considered "primary sources" happened indeed also when the mentioned list of prisoners captured by Russians was published. The list was accurate as discussed, and this can be explained only by the paper's use of some translated Russian documents.[102]

It is hard to estimate within the scope of this study if the letters by the Prussian officer and the Czar were real, but the letters may have been genuine and likely just translated. The letter of the Czar had arrived with news from Vienna and it was titled *A letter From the Czar to General Golzt from the Camp at Pultawa June 27 O.S. 1709.* The letter described the battle as it was

[98] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4590. 20 September 1709, 2.
[99] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4574. 13 August 1709, 1.
[100] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4586. 10 September 1709, 1.
[101] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4574. 13 August 1709, 1.
[102] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4590. 20 September 1709, 1-2

seen by the Tsar with a great number of military details, something to be expected from a letter intended for a general, suggesting that it might have been authentic.[103] Because similar documents were clearly published sparingly, this would suggest that the letters like these were published only when they were truly available. Such documents could have been forged easily with the correct information if more were wanted, but only these few were presented in the paper. This matter is, however, too broad to be discussed here. In any case, certainly, the readers had little reasons to doubt the letters' originality.[104]

Because even an entire issue was devoted to the battle, it became obvious even to the readers of the paper that the battle was a major action that had some importance. The Battle of Poltava later received a mythical reputation for creating Russia as a European power, but even in 1709, observers already seemed to understand that the battle was somehow important and decisive, and this view was communicated to the reading public by the paper.

Many issues of the paper put forward the image of a glorious Russian victory by telling how the Russians ambassadors organised public parties to celebrate the victory in various European centres.[105] From the Hague, it was told that:

> "[…] *The Muscovite Ambassador residing here concluded his publick Rejoicings on the 10th Instant which have been very magnificent, and suitable to the great Success of his Czarish Majesty at Poltowa* […]"[106]

The readers were presented many other pieces of news that signalled Sweden's notable setbacks, if not the kingdom's downfall. Charles XII was thought to be dead in one issue, as was presented before. Even while this was soon corrected with newer information about the king's whereabouts, this certainly shocked the readership that was used to reading about the

[103] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4574. 13 August 1709, 1.
[104] However, it has been concluded that this was a time when details in any paper were increasingly questioned by other papers and readers. See the discussion on this topic in Black 1991, 197-245. This matter naturally requires a different study to be fully answered.
[105] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4596. 1 October 1709, 1; *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4598. 8 October 1709, 1.
[106] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4598. 8 October 1709, 1.

exploits of the Swedish warrior king. News reports telling the readers that some of the Swedish forces, especially officers, had joined the Czar's army, highlighted the defeat even further. [107]

2.4 Did the Russian campaign and the Battle of Poltava matter for the Crown or the reading public?

The use of various sources, together with the abundance of material and details seems to indicate that all possible information was published. The people received the best possible information and most likely were not directly lied to in these pieces of news published in the paper that was supportive of the government. In this chapter, the reasons behind these observations are further investigated.

It appears that because the war between Swedish and Russian monarchs was rather distant, the content could be published without much ulterior motives influencing the content from the Crown's side. As Handover noted, indeed correctly at least regarding the themes studied here, even while *The Gazette,* as a journal of the court, told only things that were comfortable to the Crown, *"*[…] *much valuable news was published and what did appear had the merit of accuracy so far as this was possible to achieve."*[108] Black has noted in his work, discussing the press of the 18th century as a whole, that *"most papers certainly provided as good 'foreign advices' as possible"*[109]*,* and at least for the year 1709 this appears to be the case for *The Gazette* as well, despite the paper's function as the Crown's official supporter.

The role of the interests of the reading public and the Crown in this information transfer can be explained only when the role of the readership regarding the distant war events is clarified and thus this requires some attention here. Foreign intelligence of the early modern period was wanted by the readers. This is a known fact proven by various examples. Handover wrote, for example, how in the late 17th century intelligence from Austro-Turkish wars around the Danube was so wanted in England that it made *The Gazette's* sales rise notably.[110] The case seems here

[107] The paper even presented that Charles XII had been killed accordingly to their reports, but it was unclear where this had happened. *The London Gazette.* Issue: 4590. 20 September 1709, 2. Charles XII was reportedly alive for example in: *The London Gazette.* Issue: 4616. 19 November 1709,1. Information about recruited prisoners of the Russians: *The London Gazette. Issue:* 4603. 20 October 1709, 1.
[108] Handover 1965, 26.
[109] Black 1991, 199.
[110] Handover 1965, 25-26.

to be similar in this early 18th-century example. The only difference was, in this case, that the paper had competitors to profit from the same needs of the readers.[111]

While the theme gained significant attention in the Crown's paper, the interest that the readerships showed towards the campaigns of the Great Northern War should not be overestimated. This can be shown, for example, with some literary reaction analysed and presented already in previous research. Firstly, there were little reasons why the readership in Britain would have been especially interested, precisely because the war in the east was very far away from their daily lives. The foreign news topics were a subject of discussion, yet merely one of the multiple subjects. Historian Julian Hoppit presented an illustrative example from a text of Jonathan Swift, who was both an editor of *The Gazette* and a member of the public sphere of the period. Swift described people in the coffee houses:

> *"They smoak, game, and read the Gazettes[112] and sometimes make them too. Here they treat of Matters of State, the interests of Princes, and the Honour of Husbands c. In a Word, 'tis here the English discourse freely of every Thing, and where they may be known in a little Time." [113]*

Among the mentioned themes, the news about the campaign of Charles XII and the battle of Poltava belong to the second theme, *"the interests of Princes"*. In any case, there was much discussion over any news, certainly also in this case. The discussion about the news was so popular and entertaining among the members of the early bourgeoisie that some observers at the time were even worried that the coffee houses with their news gossip were unhealthily addictive and began to disturb the life of merchants and their families.[114] A contemporary poet described his experience of the public sphere in the coffee houses and foreign news of the Great Northern War: *"'distant Battles of the Pole and Swede, Which frugal Citizens o'er Coffee read, Careless for who shall fail, or who succeed."*[115] This show the entertaining nature of this kind of news. In this case, "Pole" could just be replaced with "Russian", but the general approach

[111] Hoppit 2002, 318-323.
[112] This probably refers to any newspapers, not only *The Gazette.*
[113] Hoppit 2002, 432 quoted here a Swift's letter. The quote highlights how the readers and the members of the press were sometimes the same individuals during the time of the elite press.
[114] Stephens 1988, 13.
[115] Coroban 2013 quoted Nicholas Rowe, *The Fair penitent* (London John Bell, MDCCXCI). Coroban 2013, 57. It should be noted that Raymond 1998 already saw this piece of text as a proof that the readers were interested in matters not related to their daily lives. Raymond 1998, 23.

was certainly the same. Compared to domestic themes, the news of the distant war (indeed called "distant") was probably more entertaining and less seriously debated as can be seen in this described carefree attitude.

Yet, the paper's staff or the Crown, as well as the reading public had some opinions about what was happening abroad, even though the Crown's paper presented things neutrally without easily noticeable passionate commentary, and when the readership was more focused on domestic affairs.

In this, a pro-Swedish attitude might have affected the paper due to the British Crown's ideal of supporting any foreign protestants of Europe, not merely Anglicans. Even while the Great Northern War was not a religious conflict, it threatened Sweden, which was a politically important protestant power that Britain traditionally supported. This so-called "Protestant interest" was not only an ideal of the Crown. It was especially notable as a Whig objective too, but actually, it played a rather universal role in British politics, even before the Lutheran George I came in power. This resulted in a certain degree of tolerance and support for many groups of Protestants in the European continent. In the case of Sweden, especially the Tories saw the country as a critically important protestant power that served the German Protestants. Still, some Whigs, who believed in a strong parliamentary system, despised the role of the Lutheran Church of Sweden in supporting the absolutist monarchy of Charles XII.[116] Some Whigs even preferred supporting Sweden's enemies, notably Poland.[117] In any case, the so-called "Protestant interest" was one notable interest and policy of the British Crown and the government as a whole.[118]

Probably the reading public was interested in the matters of other Protestant countries, so telling news about Swedish affairs served their personal interest to a degree. Certainly, the reading public read and talked about ideas which can now be called "Protestant internationalism". The case of one notable pro-Protestant writer, whose writing circulated very widely in the public sphere must be noted in this case. It concerns Daniel Defoe. Defoe was not merely a single

[116] Thompson 2006, 56-60. See also the discussion in Murray, 1969, 1-21.
[117] Because of this, some Tories accused the Whigs of hypocrisy. Thompson 2006, 54-60. For more about parties and religious motivation among politicians see for example: Hoppit 2002, 207-242 and the works of Clayton 2007 and Thompson 2006.
[118] Backsheider 1986, 96; Thompson 2006, 54-60; Kirby 1990, 304.

example, but a very notable individual in the press of the period and due to the limited reading public, a notable member of the public sphere as well. With his pamphlets and journals, such as his popular *Review,* Defoe (often considered as the first real journalist) was *"The first to make the "party spirit" a public "spirit""*[119]. Notably, he was a friend of Robert Harley, and Defoe worked for the Queen's ministry in 1708-1710.[120] Just some years before Poltava, in 1701 (probably inspired by the events of the Battle of Narva), Defoe, who saw Russia as an aggressor in the northern conflict[121] wrote that "[…] *if the Swede, or Dane, or the most remote* [Protestant] *Nation be Attackt* […] *we ought to help and relieve them".*[122] This kind of protestant internationalism was important in the British political culture and self-understanding of the reading classes in the early 18th century. Thus, it was no doubt seen in the public sphere among readers and among the governmental personnel.[123]

It must be noted, however, that this attitude in Britain was mostly a part of a larger feeling of hostility towards the Catholic powers, such as France and Spain. Russia and Orthodox Christianity were at this time rather unknown in Britain and received only occasional attention in religious or other discussions. Only later in the 18th century, Russia secured its place in European minds and gained more constant attention in Britain. This development had only begun at Poltava in 1709. Thus, the Russian aggression towards *"the Swede"* was perhaps less threatening for the British than that of a Catholic power might have been (and, as mentioned, even Sweden's war with Catholic Poland did not evoke universal pro-Swedish attitudes among British politicians, despite the general sympathy towards the Scandinavian Lutherans).[124]

In any case, Steele's paper maintained the ideal neutrality, even while the protestant interest must have had an effect on the amount of attention shown towards Swedish affairs. Steele as a Whig might have shared, or perhaps even probably did share, the Whig's general interest for foreign Protestants or even Defoe's views on the matter. This might have affected him and his helpers and encouraged them to devote so much space to Sweden's distress in the paper.

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[119] Habermas 1991, 59.
[120] Harley and Defoe had a brief period of personal disagreement around 1708-1710, as Defoe continued to write for the ministry after Harley had lost his official position. Nevertheless, Defoe worked for Harley and the ministry also after the Tory triumph of 1710. Clayton 2007, 204.
[121] Murray 1969, 20.
[122] Clayton 2007, 202. quoted Daniel Defoe's *The Danger of Protestant Religion (1701),* 18-19. The quote has been reformulated to fit the other quoted parts of this paper with additions in brackets.
[123] Clayton 2007, 11, 192-120, 538; Hoppit 2002, 298-299.
[124] Clayton 2007, 11, 192-120, 538.

Indeed, earlier in 1709, the paper had given an impression of Swedes, especially of Charles XII, as devout Protestants. In his battles against Saxony, Charles XII demanded more rights and liberties for the protestants of the Holy Roman Empire, and this was presented also in the Crown's paper.[125] They were the same protestants Britain cared for in her foreign policy, alongside other foreign protestants.

However, when considering the British governmental interests affecting *The Gazette*, the discussion of Protestant interest should be seen against more calculated and practical politics and interests of the kingdom. Indeed, historian John J. Murray described, somewhat judgmentally, that during the time of Queen Anne self-interest dominated the British policy towards the northern parts of Europe *"to a point of disgust".*[126] This was connected notably to the ideal status quo in the Baltic. This was the situation preferred by the British Crown, which meant a strong Sweden in 1709. This was not merely, probably not even mainly, motivated by the afore-mentioned religious conditions.[127] While in general, this policy was supportive towards Sweden, it must be noted that since the time of William III (1688-1702), the dominance of a single power, Sweden, in the Baltic Sea had also caused considerable frustration in Britain.[128] Thus, the British preference would have certainly been a strong, but perhaps less dominant Sweden in the north.

This need for a balance concerned the Baltic Sea's economy that was of interest to the British. This trade issue will be discussed more in detail in the following chapters where it is more relevant, but it must be noted here as a factor that affected the news coverage already in 1709. Even though the fact who exactly controlled the Baltic ports mattered relatively little, so long as the British could continue their trade there, predictability was sought after in the north.[129] Among the western nations, Britain was perhaps most committed to the northern power balance. For example, the Historian Lindsey Hudges mentions that after Poltava *"Britain in particular, insisted that Sweden must not be allowed to collapse completely, and that balance must be maintained in the north."*[130] It could be assumed that in this case, it was in the interest

[125] The paper told how Charles XII's wishes had been heard by the Emperor and how more Lutheran churches were constructed in Silesia. *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4513 7 February 1708, 1.
[126] Murray 1969, 70.
[127] For more about Britain's need for Baltic Status Quo see for example: Aldridge 2009, 36-62.
[128] Coroban 2013, 66-67; Murray 1969, 71.
[129] Coroban 201, 70.
[130] Hughes 2002, 86-87.

of the Crown to take the Swedish side, rather than that of unknown and distant Russia (Russia started to be active in the Baltic scene around this time, while until the 1710s this was not significant). By western diplomats Russia was even seen as the "Turk of the North", which at the time did not have a positive connotation, mainly indicating the country's otherness in Europe. Nevertheless, Britain was keenly congratulating the Czar for his victory at Poltava which shows the pragmatic nature of the politics.[131] No matter who succeeded in the north, it was for the best to have good relations with the winners. This attitude affected the Crown's paper as well, as was visible in reports of the victory celebrations presented before.

However, it remains difficult to assess exactly how deeply diplomacy affected the paper. Many published rumours favoured Sweden by telling about victories that did not happen, especially earlier in the year, but this can just as well be a result of Charles XII's earlier victories as of any political viewpoints. Against the background of a long list of previous victories, it was reasonable to assume that if any action had occurred Swedish forces had been victorious.[132] Only the Battle of Poltava showed that Sweden could lose, and terribly so, and once this was clear, the paper communicated this very clearly. Thus, in the paper both sides of the war were presented in a neutral fashion and, as it was stated previously, the paper always aimed to give space to both views of the war events. The British readers or the editors of the paper might have preferred to read about Swedish victories. At least many traders and government officials hoped that the situation around the Baltic remained stable, and some certainly rooted for protestant Swedes against the mysterious Muscovites, but such wishes cannot be seen in the reports in any obvious way. The number of the reports and the amount of effort by the paper's staff were the only indicators of this interest.[133]

The governmental wish for a Baltic status quo, or a strong Sweden, thus remains far less visible than many other interests that are discussed below, but the role of diplomacy must be inspected

[131] Murray 1969, 70. Also, *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4509. 24 January 1708, 1. included news about diplomatic courtesy and good wishes, shown towards Russian princes visiting Britain.
[132] The Swedes, often outnumbered, had won many important confrontations during the early phase of the war, making them seem invincible in the eyes of many Europeans. The Swedes forced Denmark out of the war in 1700 by a mere landing of troops on Danish soil and won against a three times larger Russian army at Narva, in modern Estonia, in the same year. The Swedes further won against Saxon-Polish troops at Kliszów in 1702 and staggeringly again at Fraustadt (Wschowa) in 1706, both in modern Poland. Charles XII, who oversaw his army in person during most actions, was almost regarded as a living legend, especially because he was only 18 years old at the time of the Battle of Narva. See for example: Coroban 2011, 29-32.
[133] Backsheider 1986, 96; Hughes 2002, 87-88; Thompson 2006, 54-60. For more about politics see Hoppit 2002, 279-312.

a bit more from another point of view. In this case, some other factors than the readers in the domestic British public sphere might explain the neutrality and generally cautious tone of *The Gazette* in 1709. The newspapers of the era were not merely reporting about foreign politics, but their relationship to foreign politics was twofold as was noted by Black.[134] The paper was at the same time a tool of foreign politics. It was generally believed among politicians that the British press (including the private press) and the information that was spread by them was influencing other countries, even while papers like *The Gazette* had a largely local orientation in their advertisements and proclamations. It was true that many English papers were circulated in Europe and that many governments were interested in what had been written about them abroad. Indeed, just a year before Poltava, in 1708, a Swedish paper informed the readers about Charles XII's worry that serious lies about Swedish matters were published abroad.[135]

The press also shared information to diplomats, and the other way around, causing that the Crown's paper had a notable effect on politicians' actions as well. If Britain was neutral regarding the northern European politics, at least in a direct military sense, it was for the best to ensure that the Crown's official paper adopted a similar position. Therefore, the paper did not attack or defend any factions. And thus, the paper treated both warring factions with similar dignity. The Crown communicated its official neutrality, both to its own citizens and to other countries. Supporting Sweden in careful diplomatic ways and thus maintaining a Baltic status quo was apparently left to the private sphere of the diplomats, not to the Crown's paper that technically could be read by anyone and interpreted by many in Britain or abroad. The paper was certainly not useless to diplomacy as it still informed the diplomats about relevant neutral facts, yet not about their possible objectives. All in all, this observed neutrality was in line with Black's assessment. [136]

The mentioned exchange of information was thus benefitting diplomats and politicians, as well as the lower levels of the reading public at least to some degree. And these facts were needed, if only for the sake of understanding the war against the French over the Spanish Crown. In 1709 Britain and other forces in the Grand Alliance, the Holy Roman Empire, in particular, were still involved in the War of the Spanish Succession and this largely explains the interest in the conflicts in the north and east. While the readers might not have understood everything

[134] Black 1991, 221-238.
[135] Pasay 2012, 39.
[136] Black 1991, 221-238.

about it, it was certainly realised among the British politicians and contacts that the position of Charles XII could affect the War of the Spanish Succession. Only two years before, in 1707, Charles XII's actions in Poland and his occupation of Saxony had made him a threatening, if not just as much admired, figure.[137] There had been diplomatic possibilities that Sweden might further intervene in the Empire's politics and not just by fighting against the member state of Saxony. There were even hopes in France, and fears among the Allies that Sweden might join France in the War of the Spanish Succession. But equally, there were hopes and fears that Sweden would join the allies. These fears and hopes were short-lived, and they vanished completely, at least for the time being, once Charles XII began his Russian campaign.[138] But, no one in 1709 could have known what was going to happen, so there must have been fears that this situation might arise again. This background explains to some degree the interest devoted to the war in the north and the east in the Crown's paper. These political fears certainly made the pro-Swedish attitudes of the British milder, explaining even more the paper's observed neutrality.[139]

Thus, the foreign politics of the Crown affected the paper and the image given to the reading public, but there were obvious reasons why this was still rather a mild form of influencing the readers and why this could be seen only in the general amount of attention paid to the war events. Pasay noted in her study of the Swedish Crown's paper of the same era that Swedes depicted their enemies in a neutral fashion to the reading public, because of political flexibility that Sweden had to adapt to. Long-lasting enemies could not be made through propaganda because the realities could change. An enemy state might easily become, if not an ally, at least a neutral neighbour. While Pasay indicated that in comparison Britain adopted a different attitude towards France[140], the generally careful approach of the Swedish paper towards the country's enemies was clearly comparable to the relationship between Britain and northern Europe in 1709. It was obvious that during the War of the Spanish Succession against France, Britain could not effectively participate in the wars up north. So, similarly, the Crown's paper

[137] Britain officially recognised Charles XII puppet king of Poland, being one indicator of the respect Charles XII enjoyed before Poltava. Milne 1948, 1; Wolfe 1962, 78.
[138] This was partially due to the discussions between the Duke of Marlborough's and Charles XII, when the duke visited the Swedish camp personally in 1707. Charles XII expressed his willingness not to participate in the War of the Spanish Succession. Marlborough even encouraged Charles XII to take his campaign into Moscow, but probably the King had planned to do so anyway. See for example: Young 2004, 454.
[139] Milne 1948, 1; Wolfe 1962, 78.
[140] Pasay, referring to the general development in the 18th century, did not notice that the period after the War of the Spanish Succession was followed by a short alliance between Britain and France.

could not afford to present too strong opinions to its readers (who had even more political significance within their country than the readers of the Swedish Crown's paper) or incite demands for actions that could not be realised. Britain had to adjust to the realities in the north and so they had to be flexible and accept the changes happening around the countries of the Baltic Sea. Therefore, *The Gazette* could not incite any hostilities towards any of the factions. The political situation soon changed, but this comparison between the attitudes of the Crown's papers in Sweden and Britain, was sensible when discussing the year 1709. [141]

Clearly, the subject of the distant war was kept visible not only to satisfy the readers' curiosity but also because it was useful if the readers knew about it. After all, the war could change its course and importance form the British perspective. It would have been easier to communicate about any changes in the British governmental approach towards the Great Northern War if the readers already possessed some understanding of the conflict. Possibly the notable attention in *The Gazette,* given to the Swedish campaign in Russia in the summer and autumn, was an indicator of the shock of the Crown and perhaps of the entire British Kingdom when the balance of power in northern areas of Europe was in danger (even the earliest reports informed about the totality of Sweden's defeat at Poltava). Possibly, the Crown wanted this shock to be known, in case they needed to meddle more into northern politics and justify their actions in the region.[142] Yet, before this might happen, staying neutral and keeping the news distant meant that the Crown could justify its passive attitude to the readers by giving the impression that the war between the Swedes and the Czar was something distant in which the Crown should or could not intervene.

While the Great Northern War in Eastern Europe was a clear and important theme in 1709, the previous remarks should not be overestimated when looking to the paper as a whole. Intermingled with the reports about events like the Battle of Poltava, *The Gazette* provided many other pieces of news from the continent. Only sometimes, like in the aforementioned issue of the 20th of September, the news about the battle or the campaign pushed away other possible foreign news. While the first "advices" on the paper's front page could have been

[141] Pasay 2012, 68-71.

[142] Indeed, Britain was involved in the changes of diplomacy of the war already in 1709 and especially after Poltava as was mentioned previously and the wars were connected in many ways. As stated by Hudges: *"On 10 and 11 October Russia signed treaties with Prussia and Denmark. Britain expressed willingness to act as mediator between Russia and Sweden, while the French were prepared for Russia to mediate, together with Denmark and Poland, in the War of the Spanish Succession, which was going badly.* […]." Hughes 2002, 87.

about the Great Northern War, they often dealt with other themes as well. For example, the same paper might have been explaining what was happening in the politics and nobles' lives in European centres such as Venice, the Hague, Vienna, Madrid or Rome. When pieces of news about the Swedish campaign arrived from larger towns and cities, they were usually accompanied by various other news from those places. Many times information about the campaign was mentioned after other information, like descriptions of diplomatic visits, especially in the period before the more detailed reports about the Battle of Poltava were published in September. However, this could be explained by the fact that the contact persons, who probably did not leave the cities or towns[143], wrote primarily about things which they had experienced themselves, and only then reported about what was told concerning a distant war in the same towns.[144] The role of the informants probably explained the structure of the paper's content, because the final reports were most likely similar to original letters due to limited editing, which was caused by the challenges of *The Gazette's* staff mentioned before. In the summer and autumn of 1709, the timetables were even unusually busy as the paper experimented with three numbers a week, instead of the usual two.

The amount of information about foreign occurrences, such as the Battle of Poltava, that was made freely available was also a symptom, or a side-product, of censorship rather than of free information transfer. This can be seen when comparing the news about the Great Northern War with the other content of the paper. Even when the reading public was served in certain ways by telling factual information about what was happening abroad, this did not mean that the public sphere was not controlled significantly and that the Crown had no ulterior motives at all at the same time. When looking further into the news coverage, the War of the Spanish Succession rises again as a theme probably influencing the reports about the Russian campaign of Charles XII. In 1709, the Crown's paper included news about the War of the Spanish Succession as well. Notably, the Battle of Poltava received attention in the same autumn as when reports related to the Duke of Marlborough's costly victory at Malplaquet began to arrive.

The Battle of Malplaquet was fought in France on the 31st of August being the last of Duke of Marlborough's major victories. However, this battle was considered a pyrrhic victory due to

[143] The letters were always connected to urban life and courts. *The London Gazette.* Issues: 4503- 4634. 3 January 1708- 30 December 1709.
[144] *The London Gazette.* Issues: 4503- 4634. 3 January 1708- 30 December 1709.

the heavy losses of the Allies and the fact that, even while the Allies had won at the battlefield, the French army had remained intact and a future menace for the Allies. The battle showed the new strength of the French and suggested that the complete defeat of the French army was still unlikely.[145] *The Gazette* informed about the battle against the French in a rather similar manner as about the Battle of Poltava, for example by presenting prisoners' lists and rumours about the battle.[146] However, all in all, considering firstly to what extent the battle of Malplaquet had a direct influence on Britain in comparison to the Battle of Poltava and secondly how much easier information travelled from nearby France to London, the amount of attention given to Poltava was perhaps even greater than to Malplaquet. This was probably due to the general censorship of the information given to the public if it concerned their own country and the previously mentioned loss of Marlborough's correspondence by *The Gazette.*[147] Possibly the attention given to the war between the Czar and Charles XII was meant to compensate for the lack of news about the War of the Spanish Succession.

Possibly the news about the Swedish and Russian battles, such as the Battle of Poltava, was also used intentionally to distract the readers of the failures of the British army in the War of the Spanish Succession in 1709. At least this might have been something benefitting the Crown, or at least the ministry. Indeed, the Battle of Malplaquet and the War of the Spanish Succession, in general, caused the fall of the 1708 ministry and ended the Whig dominance in the Parliament after the 1710 elections, what certainly could have been predicted by skilful analysts at the time. Queen Anne herself welcomed the idea of a new ministry by late 1709.[148] Yet, certainly, the bad news about the battle did not benefit her authority either, as she was technically the head of the military. Even though the British had been victorious in the action, the costs had been high. Supposing that there was a clear understanding of this among the paper's staff, they might have wanted to censor the news of the battle a bit more than usual.[149] Perhaps Steele, together with his staff, again because he was a Whig working for the Crown and the government, preferred to support the Whig parliament and the ministry instead of

[145] The Allies lost more than half of the number of men the French did. Of more than 20, 000 killed Allies troops 10% were British which was apparently considered high number at the time. Hoppit 2002, 120.
[146] See for example: *The London Gazette.* Issue: 4593. 27 September 1709, 1. Interestingly the piece of news appeared only after a royal proclamation about trade restrictions related to the Baltic Sea plague.
[147] Hoppit 2002, 114-120. See page 24.
[148] Hoppit 2002, 297-300.
[149] Indeed at least the Allied victory and French losses at Malplaquet were naturally highlighted by the paper in contrast to the Allied losses. See for example: *The London Gazette.* Issue: 4593. 27 September 1709, 1.

highlighting the defeat. At the same time, he would have supported Queen Anne as well. Certainly, already the members of the information network, like military officers, who were sending material to the papers, would have been careful with the information they provided. In any case, it was clear that when the public was reading and talking about the far-away Battle of Poltava they were not talking as much about Marlborough's meagre and costly victory and the long War of the Spanish Succession that was tiring the kingdom. So, in the end, this certainly protected the position of the Crown and also the ministry.[150]

The Crown's interest to control the public sphere can be seen in a broader sense as well. By making the paper comparable to private press with foreign news coverage, the institution of the Crown's paper was kept alive by the Crown and the paper's staff amid private competition. While ironically even the makers of the paper benefited from the private press, Steele, for example, had his own paper as well, everything seems to indicate that during their work for *The Gazette* the staff followed the objectives of the Crown. If the news about foreign affairs, e.g. about Charles XII's Russian campaign, could be read from *The Gazette*, the subjects, whether they were members of the bourgeoisie or state officials, would read the information that was given to them under royal authority. At the same time, they would read content more directly related to the affairs of their kingdom and their daily lives. If a merchant, interested in factors that might influence trade networks leading to the Baltic Sea, wanted to know about what was happening in the eastern parts of Europe by reading *The Gazette*, at the same time he would read other material of the paper, material that supported the Crown directly, such as the royal proclamations.

All in all, sharing any information, and not only controlling it, can still be observed as a clear interest of the Crown that also served the reading public. It appears that Steele's personal eagerness to do this served this interest of the Crown especially well in 1709. Sharing information was not notably incompatible with any of the Crown's interests in 1709, as the published information was about rather distant affairs and did not have the possibility to damage the reputation of the Crown.

The carefulness of the paper was certainly a product of the Crown's and the government's consensus. The paper's Whig writers, who had been selected by Tory Harley, in a time when

[150] Hoppit 2002, 114-120; 297-300.

the Whigs had a parliamentary majority, wrote mostly without their own ulterior motives. Possibly this was because the different political views balanced each other, or because all of these individuals supported the Crown's structure that had employed them, despite their own political opinions. The paper clearly communicated the governmental consensus of the Queen and her associated ministers, which was official and pragmatic neutrality in the Great Northern War. Apparently, Steele was indeed the discreet writer Harley had sought for, at least during his editorship of *The Gazette's* foreign news in 1709. There might have been some Whig mentality, as referred to in relation to the Protestant interest, but this remained very subtle and it was in no way contradictory to the Crown's objectives.[151]

But, the readers were also considered in many ways and they probably valued the information which they knew indirectly affected either the political life of the country or trade connections. Even to the other participants in the public sphere, those who were not involved in trade or politics, foreign news formed at least some form of entertainment. The foreign news about this military campaign served the readership to a degree, but more practical pieces of news relating to the warfare in the north, like royal proclamations about trade restrictions related to the Baltic Sea plague epidemics, probably were more important, especially to the traders reading *The Gazette*.[152] This means that in 1709 the paper was at the same time fulfilling its tasks in controlling the press and supporting the monarch. Simultaneously it provided the readers with good foreign intelligence and served their need for information or entertainment.

Black has noted that discussion about foreign affairs was not limited to high-level factions like the Parliament or the Crown's ministers at this time.[153] In this case, however, he refers mostly to the discussion about the topic in private press, rather than among ordinary citizens. When domestic matters could be published only limitedly due to censorship, focusing on the foreign policy of Britain became a way to discuss the matters of the state or to criticize the state itself. By giving information about foreign affairs, *The Gazette* indirectly supplied tools to the readers in order to criticize the Crown.[154] However, as long as Britain acted officially as a mere side-watcher, like in the case of the Battle of Poltava, the news had very little use in political debates, even though obviously the country's passive attitude could have been criticised especially by

[151] Backsheider 1986, 96; Hughes 2002, 87-88; Thompson 2006, 54-60.
[152] Royal proclamations were very common. Example: *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4557. 5 July 1709, 1. Proclamations about the Baltic plague: *The London Gazette*. Issue 4588. 15 September 1709, 1.
[153] Black 1991, 235.
[154] Noted also in Raymond 1998, 24.

pro-Swedish thinkers. This still explains why the Crown allowed so much to be published about the theme.

So, the readers of the small public sphere were at least slightly interested in the news like the Battle of Poltava, as was the Crown and the government, but it must be concluded that in 1709 this was just fleeting attention, as has been shown by previous research. It seems that the general impression, given by literary critic Paula R. Backscheider indeed does apply to the Crown's *Gazette* in 1709. (Sadly, Backsheider does not indicate which "periodicals" her impression was based upon):

> *"Although Britain had been interested in the Great Northern War from the beginning because of the Baltic trade, because of its possible ramifications for the War of Spanish Succession, and because of Sweden's traditional role as one of the protectors of the Protestant interest, it was not until George came to the throne that the Northern War became a matter of intense interest for ordinary Englishmen.* […] *a survey of the periodicals before 1714 shows what can only be called desultory interest."*[155]

However, this view could be challenged by some of the findings in this study. Some traits, like devoting practically an entire newspaper issue to the Battle of Poltava and the paper's meticulous aspiration for accuracy, against the background of challenging news transfer at the time, show that this interest might be partially more than merely "desultory". While the earlier 1709 news coverage was indeed more "desultory" rather than highly regular, this may have been caused primarily by the challenges in information transfer or plainly by the lack of material in the press considering the subject. So, the amount of material does not automatically indicate how interested the readers or the writers of the paper were, at least in the case of newspapers. The lack of original writings in periodicals, as observed by Backsheider, might reveal something about the actual share of attention discussed in the public sphere. This would suggest that the attention was still somewhat limited in the end.[156]

[155] Backsheider 1986, 96.
[156] However, to base the statement about the interest of "ordinary Englishmen" on periodicals, seems factually slightly dangerous, due to the limited elitist public sphere of the time.

Yet, how did this change in the case of the warfare on trade in the Baltic Sea in the mid-1710s, when Britain became more involved in the north? This is discussed in the next chapter. Unlike the Battle of Poltava, now the focus is on occurrences more directly linked to British politics, the Swedish privateering war around 1714 and the Royal Navy convoys of 1715 and 1716. The governmental objective, seeking support for the new King George I, will be discussed in the next chapter as well.

3. The trade war of the Baltic in 1714-1716: Britain's economic interests at stake

The theme of this chapter is to inspect how information about war events in the Baltic Sea was communicated in *The Gazette* in 1714-1716. The focus is not on Russian-Swedish or Danish-Swedish battles, instead, the selected themes are Swedish privateering and the Baltic expeditions of the Royal Navy sent in 1715-1716. Even while these expeditions ultimately were not really meaningful in a military sense, they were controversial, as it could have been perceived as if that George I used the British Royal Navy in order to support his Hanoverian anti-Swedish politics. The fleets, however, mainly served the British merchants who had themselves requested support as their trade was damaged by the Swedish privateers especially around 1714.[157]

3.1 *The Gazette* before and after the Whig dominance of 1715

The changes occurring in the Crown's paper in this era must be considered before starting the actual analysis of the theme. The image presented here is delivered from the research tradition. The information of this chapter is further reconsidered in this chapter as well as in the final chapter of the work.

The elections of 1710 and 1713 were a success for the Tories in the Parliament, having an influence also on the Crown's *Gazette*. In general, this suited the Queen as well, as she relied often more on moderate Tories than on Whigs or radical Tories.[158] Harley was appointed as the Lord Treasurer. The Crown's paper was left under the supervision of Henry St John, the

[157] Aldridge 2009, 63; Hoppit 2002, 399-400.
[158] Hoppit 2002, 278-312.

Secretary of the Northern Departments and after 1713 the Secretary of the Southern Departments. Some of the previous staff, mainly Swift, continued to work with the paper, but Handover noted that after 1710, *The Gazette* was in general *"left to clerks"*[159]. St John was an eager producer of propaganda and focused on the press more in general than in detail. For example, a new taxation policy, the so-called Stamp Duty, mostly of St John's design, was introduced in 1712 as a measure to control the entire British press.[160]

Editors were selected based on political views that fitted the new ministry. Too Whig-minded personnel were no longer recruited. Whig Tonson lost his work in 1711 and a new printer Benjamin Tooke replaced him, indicating how even the mechanical task of the printer was influenced by the political changes. The gazetteership moved to William King, who had journalistic experience. He quitted in July 1712. Swift soon found another gazetteer for the paper, Charles Ford. However, Ford's motivation was not the best possible as he did not value this task very much, even accordingly to his own words.[161]

During Ford's gazetteership, not much changed in *The Gazette*. The Stamp Duty affected the Crown's paper, as well, but in the end, it had no dramatic impact on *The Gazette*.[162] The paper was, however, partially because of this measure, again published just twice a week from 1712 and the goal during Steele's time, to produce three issues a week, was thus abandoned. Notable in this time was the decrease of certain types of newspaper material like news about shipping.[163] This was caused by an increase of royal proclamations and praises for the Monarch. *The Gazette,* while it stayed clear of direct comments on a general level, visibly developed into a more pronounced piece of propaganda in consequence of this change. Content like foreign news remained very important, but now the proclamations occupied more space.[164]

The Political situation changed quite drastically in late 1714 when Queen Anne died. The Whigs soon gained the dominance and the Whig support ensured that the crown passed into the hands of George I, making the King and Whigs long-lasting political allies.[165] The Whigs now controlled *The Gazette* and Whig Samuel Buckley, known for his Whig supporting

[159] Handover 1965, 43.
[160] For details about the effect of the Stamp Duty in 1712 see Black 1985, 13-16.
[161] Handover 1965, 43-44.
[162] Black 1985 13-16; Handover 1965, 43-51.
[163] This does not mean that for example the Baltic expedition of the Royal Navy were not followed.
[164] Handover 1965, 43-51.
[165] More about the politics see Hoppit 2002, 383-417.

newspaper *Courant*, replaced Ford. Jacob Tonson, who had been printing the paper in Steele's time, began printing the paper's issues again in 1714. Even under Buckley's leadership, who was known for his practical approach and translation skills, not much changed as the paper's official line was still to keep it clear of direct commentary, while similarly keeping the paper supportive for the Crown with content like the proclamations. Buckley deliberately wanted to encourage the readers to reflect upon the information themselves. However, accordingly to some observers this resulted into a laconic style compared to the more commenting private press of the time. The first issues produced by Buckley appeared in late September 1714. Being more than 40 years old, Buckley gained a lifetime right to work as the gazetteer of the paper in 1717, and this secured position meant less motivation for him to improve the paper.[166]

Under the Whig dominance, the paper tried to keep up with the private press, but it succeeded only partially. The King tried to encourage diplomats and other contacts to supply news to the Crown's paper because especially the supply of foreign news was seen as inadequate. Despite these efforts, the paper suffered a decline. Especially after 1717, often only about 2,000 copies[167] were printed per issue, mainly for officials of the state. Illustratively, the Buckley's private *Courant*, which was now a government-friendly newspaper as well, sold a bit more than 2,000 copies. Black noted that even after the decline, *The Gazette's* circulation was "[…] *still probably far greater than the circulation of most other newspapers*."[168] It has been concluded that the paper lost significance in the late 1710s as a general news medium, even though especially for news about war and foreign news, the paper continued to be an important source. The Crown's paper still offered valuable material to the rest of the press. So, even after the decline, *The Gazette* still had its uses and readers.[169]

Handover concludes that George I, as well as his successor George II, used *The Gazette* to influence the Parliament and political opinion in favour of the Crown. Queen Anne had practised power over the parliament mostly through appointed placemen, while George I relied on influencing the electors. In view of this manipulative purpose, he found a use for the Crown's newspaper and more generally the press. In this period the paper was used even more significantly as a governmental tool within the government structure and fewer copies of the

[166] Black 1991, 93-94; Handover 1965, 47-51.
[167] Black 1991,93. wrote about 2,500 copies after 1717 while Handover 1965, 49 gave an estimate of under 2,000.
[168] Black 1991, 93.
[169] Black 1991, 93-94; Handover 1965, 47-51.

paper circulated among the rest of the elitist reading public. It should be noted, however, that when *The Gazette* lost its previous significance, the government increasingly began to use the support of private papers, as was seen also before with the case of the *Courant* newspaper. *The Gazette* continued as a governmental tool, but it was no longer the only one.[170]

The change of the paper was gradual, and it had only begun in the era that is the focus of this chapter. However, the changing role of the paper in the 1710s offers important background information when determining the paper's news coverage about the Baltic conflicts of that decade. This subchapter also offers the necessary background for chapter 4.

3.2 Swedish privateers in *The Gazette*, British trade and traders at stake in 1714?

Before discussing the reports in *The Gazette* about the British fleets sent into the Baltic, it is reasonable to investigate the news coverage of the paper before the fleets were sent out. Thus, the actions of and reports about the Swedish privateers in 1714 form the content of this subchapter.

In their attempt to cut trade connections to Danish or Russian ports, privateers of Sweden[171] began to harass British ships for the first time in 1710, but this was not a significant problem for the British until early 1714. From 1713 onwards, Charles XII encouraged his privateers by official privateering edicts what clearly had an effect. In 1713 evidently only 2 ships of British origin were seized, but in the summer of 1714, this number had risen already up to 27.[172] Moreover, besides privately equipped privateers, Swedish naval ships had attacked British traders already in 1713.[173]

The Great Northern War was indeed a hindrance to British traders, and it must be noted that the overseas trade had a significant impact on all kinds of sectors of the British society.

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[170] Handover 1965, 51.
[171] It should be noted that privateers acting in behalf of Sweden were not always even from Sweden. Especially some of the privateers raiding in the Baltic and North Seas were in fact British Jacobite exiles working for Charles XII. See: Thompson, Ralph. *1717 and the invasion that never was*. The National Archives blog. https://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/blog/1717-invasion-never/#return-note-31425-1
Date published: 02.02.2017. Access date: 4.4.2019.
[172] Aldridge 2009, 66-67.
[173] At least in 1713, a squadron Dutch and English merchant ships were attacked by Swedish warships in the Gulf of Finland. Wolke 2015. 168-179.

Especially it mattered for the same factions that the Crown tried to influence through *The Gazette*, including members of the bourgeoisie, but also state officials and other persons in lower governmental positions and naturally the Members of Parliament. Against this background, it was notable that a significant portion of the members of local governments had stakes in the overseas trade in general, as merchants or shipowners. In London, more than half of the 62 aldermen, 36, had a background in trade and 17 among them were also Members of Parliament for a time.[174] What was told to this group about matters related to the overseas trade in the Baltic and other seas was certainly significant, especially when the Crown wanted to be sure of their support. The theme was thus certainly something many of the readers cared about, because of the possible direct effects on their own economic interests.

One notable victim of the Swedish privateering was the Russian Company, the losses of which were estimated to be roughly £100,000 during the whole war.[175] This British chartered company, trading with Russia, had previously traded mostly via Archangel in the White Sea, but by the 1710s, after the Russian conquest of formerly Swedish towns such as Reval (Tallinn) and especially Riga, and after the foundation of St. Petersburg, trading in the Baltic became easier for the company. Very soon, in around 1713, it began to suffer from the actions of the Swedish privateers.[176]Already before this also other coalitions of merchants had operated in the Baltic and many merchants also traded with mainland Sweden. One smaller company, the Eastland Company, for example, traded with various Baltic towns including Swedish ports.[177] Trade with Sweden naturally suffered less from Swedish privateering because Sweden had no interest to harm this trade, unlike the trade benefitting Denmark or Russia. In general, the Baltic trade supplied Britain with important naval stores like hemp, tar, and timber which were needed to supply the Royal Navy and other clients. The trade was thus important for the Crown and for individual merchants of the bourgeoisie.[178]

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[174] According to Hoppit these numbers apply for the period 1690-1714. Hoppit 2002, 322.
[175] Unfortunately, no estimates for the specific years of this study were found. Wagner 2018, 54-55.
[176] Wagner 2018, 54-55. For more about the Russian Company, see the work of Wagner 2018.
[177] Murray 1969, 22-54; Wagner 2018, 45-47. It is worth noticing that around 1700 the Baltic Sea trade still comprised only 10 % of the British imports. In a mercantilist sense this balance was unfavourable for the British, as only 5% of the British exports went to the Baltic. This balance indicates how badly the British economy needed Baltic naval stores, even if the percentage of imports was not large per se. Kirby 1990, 233.
[178] Aldridge 2009, 66-68. The Swedish privateers were not the only ones hindering the Baltic trade. For example, the British accused Russians of dishonesty in the hemp-trade. The difficulties in trade caused shortage of hemp, and even a hemp crisis, in 1714. Aldridge 2009, 67-68.

Against this background, it is interesting that an inspection of *The Gazette* shows that these Swedish privateers did not appear often in the paper in 1714, despite their proven significance. Clear detailed reports about captures of ships that had happened in early 1714 were not included even in late 1714 issues. This indicates that the reason was not connected to the slow transfer of information. At the same time, other up to date information (in relative terms) about the Baltic Sea region was published.[179] The privateers were mentioned, but only indirectly, in most pieces of news, even though there were a few exceptions. This lack of news was possibly primarily caused by the mentioned lack of "shipping news", reported previously. However, as will be discussed later, there are other factors to consider that might explain this style of news reporting.

Some pieces of news about the captures appeared in 1714, but they remained vague about the question of whether the ships that were captured were British. For example, in the last paragraph of a longer report from Hamburg with various news, it was mentioned: "*H*[a]*mburg, July 17. N.S.* […] *Letters from Stockholm bring an Account that the Swedish Privateers had lately taken eleven Vessels in the Baltick, bound for Muscovy."*[180]

Among its many pieces of foreign news, the Crown's paper informed its readers about the international situation of the Swedish privateering rather than communicated a clearly British perspective. The paper focused on how shipping in the allied United Provinces had suffered due to the Swedish actions. Besides numerous accounts about the discussion in the Hague concerning the protection of Dutch traders in the Baltic Sea[181], the paper revealed the dissatisfaction of the Dutch and how they complained to the Swedes:

> *"Hamburgh, July 13. N. S.* […] *The Dutch Resident here, hath sent his Secretary to Monsieur Ducker at Stralsund, in pursuance of the Orders he received from the States General* [of the Dutch Republic], *his Master, to demand the Vessels which have been taken from their Subjects by the Swedish Privateers.*[…]"[182]

[179] *The London Gazette*. Issues: 5187- 5290. 2 January 1713- 28 December 1714.
[180] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5242. 14 July 1714, 1.
[181] *The London Gazette* Issue: 5218. 20 April 1714, 1-2; *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5239 3 July 1714, 2.
[182] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5240. 6 July 1714, 2.

Besides the economic suffering of the Dutch, the paper also mentioned that member states of the Holy Roman Empire, which was another British ally, were suffering monetarily due to the privateering warfare of Charles XII. It was described how the Duke of Wolfenbüttel complained to the Diet of Augsburg about the loss of four million Crowns caused by *"the War of the North"*.[183]

However, it seems unlikely that these reports about Swedish actions against traditional British allies, many of which appeared before George I came in power in the autumn of 1714, communicated any clear anti-Swedish sentiment. At least, the Swedish perspective was well explained. A piece of news relating to the Dutch trade clarified to the readers of the paper why Sweden was so keen on stopping Dutch traders reaching Russian ports. Indeed, the Dutch were supplying the Russian forces directly:

> "[The] *Hague. August 10 N. S.* […] *Monsieur Palmquist, Envoy of Sweden, hath delivered a Representation to the States General, complaining, That not-withstanding their late Prohibition, their Subjects continue to sell Ships and Warlike Provisions to the Czar*.[…]"[184]

The captures of British ships had not, at least not yet, caused any strong anti-Swedish sentiments during 1714, or at least this cannot be noticed in the papers. This confirms what Historian David D. Aldridge has concluded. He stated that there were probably no notable hostile opinions in Britain about Sweden at the time of George I's accession to the throne in August of 1714.[185] Murray has even noted that in that period the British public and the state were still most friendly towards Sweden among all the factions involved in the Great Northern War. The government and the public had then few reasons to dislike Sweden. Murray noticed that only the continuous threat to the Baltic trade gradually increased the animosity towards Sweden. To what extent this was visible in *The Gazette* during the two years following George I accession to the throne will be studied below.[186]

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[183] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5243. 17 July 1714, 1.
[184] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5248. 3 august 1714, 2. The British were also selling ships to Russia what caused friction between Sweden and Britain. Aldridge 2009, 64.
[185] Aldridge 2009, 66.
[186] For example, see Murray 1969, 21.

The lack of news about captures in 1714 seems deliberate as other material from the Baltic arrived steadily to the press. For example, the papers had detailed information about the operations of Danish, Swedish, and Russian fleets, such as a detailed account about the battle of Gangut (Hanko), between Russian and Swedish galley fleets[187]. In the summer one piece of news stoop out due to its details. It was even about the Swedish privateers. After a description about matters, such as the actions of "His Electoral Highness", who soon would become George I of Great Britain, the report from Hanover gave the following account:

> *"Hanover, July 3. N. S.* […] *We have receiv'd advice, that a Swedish Privateer had made a Descent upon the isle of Amar in Jutland, and had laid a Tax upon the Houses, carrying away four of the Principal Inhabitants as Hostages."*[188]

This news was presented without any kind of direct commentary, but the report did give an unscrupulous picture of the Swedish privateers. The reports details make the lack of news about captures of British ships even more notable. Why did a British paper tell so much about Swedish privateers when they harmed Denmark, but not when they harmed Britain? The fact that this report came from the Hanoverian court might have little significance. Hanoverians probably had no intent to criticize Sweden officially (at least not yet during the summer), because even George I himself was not confident about the future scale of the direct Hanoverian-Swedish hostilities before the closing months of 1714.[189] This example of a detailed piece of Baltic news reveals that the paper probably censored news about British captures, as it clearly had detailed intelligence from the Baltic Area. The information had surely arrived, yet it was not published.

The relative lack of material concerning the captures was especially notable as the paper included material of interest to the part of the reading public that participated in the overseas trade. *The Gazette* regularly included news about meeting and transactions of the East India

[187] See for example the papers: *The London Gazette*: Issue: 5255. 28 August 1714,1-2; *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5256. 31 August 1714, 1.
[188] *The London Gazette*. 5238. 29 June 1714,1. Taking hostages and all forms of raiding or extortion were common tactics even in the regulated Swedish army so this may well be an accurate account. See for example: Englund 2018, 37-39.
[189] Aldridge 2009, 70.

Company, the South Sea Company[190] and the Royal African Company.[191] Interestingly, no similar material about other chartered companies such as the Levant Company and, especially interestingly, the Russian Company can be found. However, this might be merely due to the fact that these companies had little need to inform the readers because as state-regulated companies they were differently managed than the other chartered companies.[192] At least, the fact that royal proclamations about the Baltic Sea trade were presented shows that the Baltic Sea merchants were among the desired reading public of the paper.[193] Therefore it is interesting how little information was shared about the Swedish privateers.

If a reader had not heard about the ship captures that happened in 1714 from other sources, he would have been completely unaware of the role and economic significance that these captures posed to British traders or the kingdom as a whole. However, as the nature of the public sphere was so social, as has been mentioned, and since it did not rely on one paper alone or even merely on the written word, it seems more than reasonable to guess that most Britons visiting the coffee houses did hear of the captures, possibly directly from the merchant themselves. So, even if these pieces of news were left out from the Crown's paper, they were certainly known to the reading public. Most likely *The Gazette* left it over to the other press and other sources to publish, for instance, lists or details of the captured ships. However, this was most likely not the complete answer, as the paper did include a notable amount of details about related themes. This question, however, can only be answered definitively with a broader study of the press of the era and thus not in this study. *The Gazette's* case can still be inspected more closely.

Another similar and rather mundane reason that explains why the news about captures of English ships by the Swedish privateers received so little attention might be that Queen Anne's passing and the accession of George I to the throne required so much attention that these issues replaced some of the foreign news. Indeed, in Ford's era, the decrease of shipping news was caused by a growing number of governmental announcements, like vows given to the monarch

[190] The South Sea Company was a special case, as it was a broader governmental investment scheme involving not only the crown or elite classes, but many more ordinary citizens. The announcements are something to be expected as this was the time leading to the first stock market bubble, the South Sea Bubble of 1720. Hoppit 2002, 334-336.
[191] *The London Gazette*. Issues: 5187- 5290. 2 January 1713- 28 December 1714.
[192] In this period the Russian Company and the Levant Company were not stock-based companies and thus did not have to informs shareholders reading the paper, unlike chartered companies that were stock-based such as the East Indian Company, the Royal African Company, or the South Sea Company. Wagner 2018, 5-9.
[193] See for example: *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5219. 24 April 1714, 1.

(which were also the most direct pieces of propaganda that the paper offered). Naturally, the amount of this content multiplied in late 1714 when the Whigs took over, when the subjects gave their vows to their new monarch, and when the new monarch gave his first public proclamations as the king.[194] Arguably all this, however, does not fully explain the lack of news about the captures. Foreign news did not disappear and some information about the captures would have arrived before the Queen's death, at the same time when the paper published other detailed up to date news from the Baltic.

Because the matters of the British captures were strangely absent even in sections outside foreign news (no advertisements or proclamations from the Naval Office seemed to have mentioned the captures during that year)[195] *The Gazette* gave a clear picture that the war in the Baltic, even the privateering aspect of it, did not directly involve Britain. Apparently, the paper clearly did not state the facts, even while they might have been relevant to the readers. There were just some vague mentions of Swedish privateers capturing ships, but the notable amount of British ships was never properly mentioned.

Some additional reasons can be observed that explain this better than some of the practical reasons presented above. Possibly this caution was another sign of the wish for a Baltic status quo of Queen Anne's reign. Sweden's leading position had been reduced sufficiently already, so it was not wise to steer Britain into direct hostilities with Sweden by inciting a hateful public opinion. This was probably also an illustration of the cautious use of the press as a tool of foreign politics, already observed in the previous chapter. In 1714 Britain continued still a policy of officially neutrality and even Hanover declared official war on Sweden only in October 1715, despite preceding dealings and cooperation with Sweden's enemies.[196] It was clearly considered better by the Crown when the subjects of the Swedish king were not accused without proof in the official Crown's paper that was circulating in European centres and not only in British coffee houses.

Most likely Ford, who was still the gazetteer until late September 1714, followed similar advice regarding the Baltic news, as he did with matters of more domestic relevance. Handover noted

[194] Handover 1965, 47. For example most of the issue: *The London Gazette*. Issue 5282. 30 November 1714 was filled with supporting proclamations for the King.
[195] *The London Gazette*. Issues: 5187- 5290. 2 January 1713- 28 December 1714.
[196] Oakley 1993, 114.

that Ford was very careful and mentioned, for instance how Ford acted concerning Queen Anne's illness. Ford preferred to tell rather too little than too much because he feared that saying more might be improper.[197] In this case, Ford or his associates had not received enough confirmation to publish more details. Possibly one reason for the lack of news about the captures of British ships was the lack of confirmation relating this matter as well. It was not wise to claim something that was not confirmed and confirmation about foreign matters took time to arrive. Captures of ships were not uncommon in the early 18th century. However, captures could be politically dangerous, also for domestic reasons, and it was certainly better not to give room to false news in the Crown's paper. While in 1709 it was considered not to be a problem that the news about the distant war was somewhat inaccurate, this time more serious issues were at stake. The loss of ships and revenue was something that could cause unrest among traders. Without confirmation, it was not wise to incite hostile feelings towards Sweden (or perhaps also towards the Crown's still passive Baltic policy) in the paper controlled by the Crown. The private press could allow itself to incite such feelings, such feelings, but the least the Crown could do was to keep this kind of content outside its official newspaper.[198]

In the end, the economic interests of the British traders and readers can be perceived only very slightly in the paper. Instead, the paper clearly preferred to be careful because of political reasons. This would suggest that the Crown's paper under the Tories, which changed hands to the Whigs only in autumn of 1714, was not keen to cause any anti-Swedish sentiment merely because of the ship captures that had happened in early 1714. George I received the crown only

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[197] Handover 1965, 47. Handover quoted a piece of correspondence between Ford and Jonathan Swift. The collection of Swift's correspondence which Handover used was one of the few primary sources available concerning the actions of the editorial staff.

[198] Ship captures caused different scandals in the early 18th century. For example, in 1704-1705 (before the 1707 union) Scotts seized an English ship, the *Worchester*, as a retribution for English capture of one Scottish trade vessel. The crew of the *Worchester* was accused of piracy in the Indian Ocean against the Company of Scotland. The event caused a wide ranging anti-English uproar in Scotland, fueled by the private press. A few crew members of the English ship were executed by the Scottish Admiralty Court after a scandalous trial, largely to please the Scottish crowds. See the article of Bowie 2015. Indeed, a single ship capture caused even a war in the first half of the 18th century. Just a few decades later, in the 1730s, a war between Spain and Britain received a spark from an incident in which an English ship (captained by Robert Jenkins) was captured in the West Indies by the Spanish coast guard in 1731. Jenkins claimed to the House of Commons that he had lost an ear during the violent capture. The following uproar in Britain became a political tool for the opposition in the Parliament and this resulted in the so-called War of Jenkins' Ear (called as such afterwards) between Britain and Spain in 1739. However, the conflict soon merged into the War of the Austrian Succession in 1740. See: *War of Jenkins' Ear*. Encyclopædia Britannica. https://www.britannica.com/event/War-of-Jenkins-Ear. Date Published: 01.02.2014. Access date: 08.02.2019. While this later example shows the political importance of such actions, the political scene was certainly slightly different in the 1730s in comparison to the 1710s and Spanish-British relations were coloured by previous hostilities that had a long tradition, unlike Swedish-British hostilities.

in the autumn and most likely his Hanoverian interests did not yet colour much of the paper's news, even in late 1714 as certainly the period of the crown's passing to the new monarch was full of other distractions.

The next Baltic sailing season in 1715 was anticipated by the traders certainly with the experiences of the year 1714 in mind, but the paper gave little reason to think that the Baltic trade needed protection. The first proper Royal Navy Baltic fleet[199] in 1715, received thus only some justification based on *The Gazette's* news of 1714. The fleet of 1715 had not been decided yet in 1714.[200] Yet, it could be observed that the presentation of international news served to justify the actions in some sense, even while this might not have been what the paper's staff intended. By presenting the broad international situation, the paper provided tools to justify possible future actions of the Crown, in case Britain was forced to follow the international currents in politics and, like the Dutch, to protect their Baltic trade. The 1715 fleet was justified because the paper had told to the readers how the Dutch, a friendly trading nation, had deemed it necessary to send a fleet there already in 1714 because of the Swedish privateers. However, the wish for trade protection came partially from the merchants themselves, who knew well what the situation was, and this was clearly based on information from other sources than the Crown's paper. Thus, the paper had only a minor role in giving reasons and justifications for future trade protection in 1714.

So, even though in 1714 the matters were now much more connected to the British kingdom, the approach to the news in the paper was still largely similar as in 1709 in the sense that the news was presented from a distant viewpoint. This offers a possible contrast to the developments of the Whig controlled *The Gazette* in 1715, as will be observed next. While the focus of the following section is on the fleets of Admiral Sir John Norris, the presentation of Swedish privateers and navy is studied in the same context, also because these themes are inseparable. In addition, this approach is used to see if the presentation of the Swedes changed when the governmental objectives of the Crown became more Hanoverian and anti-Swedish in

[199] There had been a smaller trade protection expedition already in 1714 under Lord Archibald Hamilton, but this escort consisted of only three ships and it never really went into the Baltic Sea. Hamilton turned homeward at the Danish Straits when a Swedish fleet appeared, because he had been told not to engage the Swedes directly. The expedition remained neutral and did some repairs in Swedish ports before returning home. This British naval presence in Swedish ports caused some confusion. Having lost the protection of Hamilton's fleet so early on, one of the trade ships was captured by Swedes as it was heading for St. Petersburg. Grainger 2014, 80-81; Aldridge 2009, 64-67.
[200] Aldridge 2009, 63-110.

1715. In 1714, the propaganda nature of the paper became truly apparent only in its proclamations, unrelated to the theme studied here. To study the content about the British fleets in 1715-1716 is the subject of the next subchapter.

3.3 The Baltic fleets of 1715-1716 in *The Gazette*

To understand the governmental interest affecting the Crown's paper in 1715-1716, the role of the Baltic fleets deserves some independent attention. Following a few months of governmental planning, Sir John Norris departed on the 18th of May 1715, for the Baltic with a convoy of 20 heavily armed navy ships with over 5,500 men. The task of the fleet was to protect more than 300 merchant ships on their route to the eastern Baltic. The Convoy was a joint Anglo-Dutch venture, as Norris was joined by a considerable Dutch squadron and many trade ships which the convoy protected were in fact Dutch. Affected by winds and other conditions, most of the fleet was back in England by the 18th of October, while remaining part of the ships arrived only at the end of December. The expedition was peaceful as no Swedish ship even attempted to harass the convoy.[201]

The fleet's main purpose was to protect trade, and it was George I's answer to the demands of traders who wanted their trade secured by the Royal Navy convoy. However, Norris's more secret role was to help Danish, Saxon, and Prussian operations in the southern Baltic, in line with the Hanoverian king's hopes. These operations included especially the sieges of Swedish Rügen and Stralsund, where the allies gained supremacy in November and December. Norris was expected to offer passive assistance to the allies. The mere presence of his force was meant to make the Swedes reconsider their actions. For example, there were plans that Norris's fleet might stop the Swedish fleet from leaving the port of Karlskrona. Norris was ordered not to fire at the Swedes unless they fired at him first. In the end, Norris sent 8 heavily armed ships from his naval convoy to reinforce the Danes at Rügen. This meant that in the end, the fleet did help the northern allies, even while this was more limited kind of support than the countries had hoped to receive from George I. During the whole expedition, Norris was balancing between these two interests, to offer trade protection to British merchants and to support the Hanoverian allies. He was in the middle of serious political cross-currents. Different updates

[201] For details about the expeditions of 1715 and 1716 see Aldridge 2009, 63-161 and Grainger 2014, 72-93.

to his instructions were sent to Norris as his convoy progressed.[202] Before his departure back home with the convoy, Norris had personal diplomatic discussions with the Czar as his guest at Reval. Even though Aldridge wrote that in 1715 British politics had yet merely *"Hanoverian tincture"*[203] this was very clearly perceivable in the case of Norris's fleet. [204]

The 1716 expedition was essentially a repetition of the 1715 fleet, but with even more highlighted Hanoverian influence.[205] This time the fleet cooperated more directly with the anti-Swedish coalition also during its official convoy duty. One reason was that it was becoming increasingly clear that Sweden had started to plan some form of cooperation with the Jacobites.[206] The fleet sailed into the eastern Baltic, part of the time together with the Dano-Russian fleet. The 1716 fleet of Norris received instructions to directly protect the Danes if they were attacked by Swedes, and in general, the atmosphere was notably more hostile towards Sweden. The Dutch for their part were mostly interested purely in the trade protection, so their objectives were different from those of Norris. During the cruise, Norris himself regarded some of the favours asked by the officers of the anti-Swedish coalition as too extreme, so he reminded them that he had to respond to the British Parliament which would not have tolerated too obvious favours from the British Royal Navy to the anti-Swedish coalition. In 1716 new operations were designed by the anti-Swedish Coalition. A Dano-Russian invasion of Skåne in southern Sweden was planned, which Norris was ordered to support, at least diplomatically, if not also, for example, by considering more direct actions against the Swedes at sea.[207] However, various arguments caused friction in the alliance between Russia and the other allies during the year. Especially Denmark, but Hanover as well, had doubts towards the Russians.[208] In result, by the end of the year, the invasion plans were postponed and then ultimately abandoned. Norris's expedition was delayed because he waited for the plans

[202] A notable instructor from George I's ministry was Northern Secretary Townshend. Aldridge 2009, 63-161.
[203] Aldridge 2009, 71.
[204] Aldridge 2009, 63-110; Grainger 2014, 72-89; Kirby 1990, 309; Palmer 2005, 139-141.
[205] While 1716 was a time of notable political changes, the fleet of 1716 has been more neglected by historians than the fleet of 1715. See for example what was noted in: Aldridge 2009, 63.
[206] Grainger 2014, 82.
[207] Another military operation of that year with some significance was the Swedish invasion of Norway that, due to Dano-Norwegian resistance, failed to materialise properly already before the summer. The invasion partially distracted the planned Skåne invasion. The Norwegian invasion was notable as Charles XII wanted to show to his Jacobite contacts his commitment to the Jacobite cause (the Norwegian coast was just next to Scotland and capture of Norway would have allowed the Swedes to send help to the Jacobites in Britain). Kirby 1990, 309.
[208] For example, the Czar began to consider separate Swedish peace offerings against the wishes of Denmark. The Russian presence in Mecklenburg caused alarms in Hanover, because they shared a border. Oakley 1993, 114-115.

regarding the invasion to settle, but for example, the weather had an effect in this delay. He returned to Britain on the 7th of December. The delay almost prevented some of the merchantmen's timely return due to the stormy winter weather of November, which was usually avoided by returning earlier from the Baltic. [209]

Because 1715 was not only the time of the first Royal Navy Baltic fleet, but also the year of a major Jacobite rebellion in Britain, the special focus in this chapter is to see how the Crown's paper was used to counter any damaging opinions about the monarch or about the Baltic fleet which was sent that year and the year after that. The period 1715-1716 is interesting when researching *The Gazette* as a tool of propaganda. During this period Swedish and British relations were still rather stable, except for a small conflict of interest between the Hanoverian warfare of George I against Sweden and Britain's typical status quo approach. Naturally, also the Swedish privateering war influenced British politics as well, but this conflict of interest remained. Only later in late 1716 and especially early 1717 the matter changed considerably when it became evident that Sweden plotted with the Jacobites (what is discussed in the final chapter of this work). However, according to some observers in 1715 and 1716, the presence of the indeed mostly defensive Royal Navy's convoy in the Baltic seemed to serve Hanover and the anti-Swedish coalition dubiously well. The Royal Navy's role in the Great Northern War, in which Britain was not actually involved, troubled even some of George I's leading ministers, who were more eager to reduce the fleets' political nature and focus merely on the trade protection. Here the use of the Crown's paper to counter such fears among the group of elitist readers is a special focus. This potential of the expeditions to raise controversy makes them particularly interesting. [210] Aldridge stated about the difficult governmental situation of the fleet:

> *"The navy's presence there* [in the Baltic] *in 1715 and 1716 had this clear purpose* [to secure merchants that were trading there]*; but the extent to which that purpose was open to subversion by George's electoral interests concerned sectors of British political opinion, largely ignorant thought these remained of the pressures exerted on Hanover by Denmark and Prussia.* […] [211]

[209] Aldridge 2009, 111-161; Grainger 2014, 90-93; Oakley 1993, 114-116.
[210] Hoppit mentions Townshed in this context as the most notable minister. Hoppit 2002, 399-400. See the discussion of "Whig Split" in the Chapter 4.
[211] Aldridge 2009, 63.

The main motivation for the convoy appeared when the Swedes intensified their privateering war. The new privateering regulations were given by Charles XII early in 1715. These new rules gave privateers even more freedom to capture ships which they considered to be trading with the enemy nations. In Britain, this caused concern and the new edict was described as shamelessly piratical by leading political figures such as Northern Secretary Townshend.[212]

The Gazette, which had been edited by Whig Buckley since the autumn of 1714, continued in the same style of informing its readers about the international situation and about the new edict. A report from the Hague was published, telling how the merchants of Amsterdam were "*very much alarmed"* by the *"rigorous"* privateering edict and demanded their trade to be protected by the Dutch Navy.[213]

The paper also mentioned how even some of the Swedes were not at all happy with the new privateering regulations, as the merchants feared that the edict might cause damage also to the Swedish trade. The same piece of news also informed how the threat of privateers in the north was most likely only growing:

> *"Stockholm, March 19.* […] *The Me*[r]*chants of this City find*[i]*ng that the Ordinance published by his Swedish Majesty at Stralsund on the 8th of February, as a Rule to be observed by the Privateers, and by the Court of Admiralty where the Cases Of Prizes are to be adjudged, is like to prove as ruinous to the Trade of Sweden as to that of other Nations, have resolved to send some of their Body as a Deputation to Stralsund, to represent the Dangers and Losses to which they themselves are exposed by these new Regulations. In the mean time Commissions for Privateering are much demanded here, so that 'tis believed there will go from this Place at least thirty Privateers, and from Gottenberg about twenty, besides a great many from Stralsund and Wismar. Letters from Gottenberg give an Account, that Admiral Lewenhaupt has seized and confiscated there two Dutch Ships, because they were not furnished with such Documents as the King's late Ordinance directs* […]"[214]

[212] Aldridge 2009, 71.
[213] *The London Gazette*, Issue: 5312. 15 March 1714, 1.
[214] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5317. 2 April 1715, 1.

But, alongside this kind of news reports in the paper, finally, it was properly shown to the readers that the privateering war was affecting Britain, at least to some extent. Yet, fewer details were included than might be expected and the mentions of captures were often included only indirectly. This was the case when it was told how a Danish ship captured a Swedish privateer and an English vessel, which had been taken by the Swedish ship before.[215] This piece of news appears to be a very rare example of news informing about the individual British privateer victims. However, in another piece of news form the summer, a British envoy of Sweden, Robert Jackson, demanded satisfaction from the Royal Chancery of Charles XII for the losses caused on British trade by Sweden. Jackson was "[…] *demanding Satisfaction for the Damage suffered by his Majesty's Subjects, by the taking of their Ships and Goods by the Swedish Privateers.* […]" [216] The situation did not change completely, however. Again, the paper gave little comments. Yet, at least in the following quote from 1716, concern was more clearly present than it had been in the reports of 1714: "[...] *In the mean while the Swedes are Masters in the Baltick, and we have Advice that they have newly taken 15 Ships on the Coast- of Gotland, belonging to several Nations."*[217]

Thus, even in 1715 and 1716, the privateering war was still presented predominantly from many different perspectives as before in a moderate tone, but gradually the British point of view was communicated more clearly alongside the broader international situation. Apparently, the privateering war became a more important issue due to the new edict and increasing fears for the privateers were perceptible in this changed point of view. On the other hand, possibly the proper reactions towards the captures that happened already in 1714, came only from 1715 onwards. Also, possibly, the Crown's more anti-Swedish bias encouraged gazetteer Buckley and his Whig staff to practise less censorship towards matters not flattering Sweden in the eyes of the British readers. After all, it has been concluded before that in this time the most loyal Whigs wanted to use the Swedish privateering to cause a rupture in the relations between Britain and Sweden.[218] In this, the reading public, both in Britain and abroad, could have been used by the paper which was controlled by the Whigs.

[215] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5323. 19 April 1715, 1.
[216] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5351. 31 July 1715, 1.
[217] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5454. 24 July 1716, 1.
[218] Murray 1969, 103.

George I's Hanoverian anti-Swedish interests seemed to be less contradictory with his role as British King when it was communicated how Sweden caused damage to Britain. Yet, even while *The Gazette* described how the privateers caused the friendly Dutch to be *"alarmed"* and how the British *"suffered"*, more direct commentary was not given in the paper. This suggests some dedication to the ideals of relative neutrality of earlier times. All in all, the style did not change strikingly in 1715-1716 from the Tory-controlled paper of 1714.[219] The idea of Buckley had been to stimulate the readers to form their own views.[220] Therefore, probably he thought it was enough, or perhaps more effective, to share information and facts that could instigate anti-Swedish feelings and let the public come to this conclusion by themselves, rather than communicate open enemy images and exaggerate the Swedish menace.

So, even if the anti-Swedish objective of the Whigs was present, it was still only visible in a very mildly form when the paper told the news of the Swedish privateers. To understand the role of *The Gazette* as a Crown's supporter, perhaps the reports about the actual fleets offer a more pronounced view because they focus on the British governmental action.

Apparently there was no news coverage of the preparation of the Baltic fleet by the British in early 1715.[221] On the other hand, there was much news content about the Dutch preparations for their Baltic squadron, including the fleet's timetable and the discussion in the Hague about the financing of it.[222] Based on the papers one would have received an impression that the Dutch were more involved in the Baltic Sea expeditions of that year. However, Aldridge noted in his detailed study that while both naval powers were preparing their fleets, the British were more eager whereas the Dutch were doing this *"rather more hesitantly that the British".*[223] The reader of the Crown's paper would have gained the opposite view. Yet, it must be noted, that the readers could hear news about domestic matters via other routes and the papers of this time relied on this. The lack of news about domestic affairs was intentional. However, in this case, it is hard to tell whether this was caused by a special form of censorship of this event or just the general focus on foreign news in the early modern press. The actual news coverage about

[219] See chapter 3.2.
[220] Handover 1965, 47-51.
[221] *The London Gazette*. Issues: 5291-5328. 1 January 1714 –10 May 1715.
[222] See for example: *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5304. 15 February 1714, 1; *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5321. 16 April 1715, 1; *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5325. 30 April 1715, 2.
[223] Aldridge 2009, 72.

the fleet's actions at sea, as discussed below, offers a better understanding because here the difference between what is known to have happened and the paper's reports is more evident.

The first direct mention of Norris's fleet was rather clear, and it appeared shortly after the fleet set sail. Even a few days earlier, it had been mentioned that the Dutch fleet will join with *"The British Squadron"*,[224] so the readers certainly knew about this fleet by this time, despite the previously mentioned lack of news coverage in the spring of 1715:

> *"Whitehall, May 20. Sir John Norris, Admiral of the Blue, with a Squadron of 20 Men of War, and a Fleet of Merchant Ships under his Convoy, sailed from the Nore[225] the 18th Instant in the Morning for the Baltick, to protect the Trade of his Majesty's Subjects in that Sea."*[226]

In future papers the movements of the British and the Dutch fleets of 1715 received constant attention each time when the news was received from the Baltic towns, often including reports even if the fleet had not moved. Certainly, in a hazardous time for sea travel, even information that nothing had happened to the fleet was considered news. Thus, this makes absolute sense. Most of the reports arrived during the summer[227], but their number decreased, together with most foreign news later that year.[228] The decrease of news coverage can be explained due to the uneasiness caused by the Jacobite rebellion that began escalating from August.[229] The decrease of the news about Norris and his fleet in the autumn was probably not caused by any kind of censorship about the fleet per se, as the effect was clear in any foreign intelligence. The Jacobite rebellion incited the paper to focus more on domestic news. Clearly, the fleet itself was not a secret and its movements were followed truthfully, but what was censored were rather some details about the fleet and the motivation behind it. This will be seen later in this chapter.[230]

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[224] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5329. 14 May 1715, 1.
[225] Refers to a place at Thames.
[226] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5330. 17 May 1715, 1.
[227] In June, for example, Norris's fleet was reported about in four of the eight issues. *The London Gazette*. Issues: 5335-5342. 4 June 1715 – 28 June 1715.
[228] *The London Gazette*. Issues: 5329-5395. 14 May 1715- 31 December 1715.
[229] Hoppit 2002, 392-397.
[230] *The London Gazette*. Issues: 5329-5395. 14 May 1715- 31 December 1715.

Like seen already in the previous quote, the paper stated very clearly the obvious need to protect British traders in the Baltic Sea, and this Crown's interest was communicated with notable clarity, certainly also because this was pleasing the reading public. The previous quote about the fleet told, indeed explicitly, what was the role of the fleet: to protect the merchantmen. As one might have expected from a paper supporting the Crown, nothing about the fleet's political significance, its function to pressure Sweden, not only in privateering war against the British and the Dutch but also in the Great Northern War in general, was presented. This appears to be a trend in much of the news coverage for the period 1715-1716, as will be seen below.

Similarly, when the fleet was at sea, the paper told nothing more than pure facts of the fleet's whereabouts or just very vague information. A "council of war" held on board of the Admiral's ship the *Cumberland* was mentioned but the account was not detailed.[231] Actually, it was mentioned that the council of war had only one subject, the fleet's proceeding to the eastern Baltic, while, in reality, the fleet's anti-Swedish role was certainly discussed as well. The report about the council of war, which probably came from an observer on land in Copenhagen, not directly from Norris or his officers[232], stated that after the fleet had passed the Danish Straits in good weather:

> *"Copenhagen. June 18.* […] *a Council was held on board the British Admiral's Ship the Cumberland, to concern measures for proceeding further up into the Baltick, and for convoying the Trade* [fleet] *into their several Ports*. […]"[233]

Letters sent from the fleet to the paper were also rather vague about similar matters. Norris's visit to the Czar at Reval (Tallinn) in late July and early August was given some attention in a published letter, coming from the fleet, which gave a few details about the meeting.[234] These details, however, remained noticeably superficial. Instead of offering information on what the meeting was about, or which themes were discussed, it was told that the Czar received the same number of *"Salutes which the Fleet has always paid to Princes"*.[235] In addition, it was only

[231] *The London Gazette*. Issue:5339. 18 June 1715, 1.
[232] Naturally this may explain some of the obscurity, but the information must have first arrived from the fleet because otherwise no one could have known about the meeting of the officers.
[233] *The London Gazette*. Issue:5339. 18 June 1715, 1.
[234] Probably the letter was not written by Norris himself, because he was addressed in the third person. *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5359. 27 August 1715, 1.
[235] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5359. 27 August 1715, 1.

mentioned that the Czar and Norris visited each other's ships. Nothing was revealed about the diplomatic significance of the meeting or about the talks between the Czar and Norris.

Recent research has shown that this meeting was significant as the first contact between Norris and the Czar, who was an important ally of Hanover in 1715. Thus, the meeting was an important step in the view of possible future cooperation with the Russians. This was Norris's Hanoverian objective. From a British perspective, the meeting offered a chance to see what the unknown Russian Navy was like as the Czar presented his ships proudly to Norris. The consciousness about the full power of the Russian naval forces started to cause slight discomfort in London, especially due to Russians' dominant hold on the trade of naval stores of the Baltic.[236] *The Gazette* reveals nothing about any of these specific developments or Norris's motivations.

The letters sent from the fleet to the paper were certainly different than what Norris or other officers wrote to their superiors.[237] Even while the paper did publish information about the meeting with the Czar, much information was undoubtedly intentionally left out for the public readership, probably already by Norris and his officers before the material was presented to the press. This was a clear case of censorship, of intentional control of information that might have revealed too much about Norris's dual role. By giving the meeting only slight attention, the paper presented that the meeting between a British admiral and the Russian Czar was mostly a ceremonial courtesy call, not part of diplomacy that benefitted the King's Hanoverian objectives possibly more than those of the British Kingdom.[238]

Norris sent the 8 warships to help the Danes at Rügen and this was perhaps the most interesting occurrence of the Baltic expedition of 1715. This shows the effect of the King's Hanoverian interests in Norris's actions. While these ships, in the end, did not have much military significance, the symbolism of the action was remarkable. Norris had received the orders for this action discreetly via a Hanoverian officer, which was not a coincidence, but these orders

[236] Aldridge 2009, 66-68, 178; Murray, 1969, 1-21; Palmer 2005, 140-141. British experience of trading with the Russians had been worse than with the Swedes. Russians were seen categorically as deceitful people by many in Britain. See the discussion of the British public image of northern and eastern Europeans in Murray, 1969, 1-21 and footnotes on page 58.
[237] It appears that the case was similar than with the James Jeffreye's correspondence about Poltava seen before (see page 36).
[238] Aldridge 2009, 105-106; Palmer 2005, 140-141.

had been approved and signed also by Northern Secretary Townshend. The orders arrived about a month late to Norris on the 2nd of September. The command of the 8 ships was given to Captain Edward Hopson.[239]

The Gazette did not mention this incident, and this was clearly another example of the paper being censored to protect the King's authority and the Crown's interests in controlling the public sphere. The incident did not appear in any of the letters from the fleet from the autumn or among foreign intelligence from Baltic ports. Detailed reports from Baltic ports concerning the actions at Rügen, including details of the individual ships of the Danish fleet, did not include any clear word about the subject.[240] Indeed, one report from Hamburg at the turn of October told firstly about Swedish and Danish fleets at Rügen, then about Norris's convoy (without mentioning the Hopson's detachment), thirdly about the arrival of a Persian ambassador, and finally about the Czar's new treaty with Denmark, without making connections between these individual facts. The only connection presented was that these were the most recent news reports from that port.[241] The fleet of 1715 was never clearly associated with the war around Rügen. The only connection made in the paper was the obvious fact that these were both news topics from the Baltic Sea region.

Norris and his officer, if not also the paper's editors, certainly omitted the facts of these 8 ships in the letters published in *The Gazette* and instead, they were focused only on practical realities of the fleet. This was especially evident in the most relevant letter dated in September. This letter was clearly from Norris himself, in which he did not mention that the fleet had now 8 ships less since its departure from the Finnish Gulf in August. Instead, Norris shared facts about the sailing difficulties that he probably faced indeed.[242] He clearly wanted to assure readers of the paper that the fleet would sail home as soon as possible with the trade ships. Telling about a detachment of ships which was left behind to assist the Danes would have been contradictory to what he and the paper clearly wanted to imply. It could not be revealed how the fleet had multiple roles in the Baltic, and this clearly affected the content of the paper. A promise about

[239] Aldridge 2009, 100-110.
[240] See for example: *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5366. 24 September 1715, 1; *The London Gazette*. Issue: Issue: 5372. 11 October 1715, 1; *The London Gazette*. Issue 5373. 15 October 1715, 1; *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5380. 8 November 1715, 3-4; *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5384. 11 November 1715, 1; *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5394. 27 December 1715, 1.
[241] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5366. 24 September 1715, 1.
[242] Aldridge 2009, 107-108.

a timely return of the "whole fleet" turned out to be a direct lie.[243] The letter was also not very long:

> *"From on Board His Majesty's Ship the Cumberland at Elsinore* [Helsingør, Denmark] *Sept. 17. 0. S. The Wind coming to the South the 14th, we sailed with the Fleet from this Place in hopes to get down the Cattegat. The 15th the Wind veering to the W. and N. W. with strong Gales and ill Weather we were obliged to anchor near the Island of Anout. The 16th the N. W. Wind blew so hard that we were forced to go from thence, and the same Night we came again to anchor at this Place. We shall lose no Time in putting to Sea again with the whole Fleet, to return home as soon as we have a favourable Opportunity of Wind and Weather."*[244]

The fact that these 8 ships were separated from the rest of the fleet was mentioned in the paper only in late December in a letter, probably written by Hopson, from the squadron's flagship *Burford*. The letter only stated that these ships were soon arriving from the Baltic.[245] Clearly these ships were mentioned now because at that time the rest of Norris's squadron had been already in England for about two months. Nothing was said about the reason why these 8 ships had been returning so much later than the main fleet. It seems as if these ships only had to be mentioned because someone back in England might have started to wonder where the rest of Norris's fleet had disappeared. *The Gazette* admitted that a part of the squadron was late. Yet, the paper did not reveal or openly explain that this happened because these ships had been doing services on behalf of George I's private Hanoverian obligations in the anti-Swedish coalition.[246]

The news reporting did not change noticeably during the 1716 expedition. The fleet's movements were regularly followed in news reports and letters from Norris or his officers were published. Again, the Dutch fleet was mentioned in the spring and little was told about the

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[243] Norris gave Hopson orders to join with his ships by the 10th of October, if possible, so he might have attempted to get the fleet together before departure back home. Thus, his goal might have been indeed to return with the "whole fleet". This, however, did not happen as the Rügen actions were delayed and Norris had to leave Hopson behind. Aldridge 2009, 107.
[244] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5368. 27 September, 2.
[245] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5395. 31 December 1715, 1.
[246] Aldridge 2009, 100-110.

British preparations. Once the fleets were at sea, their actions received attention, even when they remained in the same place for weeks.[247] In general, the idea was given of a repetition of what had happened in 1715 and it was even literally presented as such when the paper informed the readers about the Dutch fleet: *"The Instructions to their commanding Officers will, we hear, be the same as they were last Year."*[248] Interestingly enough, like it was stated before, Norris's orders were not only different than the instructions of the Dutch but they were also different than his instructions of 1715. However, because the main purpose of the fleet was still trade protection, this image of a continuum by giving nearly identical reports as in 1715 was only slightly misleading the readers.

What remained lacking in the news of *The Gazette* in 1716 was the more pronounced political, even Hanoverian, motivation of the fleet. Of course, readers might have realised this as the paper did not hide the fact that Norris's fleet joined the Danes and Russians. Yet, notably, little was revealed about the military significance of this cooperation and what was planned among the officers of the fleets:

> *"Copenhagen, Aug, 11. The Danish and Russian Men of War will be ready to put to Sea the beginning of 'next Week. The Czar in Person will command the Fleet. The British and Dutch Squadrons and Merchant-Ships will sail in Company with this Fleet up the Baltick."*[249]

The paper truthfully told that this cooperation existed, but it was clearly deliberately made to seem obscure and superficial because nothing of the reasons behind this cooperation was explained properly. A letter from the fleet[250] was published including some vague information, after detailed reports about weather and sailing conditions: *"From on Board the Cumberland at Bornholm, Aug. 20.* […] *On the 15th Sir John Norris had a Conference with the Danish Admiral Count Guldenlew."*[251] No description of the motivation or the subject of this conference was presented, just like it had been the case with the council of war in the previous year and Norris's meeting with the Czar.

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[247] *The London Gazette*. Issues: 5396-5499. 3 January 1716 - 27 December 1716.
[248] For example: *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5429. 28 April 1716, 1.
[249] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5460. 14 August 1716, 2.
[250] Again, the letter addressed Norris in the third person and was possible written by another officer in the fleet.
[251] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5466. 4 September 1716, 1.

The cooperation with the anti-Swedish coalition was always mentioned in close connection with the trade ships. Even if the cooperation with the Danes received some fleeting attention, the political nature of it remained obscure. In the autumn, the paper always emphasized that the purpose of the fleet was to protect the trade. There were still reports about more military-focused operations, but these were always represented as countering possible Swedish aggression that the trade ships could face. For example, it was told how the British and Danes, while they were waiting for the trade ships near the Danish Straits, held a council, and both send vessels to gather intelligence of the Swedish fleet at Bornholm and Karlskrona. The report made a clear distinction that both factions sent their own vessels to perform this task.[252]

Just like it had been the case with the Rügen operation in 1715, all pieces of news about the expected invasion of Skåne in the summer and autumn of 1716 were presented as separate matters from the fleet.[253] The following example shows that the speculation (that proved to be inaccurate) about the Skåne invasion and the engagement of the British fleet remained separate in the collection of various news reports from Hamburg.

> *"Hambourg, Aug. 11. Letters from Copenhagen advise, that on the 3d Instant the Lord Polwarth, Envoy Extraordinary of His Britannick Majesty, had a private Audience of the King of Denmark. The Preparations for the Descent on Schonen were continued with the greatest Application; the Czar had been in one of his Frigates to view the Coast of that Province, and 'twas reckoned that by the 20th Instant the Troops would all be ready for that Expedition. The Danish and Russian Fleets were preparing to put to Sea, as were also the British and Dutch Squadrons to proceed with the Merchant Ships under their Convoy into the Baltick."*[254]

Indeed, the invasion and the British fleet were mentioned in the same paragraph. But, because of the writing style of the paper, thematically very different pieces of news were often presented in the same report, so this was in itself not notable. Mentioning the British squadron's trade

[252] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5481. 27 October 1716, 1.
[253] For example, reports about Skåne invasion or the related military situation: *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5457. 4 August 1716, 2; *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5481. 27 October 1716, 1; *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5498. 25 December 1716, 1. The final piece of news was about the cancellation of the invasion, which was by this time public information, even in Stockholm where the report came from.
[254] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5457. 4 August 1716, 2.

ships in this connection was clearly done also precisely to highlight the different roles given to the fleets of Denmark, Russia, and Britain.

When the fleet was returning unusually late, around November and December of 1716, nothing was told in the paper's reports and letters in order to explain this. The reports about the fleet remained factual, describing only the fleet's location and the weather conditions, just like it had been the case in 1715. Again, nothing was explained about the actual reasons behind the actions. The fleet's delay was of course partly caused by the political role of the fleet, as Norris had to wait for the resolution of the Skåne invasion before the fleet could return to England. This was a very sensible use of censorship from the Crown's perspective as certainly many merchants active in the public sphere would not have liked to hear that their trade was endangered by winter storms because the escort ships did services to the King's private foreign objectives.[255]

3.4 *The Gazette* and George I, a king with two seats and two obligations

The Great Northern War and Britain's growing involvement in it were connected to the position of George I and in the cases of the fleets of 1715 and 1716, the war was firmly connected to his governmental obligations on behalf of Hanover and his electoral interests. The Crown's interest on behalf of the British Kingdom became prevalent in the Royal Navy's role as the protector of British merchants, but the Crown was also influenced by the limited political aspirations of Hanover, which in this case was securing German territory, once held by Sweden. This could be done only in cooperation with Sweden's enemies, yet this cooperation was not fully compatible with traditionally more pro-Swedish British politics. King George I had limited possibilities to help the anti-Swedish coalition, but the Royal Navy fleets were used to support these policies despite the slight conflict of interests.

The Gazette presented the obligations and interests of the Crown towards Britain and her citizens. At the same time, the Hanoverian interests, which the King tried to serve simultaneously through the fleets, were toned down in the paper and not properly explained or

[255] See: *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5494. 11 December 1716, 1; *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5496. 18 December 1716, 1; *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5497. 22 December 1716, 1; *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5498. 25 December 1716, 2.

even presented to the reading public. The Crown's Hanoverian interests also explained why the effect of a Status quo politics in the Baltic was milder in George I's time. This had an impact on the content of the Crown's paper as well, visible in the paper's slightly less pronounced neutral approach. It has already been noted in previous research how even the basic fact that George I had any interest in the Swedish German provinces had been kept practically a secret for the British people until 1715.[256] Clearly, the full effect of this matter on politics was kept hidden even after this year, also in *The Gazette* that tried to continue this silence by censorship.[257]

The reading public was served more limitedly than in 1709 because other governmental interests intervened in this information transfer. The King needed all support, and when it was feared that the impression could be raised that he cared more for Hanover than for Britain, the paper's staff supported the view that the King indeed cared for his British subjects and, at least mostly, only for them. The fact that he had motivations also for his native Hanover, interests which were even conflicting with Britain's typical status quo policies in the Baltic, was not presented in order to counter any conflicting ideas of the reading public, in a time when even the King's own ministers were not always agreeing with his policy. In short, only such information was presented to the reading public that pleased them, whereas anything that seemed too complicated and contradictory to the interests of British readers was simply left out.

As the papers at this time were also read abroad, of which the editors were certainly aware, the Crown's paper also assured to the rest of Europe that the fleets were only defensive and not directly acting for Hanover's benefit. The paper presented similar denial regarding George I's interests as the British ministers practised in personal diplomacy. For example, the ministers denied the Hanoverian influence of the fleets to the Dutch ambassadors, who nevertheless believed otherwise for a good reason.[258] *The Gazette* practised the same kind of denial in the Crown's paper towards reading classes of British citizens and foreign powers.

[256] Murray 1969, 96-98.
[257] About the complicated relationship of the Hanoverian monarchy and British politics, see for example Thompson 2006, 5-9.
[258] Murray 1969, 103-104.

It should be noted, moreover, that despite the Whig's wish to cause anti-Swedish sentiments based on the trade disagreements around this time, the Crown's paper did not introduce an anti-Swedish writing style and instead, it remained rather moderate when discussing Swedish privateers around 1715-1716. This was visible when multiple points of views towards the privateering war were given and when the Swedish captures were given only limited attention. Thus, Murray's notion of the changing situation in the war and the emergence of propaganda appears not to apply to *The Gazette* significantly, at least not in 1715-1716, because here it was observed that the "petty grievances" of trade were used very limitedly to support the King's policy or to change the opinions of the readers:

> "[Around the time of George I's accession] *On the surface it appeared that the British, all things being weighted, favoured Sweden over the other belligerents in the North. Yet, there was a loophole whereby petty British grievances towards Sweden might be enlarged especially if effective propaganda were employed* [by the king and his government]. *The opening wedge for exploitation was trade, for English commercial sentiments were at times directly opposed to British political opinions."*[259]

So, in 1715-1716 the paper served the King in suppressing opposition in the public sphere and the private press by concealing tools to criticize the Crown, rather than by evoking a strong propagandistic war mentality towards Sweden. The style of reporting in the Poltava reports of 1709, in which all possible intelligence and rumours about an event were shared to serve the readership, had to be abandoned in 1715-1716 because, in this case, the information could be used directly to criticise the monarch. As was stated before, in British political culture and the public sphere, where only limited public discussion over domestic issues was permitted, the matters related to the kingdom's foreign policy were regularly used to criticise the government.[260] Since the information presented in *The Gazette* was often copied by other newspapers, this censorship was not insignificant. Ideologically the private press was independent of *The Gazette* (as will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter), but by censoring one news source, *The Gazette*, the information that circulated in the public sphere was kept in control, at least as much as possible.

[259] Murray 1969, 21.
[260] Black 1991, 235. See page 52 (Chapter 2.4).

However, it must be noted that in the public sphere and the private press various opinions must have circulated regarding the fleets, despite the message given by the Crown's paper. The most upper-level politicians, ministers for sure, were at least familiar with the double role of the fleets and certainly, some parts of the lower political sectors must have thought about this as a possibility. In 1716, a Swedish propaganda pamphlet printed in England, which was critical of the Baltic policy of George I, was disguised as *"An English Merchant's Remarks*".[261] Despite the fact that this was obvious Swedish propaganda, the way in which this viewpoint was disguised, indicates the various opinions that must have existed, because of the critical nature of the public sphere that was based on sharing information and critical discussion. Indeed, the pamphlet became widely circulated, even outside Britain, so it must have been read by members of the public sphere and as such it must have caused discussion and affected some opinions.[262] This topic concerning the critical discussions in the private press is further discussed in the next chapter because this matter becomes clearer when discussing the year 1717. This discussion in the private press, which is not the direct question of this study, requires wider research on the topic of the private press to be properly concluded. Here it can be concluded, however, that *The Gazette* was acting as a piece of propaganda to control the public sphere of readers who did not automatically share the Crown's opinions, but who thought independently.

The 1715 Jacobite Rising should be mentioned as one reason affecting the Crown's paper in this time, even while it remained rather separate from the Great Northern War. It certainly encouraged the paper's Whig staff to support the Crown even more diligently than in other times, and this applies also to the fleets of 1715 and 1716. Obviously in the time of riots and the escalating Jacobite rising in the autumn of 1715,[263] it was certainly important for the Crown to have the support of factions such as merchants and ship owners. Despite the defeat of the 1715 rebellion in early 1716, the risk of a new rebellion remained imminent and the need for support was stronger than ever, even in 1716. [264] This further explains the noticed censorship.

[261] Murray 1969, 285-286. See chapters 4.1 and 4.3.
[262] The writing caused critical discussion and resulted in pro-governmental writings that aimed to question the Swedish pamphlet. This kind of counter-measure shows that such writings had at least some effect. Murray 1945, 15.
[263] For more analysis of the Jacobite rising of 1715 see Hoppit 2002, 392-397.
[264] British governmental forces had victories over the Jacobite troops of John Erskine Earl of Mar at Preston and Sheriffmuir in the autumn of 1715. The Jacobite rebellion ended in February 1716 with the escape of the Pretender James Stuart from British soil. Hoppit 2002, 392-397.

When trying to encourage a feeling of general satisfaction among its subjects in this difficult period of rebellion, the Crown shared information that benefitted it. The trade protecting fleets and reports about their safe passage were good tools for gaining support, at least from those involved in the Baltic trade. The fact that the monarch had protected their trade interests was certainly something that assured their loyalty. Obviously, the merchants that had demanded the naval presence were satisfied when they were able to read regular reports of the steady advance of their trade ships. Thus, one notable part of the reading public with political significance, the overseas merchants, was served and not only deceived with the news reports.

Besides the inspected reports, which have been the focus of this chapter, it is reasonable to inspect some of the proclamations published in the Crown's paper as well. When the fleet of Norris was operating in the Baltic in the autumn of 1715, among many other loyalty proclamations to the King *The Gazette* presented one especially interesting proclamation. Notable in this context was the explicit addressing of merchants trading with "*Hambourgh", "East Country"* and *"Russia"*. They were those in the reading public who were served by the Baltic naval fleets. The proclamation was very clear:

> *"To the KING's most Excellent Majesty.*
> *The humble Address of the Turk*[e]*y, Russia, East Country, Hambourgh, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, Portugal, West -India, Virginia Merchants, and other Traders, of the City of London*
> […]
> *His Majesty's most gracious Answer.*
> *I Thank you for this Loyal Address, and for the just Indignation you express against the Traitorous Designs and Rebellion now on foot to subvert the Religion and Liberties of my People: I shall do all I can to encourage and improve Trade, which is so essential to the Strength and Riches of the Nation."*[265]

This shows how this role of the paper was twofold. At first, the Crown aimed to please the reading public in order to receive support through the paper. Secondly, it also wanted to show

[265] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5372. 11 October 1715, 1.

how the reading public supported the Crown and this was communicated to the readers in a propagandistic fashion.

The press that supported the Crown, of which *The Gazette* was still a pivotal part, was something on which the somewhat distant monarch and his supporting ministers could rely. The King was often literally distant, as he often spent months away from his kingdom in his native Hanover. Despite the continuous threat of rebellion, he went there already in the summer of 1716.[266] He could rest at ease while relying on the supporting Whig government, which kept the press under its supervision and which countered possible Jacobitical threats and other hostile ideals to the royal authority.

The anti-Jacobite usage of the paper is certainly much more evident in the next chapter. From the press' perspective especially the "Gyllenborg scandal" offers a unique view to the use of *The Gazette* as a tool of power. Many of the political pieces that were present already around 1715-1716 were revealed properly only in 1717. The next and final chapter will thus shed light to much of the same underlying themes, which are discussed in more detail. Especially the reading public and the private press is given more attention in the next chapter.

4. Swedish Jacobite plots of 1717: George I's throne in danger due to the Baltic politics?

4.1 Swedish Jacobite contacts circa 1715-1721 and the road to the governmental "Gyllenborg Scandal"

The turns of war on land and at sea forced the stubborn Charles XII and his administration to look for unusual allies by 1716. The King was not willing to consider peace considering that his kingdom had lost all its German possessions, Livonia, Ingria, and Finland. Only mainland Sweden remained in Charles XII's hands. Sweden especially needed new naval fleets in the Baltic against the Danes and the Russians. However, financing these fleets became highly problematic for the tiring kingdom. None of the western powers, not even Sweden's traditional political friend France, were willing to help Sweden.[267] Charles XII's plan, ongoing since 1709,

[266] Hoppit 2002, 397.
[267] For more of the theme see: Coroban 2013, 69-70; Murray 1969, 285-317.

to convince the Ottoman Empire to support him against the Russians had permanently failed and the King and his administration began to look for other alternatives for help and/or finances.[268]

One such possible faction was formed by the British rebels, the Jacobites, under their 'king with no kingdom', the so-called Old Pretender, James Francis Edward Stuart. After the crushing of the 1715-1716 Jacobite rising, the exiled Jacobites were not completely defeated and they were always willing to attempt a new rebellion and revolution in Britain with any form of alliances. Sweden and the Jacobites shared a common enemy, King George I of Britain and Elector of Hanover. This was the main reason why the firmly protestant Lutheran Swedes began to consider supporting the Catholic Old Pretender to the British throne. Soon, Swedish envoys started to test the possibilities for such Swedish-Jacobite cooperation.[269]

Already when Charles XII started his Norwegian campaign in February 1716, he was associated with the Jacobites and his escapades were followed closely in Britain with some worry. Already during the 1715 rebellion, the Swedes had sent some supply ships to aid the Jacobite forces of the Earl of Mar in Scotland.[270] It was no secret that some Swedes in the administration favoured the rebellious cause against George I and this also explains the relatively strong anti-Swedish role of the fleet of Admiral Norris in 1716, as discussed previously. However, it was during the late months of 1716 and especially the turn of 1717 that the British government started to worry about the Crown's security.[271]

The closer contacts between the Jacobites and the Swedish higher political circles started in the summer of 1716, when the Swedish envoy Georg Heinrich von Görtz[272] tried to secure finances for Sweden in The Hague, by contacting the Dutch and the French, yet to no avail. He began to test the interest of the Jacobites through his various contacts. Carl Gyllenborg, the Swedish

[268] Coroban 2013, 63-79.
[269] Coroban 2013, 63-79. It should be noted also that the Jacobite idea of a strong monarchy was something fitting with the Swedish ideals of absolutism at the time.
[270] Coroban 2013, 55.
[271] Schuchard 2012, 104; Murray 1969, 285-349.
[272] During Charles XII's exile after Poltava and until his return in 1714, "Grand Vizier Görtz" was de facto the leader of the Swedish government, yet not without some controversy. Due to his role in fundraising in a difficult situation Görtz gained the nickname of the "Philosopher's Stone", which reveals how difficult it was for the Swedes to find monetary solutions. After Charles XII died in 1718, the increased hatred towards absolutism in Sweden turned towards Görtz who was executed. Coroban 2013, 69-72; Schuchard 2012, 104.

envoy in London, started to get in contacts with Jacobite-minded British politicians, notably some of the Tory MPs, who were unsatisfied about the alliance of the Hanoverian King and the Whigs and who now supported the Old Pretender. Meanwhile, the Swedish envoy in Paris, Count Sparre, took contacts with the Jacobite exiles. Also, Carl Gyllenborg's brother Gustavus Gyllenborg also became involved in the diplomatic scheming.[273]

The outcome of this first round of secret negotiations was quite sketchy (and probably it would have remained so). It was planned that against a considerable sum of money from the Old Pretender's coffers[274] the Swedes would support the Jacobite invasion[275] of Britain from Scotland by a considerable military force.[276] The new possible supporter was welcome for the Jacobites also because around this time the French started to cease their traditional support for the Old Pretender, what became clear in the establishment of the Triple Alliance in January 1717 between Britain, The United Provinces and France. [277]

Part of Carl Gyllenborg's efforts to raise the Jacobite mindset and anti-Hanoverian feeling in Britain consisted of making contacts to the British private press. In the end, he did not manage to realise this properly since even the Tory-minded *Post Boy* refused to print his material that was intended to criticize George I's Baltic policy, out of fears for governmental reprisal. Nevertheless, some anti-Hanoverian material came to the surface (which is discussed further below). With the new material, the previously more ambiguous character of the Baltic policy became now more visible and relevant to the reading classes of the kingdom. [278]

The Swedish diplomatic network was kept intact by correspondence and it was by nature doomed to be revealed sooner or later because in this time mail was easily intercepted. After about a year of spying and interpreting mail, the full scale of this plotting was revealed to the British government by January 1717. Even while ideas of diplomatic immunity existed during

[273] Coroban 2013, 63-79; Murray 1945, 15; Murray 1969, 284-351.
[274] One generous Jacobite, James Butler, Duke of Ormonde, was willing to offer 60,000 pounds to Sweden. Coroban 2013, 74.
[275] It should be noted that the idea of a military cooperation between Sweden and the Jacobites, many of whom were Scots, was not as improbable as it might appear at first, because the two countries had been connected before, for example, by many Scottish mercenaries that had served in the Swedish army already in the 17th century. A Scottish nobleman, General Hugo J. Hamilton served Charles XII's army and he was captured at Poltava in 1709. Murray 1969, 204. Hamilton's capture was correctly mentioned in *The Gazette* in 1709. See the discussion of the prisoners in page 36 (chapter 2.3).
[276] The promise was circa 10,000 Swedish troops. For example, see Hoppit 2002, 400.
[277] Coroban 2013, 63-79; Murray 1969, 284-351.
[278] Black 1991, 154.

this time, this was perceived by the court as such an important matter that George I issued a warrant of arrest of Carl Gyllenborg, who was immediately apprehended on the 29th of January. Orders were sent to the Dutch on the continent to apprehend Görtz and Gustavus Gyllenborg, who were soon afterwards arrested. The envoys had been able to destroy parts of the evidence when they were arrested. However, the government had received enough discriminating pieces of the correspondence. The evidence was sufficiently abundant to allow the British government to publish: *Letters which passed between Count Gyllenborg, Barons Goertz, Sparre, and Others, relating to raising a Rebellion in his Majesty's Dominion to be Supported by a Force from Sweden (1717).* The Swedes received news about Carl Gyllenborg's arrest only in late February and immediately the British envoy in Sweden, Robert Jackson, was arrested as a countermeasure by the Swedes. [279]

In the British government panic about another Jacobite rising ensued. It also became to be increasingly clear to the Crown and political circles that the Swedish plot was directly caused by George I's Baltic policies and his use of the British Royal Navy for Hanover's benefit in the Baltic Sea in 1715-1716. The year of 1717, especially during its early months, was a time of heated discussion about the Swedish plot, and when the parliament met on the 20th of February 1717, the theme was dominantly present. The news about the Swedish plans did not only cause support for the King against foreign aggression but the news also led to much criticism towards George I's policy, especially once another Baltic fleet was planned. The discussion became so heated that even the Whig party, who was the most supportive of all factions to the King, became divided and some Whigs joined the opposition of the Tories in the so-called "Whig Split", a division that lasted for a couple of years.[280] After a difficult debate, another Baltic fleet was sent for trade protection.[281] If anything, the crisis limited George I's power instead of increasing it.[282]

[279] Coroban 2013, 60-83; Murray 1949, 15-16; Murray 1969, 318-349.
[280] Most notably ministers Townshend and Walpole left the ministry, while Stanhope and Sunderland remained, so the new government, Stanhope–Sunderland ministry, was formed. See more: Hoppit 2002, 400-401. It could certainly be claimed that crises like the "Whig Split" created opportunities for the future governmental changes, especially for the rise of Walpole as the country's first proper "Prime Minister" in the following decade. Thus, the crisis, along with other, perhaps more important, political developments, played a part in the formation of the strong role of the Prime Minister in Britain. However, this matter can only be speculated in here and the real effects of the crisis might deserve a study of its own.
[281] Admiral Norris was given a different and more purely diplomatic mission this time: to meet the Czar in the Netherlands. The fleet's command was given to Admiral George Byng. Aldridge 2009, 63, 162-169.
[282] Hoppit 2002, 399-403.

Jacobite plots took curious turns around this time and Sweden was not the only faction in the Northern Europe that the British had to fear. Russia, which had already shown interest in a separate peace with Sweden, against the wishes of the western members of the anti-Swedish coalition, proposed to help the Jacobites and possibly even join Sweden forming a Swedish-Russian-Jacobite alliance.[283] It seemed, staggeringly, that the Jacobite cause seemed to unite the sworn enemies Russia and Sweden in their peace proposals. However, the plans were never really carried out and much of the information that circulated was based on rumours. In any case, these plans incited an anti-Russian feeling in George I's administration and the country as a whole. This was actually the first proper anti-Russian sentiment ever expressed in British history.[284]

The possibility of Swedish cooperation with the Jacobites remained alive until late 1718 when Charles XII launched another military expedition towards Norway.[285] However, he was shot dead by an unknown marksman when he was inspecting the siege of a Danish fort of the Norwegian town of Fredrikshald (Halden) in November.[286] The tables turned, and the Swedish-Jacobite cooperation gradually ended. In this stage, Russia remained more threatening for Britain and George I because Sweden was willing to negotiate about a peace agreement and indeed ceded their former territories to Hanover in the treaties of Stockholm (1719) and Frederiksborg (1720). Britain adopted an anti-Russian or pro-Swedish policy, what continued until Sweden and Russia agreed about peace terms at Nystad (Uusikaupunki) in 1721, finally ending the Great Northern War. Nevertheless, Swedish-British relations remained worsened for half a century because of the Gyllenborg scandal and subsequent anti-Swedish attitudes expressed in Britain. The Jacobites tried to search for new support and in 1719 they tried a new Jacobite rising in Scotland, this time with help from Spain, but it was easily put down in

[283] The Russian support for the Old Pretender in the early 18th century can be explained by various reasons, one of them being the Scottish Jacobite refugees in Czar Peter the Great's western minded administration, who were pushing their agenda in the country's foreign policy, another being the Czar's wish to possibly marry his daughter with the Old Pretender and establish dynastic links with Britain. Coroban 2013, 80-82.
[284] Coroban 2013, 80-82; Murray 1969, 318-449.
[285] This choice reveals the impact of Denmark, and also of Hanover and Britain, on Sweden's war plans. Sweden invaded Norway instead of regions occupied by Russia in the east, like Livonia, Ingria or Finland. Certainly the lack of Swedish naval superiority in the Baltic dictated this too, however.
[286] The Swedish Jacobite cooperation did not end in 1718. Instead it was expressed in various lesser known and more anecdotical enterprises up to around 1720, including Swedish plans to establish an East India Company with a base in Madagascar. These plans were never carried out in practice, which is why they were soon forgotten by many. Sweden ultimately created an East India Company, but without the input from the Jacobites. See for example Steuart 1926 and Murray 1969, 290.

Britain. Another, final and the most famous, Jacobite rising attempt occurred in 1745, once more with French support.[287]

In this chapter, the events of 1717 and the role of *The Gazette* as a governmental tool are investigated further, especially since it has been formerly shown that:

> "*It must now be accepted history that Gyllenborg's arrest, and the British government's strenuous inflation of his correspondence* […] *was a part, albeit the most dramatic one, of the government's efforts to restore unity to its ranks* […]"[288]

The way *The Gazette* functioned in this context is especially interesting. The focus is on the use of the Crown's paper for propaganda. The role of *The Gazette* among other period newspapers or propaganda publications of the time is given attention as well because this was a time of a well-known press controversy that has been studied previously. Certainly, in this phase, the Great Northern War in a somewhat unique way was part of the history of British political affairs.

4.2 *The Gazette,* the "Gyllenborg scandal", and the propaganda of early 1717

The first time that the Swedish Jacobite plot appeared in the Crown's paper was a small piece of news coming from Whitehall about the Gyllenborg's arrest on the back-page of an issue. It was placed in the news section and not as a proclamation. It was a very clear and straightforward report and it appeared almost immediately after Gylleborg was arrested on the 29th of January.[289]

[287] Coroban 2013, 83-85; Thompson 2006, 74; Young 2004, 465-467; Wolf 1962, 95-96.
[288] Aldridge 2009, 166.
[289] Coroban 2013, 76.

> *"Whitehall, Feb. 1. His Majesty having had certain Information that Count Gyllemberg, Envoy of the King of Sweden, has been carrying on treasonable Practices against His Majesty and His Government, has thought it necessary for preserving the Peace and Quiet of His Dominions, to order him to be secured."*[290]

In the following issues of the paper, the arrests of the other Swedish envoys received attention as well. Besides the report about the arrest of Gyllenborg, there appeared a lengthy detailed description of the arrest of Görtz and his associates in the Netherlands. The report, which covered a quarter of the first page and a third of the second page, described in detail various matters about the arrest, such as the difficulties experienced by the Dutch when searching for the Swedes and how a box of Görtz's letters was found during his arrest. The length of the report shows the great interest in the topic, even while many of the lengthy and detailed parts had to be left out in this presentation:

> *"*[The] *Hague. Feb. 16. On the 15th Mr. Leathes, his Britannick Majesty's Resident here, received His Majesty's Orders to desire the Regents of this State to consent to the Siezing of Baron Gortz (with his two Secretaries M. Stambke and M.Gustavus Gyllenborg) who had for some Time been concerned in carrying on a Correspondence and concerting Measured with the British Rebels in France, and with several Persons in England by means of Count Gyllenborg, for raising a Rebellion in his Majesty's Dominions, to be supported by a foreign Force.* [...] *Upon Mr. Leathes Application the Council of the States of Holland met, and passed a Resolution on the 19th for Siezing the said Baron and his Secretaries* […] *On this Occasion, all those of the Regency who were applied to, entered readily into the Reasonableness of complying with His Britannick Majesty's Demands ; and gave all the Assistance and Dispatch, that is consistent with the known Forms of proceeding in this Country."*[291]

The reports of the arrests of Gyllenborg and Görzt were very factual, relatively neutral, and accurate, despite the paper's mild use of the pro-Crown language, for example in the end when it was said how it was *"reasonable"* to comply with the King's demands. Generally, the details

[290] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5508. 29 January 1717, 2. See the discussion about chronology pages 19-20 (chapter 1.3).
[291] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5513. 16 February 1717, 1-2. See appendix 3.

of the plotting were presented very clearly and honestly, if judging on the basis of what is currently known from historical studies. The reasons behind the arrests are mentioned rather explicitly. Details of the reports match as well, and it seems that nothing was added to the received reports by the paper's staff. For example, it was told in the report from the Netherlands that Gustavus Gyllenborg was arrested in the Hague and Görtz only later when he was about to leave the country. Even details (left out in the citation) such as Görzt staying at one merchant's home during his attempt to escape from the country and the number of the discovered packets of letters being exactly twelve correspond with historical research relying on other source materials, notably private correspondence.[292] While these were rather technical details, it was remarkable that the content that was shared was based on these mere facts.

The paper presented other content related to the arrests as well in its clear attempt to share as much information as possible about the matter. Soon, the paper advertised the publication of the letters of the Swedish envoys. This benefitted the Crown, but it was clearly also a case of the self-interest of the paper's staff, as both *The Gazette* and the letters were edited and now printed by Buckley. Despite the confusion among the Whigs, it appears clear, that at this time the staff of the paper was confidently at the Crown's side, if only out of their own interest:

> *"This Day is published, in Octavo,*
> **** Letters which passed between Count Gyllenborg, the Barons Gortz, Sparre, and others; relating to the Design of raising a Rebellion in His Majesty's Dominion, to be supported by a Force from Sweden. Translated into English. Published by Authority. Printed by S. Buckley in Amen-Corner. Price 6 d."*[293]

After the arrests, the theme of Jacobite plots disappeared from the actual news reports. This happened gradually and was certainly due to some form of tiredness about the topic, at least the paper communicated how George I seemed to have had enough of the matter when discussing the diplomatic actions after the arrests:

[292] Murray 1969, 316-317, Coroban 2013, 76-77. Some tiny details were left out in the reports, like some persons who Görzt met during his escape, but this happened clearly unintentionally because these omissions do not change any of the facts that were presented.
[293] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5519. 9 March 1717, 2.

> *"*[The] *Hague, July 6.* […] *Mr. Whitworth communicated to the States General an Expedient proposed by His Britannick Majesty, in the Affair of Baron Gortz and Count Gyllenborg, which has been extreamly approved here, as an undeniable Mark of his Majesty's Inclination to have that Business finished."*[294]

The paper communicated the final resolutions of the diplomatic affairs in the autumn when the diplomats from both sides were returned.[295] The style was again rather neutral and the approach factual, for example, in a report about Jackson's release. As it was claimed in the report, Jackson was indeed released soon after Görtz[296]:

> *"*[The] *Hague, Sept, 28. […] M. de. Chateauneuf, the French Minister, has received Letters from the Count de la Marque, with Advice that Mr. Jackson*[297] *has been set at Liberty, on Count Gyllenborg's Arrival at Gottenbourg ; but having desired to stay some Time at Stockholm to settle his private Affairs, it has been granted him."*[298]

Even though the shared information was without a doubt interesting for the reading public, the arrests were obviously communicated in the first place to support the King. Sharing such information benefitted the Crown and this explains why so much material was presented related to Britain's domestic affairs (despite the participation of foreign powers, a Jacobite rebellion would have been very clearly a domestic theme). The plotting of the Swedish envoys and the Jacobites was a fact that could be used to justify the arrests. By revealing this, the Crown received support from those who did not support the Jacobites and encouraged them to rally under the banner of the King. For the actual Jacobites, such pieces of news were certainly embarrassing as the plans had been intended to stay secret. It was also useful for the Crown to highlight all possible failures of Jacobite plots and show that the Crown knew about these hostile plans. Such news reports about a notable and successful governmental intervention were thus clearly published to discourage the Jacobite plotters and erode their confidence.

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[294] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5551 29 June 1717, 2.
[295] Murray 1945, 15; Murray 1969, 347.
[296] Murray 1949, 15-16.
[297] News about Jackson's arrest was published in *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5537. 11 May 1717, 2.
[298] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5574. 17 September 1717, 1.

Moreover, by presenting how foreign powers plotted to meddle in British politics with the Jacobites, this was something that could be used to cause xenophobic fear and make even British Jacobite supporters feel as if they were not benefitting their own country, but rather alien foreign powers. This was clearly communicated to make those prone to adopting Jacobite ideas feel that their attitude was less patriotic. This matter was made even more visible with other content of the paper, which is discussed below.

Indeed, the theme of the arrests was not limited to the news reports. It returned in many of the proclamations given to or by the King in the spring of 1717. When discussing the paper's role in propaganda, one cannot just investigate the news reports. For the first time, matters related to the Great Northern War were sufficiently close to British interests in order to receive considerable attention in the royal proclamations. Previously, only matters like the Baltic plague epidemics had appeared a few times a year in proclamations about trade.[299]

Shortly after the first news appeared, a speech of George I to the parliament was printed as a proclamation. In his speech the King highlighted the improved state of his kingdom, mentioning the favourable impact of the peace of Utrecht to the British trade and the fresh alliance treaty with the United Provinces and France, and that in consequence of the end of the French support for the Jacobites, the Pretender was banished beyond the Alps. At the end of his speech, the King stated that despite his merciful attitude towards the rebels:

> "[…] *but such is the Obstinate and Inveterate Rancour of a Faction amongst Us, that it hath again Prompted them to Animate and Stir up Foreign Powers to Disturb the Peace of their Native Country, they will choose rather to make Britain a Scene of Blood and Confusion, and to Venture even the putting this Kingdom under a Foreign Toke, than give over their Darling Design of Imposing a Popish Pretender."*[300]

Perhaps the most notable pieces of propaganda in *The Gazette* came from loyalty proclamations of clergymen, who showed their support for George I. Such pieces of text were certainly dramatic in their use of language compared to the news reports.

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[299] See page 52 (Chapter 2.4).

[300] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5514. 19 February 1717,1. This speech was not dated, but it appears to be one presented in the Parliament's session on 20th day of February. Note the date section in pages 19-20 (chapter 1.3).

> *"This Day the Lord Archbishop, with the Bishops, Prolocutor, and Clergy of the Province of Canterbury presented the following Address to His Majesty*.
>
> […] *It is with unspeakable Grief that we bear of a new Design, formed by a restless and implacable Party among us, against your Majesty's Person and Government, and to subvert both the Religion and Liberties of our Country* […] *Since not content to involve us, as before, in an intestine War, they have animated and stirred up a Foreign Power to invade your Dominions, and to ruin the flourishing Estate of their own native Country* […] *We have seen in the late Declarations of some of these Men, who nevertheless call themselves by the Name of Protestants, what we must look for should a Popist Prince ever sit upon the Throne of these Kingdoms. Whilst they allow us no better a Character than that of Schismaticks and Hereticks ; of Men cut off from the Communion of Christ's Church, and all the Hopes' of Salvation ; what can be expected from prosessed Papists, who Account no better of them (however they may flatter themselves) than they do of us; but that both they and we shall be utterly destroyed by them*.[…] *To you* [King George I] *therefore, Great Sir, under God, we flee for Succour and Support. Our Safety is bound up in yours. While you sit secure upon your Throne, the Church of England can never want a powerful and ready Defender. And therefore for our own, our Countries, and our Religions sake, we must never cease to implore the Divine Protection over you* […] *till time shall be no more."*[301]

These pieces of propaganda seem always to be presented to the British, and British Jacobites were marked as traitors whose plans to crown the Catholic pretender were qualified as direct hostilities towards British religion and liberties. The Swedes (and possibly also the Russians, when "foreign powers" were mentioned in plural) were often presented just as secondary evil, acting for the Jacobites' benefit and not vice versa. For example, the two previous proclamations did not even mention Sweden, but only spoke in vague terms about "a foreign power" and "foreign powers". The Jacobite faction among the British was the main enemy, not the foreign power(s) which were possibly involved.

[301] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5515. 23 February 1717, 1.

However, when King George I proclaimed his wish to halt trade with the Swedish Kingdom, he directly accused the Swedes:

> "[…] *that upon the discovery of evil Practices, which had been carried on by certain Ministers of Sueden, to disturb the Peace and Tranquillity of this Kingdom, it might be judged necessary by us to prohibit or restrain, in part or in the whole, the Commerce between our Subjects and those of Sueden* […]"[302]

The Crown's paper no longer needed to be as careful as before because of the changed international situation. The Swedish Jacobite plot seemed serious to many in the government, and it had to be presented as such also to the reading public, both at home and abroad. Thus, Swedish ministers were publicly accused of "evil practises". It should be noted that even while writing like this, the Crown's newspaper was still rather moderate. The evil plans were connected only to "certain" Swedish ministers, and not, for example, to Charles XII or to the citizens of the Swedish kingdom. This critical, but at the same time, the moderate approach of *The Gazette* was remarkable when comparing it to the atmosphere dominating in the private press, especially that in the pro-government propaganda pamphlets of 1717.

It has been well established in previous research that the news about the possible invasion started a huge propaganda campaign in Britain. Its main purpose was to cause all possible hatred towards the King of Sweden among the British reading classes. In private journals and pamphlets, the fear of a Swedish invasion was dominantly present.[303] The fact that the theme has been well researched before, enables comparison between the private press and *The Gazette*.

The hatred was not only incited towards Charles XII and political spheres of Sweden, but even the British citizens were convinced that the Swedish invasion would be a horrible experience. The fears of Russian cooperation with Sweden was also present. A pamphlet attributed to Daniel Defoe, who was by now the most notable of all Whig propagandists, but at the same

[302] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5517. 2 March 1717, 1.
[303] For example: Schuchard 2012, 122-123; Murray 1969, 340-341.

time, only one among many other writers of similar propaganda who attempted to cause xenophobic fears among the British reading public towards the possible invaders.[304]

The expressed fear in pro-Crown propaganda was that the invasion and the Jacobites would be *"bringing in the Pretender by Goths and Vandals, Muscovites, Turks, Tartars, Italian and French Papists."*[305] Clearly fearing an invasion force of soldiers of the Swedish Empire, it was also remarked that the Jacobite plotters had not considered how barbarous their accomplices were:

> "[a] *Man who has any bowels of compassion, can think of seeing his native Country become a prey to Swedes, Laplanders, Finlanders, and the rest of the Northern Mohocks.*[306] " [307]

The Swedish King and his men, who had been depicted as kindred Protestants before, became intolerable High Church Lutherans who supported the Popish (Catholic) King and posed even a danger to British daughters. In publications such as Defoe's *What if the Swedes Should Come* or *The Plot Discovered,* it presented nothing less than that British virgins would be assaulted by the barbarous Swedish forces and that Charles XII was an insane man. The warrior King of Sweden was now depicted as a brutal tyrant and his subjects as outrightly evil. Charles XII's many quirky habits were presented negatively as proofs of his insanity.[308] Charles XII (who, in reality, personally played a rather minor role in the plans of his envoys) was presented as having forgotten protestant virtues, and instead, he was presented either as a Catholic or an irreligious atheist, of which the latter one was even more shocking for many.[309]

The loyal Whig press published fanciful literary propaganda works and the campaign spread to other kinds of publications as well. Robert Viscount Molesworth published a book about the life of Count Patkul. Count Patkul had been a Livonian nobleman, unsatisfied about the

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[304] Schuchard 2012, 122-123.
[305] Schuchard 2012, Quoted: Defoe, Daniel, *An Account of the Swedish and Jacobite Plot* (London, 1717). 21.
[306] This association was meaningful. Mohocks were a group of criminals associated with thievery and various violence in early 18th-century England. Their deeds, real or exaggerated, were subjects of much discussion in the public sphere around 1712, and many writers, including Defoe and Swift, wrote about their alleged scandalous brutality. See the work of Meshon 2011.
[307] Schuchard 2012, Quoted: Defoe, Daniel, *An Account of the Swedish and Jacobite Plot* (London, 1717), 32.
[308] For example, his poor personal hygiene habits were used to create an unfavourable impression of Charles XII who was even called as "the stockfish lunatic". Murray 1969, 340.
[309] Schuchard 2012, 122-123; Murray 1969 340-341.

Swedish rule of Livonia who had joined Sweden's enemies early in the Great Northern War. In the book, Patkul was depicted as a man sharing all the Whig's core values and as a liberator of Livonians against cruel Swedish oppression under the absolutist king. The Swedes were presented as acting similarly as the feared Pretender of propaganda who wanted to destroy the liberties of his subjects and Patkul was resisting the Swedish oppression just like, in their imagination, the Whigs resisted the tyranny of the Pretender. In works like this, it was mentioned, for example, that the taxes in the Swedish empire were inhumanly high. Such works were used to create fear of a Swedish invasion among British readers.[310]

Even with its obviously propagandistic proclamations, *The Gazette* was apparently not a part of this loyal Whig propaganda campaign in the same way as the pamphlets were, and no similar fanciful content can be found in it. Indeed, the overtone was same in the propaganda pamphlets and the royal proclamations of the paper, but apart from this, they had nothing really in common. *The Gazette* directed it propaganda mostly against British Jacobites, whereas private press allied with the Crown aimed to cause broader hostility towards any possible invasion forces and towards the person of Charles XII.

Besides the Whig point of view, the readers received other opinions in the critical public sphere. The private press that was outside governmental support tried to write about the new political situation where foreign policy became deeply intermingled into parliamentary politics. The arrest of the Swedish envoys caused an international scandal that was discussed in the private press. Already in February, the *Journal* of critical Jacobite author Nathaniel Mist highlighted the noise caused by the arrest among Londoners.[311] The news spread in such a way that by March the ministers in London were convinced that the whole world was discussing the arrests. In early February, Gyllenborg's arrest in London was already known in the Netherlands (Görzt heard about this and in reaction almost escaped) and by March news spread to Sweden as well. In a few weeks, information certainly spread to the reading elites in most European towns. [312]

Previous research has shown that in general, this attempt to discuss the matter in a critical way by the private press was largely put down, but it was too widespread for complete governmental eradication. Serious governmental actions were taken, for example, in February 1717, when

[310] Murray 1969, 338-340.
[311] On Mist as an author and his usage of "spies" and "agents" as sources, see Black 1991, 95-96.
[312] Murray 1969, 316-319.

John Morphew, a staff member of the Tory-minded *Post Boy*, was arrested because he published a text about British policies towards Sweden in which defended the rights of Gyllenborg and questioned Jackson's anti-Swedish activities that the latter had secretly planned as an envoy in Stockholm.[313] The Jacobites, who were by this period even drinking toasts to the health of Charles XII and to the Czar, were able to get some of their propaganda out in print, especially through active writers like Mist. However, other, often anonymous, authors were also eager to produce anti-Hanoverian propaganda. Pamphlets like *The Northern Crisis* and *The Gothemburg Frolick* were publication in which the Swedish plan was presented and exaggerated, not at all denied. There was, however, no blind trust among these writers as even Mist admitted in his works that the Swedes might not be able or willing to really commit themselves to the Jacobite plans.[314]

Thus, the reading public in the coffee houses was supplied with increasingly critical material to be included in their discussions. Notably, for this study, this opposition discussion showed the understanding of the facts *The Gazette* had concealed in its reports previously. Apparently, this was the reason why the Crown's paper also chose to hide this discussion. The language of the Jacobite prints and correspondence proved the understanding of details about the naval expeditions of Admiral Norris in 1715-1716 and included also speculation about the 1717 fleet. The dual role of the fleets, serving both British trade and the King, was formulated completely opposite to the image given in the Crown's paper previously. In the critical press, the fleets were now presented primarily as serving just the King and his Hanoverian anti-Swedish objectives, what made the Swedish plans seem sensible countermeasures.[315] This shows how censorship of information by *The Gazette*, as seen in the previous chapter, was only a temporary solution for the Crown in a time of increasing private press influence and a readership hungry for information. The truth was revealed, eventually, and it became distorted in anti-Hanoverian propaganda.

When inspecting the content of the Crown's paper, it seems that the anti-Hanoverian propaganda was ignored.[316] Considering how information has been clearly purposefully hidden by the paper's staff previously, it seems likely that by not mentioning or referring to the

[313] A case referred to also by Black 1991, 154.
[314] For more discussion on the topic of the Jacobite press, see Murray 1969, 340-346. About general criticism towards government through analysis of foreign policy in the 18th century, see Black 1991, 234-238.
[315] Murray 1969, 342-346.
[316] *The London Gazette*. Issues: 5500-5603. 1 January 1717- 28 December 1717.

discussion in the private press in any of its texts in 1717, *The Gazette* tried to hide and marginalize the critical parts of the private press as much as possible. It must be noted, however, that due to its structure, consisting of news reports, ads and royal or other governmental proclamations, *The Gazette* could include very little discussion material. Thus, ignoring public discussion was maybe not as remarkable as it could have been.[317] On the other hand, there was no practical reason why the paper's staff could not have dealt with the matter and made it visible in some way, so ignoring the critical discussion altogether was still a symptom of power usage, at least in some sense.

Remarkably, also the Whig Split, caused largely by the Baltic politics and the Jacobite plot cannot be seen in the content of the paper in 1717. Instead, the news and especially the proclamations gave the impression that the King was supported despite all political mishaps that might have occurred. In the summer, when the Swedish crisis seemed to be largely averted with the new Baltic fleet operating against Sweden[318], but when the divisions in the parliament were highlighted[319], *The Gazette* published a speech from the King. It showed how the division was kept hidden, but it also included clear honest praise for the parliament that had allowed, among other measures, a new Baltic fleet to be sent:

> *"My Lords and Gentlemen* […] *The Measures We have taken in this Parliament, have, by the Blessing of Almighty God, effectually Defeated all the Attempts of Our Enemies, both at Home and Abroad ; and at the Principles on which those Measures are founded, are equally conducive to the Supporting the just Rights of the Crown and the Liberties of the People, I shall always persevere in them My Self, and distinguish those who adhere to them with the same Steadiness and Resolution.* […] *As you have furnisht Me with the Means of Disappointing any Designs of a Foreign Enemy against these My Kingdoms, so I cannot but ascribe, in a great measure, the happy Prospect of Our Affairs Abroad, to that Publick,*

[317] Black 1991, 93-94.
[318] At this time Russia was feared as well, because they had been engaged in the Jacobite plots and were planning a separate peace with Sweden. Russian troops in Mecklenburg were also disturbing Hanoverians' peace of mind. The fear that Russia was to make a separate peace without Hanover was one reason for the arrests of the Swedish envoys, what added pressure towards Sweden. See for example: Murray 1949, 16; Murray 1969, 322-329.
[319] Anti-Swedish measures were accepted with minimal majority support in the spring. The Baltic fleet was sent only after a debate and even while the trade restrictions towards Sweden were agreed upon in March, they were never fully carried out in practice. This indicated the lack of motivation outside the court. Murray 1969, 346-347.

> *Spirit which has appeared in your Proceedings, and has convinced the World, that no Insinuations or Artifices can divert you from your Duty to your Sovereign, and a disinterested Regard to your Fellow Subjects."*[320]

Similarly, the loyalty proclamations presented by the loyal members of the parliament, which were printed in the paper, gave a very direct picture of a universal approval of the King's policies. One such piece from Irish *"Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses in Parliament"* even spoke about "[…] *the general Satisfaction of all your loyal Subjects* […]*"*[321] when discussing the royal actions for the national security against both domestic and foreign enemies of the kingdom. [322]

Unsurprisingly for a Crown's paper, *The Gazette* continued to praise the monarch even after the Whig split. For instance, the King was pictured as the only true protector of British freedoms and religion. In this context, the protestant interest was again a notable factor used to argue that George I's administration was not merely good for Britain, but also for the rest of Europe. Some of the proclamations published in the paper even presented the King as the best protector of the protestant interests in Europe. For example, in a King's speech from late 1717, the themes of a possible Swedish invasion and the Jacobites were clearly still affecting the political scene, because the King mentioned: *"[...] many Attempts which have been set on foot to disturb the Peace of Europe, and of these Kingdoms"*[323]. In the speech, George I asked the MPs to take the protestant interest into account as *"The eyes of all Europe are upon you"*.[324] He also implied that support for him would not only benefit the freedom and liberties of the British, but it could also encourage *"Peace and quiet of Christendom"*[325]. George I was clearly searching justification for his Hanoverian foreign policy and his governmental interests about matters outside the British kingdom (including meddling into the Great Northern War) by making a call to the feeling of protestant interest among his subjects. *The Gazette's* proclamations presented this very clearly.

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[320] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5555. 13 July 1717, 1.
[321] *The London Gazette.* Issue: 5570. 3 September 1717, 2.
[322] This example referred to the actions of the Prince of Wales, later George II. Ironically, George II himself was a part of the opposition movement of Whigs, due to disagreements with his father, George I. See for example: Hoppit 2002, 401-402. However, official proclamation pieces like this can certainly be regarded as mere support for the Crown as an institution since formally the Prince of Wales was the next Hanoverian successor of George I.
[323] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5592. 19 November 1717, 1.
[324] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5592. 19 November 1717, 1.
[325] *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5592. 19 November 1717, 1.

The reading public was served by sharing information, but this was limited to the information that benefitted the Crown. *The Gazette* told about the rebellious plans, but it did not reveal why such plans had occurred, and instead, it only communicated that the government's actions, like the arrests, were taken because of the plans. The connection between George I's Baltic policy and the "evil" Swedish plans was not revealed by the Crown's paper. Regarding the public sphere in Britain at that time, it has been argued that Habermas underestimated to what extent this freedom was curtailed by the governmental fear of Jacobite rebellions.[326] The combination of propaganda emerging from the pro-governmental private journals and pamphlets, with the use of the Crown's newspaper, *The Gazette,* for more subtle forms of propaganda, as seen in this chapter, supports this view of strong, while not always successful, attempts by the Crown to control the public sphere.

4.3 *The Gazette's* downfall?

The Gazette's content clearly supported the Crown, but it was not as an aggressive tool of propaganda as the governmental supportive private press. It offered direct propaganda by presenting proclamations condemning Jacobites and Swedish ministers and supported the Crown by sharing information that was embarrassing to the same factions in its news reports. The Crown's interest in controlling the public sphere was further taken into regard through the negligence of the attempts of a more critical discussion in the private press and by even pretending that this discussion did not exist.

While on the one hand, it clearly seems that the previous neutral tone in the news reports was maintained in the Crown's paper in order to continue the tradition of Steele's time, on the other hand, the development within the paper can be explained with more mundane and less idealistic reasons. Handover noted that during Buckley's career, in 1717, his safe position in the paper caused that the Crown's paper received less attention, as there was no pushing motivation for improvement. Handover even claimed that this caused the paper to lose much of its dedications for factuality.[327] What was observed here, however, was that the paper remained largely factual, at least still in this period, and thus, this study does not confirm this broad notion. *The Gazette*

[326] Raymond 1998, 6.
[327] Handover 1965, 50-51; *The London Gazette*. Issues: 5500-5603. 1 January 1717- 28 December 1717.

continued, in a relative sense, some of the ideal neutrality and factuality even during the loyal Whig propaganda campaign, especially in its news reports, but maybe indeed a bit less in its proclamations.

What can be observed, however, was the general decrease of the number of news reports (in total, not only about the Great Northern War) compared to other content, especially royal proclamations, so at least the general decrease of editorial interest of the news was a correct notion, in line with this observation.[328] Already the fact that *The Gazette* did not increase the amount of its content was different from the development of the whole British press, as in the 18th century the trend, noted by Black, was an increase in the amount of all forms of printed content within the papers.[329] Probably the paper's increased role as a publisher of proclamations and the decreased position of the news reports made Handover conclude that around this era *"the concern was no longer to "get the facts right" or even give facts"*[330], because, at least early in 1717, the news reports were still numerous and largely very factual as was presented before. [331]

The Gazette was losing its readers in this period and it was equally possible, if not even likely, considering how well the crisis of the paper was known even by the King at this time, that the Crown and the Whig editors had realised that the Crown's newspaper was not effective in this propaganda campaign and this also incited them to continue the previous neutral tone, apart from the proclamations published in the paper. There was no need to edit the paper for more effective propaganda than its traditional structure allowed. Instead, other printed material and private papers took over this function.

It may be that the Whigs and the Crown focused on including propaganda elsewhere because propaganda might have been more effective if it reached people who did not know that they were reading a Crown's paper. Obviously, people who read *The Gazette* knew very well that it was published by a governmental authority, as this was even explicitly mentioned in each issue. Also, knowing the previous notions of using the press as a tool of foreign politics, it appears

[328] Change in the amount of content was one indicator of this lack of motivation. This could be seen for example by the increased font size that was used to fill pages in some issues. Compare the front-pages of 1709 and 1717 in appendices 1 and 3.
[329] Black 1991, 279.
[330] Handover 1965, 50.
[331] Handover 1965, 50-51; *The London Gazette*. Issues: 5500-5603. 1 January 1717- 28 December 1717.

that the Crown's paper still had to remain cautious, as it was an official publication. The private press and the private writers could be used more deliberately and in a less politically correct way to support the Crown. While this remains just one possible reason, this idea does fit with the carefulness observed already in the previous chapters.

In any case, clearly, the Crown's newspaper had lost its dominant role even as the main supporter of the Crown in a new situation of growing private press. To keep the government afloat, the Crown had to admit the role of the private press and instead harness it to fit for its purposes. This appears to materialise exceptionally well in the case of the Gyllenborg scandal and governmental propaganda. Handover's general notion was that around 1717, the role of the *The Gazette* had decreased in such a way that: "*By subsiding writers on journals other than* The Gazette *the government achieved its ends"*.[332] Indeed, this statement appears to apply to the paper's reporting and content about the Gyllenborg scandal.

[332] Handover 1965, 50-51.

5. Conclusions

The selected three focus points of this study concerning the Great Northern War (the military campaign of Sweden leading to the Battle of Poltava in 1709, the British Baltic fleets and Baltic warfare in the mid-1710s, and the Gyllenborg Scandal in 1717) were all unique cases from the British perspective. *The Gazette* published a considerable amount of news reports and other content about each of the unique cases. Even though the events behind the news were all different from each other, some universal traits of power usage in the paper were found.

The general hypothesis that the use of power, especially in the form of censorship, increased when Britain became more involved in the Great Northern War was confirmed, but only partially. The general conclusion here is that even though the paper stood under royal authority, it shared a tremendous amount of accurate information about various topics in each of the selected cases, including facts about military actions or diplomatic crises.

However, smaller changes, in accordance with the governmental objectives of the Crown, were observed in the news content, as was assumed in the hypothesis. This was most apparent in the lack of certain types of information that could have been published. The news content in the paper was largely factual, but much information was also not shared to the readers. Thus, the most notable form of power usage in this information transfer found in this study, consisted of censoring of information, leaving out, or not explaining certain facts. In this process, the Crown's various interests were most present. At first, this meant carefulness of the Crown regarding the country's foreign policy, like in 1709 concerning the Battle of Poltava or in 1714 when Swedish privateering received only a little attention in the paper. Later, during the Baltic fleets of 1715-1716 and the Swedish Jacobite plotting in 1717, more information was intentionally left out to protect the readers' perception of George I.

The paper was a governmental tool which was sharing and presenting what was politically useful to the Crown in each of the selected cases. In 1709, it communicated about British official neutrality in the Great Northern War to the reading public in Britain and abroad by staying very neutral and factual. At the same time, the amount of attention paid to the conflict at Poltava might have been an attempt to redirect the readers' attention away from the British military failures in the War of the Spanish Succession, which were embarrassing for the Crown. Yet, within the scope of this study, this could not be proven as an absolute fact. Among the

interests of the Crown presented before (Chapter 1.3, pages 14-16) the protection of the position of the Monarch (interest II) was present together with the attempt to control the press and information transfer (interest III). The role of trying to maintain a status quo in the Baltic Sea area (I interest) was, however, less notable, and instead of pro-Swedish attitudes, the paper relied on neutrality because this was more practical for the Crown in a situation where the kingdom could not focus on politics in the northern and eastern parts of Europe. Concerning the miscellaneous objectives (interest IV) the so-called protestant interest was found to have played a possible role in explaining some of the Crown's eagerness to follow the distant conflict and to share news about the situation involving Sweden, but this had no provable effect on the actual content. Sharing accurate information was the clearest miscellaneous interest to be observed.

In 1714 the paper began to communicate about war events directly involving Britain, but much of the previous carefulness was still present. In 1715, George I's Hanoverian interests started to affect the paper, but for the most part, only very subtle changes occurred, and, for example, no notable anti-Swedish attitude was expressed in 1715-1716, even while this would have benefitted George I's Hanoverian objectives. Yet, the Baltic fleets in 1715-1716 were presented noticeably in the paper and this content almost deceived the reading public. The communication about the Baltic fleets was presented in such a way that the Crown's ulterior motives, which were not benefitting the British subjects directly, were not presented. These were clearly purposefully hidden. In many cases, this was certainly taken care of already by the news informants, who were often officers, if not by the editors as well. Thus, of the presented interests the objective to protect the monarch's authority (interest II), was very clearly present together with the goal to control the information transfer (interest III). Finally, also interest IV (the protection of the British merchants in the Baltic and wish to convince readers that this objective was important for the Crown) was also very clearly present in the news content as well as even in proclamations. The interest of to maintain a (now more relative) status quo in the Baltic Sea area (interest I) was found to be similarly weak as in 1709. In this context, however, it explained the lack of direct anti-Swedish content in a time when the Crown or even the readers began to have anti-Swedish grievances. It explains the relatively minor attention given to British losses caused by the Swedish privateers, as well as the generally neutral style of reporting about the Baltic fleets. No new miscellaneous interests (interest V) were discovered in this study. The aim of sharing information was observed also here, but in this period it was more limitedly present.

In 1717 a highlighted form of power usage was the use of the paper to publish direct royal proclamations and loyalty proclamations to the King. Proclamations had always been part of the paper, but in 1717 they were used to support the King in a domestic political crisis caused largely by the King's interests in the Great Northern War. In the proclamations of 1717, a new form of power usage was apparent, being direct propaganda. This occasionally had a rather dramatic tone and it was spreading hostile images of the Crown's enemies. However, compared to the propaganda campaign in the service of the Crown in other sections of the press, *The Gazette* was very subtle and never as fierce as the private pamphlets. The propaganda in *The Gazette* never attempted to create hostile images of the Swedes or King Charles XII. Instead, the content only blackened the names of the few Swedish ministers involved, of the Jacobite supporters in Britain, and of the Jacobite exiles abroad. This propagandistic content also never entered the actual news reports of the paper that remained factual and largely neutral. Of course, the facts were used to support the Crown, but the facts were not noticeably altered in this process. This was remarkable in an era when propaganda writings that distorted facts were created by two opposing factions, one supporting and the other resisting the Crown's authority. Thus, of the interests presented before, the protection of the George I's throne from Jacobite rebellions (interest I), was very obviously present in the content. The attempt to control the press and information transfer (interest II), was present in the proclamations. This was the case especially when the Whig Split was kept hidden and when the paper did not include any comments on the critical literary discussion about the Crown's policies. No new miscellaneous interests (interest III) were discovered, but the previous theme of protestant interest was present in the proclamations, together with the obvious objective of sharing information.

The reading public of elites was served in each of the selected cases, despite the effect of the Crown's objectives. Indeed, sharing information to the reading public was in itself a clear objective of the Crown to be observed in this study. In 1709 the paper shared foreign news, also in order to entertain the early bourgeoisie class of readers. In 1714-1716, the paper informed its readers, notably those among them having interests in overseas trade, about the situation of the Baltic Sea trade, the Crown's willingness to protect the traders' interests, and the methods used for this objective. In 1717, the paper shared information about a diplomatic plot that had directly many consequences to the kingdom in which most of the readers lived. However, information was only shared to the readers as long as it could not potentially harm the readers' perception of the Crown. Foreign readership of *The Gazette* also played a role in

this information transfer and this was clearly understood by the paper's staff in each of the selected cases.

The paper presented the Crown's version of the war events, but against the atmosphere of increasing critical readership and private press, this version was increasingly challenged, what became obvious by 1717. Attempts to control the public sphere of readers and the discussion in the private press explain why the Crown's paper used the mentioned subtle forms of censorship. It was remarkable, however, that precisely due to the new press developments, this had very limited effect and censored information was nevertheless revealed to the reading public via the private press.

In this study, it was also found that some characteristics of *The Gazette's* content took shape in a particular way because of practical realities, and not merely because of the Crown's objectives or the needs of the reading public. For example, in 1709, and later as well, the news content arriving from afar was sometimes inaccurate because of the poor information transfer at the time. In 1714, for example, attention which was given to the new monarch's accession to the throne and the focus on domestic affairs during the Jacobite rebellion in 1715 explained the general reduction in foreign news content. The nature of the newspaper as a particular kind of publication also put limitations on its possible text content, partially explaining, for example, the paper's differences with the propaganda in pamphlets and the lack of any mentions of the critical discussions of the private press in 1717. The case of 1717 seems to be the only one in which the governmental interests of the Crown explain the nature of the content more comprehensively than any other, more random, factors. Yet, a step towards this direction had been taken already in 1715-1716, when the Crown's interests were probably equally visible as the effect of other factors, like the content's availability.

The results of this research are well in line with the general understanding of the press of the era, as presented in the previous research. Despite the lack of individual studies focusing on *The Gazette*, many traits that were previously noticed about the press of the period in general, such as the censorship of domestic information, were also seen after a close inspection of the Crown's paper. Also, more specific previous remarks concerning the paper were confirmed in this detailed analysis. Yet, especially one broad generalisation of the Crown's paper was found to be misleading when discussing the factuality of the paper later in the period. The newspaper clearly continued a more factual approach than it had been concluded before in research.

This study further confirms the previous notion that the paper was losing its importance in this period and this even explains some of the findings in the best way possible. For example, the decrease in certain material (such as details about shipping around 1714) and the independence of the paper's content from the loyal Whig propaganda campaign of 1717, can be partially explained through this negative development in the paper's importance, quality, and decrease in readership. The conclusion on the basis of numerical data in previous research thus receives backing by this qualitative analysis of the Crown's paper. The paper was not only losing some of its readers but also parts of its key content.

It should be concluded here that despite the paper's occasionally very visible royal ties, the content of *The Gazette* showed consistently the paper's staff's dedication towards neutrality and factuality, especially earlier in the study period. While this approach certainly cannot be characterised as striving for complete neutrality and was not resembling media practices in modern democracies, nevertheless, it indicates that some journalistic ideals were present already in the early 18th century. This dedication to facts was one of the most surprising findings of this study. In the Foucauldian sense, this also means that the staff of the paper practised only a limited amount of early disciplinary power. This happened mostly by presenting the messages from the sovereign in the paper. The personal role of the editors probably explains this, but unfortunately, this study cannot properly conclude on this matter.

There are ways how this study could be continued or refined in possible succeeding works. Especially, the role of the individuals of the press could be taken better into account. More generally, new themes, papers, and locations might be studied to explain more of the transition period of the sovereign's power, information transfer, and growing bourgeoisie in 18th-century Europe. However, other approaches should be included for a broader understanding of the development of the western press. These might include longer study periods, different comparative studies and new approaches. For example, previously neglected themes might be included also outside the political fields studied here. This might further explain the relationship of power, media and knowledge, topics that are now perhaps more relevant than ever.

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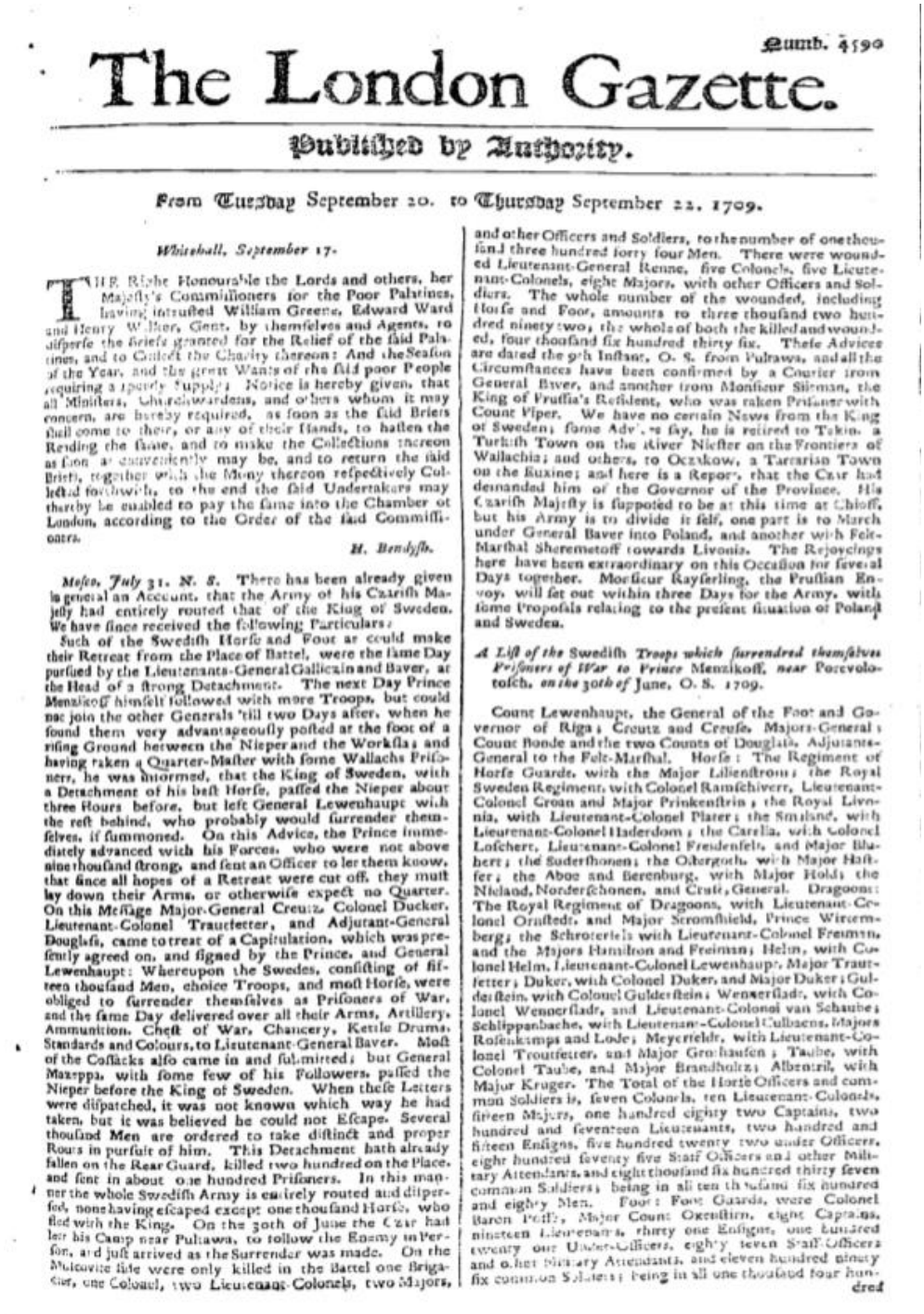
Appendices

Appendix 1. The front-page of *The London Gazette* issue number 4590.



Numb. 4590

The London Gazette.

Published by Authority.

From Tuesday September 20. to Thursday September 22. 1709.

Whitehall, September 17.

THE Right Honourable the Lords and others, her Majesty's Commissioners for the Poor Palatines, having intrusted William Greene, Edward Ward and Henry Walker, Gent. by themselves and Agents, to disperse the Briefs granted for the Relief of the said Palatines, and to Collect the Charity thereon: And the Season of the Year, and the great Wants of the said poor People requiring a speedy Supply; Notice is hereby given, that all Ministers, Churchwardens, and others whom it may concern, are hereby required, as soon as the said Briefs shall come to their, or any of their Hands, to Publish the Reading the same, and to make the Collections thereon as soon as conveniently may be, and to return the said Briefs, together with the Mony thereon respectively Collected forthwith, to the end the said Undertakers may thereby be enabled to pay the same into the Chamber of London, according to the Order of the said Commissioners.

H. Bendyshe.

Mosco, July 31. *N. S.* There has been already given in general an Account, that the Army of his Czarish Majesty had entirely routed that of the King of Sweden. We have since received the following Particulars:

Such of the Swedish Horse and Foot as could make their Retreat from the Place of Battel, were the same Day pursued by the Lieutenants-General Gallitzin and Baver, at the Head of a strong Detachment. The next Day Prince Menzikoff himself followed with more Troops, but could not join the other Generals 'till two Days after, when he found them very advantageously posted at the foot of a rising Ground between the Nieper and the Workfla; and having taken a Quarter-Master with some Wallachs Prisoners, he was informed, that the King of Sweden, with a Detachment of his best Horse, passed the Nieper about three Hours before, but left General Lewenhaupt with the rest behind, who probably would surrender themselves, if summoned. On this Advice, the Prince immediately advanced with his Forces, who were not above nine thousand strong, and sent an Officer to let them know, that since all hopes of a Retreat were cut off, they must lay down their Arms, or otherwise expect no Quarter. On this Message Major-General Creutz, Colonel Ducker, Lieutenant-Colonel Trautfetter, and Adjutant-General Douglass, came to treat of a Capitulation, which was presently agreed on, and signed by the Prince, and General Lewenhaupt: Whereupon the Swedes, consisting of fifteen thousand Men, choice Troops, and most Horse, were obliged to surrender themselves as Prisoners of War, and the same Day delivered over all their Arms, Artillery, Ammunition, Chest of War, Chancery, Kettle Drums, Standards and Colours, to Lieutenant-General Baver. Most of the Cossacks also came in and submitted; but General Maxeppa, with some few of his Followers, passed the Nieper before the King of Sweden. When these Letters were dispatched, it was not known which way he had taken, but it was believed he could not Escape. Several thousand Men are ordered to take distinct and proper Routs in pursuit of him. This Detachment hath already fallen on the Rear Guard, killed two hundred on the Place, and sent in about one hundred Prisoners. In this manner the whole Swedish Army is entirely routed and dispersed, none having escaped except one thousand Horse, who fled with the King. On the 30th of June the Czar had left his Camp near Pultawa, to follow the Enemy in Person, and just arrived as the Surrender was made. On the Muscovite side were only killed in the Battel one Brigadier, one Colonel, two Lieutenant-Colonels, two Majors, and other Officers and Soldiers, to the number of one thousand three hundred forty four Men. There were wounded Lieutenant-General Renne, five Colonels, five Lieutenant-Colonels, eight Majors, with other Officers and Soldiers. The whole number of the wounded, including Horse and Foot, amounts to three thousand two hundred ninety two; the whole of both the killed and wounded, four thousand six hundred thirty six. These Advices are dated the 9th Instant, O. S. from Pultawa, and all the Circumstances have been confirmed by a Courier from General Baver, and another from Monsieur Sitman, the King of Prussia's Resident, who was taken Prisoner with Count Piper. We have no certain News from the King of Sweden; some Advices say, he is retired to Tekin, a Turkish Town on the River Niester on the Frontiers of Wallachia; and others, to Ockzkow, a Tartarian Town on the Euxine; and here is a Report, that the Czar had demanded him of the Governor of the Province. His Czarish Majesty is supposed to be at this time at Chioff, but his Army is to divide it self, one part is to March under General Baver into Poland, and another with Field-Marshal Sheremetoff towards Livonia. The Rejoycings here have been extraordinary on this Occasion for several Days together. Monsieur Rayserling, the Prussian Envoy, will set out within three Days for the Army, with some Proposals relating to the present situation of Poland and Sweden.

A List of the Swedish Troops which surrendred themselves Prisoners of War to Prince Menzikoff, near Perevolotsch, on the 30th of June, O. S. 1709.

Count Lewenhaupt, the General of the Foot and Governor of Riga; Creutz and Creuse, Majors-General; Count Bonde and the two Counts of Douglass, Adjutants-General to the Field-Marshal. Horse: The Regiment of Horse Guards, with the Major Lilienstrom; the Royal Sweden Regiment, with Colonel Ramschiverr, Lieutenant-Colonel Groan and Major Prinkenstrin; the Royal Livonia, with Lieutenant-Colonel Plater; the Smaland, with Lieutenant-Colonel Haderdom; the Carelia, with Colonel Lofchert, Lieutenant-Colonel Freidenfelt, and Major Bluhert; the Suderthonen; the Ostergoth, with Major Hafter; the Aboe and Berenburg, with Major Hold; the Nieland, Norderschonen, and Crust, General. Dragoons: The Royal Regiment of Dragoons, with Lieutenant-Colonel Ornstedt, and Major Stromfhield, Prince Wirtemberg; the Schroterfels with Lieutenant-Colonel Freimm, and the Majors Hamilton and Freimm; Helm, with Colonel Helm, Lieutenant-Colonel Lewenhaupt, Major Trautfetter; Duker, with Colonel Duker, and Major Duker; Guldenstein, with Colonel Guldenstein; Wenersladt, with Colonel Wennerstadt, and Lieutenant-Colonel van Schaube; Schlippanbache, with Lieutenant-Colonel Culbaens, Majors Rosenkamps and Lode; Meyerfeldt, with Lieutenant-Colonel Troutfetter, and Major Grothausen; Taube, with Colonel Taube, and Major Brandhulen; Albentril, with Major Kruger. The Total of the Horse Officers and common Soldiers is, seven Colonels, ten Lieutenant-Colonels, fifteen Majors, one hundred eighty two Captains, two hundred and seventeen Lieutenants, two hundred and fifteen Ensigns, five hundred twenty two under Officers, eight hundred seventy five Staff Officers and other Military Attendants, and eight thousand six hundred thirty seven common Soldiers; being in all ten thousand six hundred and eighty Men. Foot: Foot Guards, were Colonel Baron Peiff, Major Count Oxenstirn, eight Captains, nineteen Lieutenants, thirty one Ensigns, one hundred twenty one Under-Officers, eighty seven Staff-Officers and other Military Attendants, and eleven hundred ninety six common Soldiers; being in all one thousand four hundred

Source: *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4590. 20 September 1709, 1. Notice available: http://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/4590/page/1/data.htm. Access date: 15.5.2019

Appendix 2. The back-page of *The London Gazette* issue number 4590.

dred fixty two Men. Beſides whom were the following Regiments of Foot; the Upland, Weſt-Manland, Suder-Manland, Oſtergoth, Weſtergoth, Colmar, Dalcail, Weſterhoe, North and Warmland, Jencoping, Cronenburg, and the Colonels Tock and Cronman, the Lieutenant-Colonels Chriſtbock, Sack, Brunſchild and Jung; the Majors Ramſey, Schwinfurt and Ochſe, fixty two Captains, fixty two Lieutenants, ſeventy one Enſigns, two hundred ninety nine Inferior Officers, forty four Staff-Officers, and three thouſand fifty nine common Soldiers. The Total of the Foot, beſides the Guards, three thouſand ſix hundred and ſix. Of the Artillery were one Colonel, two Lieutenant-Colonels, one Major, five Captains, ſix Lieutenants, ſix Enſigns, fifty five Inferior Officers, three hundred thirty five Staff-Officers, and one hundred twenty four common Soldiers. In all five hundred thirty five. The Total of the whole amounts to thirty four Regiments, and fifteen thouſand two hundred eighty five Men; of whom are eleven Colonels, fifteen Lieutenant-Colonels, twenty Majors, two hundred fifty ſeven Captains, three hundred and four Lieutenants, three hundred twenty three Enſigns, nine hundred ninety ſeven Inferior Officers, one thouſand three hundred forty one Staff-Officers and other Military Attendants, and thirteen thouſand and ſixteen common Soldiers. Being in all fifteen thouſand two hundred eighty five. The Laſt of the Artillery is as follows: Cannon, from ſix to three Pounders, twenty one; Haubitz for ſixteen Pound Ball, two; Mortars for ſix Pound, four; Mortars for three Pound, four.

Lisbon, September 18. *N. S.* Sir George Byng, with the ſquadron under his Command, is arrived at Gibraltar, having on board General Stanhope, with Colonel Harriſon's Regiment of Foot, and a Spaniſh Regiment of Dragoons, which it is reported they are to be joined by Admiral Baker with Reinforcements from Great Britain and Ireland. This gives an Alarm to the Coaſt of Andaluſia, and prevents the Enemy on the Frontiers of Portugal from taking the Field, who had otherwiſe intended to aſſemble their Forces between the 15th and 20th Inſtant. The Portuguize Colonels for thoſe Regiments are named, and the Levies are carried on with all poſſible diſpatch. The Marquis d'Allegretti, Chief Miniſter of this Court, lately died here, and it is ſaid the Marquis de Marialva will ſucceed him. Count Tarrucca, Son to the Marquis d'Allegretti is embarked on Board the Breda, in order to Sail for Great Britain with Sir John Jennings; from whence he will proceed to Holland with the Character of Plenipotentiary from this Court. The Britiſh Squadron under the Command of that Admiral will Sail with the firſt fair Wind. It hath been detained four Days within the Bar of this River.

Berlin, September 14. *N. S.* On the eleventh Inſtant his Majeſty ſet out for Pruſſia, being attended by a numerous Court, and many Foreign Miniſters, among whom his Czarish Majeſty's Envoy reſiding in this Place. The King ſtaid at Golis two or three Days; and this Day he deſigns to proceed on his Journey. Some time before his Departure he received Advice, that the Czar of Muſcovy had been indiſpoſed at Kiovia; but that he was recovered, and deſigned to continue his Journey to Poland; and that he left it to the determination of the King of Pruſſia, where he might have an Interview with him and King Auguſtus. We have very uncertain Accounts concerning the King of Sweden. Some Advices ſay, that he continues at Oczakow with three or four hundred Horſe; others, that he was retired towards the Frontiers of Turkey, where he had been kindly received by the Baſſa that Commanded in thoſe Parts; but that he could promiſe him no Aſſiſtance 'till the return of an Expreſs which he had diſpatched to Conſtantinople. Other Accounts advize, that his Majeſty was gone in Perſon to the Ottoman Port.

Dreſden, September 16. *N. S.* Letters from Lemberg of the 28th of the laſt Month adviſe, that the Czar of Muſcovy was expected there that Day; and that Field Marſhal Goltz had received a Reinforcement of ten thouſand Muſcovite Horſe, with Orders from his Czarish Majeſty to March with all poſſible Expedition, and endeavour to cut off the retreat of General Craſſau, who was on his March towards the Frontiers of Pomerania. We have received repeated Advices from the Muſcovite Army, of the Death of the King of Sweden; but ſome Letters ſay that he died at Oczakow, and others that it was at Bender.

My Lord High Admiral having received a Letter ſign'd S. N. giving an Account of ſome intended ill Practice of an Officer in the Navy, his Lordſhip does hereby give Notice, That if the Perſon who writ the ſaid Letter will attend him at his Office, and diſcover what he knows of this matter, he ſhall have all fitting Encouragement and Protection.

My Lord High Admiral being informed by John Bowen, a Priſoner in the Queen's-Bench, That John Arnold, a Penſioner to the Cheſt at Chatham, is a Principal Evidence for him in a Cauſe wherein his Life depends, but that the ſaid Arnold doth abſent himſelf; his Lordſhip doth hereby ſtrictly charge him the ſaid John Arnold timely to attend and give his Evidence.

Thomas Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, &c. Lord High Admiral of Great Britain and Ireland, &c. is pleaſed to direct, That all the Men belonging to her Majeſty's Ship the Bonadventure, which are in and about Town, do immediately repair to their Duty on Board the ſaid Ship at Sheerneſs, otherwiſe they will be taken up, and puniſhed as Deſerters.

Notice is hereby given, That the Officers and Company of her Majeſty's Ship Adventure, will on Thurſday the 29th Inſtant, at the Prize-Office in York-Buildings, be paid their Proportions of the Prize-Ship Providence of Dunkirk, according to the Directions in her Majeſty's moſt Gracious Declaration of the 1ſt of June, 1702.

Whereas Henry Biſhop, of the Borough of Devizes in Wiltſhire, being for a Notorious Riot Committed to the Priſon of the ſaid Borough; two Perſons in Vizards did, on the Night between the third and fourth of Auguſt laſt, Aſſault the Watch near the ſaid Priſon, break open the Priſon Door, and reſcue the Priſoner; Her Majeſty does hereby ſtrictly charge and Command all Perſons who ſhall have any Knowledge who the two Men in Vizards were, as they will anſwer the contrary at their utmoſt Peril, that they do forthwith diſcover the ſame to one of her Majeſty's Secretaries of State, or to the Mayor and Bailiffs of the ſaid Town, to the end the ſaid Offenders may be Proſecuted according to Law, and brought to Condign Puniſhment. And as an Encouragement to ſuch Diſcovery, her Majeſty has ordered a Reward of 20l. to be paid by the Sheriff of the County of Wilts, who is hereby required to pay the ſame to any Perſon or Perſons that ſhall make ſuch Diſcovery for one or both of the Offenders by him or them diſcovered, ſo as he or they be apprehended, in order to be proceeded againſt according to Law.

The Court of Directors of the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the Eaſt-Indies, do hereby give Notice, That a General Court of the ſaid Company is appointed to be holden at their Houſe in Leadenhall-ſtreet, London, on Friday the 23d of this Inſtant September, at ten in the Morning, to conſider of the Report from the Committee appointed to inſpect the Company's By-Laws.

Advertiſements.

☞ Macbeth. A Tragedy. With all the Alterations, Amendments, Additions and new Songs, as it is now acted at the Queen's Theatre. Alſo Politicks in Select Diſcourſes of Monſieur Balzac, which he call'd his Ariſtippus, or Wiſe Scholar. Done into Engliſh by Baſil Kennett, Fellow of C. C. C. Oxford, now Chaplain in a Britiſh Factory abroad: To which is added an Account of the Life and Writings of the Author: Both printed for John Phillips at the Black-bull in Cornhill.

JOſeph Tonnerton of the City of Worceſter, Clothier, and Timothy Coles of the ſame Place, Draper, being made Aſſignees of the Commiſſioners in a Commiſſion of Bankrupt awarded againſt John Fitzer, late of the City of Worceſter aforeſaid, Clothier; all Perſons that owe him any Mony, or have any of his Effects in their Hands, are to pay or deliver the ſame to the ſaid Aſſignees, or they will be Sued.

THE Commiſſioners in a Commiſſion of Bankrupt awarded againſt John Peckett, late of the City of York, Merchant, intend to meet on the 25th of October next, at the Houſe of Mrs. Katherine Dawſon, the Poſthouſe in Skeldergate in the ſaid City of York, at two in the Afternoon, to make a ſecond Dividend of the ſaid Bankrupt's Eſtate; when and where the Creditors who have not already prov'd their Debts, and paid their Contribution-mony, are to come prepared to do the ſame, or they will be excluded the benefit of the ſaid ſecond Dividend.

WHereas a Commiſſion of Bankrupt is awarded againſt Henry Marryott, late of the Strand in the County of Middleſex, Mercer, and he being declared a Bankrupt, is required to ſurrender himſelf to the Commiſſioners on the 28th and 30th Inſtant, and the 24th of October next, at 3 in the Afternoon, at the Iriſh-chamber in Guildhall, London; at the firſt of which Sittings the Creditors are to come prepared to prove Debts, pay their Contribution-mony, and chuſe Aſſignees.

Printed by *J. Tonſon* at *Grays-Inn-Gate*. 1709. S

Source: *The London Gazette*. Issue: 4590. 20 September 1709, 2. Notice available: http://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/4590/page/1/data.htm. Access date: 16.5.2019.

Appendix 3. The front-page of *The London Gazette* issue number 5513

Numb. 5513

The London Gazette.

Published by Authority.

From Saturday February 16. to Tuesday February 19. 1717.

Madrid, February 8.

THE Intendant Don Joſeph Patino, ſet out from hence the 3d towards Andaluſia, and carryed with him a conſiderable Sum of Money in Bills; 'tis ſaid that he has ample Inſtructions relating to the Marine Affairs, and that he is veſted with full Authority to haſten the Equipment of the Flota for New Spain, to take care of the Building of ſome Ships, and to look after the Buſineſs of Trade, and the Royal Revenues in thoſe Parts. The Marquis Mari, who came lately from Cadiz, and was expected to have returned thither with the Intendant Patino, in order to aſſiſt him in the Sea-preparations, has ſent to Catalonia, to take care of the launching two Ships, one of 80 and the other of 50 Guns, which have been built in that Country by the direction of Patino, and which are to be employed next Summer, in the Squadron which the King has promis'd the Pope to aſſiſt againſt the Turks. Several great Alterations have been made here lately in the Councils of the Indies and of War, and in other Offices, and many ſupernumerary Officers have been diſcharged, and further Changes are ſtill expected. The French Ambaſſador has diſapproved the behaviour of his Domeſticks here in a late rencounter, and has delivered them into the hands of the Officers of Juſtice, to be puniſhed for the ſame. The Officers of the Walloon Guards, who had been baniſhed the Court, on account of their Misbehaviour, have obtained leave to return thither again, only the Duke de Havré continues ſtill under his Baniſhment. The time of the Queen's delivery drawing very near; the ſeveral Preſidents of the Councils, have had notice to be in a readineſs to come to the Palace upon the firſt warning; and the Patriarch according to Cuſtom, has begun the Ceremony of viſiting Churches, and ſaying Maſſes for her Majeſty's ſafe delivery.

Vienna, Feb. 13. Letters from Eſſeck of the 5th Inſtant ſay, that Mr. Wortley, His Britannick Majeſty's Ambaſſador to the Port, arrived there the Day before, and deſigned to ſet out the next Day for Peterwaradin, where he hoped to find the Courier return'd which he had ſent to the Baſſa of Belgrade. Two Days ago Mr. Bentenrieder and Mr. St. Saphorin arrived here from Hanover, the former having been ſent thither by this Court on a private Commiſſion to His Britannick Majeſty. To Morrow the Count du Luc, the French Ambaſſadour here, is to take his Audience of Leave of the Emperour, and deſigns in a little Time to begin his Journey homewards.

Copenhagen, Feb. 20. On the 15th Inſtant arrived here 17 Ships from Iſeland, laſt from Norway, under the Convoy of a Man of War and a Frigate. We have a Report that the Swediſh Fleet at Carlſcrona is getting ready to put to Sea in a little Time, and that their Deſign is to attempt to ruin the Port at Revel and burn the Czar's Men of War there. We are fitting out here with all poſſible Expedition a Squadron of Men of War, to cruiſe in the Baltick, under the Command of Vice-Admiral Gabel.

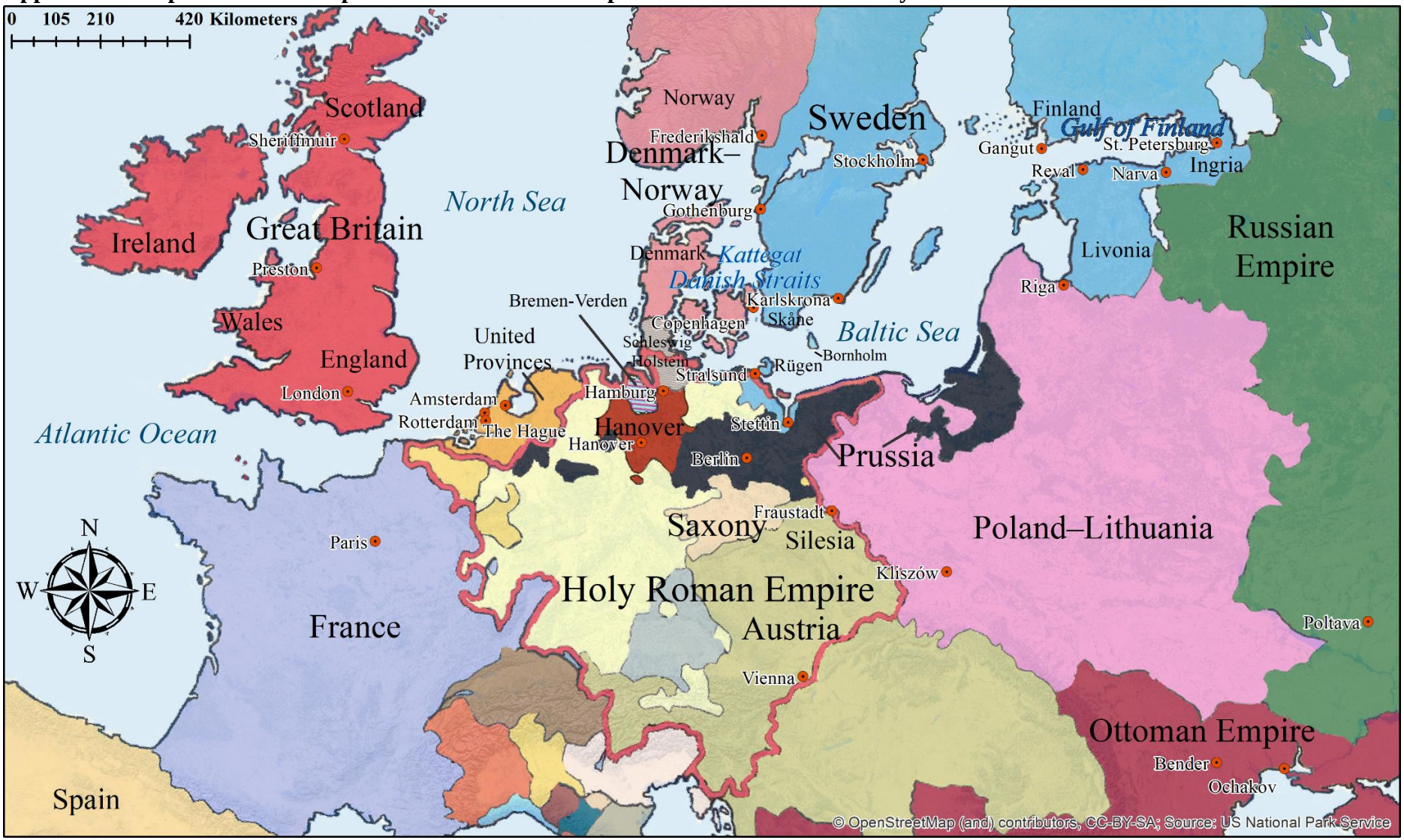
Hague, Feb. 26. On the 15th Mr. Leathes, his Britannick Majeſty's Reſident here, received His Majeſty's Orders to deſire the Regents of this State to conſent to the Seizing of Baron Gortz (with his two Secretaries M. Stambke and M. Guſtavus Gyllenborg) who had for ſome Time been concerned in carrying on a Correſpondence and concerting Meaſures with the Britiſh Rebels in France, and with ſeveral Perſons in England by means of Count Gyllenborg, for raiſing a Rebellion in his Majeſty's Dominions, to be ſupported by a foreign Force. The ſaid Reſident went the ſame Day to Amſterdam, and diſpoſed the Magiſtrates of that Place to conſent to the ſecuring of Baron Gortz in caſe he ſhould come thither from France. On the 17th Mr. Leathes came back hither. The ſame Night Baron Gortz arrived here: He had heard at Calais of Count Gyllenborg's being put under Arreſt, which prevented his going over to England as he intended. Upon Mr. Leathes Application the Council of the States of Holland met, and paſſed a Reſolution on the 19th for Siezing the ſaid Baron and his Secretaries; but before it

Source: *The London Gazette*. Issue: 5513. 16 February 1717, 1. Notice available: http://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/4590/page/1/data.htm. Access date: 16.5.2019

Appendix 4. A British coffee house at the turn of the 18th century

Source: Kortti, Jukka. *Mediahistoria: Viestinnän Merkityksiä Ja Muodonmuutoksia Puheesta Bitteihin*. Helsinki: Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, 2016.

Appendix 5. Map of the relevant place names and the European borders after the Treaty of Utrecht in 1714



The map does not show the Russian Baltic conquests in 1710s. Bremen-Verden was under temporal Danish rule in 1714 but it was given to Hanover in the following year. The map was made and edited with ArcGIS and QGIS software together with picture editing programs.

Source: Map edited from: *Map of Europe in 1714.* Author (username): Rebel Redcoat. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Europe,_1714.png. Published: 18.6.2010. Access date: 5.6.2019.

Map information and editing done based on: The maps of Aldridge, David, D. *Admiral Sir John Norris and the British Naval Expeditions to the Baltic Sea 1715-1727*. Vol. 37. Nordic Academic Press, 2009, 32, 35, 97, 196; Barraclough, Geoffrey. *The Times Atlas of World History*. London: Times, 1980, 188-193.