James Gillray's *Design for a Naval Pillar:*

Naval Heroism and Patriotic Public Display in Late Eighteenth-Century Britain

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ABSTRACT

James Gillray (1756-1815) produced maritime themed prints that were responses to Britain's contemporary naval wars against revolutionary and Napoleonic France (1793-1815). Diverse visual representations, publications, theatre performances and the press informed Gillray and his audiences' interpretations of the Navy, loyalist patriotism and emerging notions of national identity. This thesis shows that Gillray's discursive position towards naval actualities, symbolism, heroic representation and monumental sculpture are evident in his work, particularly concerning the characters of the sailor Jack Tar, the officer Horatio Nelson, and the contemporary sculptural projects of St. Paul's Cathedral and the Naval Pillar. Through distortion of the representational resources of high art, Gillray derided official representations of naval heroism and the culture of patriotic public display within which they existed, attacking their idealism, socio-political exclusivity and links with loyalist propaganda and excess. This thesis interprets Gillray's work as being indicative of his political ambivalence and critical attitude towards the establishment and cultural pretension. It is argued that Gillray's oeuvre demonstrates his dialogical engagement with, and perceptive awareness and exploitation of, the relationships between, official and unofficial discourses. This thesis explains specific Gillray works in relation to their relationships with naval discourses, culminating in the first in-depth analysis of Gillray's significant, yet previously overlooked, *Design for a Naval Pillar*, 1 February 1800 (Fig. 1 and 2).

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis focuses upon work by James Gillray (1756-1815), specifically prints produced between the outbreak of war against revolutionary France (1793) and the death of Nelson (1805), considering their use of maritime imagery and references to eighteenth-century representations of naval heroism. The works are discussed in relation to contemporary discourses relating to the Royal Navy, wars with France (1793-1815), national identity, naval symbolism, and patriotic public display.[1] I explore Gillray's satirical use of the representational resources of high art to attack the socially exclusive pretensions of the ruling elite through reference to the Royal Academy and patriotic monumental displays of naval heroism.[2] Gillray's prints were engaged in complex dialogues with official and unofficial discourses that I analyse with reference to contemporary newspapers, pamphlets, prints, paintings, theatrical performances, monumental sculpture and their designs. The thesis offers original, sustained and in-depth study of particular, previously overlooked, works by Gillray, building upon current scholarship in the field while advancing it through the application of a social art historical approach, Bakhtinian theories, and use of new primary source material. My argument culminates in the first in-depth interpretation of *Design for the Naval Pillar*, 1 February 1800 (Fig. 1 and 2). I argue that this print,

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[1] I will take the term 'discourse' to mean any utterance, therefore including, for example, conversation, song, texts, poetry, theatre performances, sculptures, prints, paintings, publications, reviews, criticism and official records including legal, governmental and naval documents, in particular concerning naval warfare, impressments, recruitment, mutiny, discipline, patriotic victory culture and monumental heroic representation. The press will provide extensive and valuable source material, with other sources of primary evidence found in letters, pamphlets, notebooks, diaries, and publications. Discourse is in a perpetual state of flux, and is invariably shifting and contested. Within the field of general discourse there are specific discourses and those most pertinent to this thesis will be based on the Navy, Britain's war with France, naval victories (especially at the Nile), the seaman and officer (specifically Nelson), and naval intelligence, heroism, representation and patriotic public display. Discourses can be thought about in terms of the different groups of people who had access to them; people sharing access and broad agreement about particular discourses I define as 'discursive circuits'. For example, broadly speaking poor people belonged to a different discursive circuit to the rich, as they went to different theatres, read different texts, talked to different people, and had different social and educational backgrounds. A common discursive ground exists where discourses of different discursive circuits overlap and interrelate. Different discursive circuits can be defined in terms of socio-economic position or class, however, in some cases, such definitions can be reductive and not especially useful analytically.

[2] I will be using the term 'high art' to ultimately mean Academic art, that which had the subject, style, quality and taste of a superior kind that conformed with the lofty and hierarchical notions of the institution's doctrines and adhered to and perpetuated by its members. High art products include principally painting, sculpture and architecture.

and indeed others analysed in the preceding chapters, despite having been largely overlooked by scholars, demonstrate Gillray's critical engagement with, and impact upon, discourses on the Navy and patriotic public display.

Although much has been written about Gillray and about British naval history, very few studies exist that examine both subjects, and specifically analyse his prints in relation to naval discourses pertaining to warfare, heroism, patriotism, and monumental sculpture.[3] Available literature on Gillray has underplayed the significance of the maritime theme. Geoffrey Quilley's 'All Ocean is her Own' has gone some way towards addressing this imbalance.[4] However, the publication is short and focuses on a wide range of image-makers, touching only briefly on Gillray. In contrast, Richard Godfrey has dedicated an entire Tate exhibition catalogue to *James Gillray* and his oeuvre, offering a valuable aid for visual research and supporting my identification of links, comparisons and stylistic developments.[5] Godfrey's thematic approach initiates a contextual consideration of Gillray's work and pays particular attention to its party political connotations and use of caricature, but only touches on the topics that are my foci in his chapters 'Gillray goes to the battlefield' and 'Wars with France and invasion fears'.[6] While these notable texts present constructive insight into Gillray, his work and its relation to various contexts, none of them offers a sustained analysis of his naval work in relation to the significance of the maritime in contemporary anti-French, conservative and loyalist patriotic discourses on naval warfare, victories and representations. My knowledge of the maritime contexts in which Gillray's prints operated, particularly of naval warfare, notions of national consciousness and constructions of identity, is informed considerably by secondary

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[3] In this study I will be using the term 'patriotism' to refer to Britons' pride in, and devotion to, their country, particularly in relation to its naval heritage and perceived supremacy. It must be noted that the interpretation and adoption of patriotism was polysemic, with its political implications and allegiances contested, shifting and unclearly undefined, with loyalists, radicals, Foxites and Pittites all attempting to appropriate the language of patriotism for their political ends. I take up Jenks's approach to 'patriotism as a category of behaviour, a public costume of rhetoric and symbolic activity, which all points of the political spectrum have sought to invest with interpretative determinism and claims of exclusivity.' Timothy Jenks, *Naval Engagements: Patriotism, Cultural Politics and the Royal Navy*, Oxford and New York, 2006, 10.

[4] Geoffrey Quilley, '"All Ocean is her Own": The image of the sea and the identity of the maritime nation in eighteenth-century British art', in Geoffrey Cubitt (ed.), *Imagining Nations*, Manchester, 1998, 130-54.

[5] Richard Godfrey, *James Gillray: the Art of Caricature*, London, 2001.

[6] Godfrey, *Gillray,* 108-111 and 112-122 respectively.

sources on British naval and cultural history that scarcely discuss Gillray, including, among others, Timothy Jenks' *Naval Engagements*, Margarette Lincoln's *Representing the Royal Navy*, Nicholas Rodger's 'Shipboard Life in the Georgian Navy', Gerald Jordan's 'Admiral Nelson as Popular Hero: The Nation and the Navy, 1795-1805' and Quilley's 'Missing the Boat' and 'Duty and Mutiny'.[7]

While they do not focus on the significance of the maritime, Vic Gatrell's *City of Laughter* and Diana Donald's *The Age of Caricature* provide important contextualisations of Gillray and his prints in relation to various other image-makers, and issues of audience, distribution, reception, fashion and party politics.[8] Gatrell focuses on Gillray's earlier works, his vicious political caricatures and vivid imagination, while the text in general offers an interesting discussion of the importance of laughter in satirical prints, supporting my consideration of the humour at play in Gillray's work and my utilisation of Bakhtin's theories of the carnivalesque.[9] Donald's chapter on Gillray is primarily concerned with his political alliances and state pension in relation to his work, reputation and subsequent fall from grace. Scholarship is increasingly concerned with situating Gillray's work in relation to print culture in general, and also demonstrates a tendency towards relatively traditional stylistic, biographical and/or thematic approaches.[10] This thesis addresses and helps to fill gaps in the historiography and aims to contribute to and advance current scholarship. I owe a debt to the aforementioned texts and to various others

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[7] Timothy Jenks, *Naval Engagements: Patriotism, Cultural Politics and the Royal Navy*, Oxford and New York, 2006; Margarette Lincoln, *Representing the Royal Navy: British Sea Power, 1750-1815*, Hampshire, 2002; Nicholas A. M Rodger, 'Shipboard Life in the Georgian Navy', in Lewis R. Fischer, H. Hamre, P. Holm and J. R. Bruijn (eds), *The North Sea: Twelve Essays on the Social History of Maritime Labour*, Stravanger, 1992, 29-40; Gerald Jordan, 'Admiral Nelson as Popular Hero: The Nation and the Navy, 1795-1805', *New Aspects of Naval History: Selected Papers from the 5th Naval History Symposium*, (ed.), The Department of History US Naval Academy, Baltimore, Md., 1985, 109-19; Geoffrey Quilley, 'Missing the Boat: the place of the maritime in the history of British visual culture', *Visual Culture in Britain*, 1:2, December 2000, 79-92; Geoffrey Quilley, 'Duty and Mutiny: the aesthetics of loyalty and the representation of the British sailor c.1789-1800', in Phil Shaw (ed.), *Romantic War: Studies in Culture and Conflict, 1789-1815*, Ashgate, 2000, 80-109. Also of note are Gerald Jordan and Nicholas Rogers, 'Admirals as Heroes: Patriotism and Liberty in Hanoverian England', *Journal of British Studies*, 28, 1989, 201-24; Lynda Pratt, 'Naval Contemplation: Poetry, Patriotism and the Navy, 1797-99 – Images of Nautical and National Heroism', *Journal of Maritime Research*, December 2000.

[8] Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London*, London, 2006; Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III,* New Haven, 1996.

[9] Mikhail Bakhtin's theories of the carnivalesque, and their application in my interpretation of Gillray's work is discussed later in this Introduction, 8-9.

[10] Examples of this include Draper Hill's *The Satirical Etchings of James Gillray*, London, 1976, and Godfrey's *Gillray*, London, 2001.

including, particularly, Richard Wrigley and Michael Craske's *Pantheons*, David Bindman's *The Shadow of the Guillotine*, Tamara L. Hunt's *Defining John Bull*, Draper Hill's *Mr. Gillray the Caricaturist* and Mary Dorothy George's *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*.[11] From such secondary sources, specifically the latter pair, I have learned much regarding Gillray's biography, his career, maritime interests, political stance and relationship with the 'establishment' and the Royal Academy.[12]

Gillray lived and worked in the cultural milieu of the West End's fashionable entertainment hub, from 1791 onwards working exclusively for the publisher Mrs. Hannah Humphrey.[13] He began his career with no intention of becoming a professional satirical printmaker. During the decade following his admission into the Royal Academy's school in 1778 he aspired, instead, to be an engraver, and only after a lack of success in this field, due to his caricatural formal tendencies, did he turn to the satirical genre to earn his living. His knowledge of high art conventions, audiences and tastes, his skilled draughtsmanship, creative vision, derision of the exclusivity and pretence of the RA, its products and participants, and his perceptive and resonant criticism of official discourses, can be seen to have been informed by his formative experiences in the 'art-world'.[14] Despite his prints attacking the RA, they were liked, discussed and bought by members of classes who constituted that institution's constituency. For example, in *Titianus Redivivus*, 2 November 1797 (Fig. 3), Gillray

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[11] Richard Wrigley and Michael Craske (eds), *Pantheons: Transformations of a Monumental Idea*, Aldershot, 2004; David Bindman, *The Shadow of the Guillotine: Britain and the French Revolution*, London, 1989; Tamara L. Hunt, *Defining John Bull: Political Caricature and National Identity in late Georgian England*, Aldershot, 2003; Draper Hill's *Mr. Gillray the Caricaturist: A Biography*, London, 1965; Mary Dorothy George, *The Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum*, London, vol. VI (1784-1792), 1938, vol. VII (1793-1800), 1942, vol. VIII (1801-1810), 1947.

[12] I will be using the term 'establishment' in accordance with the *Oxford English Dictionary*'s definition to mean 'a social group exercising power generally, or within a given field or institution, by virtue of its traditional superiority, and by the use especially of tacit understandings and often a common mode of speech, and having as a general interest the maintenance of the status quo.' Thus I refer to the various ruling elites and the institutions in which they operated and participated, including, for example, Parliament and the Royal Academy.

[13] In 1793 Gillray starting living in a room above Hannah Humphrey's shop in Old Bond Street, accompanying her when she moved to new premises in 1794 to New Bond Street and 1797 to St James's Street. Godfrey, *Gillray*, 16-17.

[14] By the term 'art-world' I mean the principles, products and participants involved in high art, specifically the Royal Academy. This world is informed by artistic conventions, aesthetic theories, classical traditions, ruling elite patrons' tastes and the academic hierarchy of art genres and media, in which satirical printmaking was at the bottom.

explicitly satirised the Academy and its high art conventions and pretension, yet the Royal Academician Farington noted in his diary that both he and the politician Canning owned copies of the print, and that Gillray's work was often a subject of discussion among such similarly educated company.[15] In this print several Academicians, including Farington and Opie, are viciously caricatured in the foreground, a receding crowd clamouring to get to the front becomes increasingly simian in appearance and an ape urinates upon a pile of portfolios leant against an Apollo statue. Nevertheless, such high art critiques were popular among the elite who produced, viewed, and bought Academic art. Gillray's oeuvre not only demonstrates his knowledge of high art, but also his continual engagement with discourses on it, and his use of its representational resources in his naval prints. The studies he contributed to Philippe-Jacques de Loutherbourg's battle paintings, *Lord Howe's Victory*, 1795 (Fig. 4), discussed in the first chapter, are examples of Gillray's engagement with Academic art.

Gillray's understanding of contemporary Academic art was married with a sophisticated knowledge of diverse contemporary discourses, particularly on the Navy, politics and patriotic culture. His knowledge of, dialogical engagement with, and intervention in such discourses influenced the nature of his audiences, and their interpretations of the subjects his prints present.[16] While his political, and indeed social and cultural, stance was characteristically ambivalent, he generally had conservative, loyalist and francophobic tendencies, more often than not attacking the Opposition, but not exclusively so.[17] His £200 annual state pension from the Pitt ministry between 1797 and 1801 is worth bearing in mind when investigating his

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[15] Regarding Gillray's *Titianus Redivivus* - Steeven's gift of a copy to Farington, III, 933, 4 Dec. 1797; Canning showing his copy to company including Farington, Pitt and Wilberforce, III, 956, 28 Dec. 1797; Bourgeois reference to it, III, 921, 10 Nov. 1797; Steeven's reference to it, III, 927, 23rd Nov. Thursday, 1797. See also Farington's attempt to buy a print of Gillray's *Portrait of Ireland* from Mrs. Humphrey's shop, III, 952, 21 Dec. 1797. Joseph Farington, *The Diary of Joseph Farington*, Kenneth Garlick and Angus Macintyre (eds), London, 1978.

[16] By the term 'dialogical' I mean that which is aware off and intervenes in the constant and value-laden dialogue of discourse that develops responsively to that in the past and in anticipation of that in the future. For further discussion of dialogical theory, see later in this Introduction, 8.

[17] Tellingly, when asked in 1798 by Johann Christian Huttner, a correspondent of *London und Paris*, a sophisticated Weimar journal that often contained satirical prints including ones by Gillray, why his prints were so critical of the Whigs, Gillray replied with cynicism "they are poor, they do not buy my prints and I must draw on the purses of the larger parties." Quoted without citation in Godfrey, *Gillray*, 20.

political allegiances and satires. This thesis focuses on works produced during this period that avoided explicit attacks upon his patrons or references to party politics in general, but which, nevertheless, employed a more subtle and restrained means of derision, using parody and inversion of the 'visual language' of high art with which they were associated. Gillray's high quality hand-coloured etchings were relatively expensive and repeatedly turned to themes of politics, military, especially naval, affairs, the liberal arts and aristocracy. This suggests they catered for wealthy, educated, culturally informed, elite, Burkian, relatively politically-engaged, audiences, with a clientele including politicians, ministers, servicemen, participants of the gentlemanly literary culture of reading rooms and subscription houses, and nobility.[18]

I argue that Gillray not only fed off, but also impacted upon, his discursive context, dialogically engaging with both official and unofficial discourses in perceptive ways. His work played with, and therefore relied upon, familiarity with the languages of politics, loyalist patriotism, naval heroism and high art, while skilfully combining them with references to theatre, satirical print culture and traditions of the grotesque. Derisive references to issues and socio-political associations of high art naval representation, the Navy and patriotic public display functioned to exploit the register of meaning these possessed for his informed and intelligent audiences who were in a position to enjoy a sense of superiority at comprehending the work's complex nuances of implication and humour, laughing at others, but also at themselves. While Gillray's principle consumer market consisted of those of relative wealth, literacy and cultural knowledge, his prints also appealed to broader audiences. Displayed in taverns and shop-windows, copiously pirated and commonly viewed,[19] interpreted and discussed collectively as a sociable activity, their multiple meanings, cultural-relevance and use of familiar representational resources, especially of patriotism, offered a register of

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[18] Godfrey, *Gillray*, 17; Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 58. Huttner, the aforementioned correspondent of *London und Paris*, noted in 1806 that 'caricature shops are always besieged by the public, but it is only in Mrs. Humphrey's shop, where Gillray's works are sold, that you will find people of high rank, good taste and intelligence.' *London und Paris*, 18 July 1806, 246.

[19] Regarding the accessibility of Gillray's prints and his status as 'the eighteenth-century's most pirated print-maker', see Richard Clay, 'Riotous images: representations of Joseph Priestley in British prints during the French Revolution', *History of Education*, 37: 4, July 2008, 585–603, specifically 596.

meaning for lower to middle class, uneducated and (semi)literate publics.[20] Gillray's resonant, responsive, polysemic, witty and critical prints confirm his prominent and informed discursive position, and indicate the range and complexity of the images' audiences.[21]

As indicated above, this art historical study employs analytical methodologies that approach Gillray's work in relation to his biography and the historical context of Britain during the period of naval war against revolutionary and Napoleonic France (1793-1815). I will consider the role of prints, paintings, monuments, publications and theatre in constructing Britons' patriotic interpretation of the Navy, and how this mapped on to contested and shifting discourses pertaining to naval actualities, war, national identity, representation, heroism and patriotic display. This investigation incorporates consideration of the contemporary patriotic public sphere, a phrase I use to connote the conceptual and discursive social and cultural space in which discourse, particularly patriotic displays, existed and operated. This sphere is taken to be both concrete in terms of physical spaces and objects of display, and virtual in terms of discourse and abstract ideas. This term relates to Jürgen Habermas's definition of the 'public sphere' as a virtual or imaginary community that does not necessarily exist in any identifiable space.[22] The most important feature of the public sphere as it existed in the eighteenth century was the public use of reason in rational-critical debate and discourse that took place in, for example, coffee houses, reading and print rooms, societies, clubs, newspapers and the Royal Academy. I will explore the socio-political

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[20] The population of London was predominantly literate by the late eighteenth century, including the commercial classes. However, gauging the levels of literacy is problematic, particularly when you consider that the ability to read might not be dependant on the ability to write, with the former skill being more socially diverse. Also, audiences of images and texts were not limited to those who could read them, as their interpretation was often a sociable practice that involved an individual explaining them to others. Nevertheless, the contemporary level of literacy is significant, indicating that most viewers of Gillray's prints would have a literacy competency that enabled them to interpret them in relation to their discursive context, being informed by newspapers and other publications in circulation at the time. For a discussion of literacy in eighteenth-century London see David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England,* London, 1975, 145-154. See also Naomi Tadmor, 'In the Even My Wife Read to Me: Women, Reading and Household Life in the Eighteenth Century', in James Raven, Helen Small, and Naomi Tadmor (eds), *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*, Cambridge, 1996, 162-74; R. S. Schofield, 'Dimensions of Illiteracy, 1750-1850', *Explorations in Economic History,* 10, 1973, 437-54, 444.
[21] By the term 'polysemic' I mean possessing multiple meaning, bearing different interpretation. It is part of the apparatus of semiotic theory to be discussed later in this Introduction, 8.
[22] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Cambridge, 1991, 176.

nature of the patriotic public sphere in relation to its prescribed meaning, participatory conventions and exclusivity.

I employ the social theories of Karl Marx, Janet Wolff and Raymond Williams,[23] particularly pertaining to ideology, by which I mean 'a set of beliefs, values, and opinions, which shapes the way an individual or a group such as a social class, thinks, acts, and understand the world, and/or form the basis of a social, economic, or political philosophy or program.'[24] This theoretical perspective approaches art as ideology, 'the product of specific historical practices on the part of identifiable social groups in given [actual and material] conditions, and therefore bear the imprint of the ideas, values and conditions of existence of those groups.'[25] Consequently, this study interprets representations of naval heroism as products of socio-cultural conventions promulgated by the ruling elites regarding class structure, social hierarchy, military rank, partisan politics, gender, national identity and high art. With this, Gillray's work is investigated in relation to the shifting and dialogical discursive contexts that it fed off and into, and consideration is given to how it expressed, perpetuated and constructed audiences' interpretations in accordance with their own nature, views and knowledge of social, political and cultural issues.

This thesis also uses semiotic theory to assess the meanings and significance of Gillray's prints, which are approached as signs, that is, signifiers of signified meanings, constructed and interpreted by the producer's and viewer's bodies of knowledge (their 'semiotic ground'). Given that, while there existed certain common semiotic ground that allowed recognition of prints' denoted meanings, viewers had access to different discourses, developed different bodies of knowledge and varied in their adeptness at decoding such visual signs, Gillray's prints are polysemic, in other words as having multiple meanings for different people both at any given time (synchronically), and over time (diachronically).[26] Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of the

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[23] Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology*, London, 1963; Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *On Literature and Art*, New York, 1976; Janet Wolff, *The Social Production of Art*, London, 1993; Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford, 1978.

[24] This definition of 'ideology' is taken from the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

[25] Wolff, *Social Production of Art*, 49.

[26] These ideas and arguments have been articulated by my supervisor Richard Clay. See Richard Clay, 'Bouchardon's statue of Louis XV; iconoclasm and the transformation of signs', Stacy Boldrick and

'dialogic' is also applied in my approach to Gillray's prints and other contemporary discourses as dialogical, that is, engaged in a perpetual dialogue that responds to and anticipates its progression.[27] Bakhtin's carnivalesque theories on the grotesque, death, laughter and comic debasement will also be utilised, in particular to investigate Gillray's mock-heroic *Design for a Naval Pillar*, 1 February 1800 (Fig. 1 and 2), with its humorous, derisive, morbid and francophobic imagery.[28] These methodological and theoretical approaches have been critical to my development of unique interpretations of Gillray's work.

This thesis presents an original body of art historical research on Gillray, in terms of topic, argument, approach and source material. It comprises three chapters that are ordered to lead from the general to the specific, each informing subsequent investigation and interpretation, while following the chronology of context and playing out the narrative of Gillray's and shifts in his work. The first chapter, 'Naval Context: Actualities and Symbolism', discusses the negative aspects of the Navy in contemporary discourse, especially in terms of service, recruitment, administration, finances, warfare and sacrifice, and the ways in which they were positively represented. Gillray's work is related to discourses on naval actualities and to the symbolism used in its representations. Specific prints by Gillray are interpreted as indicative of his critical position in relation to traditional representations of naval matters which predominantly evaded direct reference to negative actualities in order

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Richard Clay (eds), *Iconoclasm: Contested Objects, Contested Terms*, Aldershot, 2007, 93-122, especially 94. The polysemy of Gillray's prints, their multiple, contested and shifting interpretations, is exemplified in a prosecution case in 1793 Birmingham, where James (or William) Belcher's display in his shop-window of royal caricatures, including Gillray's *The Sun in his Glory*, was seen as an offence, particularly as this loyalist print was completely misinterpreted in the prosecution brief as 'representing the side features of his majesty on the top of a candlestick with rays darting there from for the wicked purpose of ridiculing the king and royal family'. Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 494; Treasury Solicitor's papers 11/578/189, National Archives, Kew.

[27] Mikhail Bakhtin discusses the word in relations to dialogism, stating that 'a word forms a concept of its own object in a dialogic way […] The word in living conversation is directly, blatantly, oriented toward a future answer-word: it provokes an answer, anticipates it and structures itself in the answer's direction. Forming itself in an atmosphere of the already spoken, the word is at the same time determined by that which has not yet been said but which is needed and in fact anticipated by the answering word. Such is the situation in any living dialogue. This orientation towards an answer is open, blatant and concrete.' Mikhail Bakhtin, 'Discourse in the Novel', first published 1934-5, in Michael Holquist (ed.), Caryl Emerson & Michael Holquist (trans), *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, Austin, 1981, 259-422, specifically 279-80.

[28] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World,* first published 1965, Hélène Iswolsky (trans.), Bloomington, 1993; Pam Morris, *The Bakhtin Reader: Selected Writings of Bakhtin, Medvedev, Voloshinov,* London, 1994.

to promulgate the ruling elite's notions of strength, supremacy and loyalism, thereby asserting the socio-political exclusivity of martial intelligence and patriotic display.[29] This chapter lays the foundations for a focused investigation of Gillray's critical interpretation of the official culture of representational naval heroism, monumental sculpture and patriotic public display.

The second chapter, 'Naval Heroism and Monumental Sculpture', argues that representations of naval heroism, including Gillray's prints, were informed by debates about individual rank, achievement and social status, and notions of patriotism, nationalism, and monumentalism, all of which were prominent in contemporary discourse. Specific Gillray prints are analysed and explained in relation to discourse on naval heroism, particularly press commentaries, art criticism, publications and theatre performances. Prints pertaining to the Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson and contemporary military monuments commissioned for St. Paul's Cathedral will provide case studies for this investigation. The argument concerning Gillray's derisive interpretations of representational naval heroism here are twofold. Firstly, they indicate his criticism of the socio-politically exclusive pretensions, conventions and implications of official loyalist patriotic display, with the interrelated significance of high art, rank, military honour, class, loyalism, ministerialism and propagandist idealism. Secondly, and consequently, they show his dialogical engagement with, intervention in, and awareness of official and unofficial discourses in his satirical assimilation of the conventions of high art.

The final chapter, 'Gillray's Critique of the Naval Pillar Project', focuses specifically on *Design* to explore and explain this project for a naval monument. It considers how this design was informed by, and intervened in, discourses concerning the Naval Pillar's form, location, purpose, audience, design specifications, competition, visual and textual proposals, public subscription, socio-political implications and associations, partisan struggle and insufficiency, significance within the patriotic

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[29] I will be using the term 'loyalism' to refer to the principles and actions of loyalists, that is support for and adherence to the sovereign and government. The increasing dominance of this political ideology in eighteenth-century Britain can be seen as responsive to dissent, riots, radicalism, radical and reformist societies (specifically the London Corresponding Society), threats of a French invasion and fears that examples set by the French revolution would stimulate revolutionary ideas in Britain. Austin Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement: 1794-1814*, Oxford, 2003, 17-18.

public sphere and ultimate non-realisation. Such a sustained and specific investigation of the history of this failed project is unprecedented, building upon brief discussions of the subject in Jenks' *Naval Engagements* and Alison Yarrington's 'Popular and Imaginary Pantheons in early Nineteenth-Century England'.[30] In the first exegesis of such focus on a single, overlooked, Gillray print, this chapter elaborates upon, unites and anchors themes from the previous chapters concerning the discursive context of naval actualities, heroism, high art representation and Gillray's work.[31] The derisive qualities of this pseudo-design (in terms of its distortion of high art conventions, inclusion of grotesque imagery and ridiculous oceanic location) are related to the various, shifting and contested discourses surrounding such monumental and public patriotic display. Bakhtinian theories of the grotesque body, humour, comic debasement, victory over fear and the death-rebirth cycle are applied to Gillray's print in order to speculate on its derisive implications, function and legibility for its audiences. I argue this work was constructed in relation to, and contributed to, mounting critical discourses on the ineffectuality and idealism of loyalist patriotic propaganda,[32] its socio-political exclusivity, excesses, hypocrisy, ridiculousness and inappropriateness.

Ultimately, this thesis contextualises Gillray's work in relation to the discursive contexts in which it was produced and perceived, particularly the discourses on naval heroism, its representations of, and expression in, patriotic public display in a maritime nation at war with France. Thus, the complexity, topicality and significance of specific prints are explained and interpreted as indicative of Gillray's awareness of the dialogical relations between various discourses and his perceptive and critical construction of, and intervention in, them through satirical pictorial expression.

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[30] Primary sources on the Naval Pillar are principally from newspapers and published letters, while secondary literature consists of Jenks, *Engagements*; Alison Yarrington, 'Popular and Imaginary pantheons in Early Nineteenth-Century England', in Wrigley and Craske (eds.), *Pantheons*, 107-121.

[31] *Design* has only ever been briefly referenced in recent scholarly literature, as a footnote and reproduction. See Pratt, 'Naval Contemplation', 16, ftnt. 22: 'The pretensions of the competing artists were satirised in Gillray's 'Design for the Naval Pillar', reproduced in H. Smailes, 'Prints and Propaganda. The Artist's Victory', in *Glorious Victory: Admiral Duncan and the Battle of Camperdown*, Dundee, 1997, 50.'

[32] I will be using the term 'propaganda', in accordance with the *Oxford English Dictionary*'s definition, to mean disseminated information that is biased, misleading and persuasive, intended to promote a political cause or viewpoint. As this thesis will reveal through the study of various naval representations, most, if not all discourses could be seen as propaganda, as they express, inform and construct the ideas and views of their audiences.

Naval Context: Actualities and Symbolism

This chapter places Gillray's work within its social, historical and cultural context, particularly pertaining to the maritime, considering how contemporary events and discourses concerning naval warfare, heroism, commemoration and national identity informed his perception and representation of the Navy and, specifically, of naval actualities and symbolism. Issues concerning the problems within the Royal Navy and the grim realities of death, mutilation, grievances and insubordination of its sailors will be discussed. By analysing the (mis)correlation between naval actuality and symbolism, we are able then to consider the social and political reasons for this imbalance and the implications it has upon cultural constructions of the Navy's image. I consider the extent to which naval representations, and the symbols used in them, were responses to, and manipulations of, actualities, presenting the argument that they were dictated by dominant ideology promulgated by the ruling elite to conform to loyalist patriotic propaganda and avoid problematic actualities. I will argue that this indicates the socio-political exclusivity of official patriotic public display, to be explored further in the subsequent chapters. With this knowledge of the contemporary discursive context, a thorough investigation of naval symbolism can ensue that will consider how, why and the extent to which such representation was a manipulation of, and response to, actuality. The symbolic naval characters of Jack Tar and Britannia will be investigated in relation to contextual actualities that made their socio-political significance problematic, demonstrating how contemporary British discourses informed the use and reception of such symbolism, particularly in Gillray's prints.

The increasing interest in naval affairs and frequent constructions of national identity in maritime terms must be borne in mind throughout this investigation of Gillray's naval prints, which are revealed to be informed by discourse to which they also contributed. While contextualising naval representations, and specific symbols used in them in relation to the social and political implications of Britain's war with France, this chapter seeks to reveal how Gillray engaged with and constructed popular perceptions of the Navy. This chapter provides the essential contextual framework

upon which Gillray's naval prints can be appropriately approached. By setting Gillray's work within its discursive naval context, more specific study will follow in the subsequent chapters, focusing upon his interpretations and constructions of the themes of patriotic public display and representations of heroism, particularly in official high art and especially monumental sculpture. This study of contemporary naval actualities and symbolism is crucial for the thesis's aim of casting light on Gillray's significant, yet overlooked, *Design*, 1 February 1800 (Fig. 1 and 2).

Throughout Gillray's oeuvre, from his beginnings as an aspiring engraver and throughout his successful career as a satirical printmaker, his interest in, and knowledge of, all things maritime, particularly in terms of the Navy and its seamen, is evident. Maritime imagery is often used for satirical, symbolic and topical ends, for example in *The Nancy Packet,* 19 October 1784, (Fig. 5), *The French Invasion*, 5 November 1793 (Fig. 6) and *End of the Irish Invasion*, 20 January 1797 (Fig. 7). Indeed, he was as much at home depicting the sea, ships, tars and officers, as creating vicious political caricature, for which he was, and remains, renowned. The commission Gillray received to produce marine studies on visiting Spithead for the aid of Philippe-Jacques de Loutherbourg in painting *Lord Howe's Victory,* 1795 (Fig. 4), can be seen to have stimulated and reinforced Gillray's interest in the maritime.[33] Such observation informed his depiction of marine imagery in subsequent work with, for example, the rigging, naval gun and tars that featured in *Death of Nelson*, 29 December 1805 (Fig. 8 and 11), and which strongly correlate with the earlier studies (Fig. 9, 10, 12 - 14). Though Gillray never witnessed the Navy in battle, his work indicates a considered awareness of the actualities of naval life and warfare that he gained through engagement with contemporary discourse on such topics. Based in the trading and political capital, London, the principle audiences for Gillray's prints would have been all too aware of the Admiralty's policies and of naval affairs that constituted a significant part of everyday-life and were widely publicised in various discourses, particularly newspapers, seamen's accounts and government documents, including published naval records and dispatches.

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[33] These studies include depictions of the sea, vessels, rigging, sailors, officers, uniforms, naval apparatus and weaponry. The British Museum's drawings collection holds a considerable quantity of these studies, which were formerly attributed for sometime until recently to de Loutherbourg.

During Britain's war against revolutionary and Napoleonic France (1793-1815), maintaining the nation's Navy and morale was critical, yet, alongside this, the negative actualities of naval life and warfare were becoming increasingly apparent. As the Navy struggled to man the expanding fleet and replace losses, it took measures that impacted heavily on day-to-day life. The naval press's use of bribery tactics in the form of a joining bounty, physical aggression, and its encroachment further inland, were indicative of the extent to which the Admiralty and government were prepared to go to deal with an increasingly desperate situation.[34] Significantly, only a small percentage of sailors then in the Royal Navy were true volunteers with more than half the average crew obtained by press-gangs.[35]

Gillray's *The Liberty of the Subject*, 15 October 1779 (Fig. 15), graphically depicted an aggressive press-gang causing a street scene in which a feeble tailor is being taken by force. Though produced many decades earlier in relation to the violent methods of recruitment during the American War of Independence (1775-82), this relatively unusual monochrome print indicates Gillray's awareness of the naval press and discourse on it, particularly concerning the controversial issue of the sailors' liberty, which would have still been a consideration for his numerous naval representations during the French Wars, when the scale of impressment and resistance to it were greater. Nevertheless, significantly, Gillray did not return to the 1779 naval press theme, suggesting his loyalist patriotic and ministerial alliances restricted his satirical interpretation of this negative aspect of the Navy during the French Revolutionary War and the period of his state pension. Impressment was a significant cause of grievance among seamen and citizens, being perceived as inhumane from various perspectives: moral, legal, medical and sentimental.[36] For example, Sir John Borlase

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[34] The number of men serving in the Navy 'increased in successive conflicts until at the height of the Napoleonic Wars in 1805 it had risen to 120,000- a number caused by a proportionate growth in naval tonnage.' Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 4.

[35] Brian Lavery (ed.), *Shipboard Life and Organisation, 1731-1815*, Aldershot, 1998, 632-3; R. J. Cootes, *Britain Since 1700,* Harlow, Essex, 1982, 103.

[36] For examples of such theatre performances and songs see R. Anderson, *Poems of Various Subjects*, Carlisle, 1798, 'Song XLIV: The Press Gang', 218, sung by Mrs. Mountain, set to music by Mr. Hook, performed at Vauxhall 1795; Anonymous, *True Blue, or the Press Gang. A favourite song*, London, c.1790.

Warren, an officer, described the Admiralty's use of forceful press-gangs as an 'illegal, unconstitutional, and oppressive, custom […] It is astonishing to think how Britons can suppose it necessary and just, that more than a hundred and twenty thousand of their most valuable fellow-subjects should not only lose their personal liberty, be robbed of a considerable part of their pecuniary right, and exposed to imminent danger, but also give up their rational powers, in order to become fitter instruments for the defence of the person and property of their merciless enslavers!'[37] Indeed, it was an acknowledged and disturbing paradox understood by many Britons that 'in a land which boasted of the liberty of its subjects, the very men who helped preserve this freedom seemed to have no liberty at all.'[38]

Alongside impressments, the Navy adopted the methods of less selective recruitment that saw ordinary seamen, foreigners and even criminals taken on at the cost of a general worsening in manpower quality, and of turning men over from one returning ship to others ready to set sail.[39] This all damaged the seamen's morale, loyalty to their ship and social relations.[40] Social problems within the Navy increased with impressment, insubordination, specifically the mutinies of 1797, and reforms along state centralising lines.[41] Old personal bonds of mutual obligation and solidarity between officers and crew were weakened with the Admiralty holding more power

[37] Sir John Borlase Warren, *A view of the naval force of Great-Britain: ... To which are added observations and hints for the improvement of the naval service. By an officer ...* London, 1791, 52-4. See also, Thomas Gisborne, *An enquiry into the duties of men in the higher and middle classes of society in Great Britain, resulting from their respective stations*, London, 1795, I, 40; Elliot Arthy, *The seaman's medical advocate: or, an attempt to show that five thousand seamen are, annually, during war, lost to the British nation, ... through the yellow fever, ... Illustrated by cases and facts*, London, printed for Messrs Richardson and Mr. Egerton, 1798, 171.
[38] Lincoln, *Royal Navy,* 14. 'Jack Nastyface complained that whatever was said about Britain's boasted liberty, from the moment a youth joined the Navy he lost his liberty to speak and act freely: he could *think* but would soon learn to keep his thoughts to himself.' Quoted in Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 27.
[39] An analysis of the musters of ships commissioning at Plymouth in 1805, in comparison with one done several decades earlier in 1770-9, reveals a significant worsening of the manning situation of the Navy, with the quality of manpower deteriorating so that the ratio of skilled to unskilled seaman had reversed (only 35% petty officers, able seamen or idlers, down from 62%, while 65% ordinary seamen or landsmen, up from 38%) and an increased number of men turned over from one ship to another. Rodger, '*Devon Men and the Navy',* Table 10, cited in Rodger, 'Shipboard Life', Fischer et. al., *The North Sea*, 29-40, specifically 29-30. While anecdotal evidence suggests that by 1800 the Navy's reluctance to admit criminals had been overcome by necessity, it is unclear how many criminals sentenced by local authorities to naval service were actually accepted into the Navy. Impressment of landsmen was illegal and virtually unknown of in the 1750s, but some considered it to be widespread by end of century. Christopher Lloyd, *The British Seaman*, London, 1968, 127.
[40] For a discussion of the implications of turning men over in the Navy, see Rodger 'Shipboard Life', Fischer et. al., *North Sea*, 31.
[41] Rodger, 'Shipboard Life', Fischer et. al., *North Sea*, 36.

and officers increasingly adopting an image of their ship as a machine and their men as mere mechanical components.[42] In *Hero of the Nile*, 1 December 1798 (Fig. 16) and *The Death of Nelson*, 29 December 1805 (Fig. 17), Gillray demonstrated his knowledge of naval individuals and social relations. Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson is presented in both as naval officer *par excellence*, supported by his duteous and loyal tars. Such construction corresponded with the audiences' view, informed by Nelson's good repute in discourses as a charismatic and paternalistic officer who held his men in high esteem, appreciating the important role they played in the Navy and their various grievances, particularly on matters of wages, prize money and turning over.[43] Significantly, in a period plagued by naval discontent, insubordination and impressment, Nelson was not implicated in any mutinies nor did he have to use the press to man his own fleet, affirming his largely unprecedented naval popularity.[44] Nevertheless, even such positive representations of naval heroism only made sense in relation to discourses on the problematic actualities of naval service and warfare. Both Gillray and his audiences' interpretations of such images and of the Navy would have been informed by not only the predominant positive patriotic rhetoric of official discourse, particularly naval accounts, ceremonies and monumental sculpture, but also the more negative and realistic, unofficial discourses of theatre, prints, radical publications and word-of-mouth.

The Navy also faced considerable financial problems in maintaining the fleet, which was not in a good state after being engaged in continuous warfare since 1793,

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[42] Michael Lewis, *A Social History of the Navy: 1793-1815*, London, 1960, 275-6. A handbook for naval officers advised the captain to imagine 'the movements of his ship to be those of a great machine, whose vigour, expertness, utility, and effect, are dependent on discipline'. *Observations and Instructions for the Use of the Commissioned, the Junior, and other Officers of the Royal Navy … by a Captain in the Royal Navy*, London, 1804, 36. Cf. *The Cruise,* 11, 24.

[43] After the Battle of the Nile, in a letter ordered to be read to the ships' companies, Nelson offered them his "most sincere and cordial thanks for their very gallant behaviour in this glorious battle.' Letter from Nelson to the ships' companies, 25 August 1798. Also after this battle Nelson billed the Admiralty for an additional £60,000 prize money for the French ship set on fire, despite becoming unpopular with Earl Spencer, in order to gain further prize money to distribute among his crew. He claimed that "an Admiral may be amply rewarded by his feelings and the approbation of his superiors, but what reward have the inferior Officers and men but the value of the Prize?" Letter from Nelson to Earl Spencer, 7 September 1798. Cited in Geoffrey Rawson (ed.), *Nelson's Letters*, London, 1960, 196. For a discussion of Nelson's concern for the health and welfare of his crew, see Jordan, 'Admiral Nelson', *New Aspects*, 109-19, especially 112-3. While it is uncertain how much of such information was common knowledge to Gillray and his audiences, it must be borne in mind that newspapers and periodicals often included excerpts from naval dispatches and letters, while the accounts told by seamen would have spread through word-of-mouth to the broader population.

[44] Jordan, 'Admiral Nelson', *New Aspects*, 112.

stretching its capability in terms of pay, availability of ships to sail, and dockyard facilities.[45] Naval wages were in arrears and unable to keep up with wartime inflation, thus ensuring the Navy was manned by discontented sailors and officers, produced embittered veteran pensioners, and lost seamen to the more lucrative merchant service.[46] As subsequent chapters will consider in relation to contemporary monumental sculpture and Gillray's prints, such financial problems within the Navy, publicised in governmental reports and naval accounts, would have provided a critical backdrop to elaborate representations of naval heroism that formed part of the culture of patriotic public display.[47] The grievances regarding wages, prize money distribution, victualling processes and disciplinary methods were prominent among the mutineers at Spithead and the Nore in 1797,[48] suggesting that the various problems within the Navy, discussed here, caused discontent and contributed to notable acts of insubordination.[49] The mutinies were significant in British naval history, altering the perception of the Navy and its men as a vital defence force worthy of respect. Such discursive shifts corresponded with the elevation of Jack Tar, to be discussed later in this chapter.

Alongside such naval problems, the grim realities of naval service, in terms of sacrifice, death and mutilation, were becoming increasingly apparent among a nation in which '1 in 4 plebeian families were directly involved in the war',[50] and around

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[45] 'Men of war' ships not only suffered damage in battles, but also from leaking, rotting, wracking out of shape and ill repairs made with unseasoned wood. Clive Emsley, *British Society and the French Wars, 1793-1815*, London, 1979, 108. See also Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 5.

[46] 'Undoubtedly the naval wage by then [the final decade of the eighteenth century] was much less than merchantmen paid even in peacetime'. Julian S. Corbett, *Private Papers of George, Second Earl Spencer,* London, 1914, II, 105-7; Rodger, 'Shipboard Life', Fischer et. al., *North Sea*, 36; Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 12. Naval officers complained that their wage was insufficient due to the substantial personal expenses they incurred in their role, particularly in terms of hospitality, charity and lavish uniform. For example, see *A Letter from a Captain of a Man of War to a Member of Parliament,* London, 1773, 10.

[47] *True Briton,* 24 July 1799; 25 July 1799.

[48] For a discussion of such grievances, see Rodger, 'Shipboard Life', Fischer et. al., *North Sea*, 31; Roger Morriss, *Naval Power and British Culture, 1760-1850: Public Trust and Government Ideology*, Aldershot, 2004, 81.

[49] The resolute, highly organised and politically sophistication mutinies of 1797 suggest they developed from radical and intellectual individuals mainly entering through the Quota Acts 1795, who were literate, aware of their rights and resented being forced into the service, fostering discontented awareness among seamen of their exploitation and grievances. Lewis, *Social History of the Navy*, 124. For a discussion of how the suppression the mutinies, prevention of their re-occurrence and concessions/reforms granted, see Jordan, 'Admiral Nelson', *New Aspects*, 111; Rodger 'Shipboard Life', Fischer et. al., *North Sea*, 31; Morriss, *Naval Power*, 81.

[50] Jordan and Rogers, 'Admirals as Heroes', 217.

130,000 men served in the Navy.[51] During this period of almost continuous warfare against France (1793-1815) approximately 100,000 British seamen died, with an estimated 12 per cent from enemy action, shipwreck or similar disaster, 20 per cent from accidents and no less than 65 per cent from disease.[52] Dr. Johnson laments the mounting death toll of armed men in recent wars, the small proportion of whom 'ever felt the stroke of an enemy' and the countless number who languished unnoticed of disease.[53] It is evident that Britons were uncomfortably aware of the absence of heroics, order or recognition in the actualities of naval service, particularly for the lower-deck masses. The common sight of pitiful wounded naval veterans would have compounded such views.[54] The loss of men to the Navy put emotional, economic and social strains upon communities, particularly those where naval recruitment was traditionally strong. The ultimate consequence was that war was increasingly seen in sacrificial terms, evident in naval melodramas, accounts, novels, battle paintings and prints. Like many of his contemporaries, Gillray was part of this context of armed service and warfare, and had, actually, experienced its negative repercussions first-hand from a young age because his Scottish father was a veteran of the British Army who lost an arm at the Battle of Fontenoy in 1745. This would undoubtedly have informed Gillray's awareness of the grim realities of service and warfare, his appreciation of the role of the common fighting men, and resentment towards the predominant evasion of bitter actualities in official representations of idealised and elite heroism, a theme explored in the next chapter.

Gillray's grotesque, morbid and chaotic visions of conflict, particularly in relation to the French revolution, were a common theme in his work and indicate his sincere,

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[51] Lawrence Stone (ed.), *An Imperial State at War: 1675-1815*, London and New York, 1994, 166.

[52] Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 171. Dudley Pope estimated that during French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars the Navy lost 1875 men in action, 13,600 from shipwreck and 72,000 from disease and accident. Dudley Pope, *Life in Nelson's Navy,* London, 1987, 131. Nevertheless, the improvements in hygiene, medicine, ventilation and diet substantially decreased mortality in the Navy. For a discussion of this see Doctor Gilbert Blane, *Select Dissertation on Several Subjects of Medical Science*, London, 1822, 2-3, 22; *Observations on the Diseases incident to Seamen*, London, 1785, V.

[53] 'Dr. Johnson pamphlet on Falkland Islands' quoted in James Thomson Callender*, The political progress of Britain; or, An impartial history of abuses in the government of the British Empire, in Europe, Asia, and America, ...* Philadelphia, 1795, 56.

[54] As the crippled ex-seamen William Spavens memoirs pointed out, the total human cost of naval warfare was partially disguised since the maimed were geographically dispersed. William Spavens, *The Narrative of William Spavens a Chatham Pensioner Written by Himself,* London, first published 1796, 1998. See also *The Disabled Sailor*, London, 1800, 2.

albeit exaggerated, unrestrained and unorthodox, appreciation of its grim actualities. For example, *The Blood of the Murdered crying for Vengeance*, 16 February 1793 (Fig. 18), portrayed the late King Louis XVI moments after execution with his blood bearing his imagined lamentations.[55] *The Apotheosis of Hoche*, 11 January 1798 (Fig. 19), depicted the General of the Republic and commander of an army for the invasion of Ireland ascending to a hellish Jacobin world above a landscape of military devastation: a distant town, sign-posted 'La Vendée' is ablaze, the republican army charges unarmed fugitives, corpses float down the stream, two bodies hang from a tree branch while a headless heap lie nearby. Here Gillray exploited the revulsion felt by most Britons, predominantly loyalists, at the atrocities of the French revolution, especially the Reign of Terror, and their widespread and often fever-pitch fear of losing the war, being invaded by savage French revolutionaries and experiencing a horrific civil war of their own.

Gillray's constructions of the Navy and French revolution responded to, engaged with, and influenced contemporary discourse on naval war against revolutionary France. Particularly crucial to such discourse were the various types of texts discussing issues of naval service and warfare which would have informed his prints' and his audiences' interpretations. Knowledge of naval actualities was informed and intensified by certain texts, such as those published anonymously by naval officers, particularly after the mutinies, that expressed the disadvantages of a career in the Navy, in terms of negative realities of hardship and sacrifice, inadequacy of pay and necessity of reform, with some even indicating an appreciation of the mutineers' grievances.[56] The published narratives, accounts and letters of seamen themselves, though few in number and predominantly expressive of individual grievances, offered

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[55] The blade and head drip with blood, which ascends in a broad crimson swirl across the design, expanding into clouds of smoke with words inscribed within them.

[56] For a discussion of the naval officer's grievances, see Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 13, 19-21; *A Letter from a Captain of a Man of War, to a Member of Parliament*, London, 1773, 4, 10-11, 65-66; *A Fair Statement of the Real Grievances experienced by the Officers and Sailors in the Navy of Great Britain; with a Plan of Reform ... By a Naval Officer*, London, 1797, 1; *The Case and distressed Situation of the Widows of Officers of the Navy, Explained in a Letter from a Captain of the Navy to a Member of Parliament*, London, 1775, 7; *A View of the Naval Force of Great Britain ... by an Officer of Rank*, London, 1791; *Observations and Instructions for the Use of Commissioned, the Junior, and other Officers of the Royal Navy ... by a Captain in the Royal Navy*, London, 1804, 78.

rare insights into first-hand naval experience.[57] The numerous texts produced by radicals also provided graphic descriptions of warfare and its unappealing effects that interpreted the Navy in a particularly critical light and emphasised the gruesome sacrifice of fighting.[58]

Despite such discourses providing an insight into the actualities of naval service and warfare, and conflict being a frequent and familiar circumstance in this era, with a large proportion of the population bearing arms and spreading knowledge through word-of-mouth to their families and friends, domestic experience was far from the sailor's actuality, both geographically and conceptually.[59] Britons' interpretation of war was largely constructed predominantly along positive, propaganda lines of heroism and patriotism through publications, victory celebrations, naval thanksgivings and commemorative displays.[60] Such manipulations of the public image of Britain's Navy and war with France can be seen as symptomatic of an establishment eager to assert its strength and capability, disguise any failings in its own preparations for war, dispel threats to the status quo which they dominated, and elicit loyalist patriotic sentiment and endeavour.[61] At the level of discourse, the maritime was frequently used to frame senses of national identity that united disparate Britons and asserted the virtues and distinction of Britishness, thus countering and dispelling unsettling naval actualities and radical interpretations.[62] Gillray's representations of naval imagery and symbolism can be seen to have referred to negative naval actualities and connotations, through irony, inversion and contradistinction, deriding their exclusion from the

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[57] For example, in 1766 Edward Thompson tried to dissuade a young relative from following in his footsteps, by listing a string of hardships, both physical and mental, that had to be endured in the naval service. He poignantly stated, 'if I have met one tar who was uneasy of shore, I have found thousands in a worse situation at sea'. R. B., *Sailor's Letters [signed R. B.],* Nettleton, Plymouth, c.1800, 85, 87, 175.

[58] Descriptions of war and its effects upon individuals are found in J. Fawcett's *The Art of War*, 1795; R. Southey's *Joan of Arc, An Epic Poem,* Bristol, 1796; *The Dying Sailor*, Cambridge Intelligencer, 15 December 1798.

[59] Lincoln estimates that by 1803 one in five of the British population able to bear arms was engaged in some form of military service. Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 4.

[60] Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 4.

[61] Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 15.

[62] Lincoln notes, there existed a 'dichotomy between public recognition of the Navy as an institution and public understanding about the realities of life at sea which seamen's best endeavours could never wholly overcome.' 'The story of maritime Britain was constructed in positive terms: it helped to bind and unite the nation and it apparently allowed the nation to display its better qualities', which included honourability, loyalty, fair-dealing, courage, strength, fellowship, righteousness and integrity. Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 36, 6.

Navy's official image. Thus, he attacked the ruling elites that endorsed the evasion of such issues to create an interpretation that accorded with their idealised, classicised and patriotic taste, expectations and demands.

Naval Symbolism

As I have shown, negative contemporary naval actualities hindered the sense of loyalty, unity, social harmony and strength sought by the establishment to assure Britons during this unstable period. At a time of naval warfare, invasion threats, naval defence, military recruitment, transatlantic trade and empire building, the Navy was a prominent aspect of Britons' discursive context, key to their construction and perpetuation of national identity in emphatically positive terms. Below, I investigate naval symbolism, specifically Britannia and Jack Tar, in relation to contemporary discourses pertaining to maritime, political, social and cultural issues, and consider how these symbolic characters were used to evade accurate representations of actuality, yet, nevertheless, possessed negative and radical connotations of their own. I argue that naval symbolism did not have a single form of representation, or unanimous or static significance, but rather its meanings shifted in accordance with the changing cultural-historical context and accompanying discourses. Of prime consideration is how Gillray's use of naval symbolism was a construction of the discourses on naval matters that informed his and his audiences' interpretation of the Navy, particularly its negative actualities and associations. Gillray's socio-political stance, ambiguous as it was during this period, was even more so in his use of naval imagery of contested symbolic value.

As symbols, Britannia and Jack were polysemic, possessing multiple meanings, at any given time (synchronically) and over a period of time (diachronically).[63] These characters were familiar, particularly in prints, songs poetry and theatrical performances, acquiring, as signs, a semiotic ground common to the majority of Britons, both literate and illiterate, which made them readily comprehensible to broad audiences. Their polysemicity and cross-class appeal makes it hazardous to assign

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[63] These ideas and arguments are indebted to my supervisor, Richard Clay. See Richard Clay, 'Bouchardon's statue of Louis XV', Boldrick and Clay (eds), *Iconoclasm*, 93-122, especially 94.

them to particular social and/or political groups as exclusively representative of their collective views. Indeed, neither was synonymous with a specific political party, being appropriated into loyalist, ministerial, Tory, Whig and radical politics.[64] As such, the constructions and representations of Britannia and Jack entailed various ideological struggles, which contributed to their symbolic ambiguity and complexity.

Gillray's *Britannia*, 25 June 1795 (Fig. 20), a comic map of the England and Wales in the form of Britannia riding upon a sea monster with a trident in one hand and a dove upon the other, exploited this character's naval symbolism as ruler of the oceans and calmer of the seas. As an old, melancholy and grotesque woman, this depiction of Britannia can be seen through contradistinction as a satirical attack upon the increasingly predominant positive representation of this national naval symbol as a characteristically passive and helpless classical beauty. Through this he subtly derided the loyalist patriotic propaganda such interpretation endorsed. Gillray continued to employ Britannia's image throughout his oeuvre as a naval and national symbol. Later, in *The Death of Nelson*, 29 December 1805 (Fig. 17), Gillray played upon Britannia's status as the embodiment of the nation's emotional and moral virtue, expressing the grief felt by so many Britons at the loss of this great seaman.[65] Seated mournfully supporting the fallen hero, Britannia's representation strongly corresponded iconographically with conventional commemorative sculpture.

Originally used in Roman times, and traditionally associated with the sea, Britannia was only first depicted with Neptune's trident in 1797, on the mass-produced cartwheel penny and two-penny coins designed by Conrad Heinrich Küchler and

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[64] While my discussion and examples predominantly take such naval symbolism as examples of loyalist propaganda, I acknowledge that Britannia and Jack Tar were employed for political patriotic messages in Opposition discourses. An example of this is found in the reformist *Morning Chronicle,* which declared in 1797 after the Battle of Camperdown, 'however we may deplore the calamity, or condemn the impolicy of the war itself, it is with pride and pleasure that we witness the exploits of our defenders on our natural element, and that we see our Country saved against the incapacity of our Government by the courage of our Tars.' *Morning Chronicle*, 17 October 1797.

[65] In a proposal written for Elizabeth's Privy Council in 1577 John Dee stressed the potential power and supremacy of England, as well as her ability to achieve a great and lasting empire, in relation to her naval advantage. William H. Sherman, *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance,* Amherst, 1995, 149-152; John Dee, *General and Rare Memorials pertayning* [sic] *to the Perfect Arte of Navigation*, London, 1577, 53-63.

struck by Matthew Boulton (1728-1809) at his Soho Mint in Birmingham (Fig. 21).[66] With over 257 million of such regal coins put into national circulation between 1797 and 1805, the image of Britannia with trident became absorbed into British popular culture as a symbol of national identity recognised by all Britons.[67] By the end of the eighteenth century, Britannia was a national icon symbolic of British virtue and naval heritage, conventionally used to glorify naval heroes and victories in various cultural forms for different audiences, particularly in commemorative medals, such as that for *Earl Howe's Glorious First of June 1794 victory*, 1797 (Fig. 22), monumental sculpture, such as John Bacon's *Monument to Major-General Dundas*, c. 1799 (Fig. 23), and theatre performances, such as Dibdin's afterpiece *The Naval Pillar* 1799, as well as naval prints.[68] This iconographic tendency is epitomised by John Flaxman's *Britannia Triumphant,* 1799 (Fig. 24), a design proposal for a Naval Pillar, to be the focus of the final chapter, which he described as representing the 'protecting power or genius of the country'.[69]

Nevertheless, despite this popularity, Britannia was not always perceived or represented in such a complementary light, and she possessed and accrued negative connotations during this period that damaged her positive, often propagandist, image. Significantly, within the first three years of the French revolution, Britannia appeared in only half a dozen satirical prints, none of which made any reference to France, thus indicating her problematic associations with French Liberty and female political participation.[70] During the late eighteenth-century, female political and intellectual activities, epitomised by the Blue Stocking Society,[71] was on the increase, causing

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[66] Richard Clay 'How Matthew Boulton helped make Birmingham 'the Art capital of the World', in Richard Clay and Sue Tungate (eds), *Matthew Boulton and the Art of Making Money,* Warwickshire, 2009, 39-55, 53.

[67] Figures taken from a statistics graph on display in the exhibition *Matthew Boulton and the Art of Making Money* in the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham (8 May 2009-16 May 2010). For a discussion of these coins, particularly in terms of the Britannia depiction and weight and quantity of those struck, see Clay 'Matthew Boulton', Clay and Tungate (eds), *Boulton*, 53.

[68] For information regarding Britannia, see Derk Kinnane-Roelofsma, 'Britannia and Melita: Pseudomorphic Sisters', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 59, 1996, 130-147; Madge Dresser, 'Britannia', in Raphael Samuel (ed.), *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity, Volume III: National Fiction,* Guernsey, 1989, 26 - 49.

[69] John Flaxman, *A Letter to the Committee for Raising a Naval Pillar, or Monument, under the patronage of His Royal Highness, the Duke of Clarence,* London, 1799, 9.

[70] Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 121-169.

[71] For a discussion of the Blue Stockings, see Jeanine Dobbs, 'The Blue-Stockings: Getting it Together', *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 1: 3, Winter, 1976, 81-93; Anna Miegon,

contention, unease and fears of a petticoat government and/or society emerging that would threaten the status quo founded upon male dominance and gender distinctions.[72] Gillray's *Henry Jenkins, the Masculine & Feminine bellows Mender,* 29 July 1788 (Fig. 25), satirised this topical issues in relation to the 1788 Westminster by-elections, caricaturing the Duchess of Devonshire and Mother Windsor using their feminine, particularly physical, powers of persuasion upon a dwarfish man for political gain. This exploited Gillray's predominantly male audiences' perception of such female involvement as indecent and associated with licentiousness, prostitution and politically influential French women.[73] The construction and perception of Britannia's image in Gillray's work, as in other cultural products, was undoubtedly informed by such discourses.

The numerous prints in the second half of the 1790s distinguishing the elevated British Britannia from the debased French Liberty is symptomatic of Britons' desire to diminish their icon's potential negative associations with their enemy and to use her symbolism instead as a means of national propaganda. Gillray's *The Genius of France Triumphant*, 2 February 1795 (Fig. 26), is especially interesting. Britannia is presented grovelling, offering her shield, spear, crown, sceptre and 'Magna Charta' to a monster representing the French Republic seated on a huge bomb-shaped cap of 'Li-ber-tas'. The French revolutionary enemy is thus debased as arrogant, brutal and menacing. Britannia's submission, humiliation and danger are used here to imply that the Whigs, set behind her as sans-culottes offering further appeasement, are putting Britain at risk. Such increasingly common presentations of Britannia as a helpless female victim needing male assistance fostered and perpetuated Britons' sense of duty to support Britain's war effort, to defend the realm and to volunteer for service, while

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'Biographical Sketches of Principal Bluestocking Women', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 65.1/2, 2002, 25-37.

[72] 'The relationships between eighteenth-century imaginaries of gender and national identity were not fixed or straightforward, but were continually formed and reformed by women's involvement with the romance of war and empire, generating unauthorised as well as conventional notions of liberty, belonging and identity.' Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century,* London and New York, 2003, 128.

[73] The Duchess campaigning for Charles James Fox's candidacy in the 1784 Westminster elections was disapproved of, unlike in previous instances. Such women canvassing some of the meanest streets in Westminster, often unaccompanied and on foot, was associated with female licentiousness, and led them to be perceived as 'public women', with all the connotations of prostitution. See Hunt, *Defining John Bull,* 135-7.

playing upon the desire to assert male dominance.[74] Yet, Britannia's shifting position in relation to contemporary discourse arguably depoliticised her in party political terms, resulting in her decreasing prominence in politically satirical prints.[75] Her decline was accompanied by the increasing adoption of alternative embodiments of national character: masculine, strong, aggressive, non-allegorical and common figures that could bolster a sense of national esteem, patriotism, consciousness and unity. In the case of naval symbolism this figure was Jack Tar.

Jack Tar was a fictive, stereotypical sailor in the Royal Navy who originated from the theatre and became a frequent and familiar positive cultural character in discourse from the 1790s onwards, elevated as courageous, loyal, duteous, defiant, jolly, carefree and honest.[76] He became a valuable national symbol of naval duty, order and strength, and of the national virtues of defiance, fair-dealing, fellowship and loyalty. As such he became an embodiment of national character, indicating and strengthening the centrality of the maritime to Britons' sense of identity and affinity with their Navy and its seamen.[77] This is evidenced not only in Jack Tar's positive patriotic representation, but also in the occasional depiction of John Bull, the common British citizen personified, as a sailor, or identification of a sailor as John Bull. Gillray's *John Bull Offering Little Boney Fair Play*, 2 August 1803 (Fig. 27), is an example of this interchange. This red-faced, big bellied and muscular male dressed in striped pantaloons, white stockings, black hat and checked neckerchief, standing in a defiant pose up to his knees in water, though textually identified as John Bull in the print, corresponded more with Jack Tar's typical iconography exemplified in *A True British Tar*, 28 May 1795 (Fig. 28). This suggests Gillray's intentional fusion of these two

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[74] See for example *Britannia Between Death and the Doctor,* 20 May 1804 (Fig. 42).

[75] Hunt, *Defining John Bull,* 139-141. It must be acknowledged that another possible reason for Britannia's diminished appearance in print, besides those of her negative and radical associations, was the fact that the focus was more on the context of party politics in which Britannia was less applicable.

[76] Jeannine Surel, 'John Bull', Samuel (ed.), *Patriotism*, 3-25, specifically 10-11. Lincoln refers to how ordinary seamen began to be seen in an increasingly favourable light, and asserts that in the 1740s Admiral Vernon did much to help this process. Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 3. A Captain stated that 'a rough, boisterous, gallant sailor has always answered the intentions of the Admiralty, and done his country's service like a man.' *The Case and distressed Situation of the Widows of the Officers of the Navy, Explained in a letter from a Captain in the Navy to a Member of Parliament*, London, 1775, 9.

[77] See Jacqueline S. Bratton, 'British Heroism and the Structure of Melodrama', in J. S. Bratton, Richard Allen Cave, Breandan Gregory, Heidi J. Holder and Michael Pickering (eds), *Acts of Supremacy: The British Empire and the Stage, 1790-1830*, Manchester, 1991, 18-61, especially 33-4; Surel, 'John Bull', in Samuel (ed.), *Patriotism*, 11.

familiar national characters for a witty comment comprehensible on various levels to different audiences, which exploited, and thus confirmed, the prevalent interpretation of Jack Tar as a recognisable and significant symbol. The elevated common tar was used as a symbol to project an ideal, strong and fundamentally maritime British national identity, as exemplified by Gillray's patriotic print produced after Nelson's victory at the Nile, *Fighting the Dunghill, or Jack Tar Settling Buonaparte*, 20 November 1798 (Fig. 29).[78] Here, upon a globe, a well-fed, strong, loyal and defiant sailor fights an emaciated, wounded and precariously positioned Bonaparte, defending with his fists the Atlantic Ocean, British Isles and Europe, which he is firmly planted astride.

Sailors were invariably aware of their positive cultural persona, and their strong sense of self-identity inspired them to live up to the brave, jolly, happy-go-lucky and loyal tar as portrayed on stage and in literature, songs and prints.[79] Naval officers also subscribed to this popular image of the sailor in their letters, accounts, songs and plays that asserted and perpetuated a heroic and positive construction of Jack Tar.[80] This notion of role-playing amongst seamen, both officers and men, will be discussed in the next chapter in relation to representations of naval heroism.[81] Such positive cultural portrayals of Jack Tar indicate contemporary popular support for the sailor's elevation and the market demand for a range of heroising representations.[82] This all helped foster British patriotism, unity and maritime national identity, in turn greatly

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[78] For a discussion of the sailor's elevation in relation to contemporary naval warfare, see Samuel (ed.), *Patriotism*, XXIV-XXV.

[79] See Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 9, 29; I. Land, Domesticating the Maritime: Culture, Masculinity, and Empire in Britain, 1770-1820, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Michigan, 1999, 224.

[80] For example, see Captain Thompson, *The Syrens, a Masque, in Two Acts, as Performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden*, London, 1794, 12-13. The Admiral Duke of Clarence became patron of Sadler's Wells Theatre in 1800, advocating the genre of naval melodrama and introducing the aquatic theatre in which real water was used in naval dramas. For a discussion of Sadler's Wells and the aquatic theatre, see Derek Forbes, 'Water Drama', in D. D. Bradby, James Louis and Bernard Sharratt, (eds), *Performance and Politics in Popular Drama [...] 1800-1976,* Cambridge, 1980, 91-107, 101.

[81] For further discussion of seamen role-playing, see Chapter Two, 33-38.

[82] This popular market demand for positive, patriotic and heroic naval representations was evident in various aspects of the patriotic public sphere, especially the press, literature, poetry, song, paintings, prints and theatre productions. With regard to the latter example, the *Monthly Mirror* tellingly explained that naval melodramas continued to be performed at theatres because 'the people have been led to expect them; and the managers [...] did their best to meet the public expectation'. *Monthly Mirror,* 20, 1805, 340.

supporting the war effort.[83] The strength and pervasiveness of such positive stereotyping of the honest and plain sailor persona is further demonstrated by tars' own use of it for their political advantage, to imply, sometimes disingenuously yet often convincingly, their patriotic, loyalist stance, particularly in the context of expressing grievances, defending themselves following insubordination and denying radical sympathies.[84] This suggests the socio-political ambiguity and potency the sailor character possessed not simply in naval symbolism and heroism, but also in real life.

It is interesting to note how this positive Jack Tar stereotype, like all stereotypes, needed constant reassertion in order to be perpetuated, suggesting that it was far from representing a blatant truth that was openly acknowledged without constant reiteration. Indeed, this positive stereotype, which Gillray's prints helped build and perpetuate, had little correlation with the sailor's negative associations with naval mutiny, insubordination, grievances, poor welfare, low wages, lack of leave, harsh discipline and impressment, and was far from his disparaging historical persona as debauched, drunken, blasphemous, irreligious,[85] violent, uncouth, foul-mouthed, disobedient, reckless and anti-authoritarian, all of which arguably conform more closely to the truth.[86] The sailor Samuel Leech recalled that 'many [sailors] fancy that swearing and drinking are necessary accomplishments in a genuine man-of-war's-man'.[87] These negative actualities and associations were evaded in positive, depoliticised cultural representations that reassuringly dispelled fears, particularly

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[83] Officers valued 'your jolly, merry-making, don't care sort of seamen' because they were good for morale. Samuel Leech, *Thirty Years from Home, or a Voice from the Main Deck*, Boston, 1843, 73.

[84] For example, in 1779 one author purporting to be a seamen complaining about the conduct of the war with America wrote 'it may be asked, who am I, that thus set up myself to instruct my Countrymen. I answer, a plain, open-hearted Sailor, zealous from the Glory of my King and Country.' *A Letter to the Right Honourable The Earl of Sandwich, on the Present State of Affairs. By a Sailor*, London, 1779, 5. Whilst Richard Parker, ringleader of the mutiny of the fleet at the Nore in 1797, began his defence at his trial with: 'As I have been at sea from my youth, I therefore hope nothing will be expected from me but a narrative of plain facts. I cannot dress up my defence in the pompous language of a lawyer; could I have procured assistance, I might have been enabled to have expressed myself with more propriety.' Job Sibly, *The Trial of Richard Parker ... Taken in Shorthand on board the* Neptune, Boston, 1797, 39.

[85] An author excused the irreligion of sailors, who 'while they prosper, seldom pray' but when food is short or a gale blows 'then you'll hear them pray, That Providence would send them some relief.' *The Sons of Commerce, An Original Poem, in Thirty-four Cantos, Written by a Sailor,* London, 1806, 28, 60. See also Land, Domesticating the Maritime, 224.

[86] For a discussion of these negative characteristics of the sailor see Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, Cambridge, 1987, 162; Quilley, 'Duty and Mutiny', Shaw (ed.), *Romantic War*, 82-84.

[87] Leech, *Thirty Years from Home*, 65.

held by the establishment and loyalist Britons, regarding their potential threat to social order.[88] As Lincoln states, 'over the years, the ordinary seaman, so often a problematic, potentially disruptive figure, was made safe and acceptable as 'Jack Tar', a caricature that glossed over his moral laxity and capacity for violence.'[89]

The behaviour of real seamen ashore: their clannishness, nautical language, distinct attire, muscular physique and weather-beaten faces, debauched spending of their wages, fondness for singing and dancing, and over-enthusiasm at theatrical naval dramas, combined with their jolly, devil-may-care cultural persona, informed Britons' positive yet 'other' perception of the tar.[90] John Nicol, a wounded veteran seaman, remarked in 1801 that 'did those on shore only experience half the sensations of a sailor at perfect liberty after being seven years on board ship without a will of his own, they would not blame his eccentricities, but wonder he was not more foolish', while Leech complained that the tar's tendency for jolly pursuits of dancing and singing 'are often resorted to, because they feel miserable, just to drive away dull care.'[91] Indeed, the sailor, for the most part absent from view and once ashore an oddity, received both cultural alienation and sentimentalisation, which inhibited the public from taking their hardships, welfare and grievances seriously.[92] A naval officer hinted at this lack of public concern or appreciation in identifying the tar as the 'most *invaluable* but *neglected* description of men', while Dr. Johnson's acknowledged that their role and sacrifice was 'ill represented by heroic fiction' in literature, theatre and imagery.[93] Indeed, there existed a representational absence of the common tar in

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[88] For a related discussion of the anxiety regarding the tar among the establishment and ruling elite, see Quilley, 'Duty and Mutiny', Shaw (ed.), *Romantic War*, 91-99.

[89] Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 3.

[90] 'In sea-port towns, where Play-houses are frequently to be found, it may be observed, how sailors are perched in abundance in the upper gallery. Music and dancing they are fond of.' C. Fletcher, *The Naval Guardian*, 2nd edition, London, 1805, 157. Seamen often made up a large and receptive proportion of the audience at theatre performances, bellowing along to sea songs, cheering to patriotic cues, and even eager to storm the stage at crucial moments and join in with the action. Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 29.

[91] John Nicol, *The Life and Adventures of John Nicol, Mariner*, Edinburgh, 1822, 32. Leech, *Thirty Years from Home*, 35. 'Superficially familiar, the seaman remained to his contemporaries profoundly strange. They knew him only on land, out of his element.' N A. M. Rodger, *Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy,* London, 1988, 15. On a similar line see Robert Southey's poem in which he exclaims 'Ah! You lubberly landsmen don't know when you're well;/ Hadst thou known half the hardships of which I can tell!' Robert Southey, *Poems by Robert Southey. [Three lines from Akenside],* Boston, 1799, 66.

[92] 'If the public recognised the suffering endured by seamen, it appears that they preferred to think of them suffering without complaint.' Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 27.

[93] Anon., *The Story of the Learned Pig, by an Officer of the Royal Navy*, London, 1786, 98, 103. 'Dr.

eighteenth-century heroising visual culture.[94] His appearance was manipulated to conform to dominant notions of loyalist patriotism and social hierarchy, and predominantly excluded from official discourse, particularly monumental sculpture, as is discussed in the next chapter.

The ordinary tar was assigned considerable symbolic weight at the time, accruing various significances concerning loyalty, duty, insubordination, social order, defence, liberty and national identity. As a lower-deck sailor, Jack Tar connoted not only the grievances and dissent typical of such crewmen, specifically the 1797 naval mutinies, but also other negative actualities of naval problems, impressment and sacrifice. Gillray's *Affability*, 10 February 1795 (Fig. 30), referred to the subversive aspects of the sailor to the British Constitution, Empire, nation and social order. Here Jack Tar, identified by his iconographic attributes of checked neckerchief and blue pantaloons, is depicted in hiding as an 'idler'. At the time there existed a tendency for able seamen to avoid naval service by moving inland and impersonating farmers, with many such deserters being radicals and Francophiles. This is implied through the tar's fearful face when questioned by George III and inclusion of pigs beside him that reference Burke's critique of the French revolution and its 'swinish multitudes', popularly taken up by Britons at the time, which have an iconographic precedence in Gillray's earlier *A Birmingham Toast, as given on the 14th July, by the Revolutionary Society*, 23 July 1791 (Fig. 31).[95] *Affability* played upon the ideological link between crown and anchor, the positive perception of the tar as the King's loyal guardian and the notion of patriotic duty of serving in the King's Navy, conveying an ambivalent interpretation, both patriotic yet derisive, of the royalty, its Navy and sailors.[96]

Johnson pamphlet', in Callender, *The political progress,* 56.

[94] For further discussion of the ideological distancing and representational absence of the sailor, see Quilley, 'Duty and Mutiny', Shaw (ed.), *Romantic War*, 81-84.

[95] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution,* first published 1790, rev. ed. Leslie George Mitchell, Oxford, 1999, 79.

[96] The use of the phrase 'crown and anchor' begs reference to the Crown and Anchor Society, named after the tavern in London the participants met in. This Society, also known as the Association for Preserving Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers, existed among the Church and Kings Clubs and Loyalist Associations in late eighteenth-century Britain, which systematically intimidated radicals and their sympathisers. The Society was founded by John Reeves in November 1792. Prints and tracts were published and disseminated through this Society. Gillray was involved in the government campaigns against radicalism, producing anti-French revolutionary, anti-Jacobin and relatively pro-government prints. For further discussion of the Crown and Anchor Society, see Bindman, *Shadow of the Guillotine,* 18, 32, 34, 35, 63, 106, 113, 114, 117, 118, 122, 126, 204.

The depiction of the common tar in *Hero of the Nile*, 1 December 1798 (Fig. 32), can also be seen to be informed by the contemporary discursive context concerning the common tar and officer. Here Gillray adapted Nelson's 'honourable augmentations to his armorial ensigns' awarded to him following his victories at Cape St. Vincent, 1797 and the Nile, 1798 (Fig. 33), so that the sailor figure corresponded more with the positive character of Jack Tar: fat, jolly, patriotic, loyal, defiant, scruffy, and unarmed.[97] Such manipulation was not simply for popular appeal or comic effect, instead it supported the elevation of Jack Tar as a positive persona in British culture. This print presented the sailor as unthreatening, evading his grievances, insubordination and politically dangerous potential. Through this Gillray provided his audiences with an expected and reassuring patriotic image of naval strength. These prints indicate Gillray's knowledge and understanding of various discourses on such naval issues, which informed his and his audiences' interpretations of the seaman, his character, habits, political associations and symbolic significance. While the sailor was perceived as national icon and metaphorical 'pillar of the nation', particularly at such times of war, he was, nevertheless, excluded from the official patriotic public sphere, indicating his elevation did not eliminate his problematic political and ideological nature. Such socio-political exclusivity of naval symbolism and heroism will be investigated in greater depth in relation to national monumental sculpture, specifically the designs for St. Paul's Cathedral and Naval Pillar, in the subsequent chapters.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that late eighteenth-century contexts of Britain's naval war against France and the accompanying discourses influenced contemporary naval representation, particularly the construction and perception of naval symbolism and patriotism. The naval actualities of administrative problems within the service and grim realities of sacrifice in warfare have been related to a symbolic language that

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[97] *The Britannic Magazine; or entertaining repository of heroic adventures. And memorable exploits. [...]* London, 1794-1807, vol. 6, 224 'Monthly Chronicle'. Nelson was granted supporters of the sailor and lion for his crest after his involvement in the Battle of Cape St Vincent, 1797, and further augmentation to these with palm leaves and a tricolour flag and staff in the mouth of the lion, following his victory at the Nile the year after.

represented the Navy predominantly in a positive light as strong, ordered and central to British national identity, history and pride. I have argued, and will continue to demonstrate in the following chapters, that the cultural construction of the Navy's public image to frame Britons' sense of national identity and elicit loyalist sentiment was a central and directive theme running throughout contemporary naval representation. The symbolic characters of Britannia and Jack Tar have been contextualised in order to reveal attempts to employ them in positive patriotic cultural representations to evade negative actualities. Their negative connotations have been explored, arguing that actualities were always present at the level of discourse and formed part of the semiotic ground upon which the significance of symbolism and representation were interpreted, hence the need to constantly reassert positive stereotypes, specifically that of Jack Tar. An appreciation of the positive manipulation of the Navy's image in relation to various cultural realities has been achieved, and leads on to a necessary further investigation of the socio-political implications, particularly of exclusivity and propaganda, in representational naval heroism and monumental commemoration. This investigation of Gillray's work has shown that it was heavily and diversely informed by, and dialogically engaged with, contexts and discourses pertaining to contemporary naval actualities and symbolism. Such contextualisation allows for an improved understanding of his discursive position in relation to the Navy and its representation. On this basis, subsequent chapters can offer a specific analysis of Gillray's critiques of representations of naval heroism and accompanying derisive attacks upon the socio-political implications these engendered, particularly with regard to monumental discourses.

Naval Heroism and Monumental Sculpture

This chapter sets Gillray's work within the contemporary discursive context of visual representations of naval heroism, arguing that specific prints were dialogically engaged with diverse discourses, both official and unofficial, pertaining to patriotic public display. The previous chapter's investigation of the contemporary naval actualities of warfare, administrative problems, grievances and death, and their relation to naval symbolism, will be advanced through study of representations of naval heroism. Gillray's critical response to their idealism and exclusivity are considered in relation to his discursive position, particularly towards the common tar's heroism, sacrifice and awarded honour. Through a consideration of the interrelated social, political and nationalistic implications and functions of such heroic representation, I will demonstrate the significance of class and military rank in naval commemoration, monumental sculpture and pantheonism.

I argue that naval heroism, especially as represented in monumental designs, was a cultural phenomenon embroiled in, and influenced by, broader issues of class, politics and national identity. By exploring the social distinctions between the naval officer and tar in actuality and visual representations, I will demonstrate that social hierarchy and exclusivity informed constructions and interpretations of the Navy's public image. The problematic dichotomy between notions of, on the one hand, socio-political exclusivity and on the other, inclusive loyalist patriotism and unified national identity, will be argued to be manifest in official patriotic monumental sculpture that commended heroic service and aimed to foster emulation and support among broad audiences. Yet, such sculpture was exclusive in terms of its subjects and high art conventions. I argue that Gillray's satirical prints distorted the conventions of official high art patriotic display to attack not only representations of military heroism, but also the socio-political propagandist idealism, exclusivity and pretension evident in such discourses and endorsed by their elite, loyalist and partisan audiences and patrons. Thus, this chapter investigates naval monumental representations and their discursive contexts, which in turn will inform the final chapter's interpretation of Gillray's critique of the contemporary Naval Pillar project.

Representations of Naval Heroism

Representations of naval heroism were products of the increasing importance of the Navy to British defence, trade, economy and empire, and the consequent centrality of the maritime as a component in Britons' sense of national identity, loyalist patriotism and heritage. As discussed in the previous chapter, the sailor in the form of Jack Tar was elevated as a national symbol and often portrayed as a courageous hero. The mindset and actions of ordinary fighting tars were presented in many prints, ballads, accounts and theatre performances as heroic, asserting an inclusive impression of naval service and victory as an accomplishment shared by all ranks. It was upon the stage that the cultural character of the common, yet heroic, sailor first appeared, and survived in the form of nautical melodramas for the longest, well into the Victorian era.[98] An increasingly popular and common theme in late eighteenth-century theatre repertories was that of naval drama in which important battles, heroic actions and victory celebrations were re-enacted, drawing the audience's attention away from troublesome considerations of the war, particularly the negative actualities of mutiny, press gangs and loss of civilian manpower, to a glorification of the Navy that boosted morale, unity, assurance and patriotism.

The allusion to theatrical conventions, imagery and subjects in Gillray's work suggest his prints were informed by such contemporary drama. For example, in Gillray's *Pacific Overtures*, 5 April 1806 (Fig. 34), George III stands on stage in uniform beside an anchor and rope with the sea and a full sailing man-of-war, the *Royal Sovereign*, behind him, defying, on inspection, the enormous scroll of France's peace terms that Napoleon is presenting upon a cloud.[99] Gillray employed theatrical naval imagery, creating a culturally complex and resonant comment upon contemporary

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[98] Early examples of the British tar portrayed as gallant and jolly on stage are Cross's music-dramas *The Purse, or Benevolent Tar,* 1794, and *England's Glory, or the British Tars at Spithead*, 1795, at Covent Garden Theatre. For a discussion of nautical melodrama in nineteenth-century Britain, see Michael R. Booth, *English Melodrama*, London, 1965, 104.

[99] The King says: " - Very amusing Terms indeed! - and might do vastly well with some of the new-made little Gingerbread kings - but WE are not in the habits of giving up either "Ships, or Commerce, or Colonies", merely because little Boney is in a pet to have them!!!" The scroll is inscribed: 'TERMS OF PEACE - Acknowledge me as Emperor - "mantle your Fleet, - Reduce your Army - Abandon Malta & Gibraltar, - Renounce all Continental Connection - Your Colonies I will take at a Valuation, - Engage to pay to the Great-Nation for 7 Years annually £1.000.000. and Pace in my Hands as Hostages the Princess Charlotte of Wales, with Ten of ye late Administration whom I shall name.'

discourse, while constructing a scene of defiant British patriotism, loyalism and national identity in emphatically naval terms. Gillray's dialogical discursive engagement is evident in such work; in anticipation of his audiences' response, his prints fed off, and back into, the discourses he and his viewers were informed by.

The idea of sailors being aware of, and living up to, this positive, specifically heroic, cultural persona, can be related to role-playing the brave, loyal, dutiful, jolly and devil-may-care character.[100] The elevation of the tar was particularly evident in theatrical naval dramas in which he was generally employed as the heroic lead over his social superior, with whom he was often paired, even in plays that implied by their titles that they focused upon the officer. This role reversal suggests the greater applicability and popular appeal of the heroic tar.[101] As unofficial cultural products, theatre performances were able, expected and required to operate beyond the bounds of the official rhetoric of heroism which, being replete with its loyalist, partisan, elite and high art exclusivity, would have appeared odd in this particular discursive and participatory context of socially diverse audiences.[102] While Jack's cultural elevation in the theatre could be seen to legitimate plebeian patriotism and appeal to a more inclusive community of addressees, his heroism was nevertheless restricted through his exclusion from official discourses, specifically monumentalising ones. Furthermore, he was frequently feminised in representations that constructed him as emotional and superstitious, and was often impersonated by women on stage.[103] Such challenges to the tar's heroism would have had an impact upon the role-playing of sailor audiences, further instilling in them the need to prove their heroic status as

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[100] For more information on the sailor's positive cultural persona, see Chapter One, 25-27.

[101] A particular example of this is Fitzball's *Nelson; or, The Life of a Sailor*, Adelphi, 1827, in which Nelson only appears briefly, with the play largely focused upon a sailor rather than his commander.

[102] In the preface to his farce *Not at Home* in 1809, John Dallas's description of the 'public' at a theatre as 'that cultivated Company who usually occupy the circle of dress boxes; […] those judicious Critics who take their station in the Pit […] my worthy friend John Bull, who is to be found in either Gallery' suggests the social diversity of such performances' attending audiences. Quoted in Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of English Drama, 1660-1900*, IV, 2nd ed., Cambridge, 1955, 11-12. For more information on theatre ticket prices, repertories and audiences see Charles Beecher Hogan, *The London Stage 1660-1800: a Calendar of Plays, Entertainments & Afterpieces, together with Casts, Box-receipts and Contemporary Comment: Compiled from the Playbills, Newspapers and Theatrical Diaries of the Period. Pt.5, 1776-1800*, Vol. 3, Carbondale, 1968; Michael Booth, 'Volume 6: 1750-1880', in Clifford Leech and T. W. Craik (general eds), *The Revels History of Drama in England*, London, 1975; H. W. Pedicord, *The Theatrical Public in the Time of Garrick*, 2nd ed., Carbondale, 1966, 22-36.

[103] For a discussion of the feminisation of the tar see Gillian Russell, *Theatres of War: Performance, Politics, and Society, 1793-1815,* Oxford, 1995, 102-3; Quilley, 'Duty and Mutiny', Shaw (ed.), *Romantic War*.

brave and strong devil-may-care men. Clearly theatrical representations of naval heroism, albeit to a lesser extent than those in high art, were still informed by dominant ideologies regarding class, in terms of social hierarchy, military rank and intellectual elitism. Even in unofficial cultural products, there existed a tension surrounding representations of the tar, particularly concerning the extent of his heroism. Jack Tar's negative social and political connotations made his inclusion in official patriotic display, such as monumental sculpture, problematic, whether as subject or audience.

Alongside this cultural construction of the courageous and patriotic tar, there existed a contrary, socially selective, cult of naval officers' heroism in official discourses, especially pertaining to monumental sculpture, is particularly evident in loyalist and such conservative publications as the *Naval Chronicles* and *Gentleman's Magazine*.[104] These discourses constructed and perpetuated socio-politically exclusive heroism that mapped onto the social hierarchy promulgated by the very ruling elite to which the depicted officers and the monuments' audiences belonged. Rank, social status and partisanship were the interrelated prerequisites of representations of naval heroism, and correlated in attempts to secure the exclusivity of the patriotic public sphere and naval symbolism. Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson, with his charismatic, paternalistic, tactically astute, often maverick, and consistently victorious leadership, was the supreme naval hero of his time. His relatively lowly birth as a parson's son, his discovery of influential relations (specifically his uncle Suckling, later Comptroller of the Navy), his elevation from able seaman up through the ranks, his successive victories and ultimate loss of life in the course of duty, dying at the Battle of Trafalgar, corresponded considerably with the fictive progression of the hero played out in contemporary theatre performances and novels. Such discourses pertaining to naval heroism and the relations between them would have informed, and been informed by, popular perceptions of Nelson and military issues, as is indicated in Gillray's constructions of the Navy's image, and his and his prints' audiences understanding of associated themes.[105]

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[104] For a discussion of the gentlemanly literary culture concerning naval intelligence, specifically the *Naval Chronicle*, see Jenks, *Engagements*, 157-168.

[105] Joseph L. Henderson, 'Ancient Myths and Modern Man', in Carl Gustav Jung (ed.), *Man and his Symbols,* New York, 1968, 103-25.

Gillray's depiction of a naval theatrical performance in which George III stands upon stage in *Pacific Overtures*, 5 April 1806 (Fig. 34), demonstrated the print-maker's awareness of the relationship between diverse discourses pertaining to the Navy, particularly in relation to naval representation, theatre, role-playing and heroism. Previously, in *The Hero of the Nile*, 1 December 1798 (Fig. 16), Gillray had depicted Nelson as if he was an actor on stage surrounded by dramatic effects; standing on the planks, this time by implication of a deck. Nelson is shown fully garbed in ceremonial robes with clouds billowing behind him. This print plays upon the resonance between Nelson's contemporary victory and heroism, and patriotic naval drama. Here, Nelson has not been subjected to Gillray's typical caricature of a prominent individual. Instead his facial expression is unusually illusionistic, connoting his emotional sensitivity and melancholy temperament. He stands as the national naval hero *par excellence*, dignified and victorious, yet also a virtuous man of humanity and sensibility. Nelson's success at the Nile made him a familiar subject in extensive discourses. His public appearances excited huge crowds, becoming in themselves quasi-theatrical spectacles, no more so than his theatre visit in land-locked Birmingham in 1800 where he became as much the subject of the audiences' and actors' attention as the stage performance.[106]

The convention of depicting the officer within a naval setting was evident not only on stage, but also in high art, for example in Leonardo Guzzardi's and Guy Head's portraits of Nelson, both 1798-9 (Fig. 35 and 36). Gillray's representations of Nelson, such as in *Hero of the Nile*, 1 December 1798 (Fig. 16), and *Extirpation of the Plagues of Egypt*, 6 October 1798 (Fig. 37), demonstrated his awareness of such official and unofficial conventions and the relationships between them. The representational convention of removing the naval figure from familiar settings enabled a kind of displacement and ideological distancing of this almost fictive character, and prompts the notion that he could only be presented and interpreted as heroic if removed from the realm of his audiences' experiences: geographical, occupational, physical and emotional. It must be noted that Gillray also played with the otherness and exclusivity of the Navy and its representations in high art, making it

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[106] For a detailed account of this event see Sir Frederick Pollock (ed.), *Macready's Reminiscences and Selections from his Diaries*, 2 vols, London, 1875, 2, 78-85.

more accessible by humorously merging references to official and unofficial discourses and their representational resources, for example theatre and high art. Nevertheless, the element of otherness, alienation and sacrifice were clearly prerequisites for the hero's distinction.[107] In *Extirpation of the Plagues of Egypt* the victorious Battle of the Nile is represented in allegorical, yet historically accurate, terms that substitute the battle's French warships with crocodiles. The subjection of these beasts by the diminutive, maimed, yet heroic Nelson makes him appear Herculean, playing upon the perception of a warrior hero as possessing almost superhuman strength and being providentially protected in battle. Here his large bulbous hand seems to be part of the gnarled wooden club inscribed 'British Oak' that he holds. Nelson himself has become, like the British Oak and the man-of-war ships assembled from its timber, a prominent and historic icon of British national identity and naval strength.

In his own lifetime, Nelson developed a cult following as a kind of legend and 'hero beyond Homer's'.[108] His heroic death confirmed his place in the 'national temple of fame'. His cultural significance is evidenced by the mass mourning and abundant attendance of Britons at Nelson's carefully choreographed State funeral, and also the sailors, acting as pallbearers, who tore his flagship the *Victory*'s ensign flag to shreds to serve for 'commemorabilia'.[109] In Gillray's *The Death of Nelson*, 29 December 1805 (Fig. 17), the mournful Britannia, elevated in this context and in contrast to earlier representations discussed in the previous chapter, expresses, responds to, and perpetuates the prevalent emotional sentiment regarding the late Nelson. With Fame flying above trumpeting his 'immortality', Gillray confirmed Nelson's heroic status on completing the ultimate step of sacrifice and consequently being immortalised as an exemplary legend. The inclusion of two loyal tars beside their mortally wounded commander, outnumbering the single officer, Flag Captain Thomas Hardy, suggests

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[107] This can be related to Strauss's theory of binary pairs: away/home, afloat/ashore, duty/love, which in turn emphasises the distinction of the naval figure from society.

[108] Lord Minto's description of Nelson following the victorious Battle of St. Vincent. Cited in Hoock 'The British Military Pantheon', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 79-105, 95.

[109] The term 'commemorabilia' is my own, created from an amalgamation of the words commemoration and memorabilia, which I use as a general category to refer to objects produced, kept and/or collected specially to commemorate a particular historically significant person or event, perpetuating the memory of it for posterity. Naval commemorabilia in the late eighteenth-century consisted especially of prints, paintings, artefacts and publications of excerpts from personal diaries and letters.

that Gillray was alluding to the heroic affinity between the officer and tar, and the significance of Nelson's good relationship with his men in justifying his status as a popular hero. By representing ordinary men aiding their commander and fighting in the distance, Gillray demonstrated their significant role in such historically important moments and naval warfare in general. Consequently, this print elevated not only Nelson but also the common tars depicted in this scene of heroic naval sacrifice.

While Nelson was a popular national hero and acknowledged linchpin for the Royal Navy's success, his relationship with the establishment was far from accommodating. He achieved significant victories, yet his career contradicted the service's claimed meritocracy: he spent eighteen years awaiting promotion as Captain, only ever reaching the rank of Vice-Admiral, and gaining rewards that rarely matched those received for lesser feats by favoured naval officers of the nobility. Such a narrative could have been seen as a commentary on the establishment's ingratitude for victorious service, biased distribution of military honours and promotions, and the inherent elitism and prejudice within the Admiralty and government. Gillray's depiction of Nelson in *Hero of the Nile*, 1 December 1798 (Fig. 16), in ceremonial robes, responded and contributed to these discourses. The visual emphases upon the chelengk, a diamond spray from the Turkish Sultan valued at £2000, and a presentation sword worth 200 guineas from the City Corporation, referenced the generous rewards bestowed upon Nelson by other countries and by non-governmental organisations, in contrast to the government's disproportionately limited honours.[110] This print can be interpreted as a timely critique upon the social-political exclusivity of naval honours whose award was dictated by the government, which constituted prominent issues in various contemporary discourses. Evidently, the popular cults of Nelson and naval heroism were loaded with socio-political implications, as were Gillray's references to Nelson as hero of the Navy and the theatre, and to the common tar.

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[110] For his victory at the Nile Nelson received a Barony and state pension of £2000 a year, but, in accordance with the laws of military honours distribution, no more because he was not a Commander-in-Chief. A public outcry ensued at the limited reward such a hero received, with the Prime Minster having to pacify an irate and disaffected Parliament with the assertion that Nelson's unprecedented and legendary naval victory made the title he won irrelevant. Jordan, 'Admiral Nelson', *New Aspects*, 114.

The *Naval Chronicle* opposed the contemporary celebrity cult of naval heroism, challenging its vicissitudes, interest and partisan slants, at one point dismissed as typical of 'this age of Egotism and Grasping'.[111] With this publication's principal audience being loyalist, partisan and naval, this suggests that a criticism of naval heroism, with the self-interest, competitiveness, jealousy, prejudice and exclusivity it engendered, was apparent among the ruling elite and would have informed the construction of Gillray's prints and their audiences' interpretation. The implication is that ruling elite participants in such publications' literary culture were also anxious about the popular cult of naval heroism, specifically its expression in unofficial discourse, as they believed the set of recognitions of military merit and heroism to be their prerogative.

While Gillray supported the Navy and referenced in his work the heroism of its fighting men, he was critical of the socio-political exclusivity inherent in the official representations of such bravery and the associated distribution of honours. Such criticism is evident in his pseudo-bust portrait of the Duke of Clarence, *Nauticus*, 11 October 1791 (Fig. 38), caricaturing William, third son of King George III, depicted with a dumb staring expression, uncurled hair, swollen lips and ruddy face, with lines beneath reading "Those Lips were made for Kissing, Ladies!" Here Gillray derisively referenced aspects of the Duke's biography, his notorious lack of refinement, his moral laxity, debauched behaviour and scandalous relationship with his mistress Mrs. Dorothy Jordan, the actress from the Drury Lane Theatre. William, as a wealthy, leisured and retired Admiral of the Fleet, was shown as an idle and immoral royal who used his interest to commandeer unwarranted heroic officer status. Gillray thus implied the socio-political bias towards nobility of the Navy's supposed meritocracy in naval honours, promotion and heroic reward.[112]

Indeed, officers were predominantly drawn from the ruling elite, for whom the glorification of heroic men of high rank was perpetuated by a public-school education

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[111] *Naval Chronicle*, 1, 1799, II, 89; *Naval Chronicle*, 3, 1800, IV.

[112] Despite various claims and presumptions of the Navy's meritocracy, interest and patronage were perceived by many as key to promotions and commissions. For example in a maudlin letter from midshipman to his friend in the naval service stated 'we must, if we appear like gentlemen, spend our fortune, if it is small, in the chace [*sic*] of preference.' R. B., *Sailor's Letters [signed R. B.]*, Nettleton, Plymouth, c.1800, 8-9.

that emphasised a classical curriculum, manly hardiness and family military legacies.[113] The military nobility constituted 'the fastest growing component of the British peerage after 1780, and accounted for more than half of new titles created after 1801'.[114] Furthermore a significant naval and army element existed within Parliament with around 4 per cent of it consistently made up of seamen in this period.[115] Naval commands and affairs were frequently political decisions and officers sought to be influential within both spheres by gaining a seat in Parliament. From this we can assume representational heroism of the officer and warfare would be informed by notions of rank, service and socio-political status, with their elite and influential contemporaries having considerable personal and partisan interest in official patriotic discourses. Naval accounts, celebrations, portraits and monuments portrayed war in emphatically heroic and victorious terms, as necessary, beneficial and part of one's loyal duty, thus evading the negative actualities of naval service and warfare, instead bolstering support for the war and its continuation, advocated by Pittites who asserted that the Nile victory was the 'end of the beginning'.[116] Clearly, naval heroism and its representation was a sphere of discourse in which every utterance had accessible socio-political connotations for all classes of Britons. Gillray's prints demonstrated his perceptive awareness of, and intervention in, this discursive context, with his elevation of Nelson and the tar encoding his allegiance with 'the people' rather than the elite who paid his pension and patronised his work.

Such socio-political contexts are culturally significant and must be borne in mind when considering not only monumental sculpture, but also other contributions to discourse, such as history painting, prints, theatre performances and poetry. Gillray's allusions to high art, military affairs, the aristocracy and ministerial politics were critiques upon the socio-political exclusivity engendered in these institutions. His prints constructed and fed into the accompanying discourse on the selective, militaristic and propagandist implications of naval heroism, which informed his audiences' interpretation. In *The Death of the Great Wolf*, 17 December 1795 (Fig.

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[113] For discussion of heroic ideals in relation to public school education see Hoock, 'British Military Pantheon', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 87.
[114] Hoock, 'British Military Pantheon', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 87.
[115] J. Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783*, London, 1989, 45.
[116] *Morning Chronicle*, 21 Sept. 1799; 28 Sept. 1799.

39), Gillray attacked high art, its conventional and propagandist products, the associated hierarchy of taste, military heroism, elite audiences and ministerial allegiances. Member and President of the Royal Academy, Benjamin West's celebrated *Death of General Wolfe,* 1770 (Fig. 40), was subjected to 'a kind of satirical iconoclasm' in Gillray's pictorial and thematic distortion.[117] General Wolfe is substituted by William Pitt, showing the Prime Minister as a military leader dying in the arms of colleagues and confidants on the battlefield. Gillray's mock-heroic parody of Academic representations of military heroism can be seen to critique its inherent selective code of rank and the propagandist loyalist and ministerial implications. According to the publishing line,[118] produced the day before Pitt's Treason and Sedition Bills became law, Gillray's representation of massed ranks of ministerial troops scattering a feeble body of sans-culottes, symbolically attacked the over-reaction of the government, making his critical point on the repression of political debate.[119]

Gillray's subtly derisive, yet polysemic and ambiguous, distorted references to the conventions of high art were loaded with socio-political implication. He played upon visual imagery's relative immunity from prosecution and repression, in contrast to that of texts, while expressing his political ambivalence towards the ministry regardless of his state pension.[120] Pitt's political victory over internal sedition is

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[117] Godfrey, *Gillray*, 33. Benjamin West RA (b. October 10, 1738 – d. March 11, 1820) was an Anglo-American painter of historical scenes around and after the time of the American War of Independence. He was the second president of the Royal Academy serving from 1792 to 1805 and 1806 to 1820. West's painting of *Death of General Wolfe* was reproduced in a best-selling engraving by W. Woollett.

[118] The publication dates inscribed on prints can often be inaccurate, as Antony Griffiths, Keeper of the Prints and Drawings collection at the British Museum, pointed out to me, the date would have been inscribed on the plate at a relatively early stage in its production, before the pressing and distribution, and consequently the print may have actually been publicly available from a later date. Also, particularly in the case of specific contemporary subjects, the printmaker would inscribe an earlier date to suggest that his work was hot off the press and had been on popular sale for some time.

[119] The 1795 Treasonable and Seditious Practices, and the Seditious Meetings Acts, commonly known as "The Gagging Acts", expanded the definition of high treason to encompass any conspiracy to bring the King or his government into contempt and included speaking and writing, even if no subsequent actions followed, and required that any public meeting of more than fifty persons had to be authorised by a local magistrate. See Jennifer Mori, *William Pitt and the French Revolution: 1785-1795,* Edinburgh, 1997, 252-9; Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 493-4.

[120] Gatrell has argued that the emphasis on prosecuting the selling of radical text, rather than images, related to the better chances of securing witnesses for the latter cases. The threat of pro-reform texts' dissemination was taken by the government as far more serious than that of prints due to the durability of moveable type used for printing text, which enabled pamphlet production to achieve huge economies of scale, ensuring low prices and large audiences across the social spectrum. Gatrell, *City of Laughter,* 493-4.

presented in military terms as a conquest of the French, while the defiant declaration in the inscription, 'we have overcome all Opposition!', clearly alluded to Parliamentary Opposition at home. Gillray connected political, ministerial and military achievement, and did so by referencing the government's deployment of war-hero commemoration to political ends of national unity and loyalist security. The collapsed leader aided by his followers who gather round him, with the Union Jack flag, completing the patriotic pyramidal configuration, all corresponded with the typical iconography of commemorative representation in Academic painting. The inscription, 'the Dying Hero […] Expired in the Moment of Victory', referred to the conventions of military heroism in viewing such exemplary leadership, strategic skill, duteous loyalty, patriotic endeavour and victorious human sacrifice as the ultimate crowning of heroic status, and most worthy of honour and immortalisation in monumental form. Once again we see the existence, extent and impact of the socio-politically contested discourse on naval heroism in its representation, particularly in Academic art.

Gillray's *"Patience on a Monument"*, 19 September 1791 (Fig. 41), simulated a pyramidal stone monument in bas-relief, with Lady Cecilia Johnston portrayed on its face in vicious caricature.[121] By portraying her witch-like upon a round close-stool with a cherub behind holding its nose and a fallen torch, Gillray implied this votary of fashion's decline and ironically played upon her reputation as 'the divine'.[122] Through the inscription, 'Engrav'd from a Modern Antique, in the possession of the General', Gillray referred to Cecilia's husband Lieutenant-General Johnston (1721-97) and disparagingly suggested the exclusive interrelationship between the nobility, military high rank, commemorative monumental sculpture and high art.[123] Gillray's perceptive exploitation of the cultural topicality of discourses on the Navy, militarism, party politics, patriotism, monumentalism and heroism is later evident in *Britannia between*

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[121] Wright and Evans declared how they 'have not been able to find the cause for Gillray's bitter attacks upon Lady Cecilia Johnston'. Thomas Wright and R. H. Evans, *Historical & descriptive account of the caricatures of James Gillray: comprising a political and humorous history of the latter part of the reign of George the Third*, New York, 1968, 416.

[122] 'Oh, would divine Cecilia deign, / With her brave warrior to augment the train […]'. Walpole, *Lady Cecilia Johnston*, 1777.

[123] Lady Mary Cecilia West married Lieutenant-General Johnston on 4 May 1762. For an account of Lieutenant-General Johnston see Edmund Burke's *Supplementary volume to the History of the Landed Gentry*, cited in Wright and Evans, *Historical and Descriptive Account,* 413.

Death and the Doctor, 20 May 1804 (Fig. 42). Here Pitt is presented violently dismissing Addington who was believed to have neglected the country's defence while in office, as implied by the distressed Britannia being threatened by a savage and skeletal Napoleon in the form of the traditional figure of Death, which was common in contemporary sculpture.

Such prints demonstrate how Gillray often combined derisive references to representational military heroism and to party politics, particularly Pittite, attacking the interrelated, socio-political exclusivity of the patriotic public sphere and official display within it. In the process, by distorting high art conventions, Gillray made his own critical commentary upon the exclusivity, idealism, self-interest and loyalist and ministerial propaganda of heroising history paintings and monumental designs. He exploited his principally educated and wealthy audiences' knowledge of such conventions and of pictorial and social debate, knowing they could decode his references to diverse discourses and the critical implications of his images.

To summarise, I have argued for the interrelated significance of socio-political factors of class, rank, loyalism, militarism, partisanship and high art upon conventions used in representations of naval heroism and, importantly, upon their audiences' interpretations of them. I have shown Gillray's demonstrable awareness of such issues. From this contextual foundation, specific case studies of naval monumental sculpture at St. Paul's Cathedral, and in the subsequent chapter of the Naval Pillar, can be appropriately approached, considering Gillray's satirical constructions of such official patriotic representations of naval heroism.

The Naval Monuments of St. Paul's Cathedral

In this section the naval monuments commissioned for St. Paul's Cathedral, particularly their elite, partisan and loyalist allegiances and implications, are investigated. I argue that this official sculptural project provided the supreme contemporary example of socio-political hierarchism and exclusivity in representations of naval heroism and commemoration. From 1795 onwards there was a Parliamentary move to increase military memorial sculpture, with seventeen such

monuments voted for by 1811, of which thirteen were to naval officers and all but two were destined for St. Paul's.[124] Such national memorialisation was a parliamentary extension of the traditional honours system presided over by the Crown and government, a 'function primarily of the military rank, and only secondarily of the specific merit of the individual honoured.'[125] Analysis of the military personnel honoured reveals that the monuments were specifically for the officer rank, with those admitted not falling below that of Captain, and even the highest junior officers marginalised alongside their commanders, if represented at all.[126] Rank also dictated these monuments' positioning within St. Paul's; the layout was largely hierarchical, with the highest ranking officers, Nelson and Cornwallis, allocated the most prominent spaces against the two piers on north and south sides of the great eastern arch between the dome and choir.[127]

The common serviceman was almost completely excluded from such monuments. None was given over entirely to the common tar and those that even included him within their designs were rare. Two such examples are John Bacon's memorial to *Captain Duff*, 1807 (Fig. 43) that shows a bare-chested, bare-footed and muscular sailor kneeling beside the tomb mourning, and the depiction of two sailor boys looking up at *Vice-Admiral Nelson* in Flaxman's monument, 1801-18 (Fig. 44). Such inclusions of mourning and loyal tars functioned as 'exhortative figures: they appeal to an inclusive community of addressees and acknowledge the ordinary serviceman's presence, though without elevating him to the status of the hero'. These monuments existed as self-interested calculations of the ruling elite that asserted the social hierarchy evident within the Navy and naval heroism, and indeed society at large, in which the lower masses knew their place and patriotic duty.[128] Furthermore, a parliamentary move for a general war monument to all the fallen and veterans of any battle was not suggested until after 1815, with Trafalgar and Waterloo monuments to

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[124] These national monuments 'were commissioned for St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey on the initiative of the House of Commons, sanctioned by the monarch and funded by Parliament.' Hoock, 'British Military Pantheon', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 83.

[125] Hoock, 'British Military Pantheon', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 87.

[126] 'The highest ranking junior officers killed in a significant battle would receive monuments if all superior commanders survived, very rarely alongside their commanders.' Hoock, 'British Military Pantheon', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 86.

[127] Hoock, 'British Military Pantheon', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 86.

[128] Hoock, 'The British Military Pantheon', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 88.

the regular armed services only ever reaching the design stage.[129] It is clear that the ruling elite were uneasy about the socio-political ambiguities such inclusive naval symbolism, heroism and patriotic demonstrations could be seen to possess, with the sailor's negative connotations still apparent and problematic.[130] Bacon's and Flaxman's designs were very timid and rare attempts to bring the common tar into honorary monumental sculpture, and appeared almost a decade into the official drive for national military monumentalism.

The St. Paul's monuments were not only socio-politically exclusive in terms of the personnel honoured, their subject, scale and interior position within the church, but also in terms of the artistic conventions used in their designs. The high art conventions of allegory, classical mythology and use of Latin inscriptions were tailored to educated, wealthy elite audiences' informed cultural knowledge and taste.[131] Such social exclusivity was perceived by some critics of the St. Paul's monuments as contradicting the prevalent and prominent notions of monumental sculpture as eliciting patriotic sentiment and endeavour, and constructing, through the twin processes of seeing and deciphering, a sense of national character among an inclusive audience.[132] Nevertheless, the abundance of contemporary commemorabilia depicting the officers ensured that their heroic sculptural representation would be almost universally comprehensible.[133] Despite the increasingly familiar conventions and iconography of military patriotism, in general it remained socio-politically exclusive as it constituted an institutionalised product of high art and social hierarchy

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[129] *Journal of the House of Commons*, vol. 70, 446, 448; vol. 71, 11, 22; T1/4029.6968, Committee of National Monuments to Lords Commissioners Treasury, 4 April 1818.

[130] For further discussion of the sailor's symbolism and negative connotations, see Chapter One, 25-30.

[131] Complaints that the public had to pay for access to national monuments were defied, until 1840, by the dean and chapter of St. Paul's who argued that they were a self-governing body, not responsible to Parliament. *Parliamentary Accounts and Papers*, 1837, 119, XXXVI, 447, 'Correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's'. John Smith, *Nollekens and his Times*, 2 vols, London, 1829, I, 376ff. Cf. Holger Hoock, 'Reforming Culture. National art institutions in the Age of Reform', in Arthur Birns and Joanna Innes (eds), *Rethinking the Age of Reform: Britain 1780-1850*, Cambridge, 2003, 254-70.

[132] Some critics of the St. Paul's monuments demanded legibility in such national sculpture, doubting whether they were accessible to those without a formal education. 'A Patriot', *Gentleman's Magazine,* 76: 2, 1806, 821; Robert Southey, *Letters From England: by Don Manuel Alvarez Espriella. Translated from the Spanish*, 3 vols, London, 1807, ii, 5; Hoare. *Epochs*, 233ff; Hunt, *Examiner*, 215, 9 February 1812, 93; Allan Cunningham, *The Lives of the Most Eminent British Painters, Sculptors, and Architects,* 6 vols, London, 1829-33, III, 113-5, 325ff. Pratt, 'Naval Contemplation', 4. It must be noted that these notions had significant implications beyond official monumental sculpture, being pertinent to prints, paintings, theatre performances and publications.

[133] Regarding the term 'commemorabilia', see earlier in this Chapter, 37, ftnt. 12.

that marginalised, even excluded, the common fighting man from heroic representation. Specifically, the St. Paul's monuments were exclusive not only in terms of their representational conventions, but also their location within a London Cathedral that charged an admission fee of two-pence. This restricted physical access, discouraging visits by a considerable proportion of the nation's broader population, particularly the working classes whose average weekly wage was between 10 shillings and 1 guinea.[134]

Gillray's *Hint to Modern Sculptors*, 3 May 1796 (Fig. 45), as a culturally resonant reference to these monuments recently voted upon for erections in St. Paul's, can be seen to have responded and contributed to discourses surrounding official monumental sculpture. Here the conventions of military and royal equestrian sculpture are derisively manipulated. The Prince of Wales is represented on horseback with exaggerated verisimilitude as fat and pompous, far from the gallant knight or worthy warrior hero. The work's title and date suggest it is a timely comment upon the contemporary monumentalising tendencies, advocating a more truthful, realistic and inclusive sculptural approach which would tally with Gillray's consideration for naval actualities and support for the heroic common tar. Gillray's critical discursive position towards naval monumentalism will be interpreted in the subsequent chapter as informing his later critique of the Naval Pillar project. His attack is ultimately on the ruling elite and their self-interested influence upon such official patriotic representation in terms of idealism, heroic pretence, social exclusivity and loyalist propaganda.

Based on anecdotal evidence such national commemorative monuments can be seen as having been informed and dictated by the dominant ideology as promulgated by the Tory, Burkian and Pittite ruling elite regarding loyalism and official social codes of service rank, heroism and cultural education.[135] The hope was that through highlighting and exalting patriotic, heroic and chivalric values, particularly of duty to

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[134] Michael Richard Booth, Clifford Leech and Thomas Wallace Craik (eds), *The Revels History of Drama in England*, London, 1975, 7; Elizabeth W. Gilboy, 'The Cost of Living and Real Wages in Eighteenth Century England', *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, 18: 3, August 1936, 134-143, especially 138, 140.

[135] I must pay my dues to Hoock's 'The British Military Pantheon', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, which has been an invaluable source from which my argument grew.

King and Country, embodied by warrior officers, these evocative, didactic and skilful monuments would have the power to inspire emulative sentiment and endeavour among their beholders. Consequently, a sense of British national identity in terms of naval greatness and loyalist service would be defined and perpetuated. Such aspirations are most evident in William Sotheby's *Battle of the Nile, A Poem*, 1799, which advocated 'brazen columns' to lift to fame the deeds of naval commanders killed in battle and inspire a 'race […] yet unborn […] to point [to] their brave sire, and vow like him to die!'[136] National achievement and individual heroism were intermixed and reconciled with the demands of the religious site and tradition, the stress being on humanity and piety in the form of the Christian warrior hero.

While the St. Paul's monuments were voted for by Parliament in a largely bipartisan fashion to function relatively apolitically, they clearly had official, loyalist and conservative allegiances engendered through their state-funded and Crown approved nature and reiterated by their inscriptions acknowledging the role of the King and House of Commons as fountains of honour.[137] They stood as belligerent patriotic spectacles of loyalist propaganda, politically driven to boost support for the Crown, ministry and war, and collectively forming a distinctly British configuration that placed loyalty to the Constitution at the centre of national heroism, identity, patriotism and history.[138] Such a sustained development of a set of military monuments marks a rare official use of the cult of service and hero, suggesting the British authorities' emphasis on creating a shrine to 'service', for loyalist patriotic State propaganda. St. Paul's asserted a triumphant ministerial message, advantageously connecting naval prowess and national security with British constitutional strength and national loyalist

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[136] 'Oh, rest in peace! [naval commanders killed in battle] while History graves your name
And brazen columns, lift your deeds to fame,
Recording Albion o'er your gathered dust
Piles the proud tomb, and rears the laurell'd bust:-
There shall a race, thro' ages yet unborn,
Glow o'er the battles that urn adorn;
Pledg'd to their country, stretch their arm on high,
Point their brave sire, and vow like him to die!' William Sotheby, *Battle of the Nile, A Poem*, Stables, 1799, 8-9.
[137] Designs were chosen by King George III and his Treasury Charles Long. In 1802 a Committee of Taste was elected to supervise the project. Hoock, 'British Military Pantheon', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 97.
[138] Henry R. Yorke, *Letters from France; in 1820*, London, 1804, 340ff.

unity.[139] To an extent, it could be argued that the St. Paul's initiative was a response to, and even an attempt to assimilate, popular heroisation as discussed earlier in this chapter.

Such monumental designs were ascribed national significance as emphatically maritime symbols of loyalist national identity. For example, Cartwright claimed that his contemporary naval monumental design, to be discussed in the next chapter, was conceived as 'instrumental to the high purposes of public duty and national elevation',[140] 'a monument of national glory, a nursery of national art […] but also, importantly a school of national manners and public virtue'.[141] Similarly, Flaxman described his colossal statue, *Britannia Triumphant*, 1799 (Fig. 24), as functioning 'in all respects [as] a lasting memorial of the Magnanimity, Virtue and Wisdom of the Country.'[142] In contrast, John O'Keefe's *Britain's Brave Tars; or, All for St Paul's*, 19 December 1797, Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, provides a particularly critical interpretation of contemporary national patriotic character and display.[143] This 'new Musical Farce' was a timely comment upon the Naval Thanksgiving State procession to St. Paul's held earlier that day. However, the production did not refer to ordinary sailors, 250 of whom, as the title suggests, were uniquely incorporated into this procession. The plot centred instead on the fiscal prudence of elite Londoners, 'whose mansions were favourable for a sight of the Royal Procession', in 'letting out their apartments' to would-be spectators in order to make a financial killing.[144] Similarly to Gillray, O'Keefe mocked the socio-political interest and exclusivity engendered in the patriotic public sphere and the war-profiteering and propagandist aims of ruling elites who attempted to control display within it.

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[139] Tim Fulford, 'Romanticising the Empire: The Naval Heroes of Southey, Coleridge, Austen and Marryat', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 60: 2, 1999, 161-196.

[140] Major John Cartwright, *The Trident, or the National Policy of Naval Celebration; describing a Hieronauticon, or Naval Temple,* London, 1802, 15.

[141] John Cartwright, *England's Aegis; or, the Military Energies of the Empire,* London, 1804, 73.

[142] John Flaxman, *A Letter to the Committee for Raising a Naval Pillar, or Monument, under the patronage of His Royal Highness, the Duke of Clarence,* London, 1799, 9.

[143] The newspapers ascribed it to O'Keefe, yet it is not listed among his works. Little information exists on *Britain's Brave Tars*, with it unknown whether this was only performed once as a timely production on the Naval Thanksgiving State procession 1797. Pratt, 'Naval Contemplation', 6.

[144] For an account see *True Briton,* 21 Dec. 1797.

Notions of a Pantheon

Gillray's *The New Pantheon of Democratic Mythology*, 7 May 1799 (Fig. 46), presented another critical comment upon the monumentalising and heroising tendencies of the late-eighteenth century, specifically the popular notions of a national and/or naval pantheon to house monuments to commemorate worthies rife in contemporary discourse.[145] In voting all officer monuments to be destined for St. Paul's from the spring of 1795 onwards, while those to statesmen continued to be situated in the increasingly overcrowded Westminster Abbey, Parliament in a sense invented a British military pantheon.[146] Extensive press commentary on these sculptural commissions saw St. Paul's proclaimed as a 'Temple of British Fame' or the 'National Temple of Fame', while perpetuating popular interest in naval monumentalism and pantheonism.[147] The project was advocated as, and successfully constituted, a supreme manifestation of official cultural patriotism that invested significance in the nation's naval supremacy, commemorating for posterity this great period in British history while asserting a national school of art, thus aptly combining what the academician Opie described as 'British valour, taste, munificence and genius'.[148]

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[145] Yarrington, 'Popular and Imaginary Pantheons', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 107. This notion was not only evident in contemporary sculptural and architectural proposals, designs and projects, but also in press commentary, literature, poetry and theatre performances. The 'Grand Allegorical Representation' at Sadler's Wells theatre, in which 'Britannia is enthroned in a Temple of Patriotism', is one such example. *The Sun*, 14 April 1800.

[146] While St. Paul's is the prime example of a realised British pantheon and memorialises military heroes of the recent wars, another, more obscure and now demolished contemporary example of a Naval Temple of Fame was advocated and erected in Monmouthshire upon Kymm Hill in 1801. *E. Johnson's British Gazette and Sunday Monitor*, 21 June 1801.

[147] *The Public Advertiser,* 25 April 1791, 2; 27 Feb. 1792, 3; 3 March 1792, 3; 9 Feb. 1793; 8 June 1793. This notion of St. Paul's as a temple of fame continued on for many years well after the initial call for monuments in the Cathedral. See *The Star*, 29 Jan. 1798; *Whitehall Evening Post*, 3 April 1798; *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 22 July 1799; *Gentleman's Magazine*, 94, 1803. See also *Whitehall Evening Post* for reference to St. Paul's as the British Temple of Fame and a suitable site for a monument to Dr. Robert Warren among other 'benefactors and illuminators of mankind!' *Whitehall Evening Post,* 28 Oct. 1797.

[148] John Opie, Professor in Painting at the Royal Academy, saw a public memorial to the Navy as beneficial to the nation, individual artists and the reputation of British art. John Opie, *Lectures on Painting, delivered at the Royal Academy of Arts with a Letter on the Proposal for A Public Memorial of the Naval Glory of Great Britain*, London, 1809, 178. See also *A collection of state papers, relative*

Gillray's *Pantheon*, a title-page to a set of anti-Opposition prints, played upon the reformist and radical agendas, and French revolutionary associations, of pantheonic and national impetuses behind contemporary monumental sculpture. This linking of national monumental sculpture with political significance recalled Mr. Macfungus' words on a 'Temple of Freedom' and his description of political reform in monumental metaphor, recently published in the new government-subsidised, ministerial and partisan periodical, *The Anti-Jacobin*, from which it is likely Gillray, as a frequent contributor, drew inspiration.[149] In this print monumental conventions are distorted, with the altar's decoration consisting of apes' rather than rams' heads and a garland of laurel bound with tricolor ribbon. Traditional mythological symbols are relegated to a bonnet-rouge cornucopia at its base which, in terminating with a bell, is transformed into a fool's cap, thus mocking the French revolutionaries' and Opposition's foolishness. Gillray was deriding the Opposition's democratic demands, particularly to extend the patriotic public sphere and create more inclusive national monuments, implying their absurdity and inconsistency as un-patriotic, disloyal, radical and Francophilic expressions. Through the manipulation of the conventional, socio-politically exclusive and nationalistically significant language of monumental sculpture, Gillray implied the Opposition was jeopardising Britain's national identity.

Gillray's *Pantheon* exploited this term's problematic connotations with the recently established French republican Panthéon, and also existing tensions between personal fame and military heroism, and traditional Christian principles and religious sites. Thus he derided the national ineffectuality and partisan insufficiency of loyalist patriotic monumentalism.[150] While culturally aware Britons would have appreciated

to the war against France now carrying on by Great-Britain and the several other European powers, ... London, 1794-1802, vol. 10 of 11, 308. The arts of the nation were often used in British commentary as an index of its constitutional health, it being commonplace to associate this unified and prosperous nation with that of Greece and Rome, asserting Britain's claim as heir to classical antiquity and civilisation. Quilley "All Ocean is her Own'', Cubitt (ed.), *Imagining Nations*, 132.

[149] 'Meeting of the Friends of Freedom' in *The Anti-Jacobin, or Weekly Examiner*, London, 1799, vol. 1, 4 Dec. 1797, 133.

[150] King Louis XV, on regaining his health, in the mid- eighteenth century commissioned the construction of the Panthéon to replace the ruined Abbey of Sainte-Geneviève with an edifice worthy of the patron saint of Paris. The Marquis of Marigny oversaw the project, while Jacques-Germain Soufflot (1713-1780) was the architect. Despite foundations being laid in 1758, due to financial problems it was not completed until 1789 at the start of the French Revolution. The new Revolutionary government ordered it to be changed from a church to a mausoleum or temple for the interment of great Frenchmen. See Barry Bergdoll (ed.), *Le Panthéon: Symbole des Révolutions*, Paris, 1989. As well as monumental forms, design competitions were also used for such purposes. Instigated by Jacques-Louis

the didactic and propagandist parallels between monumental enterprises on either side of the channel, St. Paul's' apolitical, loyalist and Christian allegiances would have ensured its favourable distinction from the Republic's Panthéon, the secularised ex-church of St. Geneviève, Paris, associated with the French revolution's irreligious policies of overthrowing the divinely ordained monarch.

In its pantheonic nature, St. Paul's exploited its potential to bridge State service, individual heroism, militarism and ecclesiasticism, principally through the depiction of the naval officer as Christian hero warrior, of which Nelson was the archetype.[151] The context of war made such glorification of temporal heroism acceptable, with some commentators even expressing their satisfaction that this British Temple of Fame had the 'additional sanction of religion'.[152] Uniquely, St. Paul's accommodated a pantheon of military heroes in a prominent, functioning and historic Anglican space, constructing and perpetuating the national cult of military heroism. Gillray's awareness of such cultural, political, national and religious issues, and the resonance between them in the given discursive context, is evident in *Pantheon*'s paralleling of politics with monumentalism at a time of heightened British patriotic celebration following the news of Nelson's Nile victory, re-emerging notions of a naval pillar, and declining French republicanism in the face of Napoleon's consulship.[153] Gillray mocked the futility of the French revolution and national monumental sculpture to operate effectively outside the socio-political conventions inherent in, and

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David a design competition for a variety of monuments, including a figure of the Virgin Mary, Hercules and the French People was held at the Festival of 10 August 1793, but never judged or executed. Lynn Avery Hunt, *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution*, California, 2004, 110, ftnt. 50, and Chapter Three 'The Imagery of Radicalism' 87-122. See also Nicholas Penny, 'Amor Publicus Posuit': Monuments for the People and of the People', *The Burlington Magazine*, 129: 1017, December 1987, 793-800, 5.

[151] Hoock, 'British Military Pantheon', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 93-5. The figure of the British Christian hero warrior was advocated in sermons preached onboard battleships, thanksgiving services on shore, parliamentary rhetoric, private battle accounts and victory celebrations descriptions. 'Debate in the Commons on the vote of thanks to Lord Howe', 16 June 1794, cols 906ff, in *Parliamentary History ... to 1803*, 1818; Robert Southey, *The Life of Nelson,* 2:ii, London, 1813, 268; James Clarke, *Naval Sermons Preached on Board Her Majesty's Ship the Impetueux*, London, 1798, V, 'On the Naval Character', 85; Henry Draper, *National Distresses Counterbalanced by National Mercies: A Funeral Sermon on Lord Nelson*, 2nd ed., London, 1805, 14, 22.

[152] *The Public Advertiser*, 4 April 1791, 3; *World*, 4 April 1791, 3; *The Times*, 4 April 1791, 3; *Public Advertiser*, 25 April 1791, 2; 3 March 1792, 3.

[153] The Directorate resign on 18 June 1799. On 9 November 1799 Napoleon was named First Consul, becoming effectively dictator.

promulgated by, hierarchical society in a topical, familiar, complex and interpretatively polysemic print that offered meanings accessible to various audiences.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that late eighteenth-century notions of military heroism, national identity, social hierarchy, meritocracy, rank, national identity, monumental commemoration and high art conventions had, in varying degrees, significant impact upon both official and unofficial discourses. The socio-political exclusivity of representational naval heroism and symbols used in it, along emphatically elite and loyalist lines, has been explored, and shown to be most evident in monumental sculpture, specifically St. Paul's'. This chapter has thus built upon the previous study of contemporary naval actualities and symbolism, their negative connotations and positive interpretations for socio-political, especially loyalist and conservative, propagandist ends. Here the significance of rank, national identity and partisan politics upon the cult of the naval hero and pantheon has been revealed. An understanding of the nautical, military, heroising and monumentalising tendencies of the age, and how integral these were to the functioning of national patriotic display, has been gained. Specific prints by Gillray have been discussed in relation to these issues to reveal their critically and culturally informed nature as constructions of, and contributions to, the discursive context surrounding naval representation, heroism, monumental commemoration and national patriotism. Gillray was clearly dialogically engaged with, intervening in, and perceptively merging, both official discourses, specifically high art naval representations, and unofficial discourses, particularly theatre, song, prints, press and radical texts. Furthermore, he remained aware of and exploited the dialogical relations between official and unofficial discourses. An understanding has been gained of Gillray's discursive position, his ability to combine legible references to various discourses to produce an image that offered a register of meaning for numerous audiences who occupied differing semiotic grounds and thus would interpret prints differently. This line of argument will be central to the subsequent chapter's analysis of his mock-heroic *Design for a Naval Pillar*, 1 February 1800 (Fig. 1 and 2), which critically derided an unrealised monumental

enterprise (1799-1801) and intervened in the shifting and contested discourses pertaining to it.

Gillray's Critique of the Naval Pillar Project

Gillray's *Design for a Naval Pillar* (Fig. 1 and 2) was published on 1 February 1800 as a timely critique upon the failing enterprise to erect a public naval monument. This specific print will be analysed in order to cast light on the obscure and neglected history of the Naval Pillar project itself (1799-1801), while offering a culminant exegesis of this thesis's theme of naval representation in relation to the discourses on naval actualities, symbolism, heroism, monumentalism and national patriotism. This print will be interpreted as expressing Gillray's discursive position towards the contested and shifting debates surrounding the proposed Naval Pillar's form, location, audience, purpose, significance, socio-political allegiance, propriety, place within the patriotic public sphere and failings. I argue that *Design* derided the perceived idealism, exclusivity, loyalist implications, excesses and self-interest of such monumental sculpture, engaging in a dialogue with, and making a critical intervention in, relevant discourses, specifically of design proposals, press commentary, advertisements and theatre performances. Gillray's perception of resonances between different discursive spheres, particularly official and unofficial, exploitation of their representational resources, and manipulative discursive union of them in bizarre, yet perceptive, visions will be demonstrated as having been central to the construction and significance of *Design.* I argue that this print was a response to, and re-interpretation of, discourses on the Navy, heroism, monumentalism and war, representing the absurd gulf between naval actualities and official patriotic representation. This chapter provides an unprecedented sustained and focused analysis of *Design* and the Naval Pillar, subjects somewhat overlooked in current scholarship.

This pseudo-pillar design distorted the conventions of monumental sculpture and high art for satirical effect; it is decorated in high-relief as if assembled out of a jumble of naval apparatus, weaponry, trophies and enemy corpses, tied together with rope and set upon rocks amidst the open sea. Regardless of this design's ridiculous quality, or even because of it, *Design* conveyed a sense of patriotic defiance that responded to, and influenced, popular sentiment. While attacking high art and its elite and loyalist implications, this satirical print, nevertheless, had patriotic and pro-Navy resonance.

Gillray used naval imagery to express and evoke a sense of maritime national identity and patriotic, almost defiant, confidence in the Navy, indicating his advocacy for its interpretation as central to Britain's strength, success and identity. *Design* asserted and assured a sense of national unity in relation to common enemies who are implied, through the grotesque imagery, to be the cause of warfare, death and devastation. The enemy contrasts with Britain's strength, righteousness and virtue. With Britannia set triumphantly above the conquered foe and the dangerous seas, stoically enduring the test put to her by revolutionary France and by nature, *Design* functioned to convey assurance and pride from an emphatically naval perspective, presenting the message that no matter how threatened Britain was, Britannia would weather the storm and reign supreme with her victorious Navy.[154] This defiant and triumphant patriotic image of Britain, especially her Navy, is reiterated by the inscription on the pillar's plinth, '*To Perpetuate the Destruction of the Regicide Navy of France and the Triumph of the British Navy*' and the text above beginning 'Britannia Victorious'.[155] The latter words, written prophetically during the naval mutinies of 1797, significantly reassure viewers that mutinous radicalism has been put to rest and the Navy is a supreme force, while ostensibly implying the importance of naval monumental sculpture to commemorate achievement in permanent patriotic symbols of 'stately pride'.[156] Gillray's awareness of naval actualities and their cultural, historical, socio-political discursive contexts, alongside his humanitarian considerations and moral distaste for pretentiousness, are evident in this work and indicative of its serious and critically informed nature.

The decoration in *Design*'s pillar of slumped, grotesque and rent asunder corpses of French revolutionary soldiers a broken flag shaft, cracked cannon barrel, cannon ball,

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[154] Such patriotic interpretation of Britannia was typical of various media in which she was employed in relation to naval supremacy, specifically prints, literature, song, newspaper articles and theatre performances. For example in the *Sun* Mr. Gillum expresses his views of the war with France and Lord Howe's recent victory as a decisive event that will convince France 'of the fruitlessness of every attempt to wrest the Trident from Britannia's hand.' *The Sun,* 14 Jan. 1795, 717.

[155] The inscription upon the pillar's plinth can be seen to correspond and play upon the purpose ascribed to the Naval Pillar publicised in loyalist newspapers to 'To Perpetuate the Glorious Victories of the British Navy'. See for example in *True Briton*, 5 Oct. 1799, 2118.

[156] 'Britannia Victorious.

"Nought shall Her Columns stately pride deface;

"The Storm plays harmless round the marble base,

"In vain the Tempest, and in vain the blast,

"The Trident is confirmed:' Lines taken from T. J. Mathias, *The Pursuits of Literature*, 1797.

ramrod and sword, and its surrounding menacing lightning bolts and crashing waves (Fig. 47) are at complete odds with representational conventions of serenity, decorum and order in military monuments. This imagery can be interpreted as being allusions to the various adversities Britons must endure: grievances and problems within the Navy, French invasion threats, death and devastation of naval warfare, unpopular government policies, ruling elites' self-interest and excesses, and failing patriotic projects such as the Naval Pillar. In the context of contemporary naval actualities and their accompanying discourses discussed in the first chapter, Gillray's monumental design can be understood as a candid vision of the indignity, chaos and excesses of naval warfare, connotative of the violent, dangerous, sinister and unstable aspects of naval service. The sacrifice, press-gangs, harsh discipline, social tension and poor welfare corresponded with such critical interpretations of the Navy's 'confusion, disorder, irregularity, discontent and oppression'.[157] *Design* derisively critiqued the positive propagandist representations of naval service, warfare and victory as assured, heroic and noble, epitomised by the exclusive monumental histories at St. Paul's, discussed in the previous chapter, and utopian Naval Pillar proposals, to be returned to later, which evaded naval actualities and glorified heroic sacrifice.[158] Set unlit amidst the waves, as a nautical death trap unidentifiable and dangerous to voyagers at night, Gillray's pillar design derided the establishment's ignorance, inconsideration, and idealising and politically propagandist representation of the dangerous realities of naval service and warfare.

Design's portrayal of Britannia, and also the significant absence of Jack Tar, demonstrated Gillray's awareness of, and intervention in, contemporary discourse concerning naval symbolism, as discussed in this thesis's first chapter.[159] Britannia's negative connotations of female political participation and the French allegorical figure of Liberty are referenced. However, these are dismissed through Britannia's representation as a strong, dignified and feminine goddess, stoically removed from

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[157] *A fair Statement of the Real Grievances experienced by the Officers and Sailors in the Navy of Great Britain; with a Plan of Reform ... by a Naval Officer*, London, 1797, 1.

[158] For example, while Cartwright believed 'the *calamities* of war should never be kept out of sight', he intended his architectural proposal's iconography to combine them with the sentiments of 'its glories'. Cartwright, *Trident*, 176.

[159] For further discussion of Gillray's awareness of, and intervention in, contemporary discourses concerning naval symbolism see Chapter One, 21-30.

political participation, above the small, grotesque, decapitated Liberty located at the column's base. Britannia's triumphant position as ruler of the waves is built upon male British valour and aggressive defiance, symbolically displaced in the lion beside her, tritons supporting the shell in which she stands, and the weaponry below (Fig. 48). Yet the significant absence of any male counterpart, specifically Jack Tar, suggests Gillray was challenging the increasingly common portrayal of Britannia as helpless without male assistance, and also questioning the exclusion of the sailor from official representational, especially monumental, heroism. Britannia's inclusion and, conversely, Jack's exclusion reference the numerous design proposals for the Naval Pillar and other monuments that conformed to symbolic, cultural and socio-political conventions of official patriotic public display.[160] Significantly, the iconographic parallels that can be traced between John Bacon's design for the St. Paul's monument to *Major-General Dundas*, 1798 (Fig. 49), and *Design*, in the figure of Britannia, lion and shield beside her, the obelisk and pillar, and the scenes of violence sculpted atop this pillar and carved upon the sarcophagus, suggest that Gillray was not simply referencing conventions of naval monumental sculpture in general, but specifically those of Bacon's recent *Dundas*. Clearly, *Design* was complexly informed by, and engaged in a dialogue with, contemporary discourses pertaining to naval representational symbolism, heroism and monumentalism.

A Bakhtinian Interpretation of Design

Applying Mikhail Bakhtin's theories of the carnivalesque to *Design* provides interpretative insight into Gillray's unique visual critique. The chaotic, morbid and unrefined imagery of the pillar's scattered body parts amongst broken weaponry present it as the Bakhtinian grotesque body and antithesis of the classical nude.[161] Its distortion, juxtaposition and inversion of high art traditions can be construed as grotesque realism: 'degradation, that is, lowering of all that is high, spiritual, ideal, abstract'.[162] Gillray's humorous challenge to conventions and hierarchical order

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[160] John Flaxman's colossal statue of Britannia, Alexander Dufour's obelisk surrounded by temple and statues to include one of Britannia, John Opie's temple of naval virtue to include a central sculptural grouping of Britannia, Neptune and George III, and John Cartwright's pantheonic architectural complex to include sculptural representation of Britannia.
[161] Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, 29.
[162] Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, 205.

relates to Bakhtin's notions of the universal and collective laughter of the carnival, which gave 'temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order [… and] marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms and prohibitions.'[163] Laughter is a device that Gillray used to lower the hierarchically distanced, and to challenge the powerful, making the project's socio-political pretensions and exclusivity laughable, particularly for his print's audiences, who were predominantly from the educated elite, gentry and middle classes who laughed at themselves for being part of this discursive circuit. *Design*'s ambivalence, particularly towards naval patriotism, heroism and monumentalism, can be related to Bakhtin's carnivalesque folk humour - 'ridicule and abuse are always the other side of praise and celebration'.[164] While asserting Gillray's independence from official patriotic display, through derisive referencing, 'this very process both confirmed his and graphic satire's dependence, and ultimate deference to, the Academy, and the kinds of art that it sponsored.'[165] Indeed, *Design* was ambivalent, paradoxical and dialectical, combining apparently opposing aspects, high and low art traditions, official and unofficial discourses, in an effective critical synthesis. It was dialogic in that it engaged with, and intervened in, debate on naval representation between two conflicting interpretations, perceptively considering both to draw out their alternate truths about art, culture, society, government, the Navy and war with France.[166]

Design's morbid imagery and patriotic implications can be analysed using Bakhtin's theories of comic debasement to conquer fear, in this case of death and the enemy.[167] Here humour operated to make light of such naval threats and grim actualities, providing indirect reassurance by making them less fearful, threatening or real.[168] Gillray's satirical depiction of the corpses of anonymous French revolutionary soldiers rent asunder in undignified poses, particular that with its wounded and blood-dripping backside on display, relate to Bakhtin's description of the 'grotesque body

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[163] Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, 199. '[All] were considered equal during carnival. Here, in the town square, a special form of free and familiar contact reigned among people who were usually divided by the barriers of caste, property, profession, and age'. Bakhtin. *Rabelais,* 199.

[164] Morris, *Bakhtin Reader*, 195.

[165] Godfrey, *Gillray*, 33.

[166] The dialectic is the process in Hegelian and Marxist theory and methodology, in which two apparently opposed ideas, the thesis and antithesis, become combined in a unified whole, the synthesis.

[167] Morris, *Bakhtin Reader*, 194-225.

[168] 'Laughter overcomes fear, for it knows no inhibitions, no limitations. Its idiom is never used by violence and authority.' Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, 209.

[… as] the undying body of all the people, comically debased so that it may be festively reborn.'[169] *Design* presented death as grotesque and the fearful danger and sacrifice of naval actualities comical. Thus making the awesome (representational naval heroism and official patriotic display) a kind of Bakhtinian 'comic monster', while challenging and distorting symbols of power and violence in a vision of the 'world upside down'.[170] This enabled Gillray's audiences to play with terror and laugh at it.[171]

Bakhtin's theory of the cyclic process of life-death-rebirth is also relevant in relation to Gillray's critique of the Naval Pillar. The monument was proposed to memorialise those who fought and died in the naval service, while also to celebrate the recent naval victories, thus combining loss and gain. However, emphasis was predominantly upon life and rebirth, with the emergence of heroes and oceanic supremacy. The morbid imagery, menacing surroundings and dangerously unlit oceanic location of Gillray's pillar, through contradistinction, could have been interpreted as a critical comment on this idealising bias. In a Bakhtinian sense, abuse is *Design*'s French corpses, slumped and lifeless with their power removed and debased, and their historic death made comic, which is followed by regeneration with Britannia surmounting the chaos and morbidity, triumphing over fear, death and adversity to symbolise Britain's naval immortality.[172] Here, once the grim realities of naval warfare have been acknowledged and the death of the enemy debased, fears can be made comical, and praise of the Navy and its seamen can ensue. Through the French corpses in the shaft and Britannia in the capital, *Design*'s pillar can be perceived as a symbolic interpretation of the dialectic and diachronic relationship, the tension and progression, between these two aspects, death/abuse-life/praise, within the naval discursive context.

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[169] Morris, *Bakhtin Reader*, 195.

[170] 'Defeat of fear [is] presented in a droll and monstrous form, the symbols of power and violence turned inside out, the comic images of death and bodies gaily rent asunder.' Bakhtin, *Rabelais,* 209.

[171] All that was terrifying becomes grotesque […] The people play with terror and laugh at it; the awesome becomes a 'comic monster'. Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, 209.

[172] 'Abuse is death, it is former youth transformed into old age, the living body turned into a corpse. It is the 'mirror of comedy' reflecting that which must die a historic death. But in this system death is followed by regeneration […] Therefore, abuse is followed by praise; they are two aspects of one world, each with its own body.' Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, 212, 224.

The Naval Pillar Project and Gillray's Intervention in its Discourses

Design will now be interpreted through a detailed investigation of the Naval Pillar project in order to explain it in relation to its discursive context and to demonstrate Gillray's critical engagement with, and intervention in, the discursive dialogue concerning this proposed monument. Under the patronage of the Duke of Clarence the initiative was taken in 1799 to organise a project to erect a publicly funded, national monument to celebrate Britain's recent naval achievements and lost heroes,[173] with the news of the victorious Battle of the Nile providing decisive impetus for such a popular notion of patriotic public display.[174] Among the founding patrons, subscribers, committee members, design competitors, advocates, reviewers and critics there emerged an initial consensus that this monument might assert the nation's naval strength and provide a didactic example of patriotic endeavour that would 'perpetuate [the sailors'] valorous deeds to future generations' and 'compensate' for the suffering of their relatives and fellow men.[175] Nevertheless, little agreement was reached over such issues as the monument's form, precise purpose, location and audience. The contentiousness, and ultimate failure, of this monumental enterprise indicates how, as Jenks notes, 'a wide range of opinion could be masked by patriotic projects generally held to be 'good ideas'.'[176] The bizarre, incongruous and unconventional quality of Gillray's pillar conveyed the disparity and flux of discourses on the Naval Pillar, particularly in relation to its honorary purpose, socio-political significance and heroising exclusivity. Gillray played upon various individuals' and groups' incompatible demands and proposals for this prospective monument, implying that they threatened achievement of the aim of perpetuating a positive image of the Navy. The oceanic location can be interpreted as a metaphor for the project being 'out at sea', floundering amidst controversy and partisan struggles.

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[173] The Duke of Clarence is discussed in relation to Gillray's *Nauticus*, 11 October 1791 (Fig. 38), in Chapter Two, 39.

[174] *The Times,* 12 Jan. 1798; *Gentleman's Magazine*, 83, 1798, 24-7, 100. Initial calls for a naval monument were made during early 1798 and increased following the news of the Nile victory that reached Britain in October.

[175] *True Briton*, 24 July 1799; 25 July 1799.

[176] Jenks, *Engagements,* 180.

The Question of the Monument's Form

Design demonstrated Gillray's intervention in discourses questioning the potential form of this naval monument, derisively referencing proposals' typical use of high art conventions of monumental sculpture, antique figures and allegorical devices to make critical comment upon their inherent exclusivity, pretentiousness and idealism. Despite the Naval Pillar design competition, first advertised in August 1799, specifying a 230-foot high pillar or obelisk,[177] proposals extended far beyond this remit to include statues, temples and pantheonic structures.[178] Extensive debate ensued over the appropriate form for this intended commemorative and didactic monument, with the most notorious raging between John Flaxman, Alexander Dufour and John Opie.

The sculptor Flaxman proposed a gigantic statue of *Britannia Triumphant* (Fig. 24) set upon a hill above the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, believing 'how much more sentiment and interest there is in a fine human figure than can possibly be produced in the choicest piece of Architecture.'[179] The architect Dufour retorted: 'if we wished to perpetuate [the hero's] memory, a piece of Architecture is better calculated for the purpose than a Statue […] It is to the Pillars of Trajan, Antoninus, Pompey […] and their inscriptions, which have survived so many ages, that we are indebted for the memory of these great men.'[180] Dufour's assertion of architecture's formalist and historic supremacy was visually advocated by his elaborate design proposal for an

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[177] Farington noted that 'Smirke called in this morning with Mr. Davison the Agent who showed him a proposal for an advertisement calling upon all Artists to offer designs for the Obelisk or pillar proposed to be raised to commemorate our naval victories.' Farington, *Diary*, Garlick and Macintyre (eds), IV: 1266: 12 Aug. 1799.

[178] Yarrington, 'Popular and Imaginary Pantheons', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons,* 107.

[179] Flaxman, *A Letter to the Committee for Raising a Naval Pillar*, 7. The design was published as a pamphlet with three plates etched by William Blake. One of the design drawings survives in the Victoria and Albert Museum, while a model, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1801, now stands in the Soane Museum. Penny, 'Amor Publicus Posuit', 5. The statue was to be 130 feet high, and stand upon a pedestal 100 feet high. Farington, *Diary*, Garlick and Macintyre (eds), IV: 1331: 24 & 25 Dec. 1799; Yarrington, 'Popular and Imagined Pantheons', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 112.

[180] Dufour continued that in contrast the statues to great men 'have been almost all despoiled […] or broken.' He conceded that 'if we wished to represent the portrait, the figure, or any memorable exploit of a hero, a Statue would answer the intent better than a Pillar, or an Obelisk. This is too evident for argument.' Alexander Dufour, *A Letter to the Nobility and Gentry Composing the Committee for Raising a Naval Pillar, or Monument, under the patronage of His Royal Highness, the Duke of Clarence,* London, 1800, 15.

obelisk surrounded by a temple and pillars. John Opie also defied Flaxman's proposal, writing in a letter to the ministerial newspaper, *True Briton*,[181] 'a colossal statue might do more, in some respects, than a column, but in magnitude and effect it must be inferior; […] the ideas suggested by it would be of too refined and abstracted a nature to allow it to be very instructive, and it must at last partake of too much of the uniformity of a pillar, to be capable of affording that plenitude and succession of entertainment, which ought always to accompany great durability.'[182] Opie proposed a *Temple of Naval Virtue* with statues of naval heroes and history paintings alongside them, and colossal sculptures of *Neptune playing Homage to Britannia* and George III. Gillray's pillar topped by Britannia and surrounded by the 'inhospitable climate' of its stormy oceanic location can be seen to have referenced, and be engaged in a perceptive and critically informed dialogue with, these visual and textual design proposals.[183]

Gillray's *Design* implicitly played upon the competition's columnar specifications and various discourses on the subject rife at the time, subtly challenging and mocking them through parody and inversion, to create an unorthodoxly oceanic pillar of a ridiculous, exaggerated and chaotic quality. It constituted a sustained form of pictorial and satirical distortion that attacked the Naval Pillar project and all those involved - competitors, sponsors, subscribers, commentators, Royal Academicians, Pittite ministers and the ruling elite.[184] The derisively employed high art conventions are numerous: the base, plinth, shaft, abacus, capital formula, patriotic naval symbolism

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[181] The *True Briton* was a ministerial daily newspaper founded by the Pitt ministry in 1792 and published between 1793 and 1806. Karl W. Schweizer, 'Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion in the Later Hanoverian Era', *Parliamentary History*, 25: 1, 2006, 32-48, 41.

[182] John Opie, 'A Letter addressed to the editor of the *True Briton*, on the Proposal for erecting a public memorial to the naval glory of Great Britain', *Library of the Fine Arts*, 4, 1832, 61-4, 63. Cited in Alison Yarrington, *The Commemoration of the Hero, 1800-1864: Monuments to the British Victors of the Napoleonic Wars*, London and New York, 1988, appendix 338-9.

[183] Regarding a statue, Opie stated that 'the inhospitable climate, by wearing away the sharpness and delicacy of the workmanship, would prevent its being considered an object of attention, in point of taste; […] A column may at first surprise by its magnitude and please by its beauty; but the uniformity of its impression on the sight, alike on all sides and at all times must quickly render is uninteresting; and after a few ages of disregard, posterity may only view it as a quarry of materials for other edifices.' Opie, 'A Letter', *True Briton*, 63.

[184] Unfortunately no evidence, neither visual nor literary, exists for Robert Smirke's or James Wyatt's pillar proposals, or indeed any other proposals that incorporated a pillar. As a result, I am unable to perform a sustained visual comparison between them and Gillray's design. Instead, we can only speculate, using the columnar conventions and Gillray's evident knowledge of these and discourse surrounding the Naval Pillar, that there would have been some parallels between the pillar design proposals then in circulation and Gillray's pillar design.

of Britannia, allegorical figures of Victory, Fortitude and Justice, inscription between the latter pair, high relief for the shaft decoration, and its portrayal of a kind of narrative. The scales that Justice holds are unbalanced, while the pillar beside which Fortitude stand is broken. The fact that this etching was printed in monochrome (Fig. 2), as well as polychrome (Fig. 1), further indicates Gillray's parody of monumental conventions, monochrome being the media for genuine architectural designs. This exemplifies Gillray's typical exploitation, yet derision, of the prescribed languages of high art in order to distinguish himself from its flaws, pretentiousness and socio-political exclusivity in a complex and witty print that offered various registers of meaning for a broad audience.

Given the eclectic and contentious nature of the monument's potential form, it is unsurprising that there is evidence of discourse that questioned the validity of the conventional commemorative and triumphal column, with the architectural structure of a temple or pantheon its supreme rival.[185] The Naval Pillar project and such design proposals were part of the pantheonic notions regarding naval heroism, monumental sculpture, national identity and the arts, discussed in the previous chapter, providing impetus and outlet for pantheonic imaginings.[186] Opie recommended the 'building of a Pantheon', 'as nearly on the plan of the Pantheon at Rome as the different designation of it will allow',[187] as 'far preferable to the scheme of a pillar.'[188] Pantheon designs were invariably elaborate and complex, tending to incorporate various art forms, believed to be 'more durable and more proper […] to transmit to posterity the talents, bravery, and the riches that distinguish the English nation'.[189] Despite the popular support for such a monumental enterprise, the Naval Pillar remained an 'imaginary pantheon' unlike the unprecedented military pantheon

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[185] Pantheonic design proposals for the Naval Pillar competition included those put forward by Dufour, Opie and Cartwright, but also various other commentators and amateurs architects, of which many were published in newspaper, particularly the *Gentleman's Magazine*. See for example, Blakeney's design, *Gentleman's Magazine*, 70: 1, 1800, May, 109 and plate X.

[186] For a discussion of contemporary notions of a pantheon, see Chapter Two, 49-51.

[187] *Sun*, 3 March 1800, 2323; *True Briton*, 3 March 1800, 2245.

[188] Farington noted that Opie 'mentioned to me a letter which He is preparing for publication in a newspaper, recommending the building of a Pantheon to contain pictures & Statues to record the great actions and the Heroes of this Country. – I told Him it was a noble idea & He said far preferable to the scheme of a pillar.' Farington, *Diary*, Garlick and Macintyre (eds), IV: 1373: 7 Feb. 1800.

[189] Dufour, *A Letter to the Nobility and Gentry*, 15.

realised at St. Paul's.[190] Clearly, patriotic monumentalism adhered to the educated taste of the ruling elites that took classical antiquity as the exemplar.[191]

The debate concerning the monument's form also demonstrated the self-interest of the competitors who advocated their own media, and candidacy, through elaborate proposals and extensive publicity, in a bid to secure the prestigious and financially rewarding commission.[192] Thomas Dibdin's theatrical afterpiece, *The Naval Pillar: A Musical Entertainment*, Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, 1799, in a similar vein to Gillray's *Design*, presented a critical and cynical interpretation of this monumental project. This was achieved on stage through each individual in the village meeting scene advocating and employing an iconography specific to a separate sectarian constituency, parodying the self-interested and partisan nature of the competitors' Naval Pillar design proposals.[193] As a heavily publicised project with a national design competition and public subscription it entailed and endorsed a competitiveness, assertiveness and self-publicity that characteristically 'underwore activities in the patriotic public sphere'.[194]

The Debate over the Monument's Location and Socio-Political Significance

Although the Naval Pillar committee had initially named Portsdown Hill or Blackheath as possible sites, others were eventually suggested, including: Shooter's Hill, Hyde Park Corner, Admiralty, Bloomsbury, St. James' Park, Dover Cliffs, the

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[190] Yarrington, 'Popular and Imaginary Pantheons', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 107-121.

[191] First calls for the proposed monument to be modelled directly upon the practices of the 'nations of antiquity' were expressed towards the end of 1798, generated particularly by the news of Bonaparte's Army of Egypt desecrating Pompey's Pillar with inscriptions of their dead comrades' names. *Morning Post,* 1 Nov. 1798.

[192] The winner of the competition would receive a premium alongside the commission, as well as financially rewarding publicity, prestige and further commissions. Farington, *Diary*, Garlick and Macintyre (eds), IV: 1326: 17 Dec. 1799. 'For the Design […] a Gold Medal, value Thirty Guineas, will be given. The sum of Twenty Guineas will also be given to the next in merit, and Fifteen to the Third.' *Oracle and Daily Advertiser*, 19 Aug. 1799.

[193] For further discussion of Dibdin's *Naval Pillar*, see *Monthly Visitor*, Oct. 1799, 180; *Morning Chronicle,* 16 Oct. 1799; Charles Beecher Hogan, *The London Stage 1660-1800: a Calendar of Plays, Entertainments & Afterpieces, together with Casts, Box-receipts and Contemporary Comment: Compiled from the Playbills, Newspapers and Theatrical Diaries of the Period. Pt.5, 1776-1800*, Vol. 3, Carbondale, 1968, 2218-9; Yarrington, 'Popular and Imaginary Pantheons', Wrigley and Craske (eds), *Pantheons*, 107- 121.

[194] Jenks, *Engagements,* 139.

Isle of Portland and the Isle of Wight, among other locations.[195] Extensive debate raged over the monument's location, calling into question its target audience, its purpose and political function. Choice of location impacted on the symbolic, memorial and historical significance ascribed to what would effectively become a 'site of memory', given that all space is socially, and arguably politically, demarcated and encoded with meaning and memory.[196] *Design* was a dialogical intervention into this contested and shifting 'location' debate, critically asserting the futility and false pretence of attempts to extend the patriotic public sphere. Gillray emphasised the irreconcilability of the various Naval Pillar proposals, the impossibility of any design uniting the nation, and the problematic, even contradictory, nature of popular national patriotism.

While prominence of the pillar was advocated by a diverse range of commentators, the nature of its location in relation to its target audience caused contention, particularly over whether the monument was to be exclusively for the social elite, inclusively for the general masses, or principally for the seamen in whose honour it was to be erected. Some commentators wanted the patriotic public sphere to be extended by a monument accessible to socially-diverse audiences, yet disagreed over which group, the masses or the seamen, should receive priority and, thereby, be the key variable in deciding the location.[197] For example, in the *Morning Herald*, 'Mechanic' asserted that 'a structure of such national importance' should be placed in London where it would be visible to 'so many thousands', including the majority of seamen and mariners when the fleet was laid up. 'Mechanic' opposed the 'improper and ill-chosen' Portsmouth Hill location for being not commonly visited and only

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[195] *Morning Chronicle*, July 19 1799; *The Times* July 19 1799.

[196] This relates to Pierre Nora's pioneering work investigating the notion of 'sites of memory' in relation to history, specifically French history. Pierre Nora (ed.), *Les Lieux de Mémoire*, Seven volumes, 1984–1992, Paris; Pierre Nora and Lawrence D. Kritzman (eds), *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past*, *Vol. I: Conflicts and Divisions*, and *The Construction of the French Past, Vol. III: Symbolism*, New York and Chichester, 1996 and 1998, respectively. Nora's definition of a 'lieu de mémoire' [site of memory] is any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community.' Nora and Kritzman (eds), *Realms of Memory; Vol. I*, XVII. In other words, sites of memory are 'where [cultural] memory crystallizes and secretes itself.' Pierre Nora, 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire [1984]', *Representations*, 26, Spring 1989, 7-25, 7.

[197] For example the suggestions made by the 'Mechanics' in the *Morning Herald,* 2 and 17 Sept. 1799; *Oracle,* 24 Sept. 1799; *St. James Chronicle*, 21-4 Sept. 1799.

visible to sailors on the Solent.[198] A correspondent, 'Jason', was one of the strongest advocates of the Portsmouth site, justifying it as a place where the monument could be viewed by the largest number of men it was erected to honour, a belief that drove much support for other maritime locations.[199] 'Jason' challenged proposals that interpreted the Naval Pillar as an opportunity to reclaim a portion of London for the enjoyment of the elite, to uphold and strengthen the socio-political circumscription of the patriotic public sphere, and to politicise the Navy. He contemptuously equated such proposals with plans for a large heroic statue holding a brazen lamp to stand near the admiralty illuminating St. James' Park to entertain genteel walkers, and for a large edifice in Covent Garden that could provide a permanent ornamental stage for the naval candidates who frequently submitted themselves at Westminster elections.[200] 'Jason' supported the notion of an inclusive patriotic display to honour all seamen, which could kindle plebeians' loyalist flame 'by witnessing some public and permanent monument'.[201] Similarly, other commentators demanded the pillar's inscriptions to be in English, readable for 'every British Subject of the least learning.'[202]

Significantly, the reformist implications of these proposals were confirmed and compounded by the derisive connotations of the pseudonyms under which they were put forward, which challenged the socio-political exclusivity of the liberal arts ('Mechanic') and the elites' penchant for classical mythology ('Jason'), and by the oppositional allegiances of the newspaper in which they were published.[203] *Design*'s oceanic and unorthodox pillar presented it as physically and intellectually inaccessible, derisively referencing such democratic demands to have a monument located in a maritime-associated site and comprehensible for seamen viewers. I argue

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[198] 'Mechanic', *Morning Herald,* 2 Sept. 1799; 17 Sept. 1799. See *The Times*, 31 July 1799, for another example of the advocacy of a London location instead of Portsdown Hill.

[199] 'Jason', *Morning Herald,* 6 Sept. 1799. See also 20 Sept. 1799, and 24 Sept. 1799.

[200] 'Jason', *Morning Herald,* 5 Sept. 1799, 5917.

[201] *Oracle*, 24 Sept. 1799.

[202] *St. James Chronicle, or the British Evening Post,* 21-4 Sept. 1799; *Oracle and Daily Advertiser*, 7 Oct. 1799.

[203] By the term 'reformist' I mean that which advocates and supports social and/or political reform, through gradual reform rather than abolition or revolution. This definition is taken from the *Oxford English Dictionary*. I will use this term in relation to commentators, and their commentaries, which advocated reform of the socio-political exclusivity of the patriotic public sphere. Regarding the oppositional allegiances of certain newspapers, particularly the *Morning Herald*, see Schweizer, 'Newspapers', 37 and 45.

it sardonically suggested this unconventional, grotesque, popular, tasteless and ridiculous form would be what was required for, and the result of, the extension of such patriotic public display to include sailors, and the lower orders in general. This critical view can be seen to have appealed to the tastes and expectations of Gillray's predominantly elite, loyalist and conservative audiences. However, with his characteristic critical ambivalence, Gillray also derided the socio-political exclusivity of high art official patriotic displays.

Some other commentators advocated a London-located naval monument as a socially elite attraction that could assert and perpetuate their control over such socially demarcated space and display.[204] The perceived extension of the patriotic public sphere was distrusted and retracted by the project's elite, loyalist and conservative alliances and agenda. While initial impetus and support for a monument to honour the sailor existed, indicating the tar's importance to the national and symbolic interpretation of the Navy, maritime and British identity, the rarity of, and opposition to, proposals that incorporated him within their designs and/or audience suggest such inclusive notions were far from popular among the ruling elites. These exclusive proposals rejected the common seaman as the honorary subject and/or audience, instead directing the monument towards the higher rank of admirals and the ruling elite.[205] For example, 'Dinocrates' dismissed the frequently raised objection that 'common sailors' were less likely to visit the capital, arguing that the vulgar order to which they belonged was incapable of being affected by monumental forms as 'it is strong habits, the impulse of occasion, and animal courage, that operate in them far more than the finer and more noble sentiment, which this Pillar is intended to perpetuate and excite.'[206] These notions further evidence the socio-political exclusivity of representational naval heroism, symbolism and monumentalism, and official victory culture in general. Clearly, the Naval Pillar brought for the ruling elite the need to safeguard the social and partisan exclusivity of the patriotic public sphere and an opportunity to strengthen control over display within it. Through the

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[204] One contributor, who supported locating the pillar in London, justified his preference by arguing this was most convenient for the majority of subscribers. *Oracle*, 15 Oct. 1799.

[205] This is similar to social exclusivity of naval monuments in St. Paul's Cathedral discussed in Chapter Two, 43-48.

[206] 'Dinocrates', *Morning Herald,* 21 Sept. 1799.

significant absence of Jack Tar and inclusion of famous admirals' names upon the pillar's steps in *Design*,[207] Gillray presented a critical comment upon the social exclusivity, celebrity and idealism of naval representation, commemoration and heroism, most evident in monumental sculpture, implying the pretence, hypocrisy, failure and impossibility of the ministerial and loyalist ruling elite's attempt to achieve an inclusive national monument, meritorious military heroism or extended patriotic public sphere.[208]

Gillray's *Design* deflated the Naval Pillar's pretensions of being national, inclusive and publicly funded, while criticising the politicisation and idealisation of the Navy's image to propagate an exclusively loyalist, triumphal ministerial message. Indeed, this monumental project was invested with socio-political, specifically elite, loyalist and Pittite, allegiances and implications from the outset. Its committee members were from the royal family, Parliament, Pitt ministry, and the Admiralty. The public subscription was circumscribed to those who had sufficient wealth and social-standing to make significant contributions and partake in the elite culture of which the project existed in and was a product of.[209] The design remit and the majority of proposals were informed by the conventions of the official language of high art, associated with the social elite and the Royal Academy. Some commentators perceived that advocates hoped the pillar would function as loyalist state propaganda advancing a triumphal ministerial message of the 'exalted services' of ministers under whose direction such a victorious Navy reigned, and of the governmental interpretation of the Nile victory and continuation of the war.[210] The pacifying and loyalist patriotic powers invested in the monument are aptly expressed by a reader of the conservative, state-subsidised *Gentleman's Magazine*, who believed such a London-located monument to national glory towering over the inhabitants could countenance disaffection, discontent and

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[207] The two steps of stones at the base of the pillar are inscribed with the names of admirals: (below) 'Howe', 'Parker', 'Nelson', 'St Vincent', 'Bridport'; (above) 'Duncan', 'Gardiner', 'Keith', 'Hood'.

[208] The names of naval admirals are only included in the polychrome version of the print.

[209] There were many modest donors 'who would shrink from the idea of paying a shilling on the counter of a Banking-house'. *The Times*, 22 Nov. 1805. 'An enthusiastic admirer of the Navy' stated that 'had I gold, I would contribute largely to this undertaking, but having the misfortune to be poor, I can only offer the *contribution of my sentiments* on the present occasion.' *St. James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*, 21Sept. 1799; *Oracle and Daily Advertiser*, 7 Oct. 1799.

[210] *Morning Chronicle*, 21 Sept. 1799; 28 Sept. 1799.

revolutionary notions.[211] The loyalist and ministerial allegiances and implications were furthermore suggested by the rejection of Foxite and radical support for the Naval Pillar as expressed in the oppositional newspapers *Morning Chronicle* and *Morning Herald*,[212] and ultimately confirmed by the project's abandonment immediately after the Pitt ministry fell. The plans lapsed alongside a failing government whose accomplishments the pillar was supposed to advance.[213] The apolitical and inclusive agenda of this proposed monument can be seen as a mere pretence, with the ministerial *Oracle*'s call for all parties to unite behind this project a 'red-herring […] specious declaration, aimed at subordinating the project to loyalism.'[214]

Nevertheless, as a monument to honour the *general* naval service, designed through a *national* competition and funded by *public* subscription, the Naval Pillar inevitably invited socio-political speculation, tension and ambiguity, particularly regarding its purpose, exclusivity and proprietorship.[215] It was appropriated into political struggles between Pittites and Foxites, and loyalists and radicals, accruing negative associations that in turn challenged its exclusivity and revealed its partisan insufficiency. The perceptions and demands of this monument were various, contested, shifting and dialogic, with such particularised and disparate interests symptomatic of the fractured, incompatible and irreconcilable nature of the patriotic public sphere.[216]

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[211] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 69: 2, 1799, 760-1.

[212] The Duke of Norfolk was among the first subscribers, and the Whig Duke of Bedford offered to donate a site in his Bloomsbury holdings. *Morning Chronicle*, 22 July 1799. If this had come to pass, it would have seen the Naval Pillar constructed in a new square immediately adjacent to Bedford House, 'to be called *Victory Place*'. *Morning Chronicle*, 28 Aug. 1799; *Whitehall Evening Post*, 24 Aug. 1799. See for a similar proposal the *Gentleman's Magazine,* 84, 1798.

[213] *Naval Chronicle*, 3, 1800, 146. Funds and design proposals continued however for some years after 1801. For example, Richard Elsam produced a design in 1803, which was published as an engraving by Thomas Tegg on 4 May 1804, (Fig. 50). *Richard Elsam, An Essay on Rural Architecture [...] containing a Proposal for a Naval Pillar,* London, 1803, 43-4.

[214] Jenks, *Engagements*, 179. *Oracle*, 14 Sept. 1799. The *Oracle* was a daily, generally ministerial, pro-government paper, often dutiful in its anti-Jacobin declarations and subscription to the reactionary government stance. However, at times it possessed significant tendencies towards the liberal cause, which appeared to coincide with a decline in sales, indicating a principally Tory and Pittite loyalist readership. Schweizer, 'Newspapers', 45.

[215] The loyalist spectacle […] generated fundamental concerns relating to the perceived expansion or democratisation, of the patriotic public sphere.' Jenks, *Engagements*, 148.

[216] The debate the project stimulated registered 'the existence of significant dissenting traditions within the broad church of British's patriotic culture.' Jenks, *Engagements*, 168.

Radical Major Cartwright's ambitious *Hieronauticon* proposal, put forward in numerous drawings and a lengthy volume, *The Trident*, was a supreme challenge to the loyalist, conservative allegiances of the Naval Pillar.[217] Intended as a place where Cartwright could implement his democratising reforms of the culture of patriotic public display, his architectural design incorporated memorials to lower rank individuals and various maritime professions, and popular festivals, taverns and public houses geared towards attracting the 'multitudes' and convening plebeian revelry.[218] Cartwright hoped 'to inculcate patriotism and heroism by making every Briton proud of his country, and every British seaman proud of his profession; and finally to adorn, as becomes her, the wealthiest and most potent naval state that ever figured on the theatre of the world'.[219] However, such sentiment did not detract from his popular radical perspective, informed by his political stance as the 'father of reform', indefatigable radical pamphleteer and sympathiser with the early triumphs of French Republicanism.[220] Clearly such democratic patriotic proposals would have been accompanied with radical associations, specifically of the French revolutionary enemy Britain was fighting against, and therefore damaged, even contradicted, the loyalist patriotic implications invested in the Naval Pillar.

Design's familiar iconography (sea, Britannia, lion, naval objects) and references to the common enemy and their atrocities (French revolutionary corpses, Tricolor flag on which is written Egalité, guillotine, decapitated Liberty and Phrygian cap) can be interpreted as engaged in a dialogue with such unofficial discourse. The unconventional design responded and contributed to popular culture, at odds with the

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[217] *The Trident* was 200 pages long and allegedly forty-six drawings were produced, sadly no visual records of the scheme survive. Yarrington, *Commemoration of the Hero*, 342. No visual material of Cartwright's design survives. However, the structure James Barry added to his vast painting *Commerce or The Triumph of the Triumph of the Thames*, 1774-84 in the Royal Society of Arts, in June-July 1801, (Fig. 51) after admiring and advising Cartwright's drawings for a Naval Pillar, corresponded closely with Cartwright's proposal and gives an image of what this design probably looked like. See D. Allan, *The Virtues and Tribe of Arts and Science. Studies in the Eighteenth-Century Work and Membership of the London Society of Arts*, London, 1992, 353.

[218] There were memorials for various naval professionals, including surveyors of the navy and officers of the dockyards, shipwrights, carpenters and labourers of the royal dockyards. Cartwright envisioned these as places of revelry where 'the friends of the honest tars of old *England* might […] drink their wine […] sing a song [… or] recount old stories of battles and sieges'. Cartwright, *Trident,* 32, 30-4. For further discussion of Cartwright's plans for public victory celebrations, see Cartwright, *Trident*, 13; Jenks, *Engagements*, 176.

[219] Cartwright, *Trident*, 125.

[220] For a discussion of Cartwright's interest in, and influence from, French culture, see Les Fêtes de la Revolution, exh.cat., Musée Bargoin, Clermont-Ferrand, 1974.

socially exclusive language of high art. Gillray, I argue, was playing upon the more public, inclusive and less institutionalised nature of the Naval Pillar, asserting the need for a greater emphasis upon this, and implying through contradistinction that it was in fact typically and intensely partisan and socially circumscribed. The ridiculousness of his design also suggested the national and naval ineffectuality and inaccessibility, both physically and intellectually, of this proposed monument as a didactic loyalist patriotic display. Given Gillray's political awareness, ambivalence about, and consistent ridicule of, party politics and the establishment, a subtle derision of such a propaganda project and its failings amidst partisan struggles was highly probable in *Design*.[221]

The sinister quality of Gillray's pillar's decoration and situation can be interpreted as a metaphor for the self-interest, pretence and hypocrisy at work behind this supposedly publicly funded, historic and charitable endeavour.[222] Indeed, subscription was not only socially exclusive, but also driven by self-interested agendas for aggrandising publicity as donors' names were regularly published in the newspapers, including the *Gentleman's Magazine*. These 'self-reflective estimations of personal worth and public honour' tallied with the accepted notion at the time that 'such patriotism and generosity ought not to pass unnoticed.'[223] Nevertheless, this published subscription list seemed not to offer sufficient levels of publicity and celebrity for some wealthy donors, as indicated by Lord Romney's mere £21 donation contrasting with his own £15,000 royal fête, and W. Nicholson of Cornhill announcing his 20-guinea contribution in at least two London papers.[224] As the newspapers tellingly asserted, the monument was intended to reflect admirably upon the 'Patriotism and Public Spirit' of those individuals and corporations financing it,[225] functioning 'as an Address to the British Nation, but more particularly to those who have so liberally

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[221] For a discussion of Gillray's political stance, see the Introduction, 5.

[222] As Lincoln perceptively points out, of the commemorative patriotic monuments that were intended to be highly visible and capable of reaching different levels of society 'very few were set up without an ulterior motive.' Lincoln, *Royal Navy*, 96. And as Jenks notes, 'for many the Georgian elite's assertive gestures of patriotism articulated a determined exclusivity, and charitable objections were sometimes completely absent.' Jenks, *Engagements,* 134.

[223] As Jenks notes, 'personal motives loomed so largely in the patriotic culture of the day that the communal intent is often barely visible. Self-reflective estimations of personal worth and public honour lay behind the practice of printing subscribers' names in lengthy front-page advertisements and the puffs that appeared announcing pecuniary gestures.' Jenks, *Engagements*, 134; *Oracle*, 27 Oct. 1798.

[224] *Morning Chronicle*, 27 July 1799; *True Briton*, 27 July 1799.

[225] *True Briton,* 24 July 1799; 25 July 1799.

contributed to [its] erection.'[226] This indicates the rhetoric of 'public' subscription was seemingly a misnomer, or disguise for what really constituted a typical example of the patriotic public sphere being circumscribed along elite and partisan lines, and display within it adhering to social exclusivity and personal-political propaganda. The paradox that such a proposed national monument was not funded by the nation's purse was apparent and acknowledged by reformists.[227]

The Demise of the Naval Pillar

Despite considerable donations, the Naval Pillar project failed to accrue sufficient funds (only £2300)[228] and was abandoned in April 1801.[229] Gillray's ridiculous, redundant and improbable pseudo-design anticipated the non-realisation of this monument and its potential to make the patriotic public sphere more inclusive, in terms of stylistic vocabulary, honorary subject, participatory conventions and financial responsibility. It was not for some years, with Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square, 1839, that such a public, commemorative and patriotic naval monument was successfully erected.[230] While there exists few evidenced reasons for this failure, the unresolved tension over purpose and significance can be seen as a contributing factor to, and possible cause of, the project's contention, partisan struggles, radical

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[226] 'The Naval Pillar, A Poem', *Oracle,* 10 Dec. 1799.

[227] The radical Major Cartwright asserted that national honours such as this monument 'required both the public purse, and the public power.' Cartwright, *Trident*, 7. See also, *Critical Review*, 37: 2, 1803, 139.

[228] For an estimate of the projected cost, see *Morning Chronicle*, July 19 1799, 9409; *The Times,* July 19 1799. Elsam claimed that Davison raised £2300 for the project. Elsam, *An Essay on Rural Architecture,* 42-3. See also Jenks, *Engagements,* 179. However, funds continued to be accrued until the project's abandonment in 1801. According to the *Evening Mail* by the beginning of 1800 the 'subscription did not exceed 4,000l', implying the project had continued into the new century. *Evening Mail*, 10 Jan. 1800.

[229] *The Times*, 18 April 1801.

[230] With efforts to promote public interest in a naval monument for Trafalgar Square the Committee tried to encourage subscribers to the Naval Pillar project to re-donate to this later one. Several letters to editors of newspapers expressed the dislike of contributing to a new fund for a national monument, without having proof that the earlier subscription had been properly used. For letters see *The Times,* 19 and 27 Dec. 1805; 22 Jan. 1806; *Naval Chronicle*, 1805, 382. B. R. Haydon complained in 1812: 'You […] lavish thousands upon thousands on sculpture without effect. In no country under heaven has such patronage been met by such shameful, disgraceful indolence as in this. Masses of marble scarcely shaped into intelligibility; boots, spurs, epaulettes, sashes, hats and belts huddled on to cover ignorance and to hide defects.' Cited in Marcus Wood, *Radical Satire and Print Culture: 1790-1822,* Oxford, 1994, 207. Evidently public patriotic display was still a contentious issue and the Naval Pillar project may have actually damaged the reputation of, and confidence in, it.

associations, political ambiguity and insufficient exclusivity.[231] This in turn damaged the confidence of loyalist individual and corporate donors, both real and potential. The elaborate nature of proposals, for example Flaxman's estimated £70,000 statue, suggests even the high £15,000 projected cost would have been insufficient and arguably the monument was inevitably unfeasible. Gillray's exaggerated, chaotic and unconventional pseudo-design mocked the excessive design proposals, critically implying that they were no less ludicrous than his own, while through contradistinction, advocating a more appropriately restrained celebratory and commemorative approach in patriotic display.[232] *Design*'s discursive dialogical nature derisively referenced press commentary calling for 'chaste and classical Simplicity in Embellishments' dictated by the ruling elite's classical taste, alongside the 'incompatible […] profusion of Ornament' typical of design proposals that failed to adhere to such stimulations.[233]

Gillray's critique responded and contributed to mounting criticism and rejection of the Naval Pillar, both on grounds of its financial inappropriateness and symbolic ineffectuality. Gillray's preposterous, grotesque and inaccessible pillar would have been interpreted in light of naval financial problems and wartime pressures, implying extravagant expense, inappropriate public spending and ministerial financial maladministration. *Design*'s oceanic and morbid pillar arguably asserted that the actualities of manning and maintaining the Navy should take financial priority over such unbeneficial measures as monumental sculpture at a time of serious military, financial and social pressures. The elaborate design proposals, and self-publicity of subscribers, advocates and competitors, would have disparagingly equated the Naval Pillar with other excessive displays of ostentatious patriotism and social standing, such as fêtes, feasts, dinner parties and balls.[234] Such display also revealed the

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[231] *Naval Chronicle,* 3, 1800, 146. For the 'causes of disaffection' see the letter of 16 Sept. 1799 from J.P. Malcolm on the subject of a Naval Memorial to Mr. Urban [i.e. the Editor], *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 69: 2, 1799, 760-61; Hugh Honour, *Romanticism*, Harmondsworth, 1979, 226. For further discussion of the reasons and causes of the project's collapse, see Jenks, *Engagements,* 179.

[232] Flaxman's statue 'would cost if made of the height proposed for the pillar abt. £70,000 & might be executed completely in less than 10 years', whilst templar or pantheonic constructions would require a large and skilled workforce. Farington, *Diary,* Garlick and Macintyre (eds), IV: 1331: 24 Dec. 1799.

[233] *Oracle and Daily Advertiser*, 19 Aug. 1799.

[234] Public and government debts were publicised in newspapers. For example, the *Morning Chronicle* listed the 'National Debt on the 1st February 1799 from the Accounts presented to the House of Commons' on 10 April 1799, with the Navy's unfunded debt defined at £5,556,034. *Morning*

establishment to be hypocritical and attempting to assert control over the patriotic public sphere, with the government supposedly 'saving candle ends' by reigning in public victory celebrations, especially illuminations, whilst the very ministers who advocated wartime austerity also supported other excessive and exclusive patriotic activities. Perception of the pretence, self-aggrandising agendas and excess of the pillar project was apparent in discourse, which *Design* fed off and into, exemplified in the implications of the *Evening Mail* article that began a declaration of the project's failure with an account of lords' genuine charitable acts.[235] The culturally-informed and elitist views among participants of the gentlemanly reading culture of subscription and coffee houses, who by no coincidence also constituted a significant consumer audience for Gillray's prints, increasingly perceived such a public monument as ineffective and irrelevant to the national purpose of naval strength and loyalist patriotism. One such 'Purchaser and Constant Reader of your paper' stated 'the happy effects and the faithful pages of history will do more justice to our naval heroism, and tend more effectively to inspire emulation, than a Pillar as wonderful as the Tower of Babylon'.[236] This exemplified the social exclusivity and cultural hierarchy of the language of the liberal arts, which Gillray played with in his dialogically discursive work.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that Gillray's *Design* was a highly perceptive, complex and informed critique of the contemporary phenomenon of the Naval Pillar. The print has been investigated in relation to this project and related discourses, specifically the debates over form, location, audience and purpose, design proposals and their use of monumental conventions, partisan and radical commentaries, and subscription. Gillray's derisive distortion of the language of high art in this pseudo-design has indicated his critical discursive position towards naval contexts, heroic representation and patriotic culture. These issues of the patriotic public sphere have been

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Chronicle, 26 Oct. 1799. Such extravagant patriotic displays were set in the 'context of particular discourse concerning famine and war that saw them refracted through a partisan prism.' Jenks, *Engagements*, 132.
[235] *Evening Mail*, 10 Jan. 1800.
[236] *Oracle*, 8 Oct. 1799.

demonstrated to be subject to elite and loyalist attempts to assert socio-political exclusivity. Gillray articulated socio-political anxieties, contention and tension through a pictorial attack upon this proposed monument, using the prescribed language of monumentalism to make a subtle yet poignant critique upon the loyalist predilections engendered in such patriotic display. Bakhtinian theory of the carnivalesque has been applied to Gillray's print to explore the significance of its grotesque and unconventional imagery upon its contemporary meanings and their interpretation. *Design* has been related to Bakhtin's notion of comic debasement, in this case of death, the enemy and high art conventions. This satirical mock-design has been interpreted as having invited an appreciation of the laughable absurdity of naval monumental sculpture on various levels, particularly as loyalist patriotic propaganda to unite the nation, as an idealising representation of naval heroism, as a public endeavour inherently socially exclusive and as a financially inappropriate excess in the context of wartime pressures.

Gillray's fundamental distaste for pretension and socio-political exclusivity is epitomised in this assault upon the official discursive realm of patriotic public display, high art, monumental sculpture and positive representations of naval heroism. In this chapter, the themes developed throughout the thesis of naval actualities, symbolism, representations of heroism and monumental commemoration have been elaborated upon and explained through a focused analysis of Gillray's *Design*. This overlooked print is significant in two key respects. Firstly, it demonstrates Gillray's culturally-informed engagement with, and intervention in, official and unofficial discourses, and his perceptive awareness and exploitation of the dialogical relations between them. Secondly, it indicates the shifting, contested and interrelated nature of such discourses concerning patriotism, national identity, high art, social exclusivity and military heroism, particularly in relation to Britain's contemporary maritime context.

Conclusion

This thesis has contextualised works by James Gillray in relation to late eighteenth-century discourses on the war between Britain and revolutionary and Napoleonic France (1793-1815), naval heroism, national identity and patriotic public display. Through analysis of specific works I have argued that Gillray was culturally informed by, and critically ambivalent towards, such discursive contexts. Indeed, his prints clearly demonstrate his dialogical engagement with, and intervention in, both official and unofficial discourses, and his perceptive awareness and exploitation of the relationships between them. The political, social, national and cultural significance ascribed to the Navy, its heroes, victories and symbols, have been explored in an in-depth and sustained investigation of Gillray's prints in relation to his audiences' interpretations of war, party politics, the interests of the ruling elite, high art conventions, monumental sculptural projects, patriotism, national character, Britannia and the common tar. Naval representations, their conception, function and socio-political implications have been explored in relation to both official and unofficial discourses, including contemporary newspapers, pamphlets, prints, theatrical performances, Academic paintings and monumental designs (with the sculptural projects for St. Paul's Cathedral and Naval Pillar providing specific case studies). I have investigated Gillray's critical interpretations of such enterprises in patriotic public display with particular consideration given to their distortion of high art conventions and derisive socio-political implications. These prints have been demonstrated to suggest the printmaker's, and to an extent his audiences', critical perception of the exclusivity inherent in patriotic public display, particularly in terms of loyalist ministerial propaganda, elite honours, and culturally-refined and academically conventional representational resources. My study has argued that, ultimately, the officially endorsed patriotic public sphere and display within it, particularly pertaining to naval representation, was defined along emphatically elite, partisan and loyalist lines, and that Gillray's satirical prints challenged this exclusivity, dialogically engaging with contemporary critical interpretations.

Significant discoveries have been achieved by this research project. In setting the various naval actualities against the popular positive representations of the Navy I have uncovered their propagandist heroic idealism, patriotic nationalism and loyalist ministerism. The negative connotations of the Navy's image and symbols of Britannia and Jack Tar have been revealed to bear influence upon constructions of naval heroism and national identity. Through analysis of official representations of naval heroism I have demonstrated that rank, social status and patriotic duty were prerequisites of officially recognised heroism, and have explored the interrelated significance of notions, constructions and participatory conventions of patriotic display, pantheonism, national identity and high art. Through the investigation of the contentious discourse of the Naval Pillar project and its unrealised monument, I have uncovered the contested, fractured and shifting nature of the patriotic public sphere, with its unresolved issues of socio-political allegiance, propriety, purpose, representational language, audience and participation. Ultimately, this thesis has provided original research into Gillray, his work, discursive position and cultural context in late eighteenth-century Britain. This art historical study has undertaken unprecedented analysis of naval themes as important and overlooked aspects of Gillray's oeuvre, confirming his ingenious cultural perceptiveness, creative vision and critical shrewdness.

My thesis's investigation of Gillray's work in relation to naval heroic and monumental discourses culminated in the first in-depth study of his *Design*, 1 February 1800 (Fig. 1 and 2), a print that sparked my curiosity about the obscure Naval Pillar project and intriguing themes of heroic representation, monumental commemoration and patriotic public display, directing the conception and progression of this body of research. The social art historical research methodology I have used provided insight into the construction, function and significance of specific Gillray works in relation to the broader discursive context that informed his work and his audiences' decoding of it. Bakhtin's carnivalesque theories were applied to the morbid, grotesque, comic and exaggerated imagery of *Design*, enabling speculation about the derisive, ambiguous, patriotic and, yet, reassuring implications of Gillray's work. Concepts of ideology, semiotics, class, collectivity and humour have also been

applied in this study, particularly in relation to the construction and interpretation of Gillray's prints and their socio-political implications.

This thesis contributes significantly to scholarship on Gillray's work, eighteenth-century British culture, contemporary monumental sculptural projects of St. Paul's and the Naval Pillar, and Georgian naval history. In the broader picture, this study should inform readers' understanding of the significance of the Navy at the time of Britain's war against France, not simply in relation to defence, commerce and imperialism, but also to conceptions of national identities and symbolism, notions of heroism and pantheonism, endeavours in patriotic public display and political, specifically loyalist and ministerial, propaganda. Thus, this body of research exists within the extensive and important investigative field concerning politics, war, society, culture, art and print culture in Britain at the turn of the eighteenth century.

This thesis also has relevance in relation to the present-day world, including debates around the issues of public display, inclusive art, the national (in)significance of public monumental sculpture, symbolically and physically demarcated realms of memory and war reportage. Antony Gormley's *One and Other* project (June-October 2009) provides a timely example of monumentalism, in our own age, captivating the public's imagination, providing the opportunity for inclusivity and collectivity, enabling the patriotic public sphere to be extended, taking on profound national significance and being employed and exploited to question conventions of art, class and communal participation. This contemporary sculptor invited 2400 people of the United Kingdom, as representations of both individuality and, collectively, the whole of humanity, to take turns in standing on the Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square, thus defying the social and artistic exclusivity of this space traditionally reserved for conventional sculptural representations of notable worthies or significant and monumental historic scenes. Gormley told reporters that "*One & Other* is a picture, or representation, of a very different kind from the statues around the square or the paintings in the National Gallery. It is not about myths, power or privilege, nor about war and certainly not about death – it is an opportunity to look at life." In a vein reminiscent of Gillray's prints, this project challenged the socio-political exclusivity,

military heroism and propagandist glorification inherent in the conventions of monumentalism.

Beyond art, this thesis relates to the sphere of politics, foreign policy and military campaigns, specifically the current war in Afghanistan. Reportage of this war by various commentators reveals similar debates over purpose, timeframe and achievements as I have analysed in relation to late eighteenth-century Britain. The military campaign in Afghanistan has come under considerable scrutiny in recent, well-publicised political enquiries. The negative aspects of this conflict are becoming increasingly apparent, especially the mounting death toll of armed personnel,[237] insufficient resources, discontinuity in strategic decisions and declining morale within the Army and support at home.[238] As in the eighteenth century, Britain is experiencing the strain of war through loss of life, debilitating physical, mental and social problems of troops following active service, financial pressures and questionable foreign policies.[239] While the democracy in which we now live offers a greater freedom of speech and information that enables war and related issues to be

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[237] More than 80% of British deaths in Afghanistan have occurred in the southern province of Helmand and more troops were wounded in action in July 2009 than in the whole of 2006. At the time of writing on 22 October 2009, the number of UK troops killed on operations in Afghanistan since 2001 stands at 222. Of this figure, 191 have been killed in action and 31 from other incidents, with the cause of death broken down as follows: 63% hostile, 11% accident, 2% friendly fire, 1% suicide and 22% other. Statistics sourced from BBC News webpage 'British Military Fatalities in Afghanistan', accessed 22 October 2009.

[238] The Afghanistan war began on 7 October 2001, in response to the 11 September attacks on New York, with a combination force of the US military's Operation Enduring Freedom and the British military's Operation Herrick. Initially the war was supported by politicians, servicemen and civilians alike, 74% of the British population in October 2001. By July 2009 this percentage had fallen to 47%, only 1% higher than those who opposed the war. Statistics sourced from the ICM. Of 1,010 people polled on the eighth anniversary of the start of Afghanistan operations over the war there, 56% were opposed, 37% in favour, 6% unsure and 1% refused to answer. Statistics sourced from a BBC survey, published 7 October 2009.

[239] On returning from active service, troops suffer not simply from physical injuries, but also from post-traumatic stress disorder, chronic-paranoia, depression, suicide, drug and alcohol dependence, and criminality. About 12,000 veterans are on probation or parole, representing 6 per cent of the total, while 8,500 are in prison, representing 8.5 per cent of the jailed population. Statistics according to the report by the National Association of Probation Officers. At the time of writing on 21 September 2009 Britain has spent 5.7 billion pounds on the military campaign in Afghanistan so far. Sourced from Ministry of Defence. In the final weeks of September 2009, the NATO commander in Kabul, General Stanley McChrystal, has called for considerable reinforcements for the Afghanistan campaign, with proposals for Britain to send out a thousand extra troops to take its number of personnel out there to 10,000. Such a proposal existed within, and exacerbated, debate over the war in Afghanistan, particularly regarding the strategy, objectives and timeframe of the campaign for British forces. Gordon Brown has responded to this military request, despite mounting opposition and criticism, with the announcement on 14 October 2009 that 500 further British troops are to be sent out to Afghanistan. Crucially, the extra forces being sent out to Helmand Province will be mainly frontline combat troops.

questioned widely, nevertheless, much of the official reportage on the Afghanistan war emphasises the government's strategic policy-making and military achievements. The campaign is, to an extent, presented in defiant, noble and chivalric terms reminiscent of Georgian sentiment, as a war that can, will and needs to be won to protect the Afghan and neighbouring states' people from the Taliban, to prevent terrorism from threatening the world and to ensure British, and American, forces remain those with which to be reckoned.[240]

While this thesis has successfully investigated naval representation in relation to Gillray's prints and other discourses, there are inevitable weaknesses in this research. Without the limitations of word count I would have developed further the stylistic and biographical aspects of this study of Gillray, investigating in greater depth his subtly derisive pictorial style that involves a knowledge, exploitation and parody of the language of high art, and its relation to his personal experience of, and discursive position towards, the Royal Academy, its products, members, patrons and audiences. While this theme has been explored in relation to specific examples focusing on the issues and conventions of monumental sculpture and military heroic representation, I believe that research beyond this selective scope, encompassing other conventions of the liberal arts - classical mythology, antiquity, literature, drama, history and philosophy - would offer even greater insight into Gillray's oeuvre, his stylistic language and relationship with contemporary discursive contexts. On a broader scale, the construction and perpetuation of the Navy's image is worthy of further attention, particularly in relation to the negative aspects of the service. As my PhD project I intend to pursue the potential for research in the relatively uncharted field of negative and subversive naval imagery, specifically depictions of press-gangs, mutiny, punishment, smuggling, disorder, drunkenness, war, devastation and death. The sound understanding gained through this thesis of heroising and glorifying interpretations, and their relations to socio-political propaganda, war context and high art conventions will provide a strong foundation upon which such future study can be built. This

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[240] Of particular poignancy is the statement of Michael Codner, director of military sciences at the Royal United Services Institute, in an article sent to the BBC concerning the issue of further deployment of British troops in Afghanistan: "There is a financial and human cost in this strategy which the nation must either pay, or accept that it has lost its presumed status and influence and can relax and be a normal European country that does not take hard power seriously". Published on BBC News webpage 'Most remain against Afghan war', accessed 7 October 2009.

forthcoming investigation will encompass works by various image-makers, including J. M. Turner, Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg, Issac Cruikshank, Thomas Rowlandson, George Morland, as well as Gillray, considering artists' and audiences' assumptions about, and perceptions of, the maritime, its realities and relationships with national identity. I will ask within which pictorial and attitudinal restrictions artists operated when representing such subjects, and what this reveals about the limitations of contemporary taste and audience expectations shaped, as they partly were, by the dominance of positive representations. Thus this completed MPhil thesis will make a significant contribution not only to existing scholarship but also to my own personal and professional development as an art historian.

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Figure 2. James Gillray, *Design for the Naval Pillar*, 1 February 1800.

Figure 3. James Gillray, *Titianus Redivivus; -or- the seven-wise-men consulting the new Venetian oracle, -a Scene in ye Academic Grove. No 1*, 2 November 1797.

Figure 4. Philippe-Jacques de Loutherbourg, *Lord Howe's Victory* or *The Battle of the First of June*, 1795.

Figure 5. James Gillray, *The Nancy Packet*, 19 October 1784.
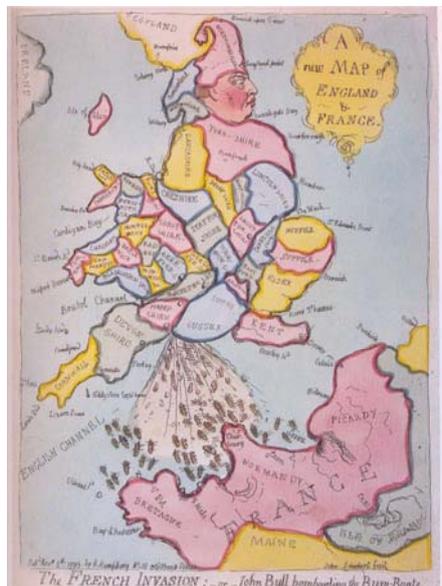
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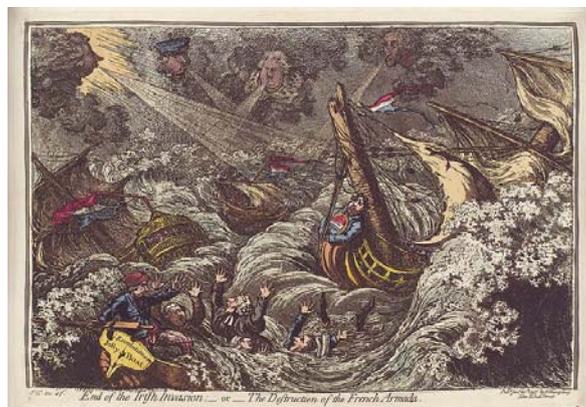
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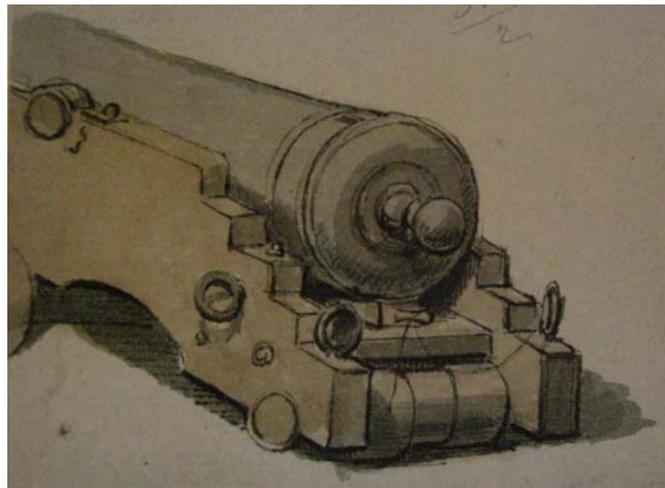
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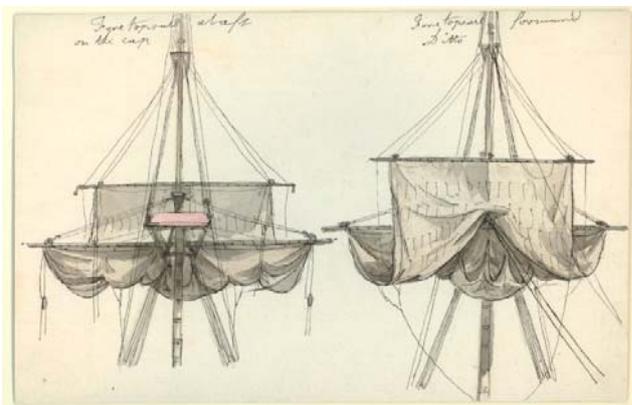

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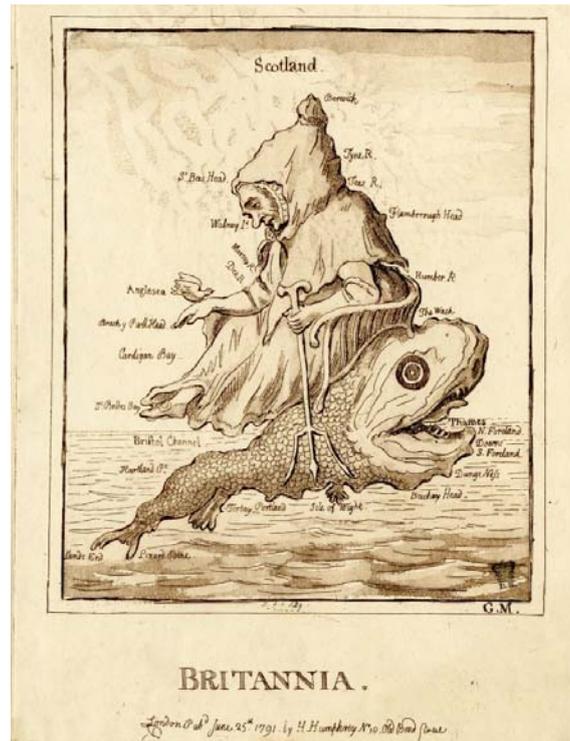
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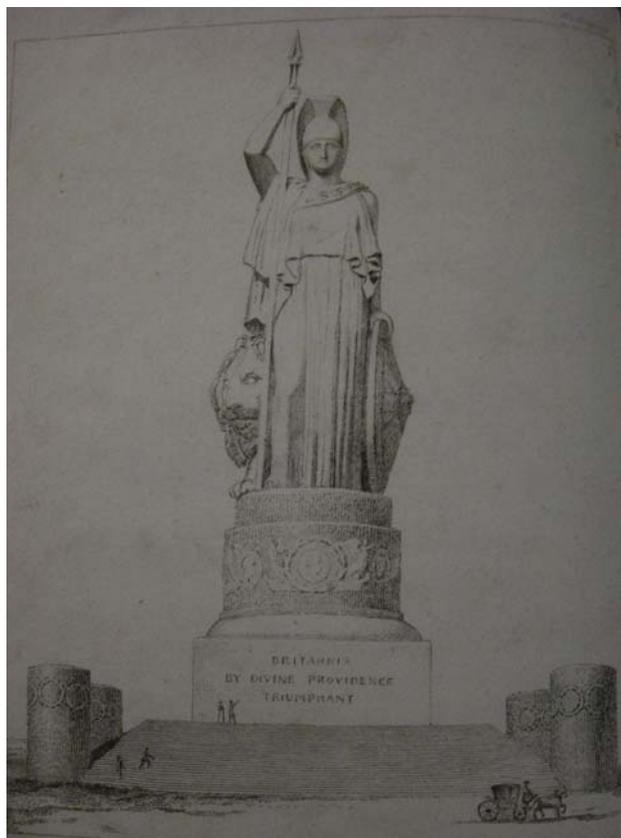
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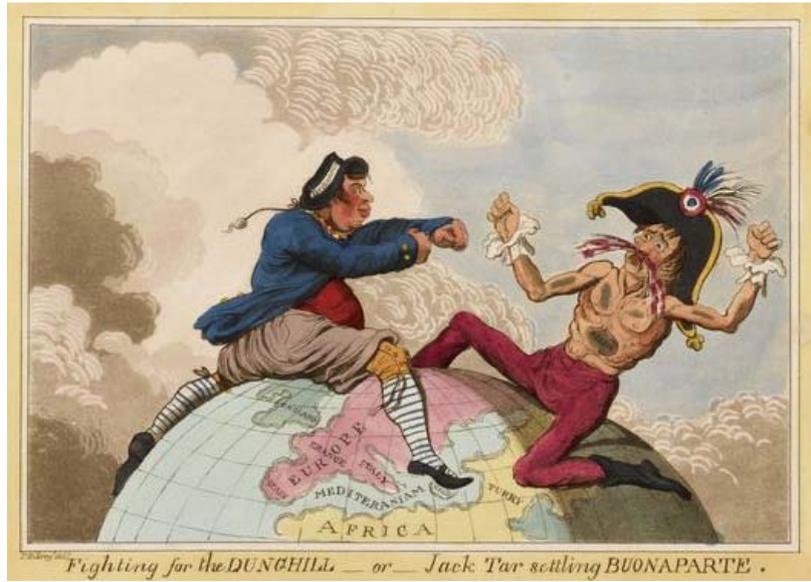
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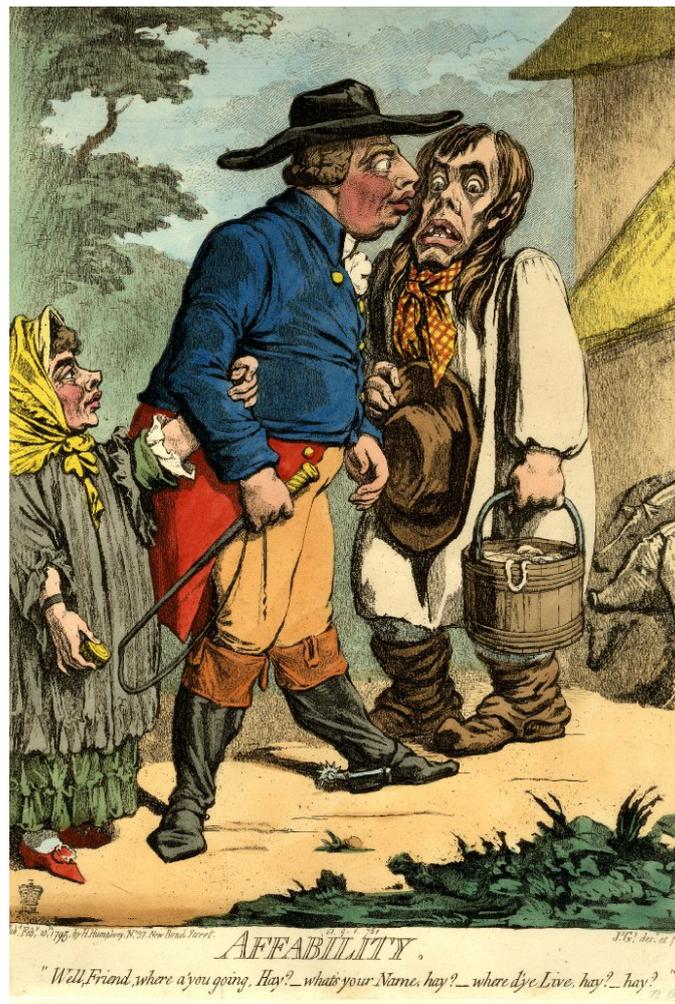
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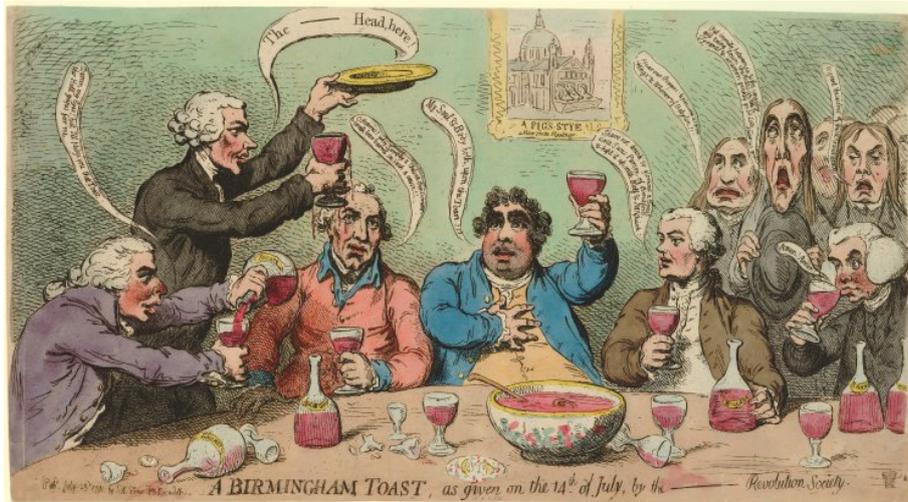
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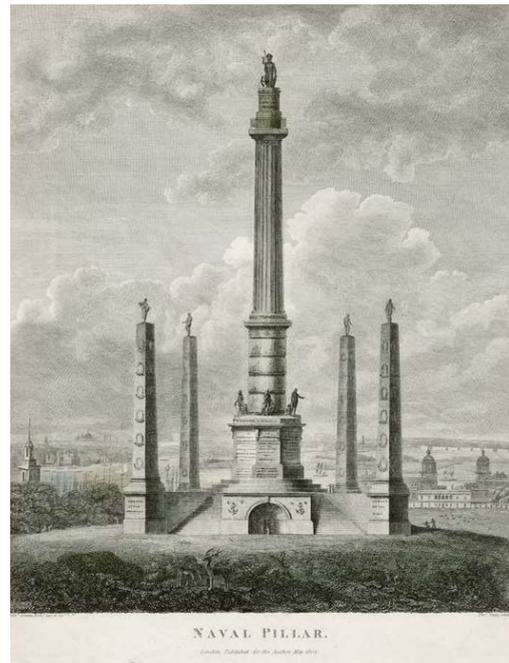
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