Transnational and Cosmopolitan Aspects of Eighteenth-Century European Wars

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If by transnational we mean ideas, actions and actors that cannot fully be comprehended by reference to national boundaries, considerations and sentiments, then war is in many senses transnational. This claim may come as a surprise: war between states and peoples generates fear and hatred, heightens perceptions of difference and de-emphasizes commonalities. Not only does international armed conflict entrench national feelings; it can also encourage a retreat into even narrower insular senses of belonging, as local feelings are intensified when communities are threatened by external dangers, or the same local feelings are deliberately promoted by governments seeking to appeal to established local identities to serve the national purpose of recruitment into the military.[1]

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[1] From 1782, the British army's infantry regiments were nearly all given county affiliations to encourage local enlistments. The French army's infantry had been organized on a provincial basis since its creation as a standing military force in the seventeenth century.

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Even more surprising might be the second claim advanced in this paper: that war contains important elements of cosmopolitanism, defined here as a belief in the essential unity of humankind and in the values and sympathies that underpin that unity. The connection between cosmopolitanism and war, we may be tempted to think, is merely sequential; the horrors of armed conflict bring forth a postwar cosmopolitan reaction. Wars in the early modern and modern periods have been followed by attempts to promote international understanding and avoid future struggles. We can see these attempts in the realm of civil society, as in the forming of peace organizations in Britain and the United States and then continental Europe after the end of the long, bloody and destructive Napoleonic War in 1815.[2] More often, they took the form of government initiatives, with international congresses or even the establishment of permanent international machinery to settle disputes and promote harmony. Examples of this tendency are the Congress system to keep the peace in Europe established by the major powers that defeated Napoleon in 1814–1815;[3] and, most familiarly, perhaps, the forming of the League of Nations after the First World War and the United Nations after the Second.[4] Yet a case can be made for cosmopolitanism as part of the experience of war-making, and not simply a postwar reaction to war's large-scale suffering.

The purpose of my paper is first to sketch out the transnational dimensions of wars involving eighteenth-century Europeans, and then to explore the ways in which we can see the armed struggles of the time as embodying cosmopolitan features. Most of this account relates to war on land rather than at sea, as for most European states armies were more important than navies. Many of the examples are British, for the

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[2] See W.H. van der Linden, *The International Peace Movement, 1815–1874* (Amsterdam: Tilleul, 1987) chs. 1–5. For the British case, see Martin Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention: The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1730–1854* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), esp. ch. 6.

[3] See, e.g., Adam Zamoyski. *Rites of Peace: The Fall of Napoleon and the Congress of Vienna* (New York: Harper, 2007); Mark Jarrett, *The Congress of Vienna and its Legacy: War and Great Power Diplomacy after Napoleon* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013); Brian E. Vick, *The Congress of Vienna: Power and Politics after Napoleon* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

[4] See, e.g., Martyn Housden, *The League of Nations and the Organization of Peace.* (London: Pearson Longman, 2012); Kate Seaman, *Un-tied Nations: the United Nations, Peacekeeping, and Global Governance* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

simple reason that I know the British material best; but from my more limited knowledge of non-British sources, I am confident that many of my British examples could be replicated by similar testimony relating to other Europeans. Under the transnational heading, we will consider the ends for which wars were fought, or at least the ways in which they were legitimized by governments. We then turn to the means. Four areas will be examined: first, the alliance systems that brought different governments and armed forces into cooperation; second, the supply and finance of armies and navies, which often relied on complex transnational networks; third, the composition of supposedly national armies; and finally the legal framework that sought to define the boundaries of acceptable behaviour in war and the values that underpinned its conduct. Once these transnational aspects have been considered, we can go on to explore the cosmopolitan dimensions, focusing on sympathy for the sufferings of others—outside one's own local, national or ethnic community—among those engaged in the fighting.

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Accustomed as we are to seeing the European states system as inherently competitive, and armed conflict as an expression of national or state rivalries, we naturally tend to think of war aims as reflecting the interests of states and their rulers. It would be foolish to deny that states entered wars to improve their own position. In the eighteenth century, many of Europe's wars began as a result of a disputed succession to a throne— hence the wars of Spanish (1702–1713), Polish (1733–1738), Austrian (1740–1748), and even Bavarian (1778–1779) succession—behind which lay a desire on the part of particular states to acquire more territory or increase power and influence at the expense of others. Yet for all the evidence of the pursuit of national or state interest, some of the language used to explain and justify eighteenth-century European wars was much wider in conception.

In the British political lexicon, eighteenth-century wars might be described as struggles to resist 'universal monarchy', or the dominance of one particular state over all others. France was seen as aspiring to 'universal monarchy' under Louis XIV in the first decade of the century, and again under Louis XV in the 1740s, '50s and early '60s. The same ambition was attributed by British commentators in the 1720s and again in

the 1780s to the Austrian Habsburgs.[5] Closely related to resistance to 'universal monarchy' as a justification for war was 'defence of the liberties of Europe', or the securing of the political independence and territorial integrity of all states threatened by an over-mighty power. The European dimension of the 'liberties of Europe' deserves emphasis; it was not the liberties of any one country that were being invoked, but the liberties of all European states. Examples of the British use of this concept can be found throughout the eighteenth century, from the War of the Spanish Succession at its start to the French Revolutionary War at its end. They appear, furthermore, in a great variety of sources: public material, such as parliamentary debates, political pamphlets and newspapers, but also private letters.[6]

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, when memories of the Ottoman siege of Vienna were still fresh, wars against the Turks were similarly explained in many European countries not by reference to national or state interests, but by the need to defend 'Christendom'. We can even see signs of the same perspective in criticism of the aggrandizing tendencies of Louis XIV, who appeared in some British accounts as a French version of the 'Grand Turk', who posed a similar challenge to Christian values across Europe.[7] The threat to Christian civilization was again invoked by many European governments in the 1790s, when the danger came not from the Sultan but from the atheistic and republican regime established in Paris. No one used the language of Christendom

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[5] See, e.g., Stephen Conway, *Britain, Ireland, and Continental Europe in the Eighteenth Century: Similarities, Connections, Identities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) ch. 2.

[6] See, e.g., [Anon.,] *Reasons Prov'd to be Unreasonable: or, An Answer to the Reasons against a War with France* (London, 1702) p. 4; [Anon.,] *Reasons for a War; from the Imminent Danger with which Europe is Threatened, by the Exorbitant Power of the House of Bourbon.* 2nd edn. (London, 1734) p. 22; National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, Hamilton Dalrymple of North Berwick Muniments, GD 110/929/2 and 5, Earl of Stair to Sir Hew Dalrymple, 26 Jan., 4 Feb. 1742; William Cobbett and John Wright (eds) *The Parliamentary History of England*, 36 vols. (London, 1806–1820), xiii. 1317 (Lord Ilchester, 1745); *Monitor, or British Freeholder*, 13 Jan. 1759; Thomas W. Copeland (ed.), *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke*, 10 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958–1978), vi. 344.

[7] See, e.g., [Anon.,] *The Most Christian Turk; Or, A View of the Life and Bloody reign of Lewis XIV Present King of France* (London, 1690) p. 101. See also Tony Claydon, *Europe and the Making of England, 1660–1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), esp. pp. 152–192.

more readily at this time than Edmund Burke, for whom 'the community of Europe' was not just Christian, but defined by its Christianity. To him, and many who thought like him, the French Revolution threatened to destroy that Europe, and it was imperative that all Christians, regardless of their denomination or country, united to defend what they held dear.[8]

A less ecumenical but still transnational religious appeal was made in Britain in the middle of the century to 'the Protestant Interest', or solidarity among Protestants of all countries against menacing Catholicism. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, meeting at the height of the Jacobite rebellion of 1745–1746, welcomed the arrival of Dutch troops to help defend the Protestant Hanoverian dynasty from the Catholic Stuart threat. Indeed, the General Assembly looked forward to further reinforcements from other Protestant states—Danish, Hessian and Swiss—on the grounds that 'as this seems to be the last effort to overthrow the protestant religion; is it any wonder protestant powers should join together to defend us? Our interest, as to religion, is the same with theirs; and the preservation of it depends upon the defeat of this wicked design'.[9] Similarly, British intervention on the Continent appears in some contemporary accounts as necessary to defend the Protestant Interest in Europe; government-supporting newspapers made this point to explain the commitment of British military resources to western Germany during the Seven Years' War.[10]

Scepticism about some of these claims to be acting in the wider interest seems appropriate. British commitment to the apparently selfless concept of the European 'balance of power', for instance, often seems to have been no more than a screen for the more parochial defence of British commercial interests on the Continent. A persistent British government fear appears to have been that if the French or some other power dominated Europe, British merchants and manufacturers would sell fewer goods in continental markets. Government-supporting pamphleteers, seeking to justify British military deployments on the Continent, were rarely coy about stressing the economic benefits of preventing the French from blocking British access to European

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[8] For more on this, see Conway, *Britain*, *Ireland*, and Continental Europe, 180–187.

[9] *Gentleman's Magazine*, 15, 1745, 633.

[10] See, e.g., *Monitor, or British Freeholder*, 10 March, 12 May 1759.

customers.[11] We might also reasonably doubt the sincerity of the message regularly conveyed to the British public during the Seven Years' War that their country was engaged in an essentially religious struggle, with Protestant Britain, Prussia and Hanover ranged against Catholic France and Austria, joined in the war's final stages by equally Catholic Spain. Closer inspection reveals that there was much more to the war than religious animosity. Lutheran Sweden was an ally of Catholic France, and the British government sent an expeditionary force to protect Catholic Portugal against its Catholic Spanish neighbour. Russia, a major player in the war until its last year, was neither Catholic nor Protestant. Frederick the Great of Prussia, lauded in Britain as the defender of the Protestant cause in Germany against the threat from menacing Catholicism, was an unlikely Protestant hero, as anyone who knows anything about his views will be aware.[12]

But if caution about the transnational claims of belligerent states is entirely appropriate, we should not dismiss those claims too readily. The use of expansive language tells us much about politicians' perceptions of what would encourage their publics to support conflicts. Frederick the Great was portrayed as a Protestant hero for good reason. Both he and British ministers wanted to persuade the British public to back a commitment of British manpower and resources to Westphalia, where a multi-state German army was protecting Frederick's western flank. That British ministers encouraged their press supporters to use the language of Protestant solidarity to promote British military intervention in Germany suggests that they believed the British public would respond positively to such an appeal.[13] Just as importantly, from our current perspective,

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[11] See, e.g., [Anon.,] *The Conduct of the Government with regard to Peace and War, Stated* (London, 1748), p. 5; Malachy Postlethwayt, *Britain's Commercial Interest Explained and Improved* (2 vols., London, 1757), ii. 511; [Anon.,] *The Occasional Patriot: or, An Enquiry into the Present Connections of Great Britain with the Continent* (London, 1756).

[12] See, e.g., Walther Hubatsch, *Frederick the Great of Prussia*: Absolutism and Administration (London: Thames & Hudson, 1975), p. 190; Theodor Schieder, *Frederick the Great*, ed. and trans. Sabina Berkeley and H.M. Scott (London: Longman, 2000), p. 18; David Fraser, *Frederick the Great*: King of *Prussia* (London: Allen Lane, 2000), esp. 57–60.

[13] They seem to have been right, judging by the seemingly autonomous expressions of support for the Protestant cause in Germany. In November 1759, for instance, an Edinburgh club formed to celebrate the principles of the Glorious Revolution included among its toasts 'To the downfall of Popery and Tyranny. To the preservation of the Protestant religion and civil liberties of Germany: A speedy deliverance of such of our Protestant brethren abroad as are groaning under the yoke of their cruel enemies': *Edinburgh Chronicle; or, Universal Intelligencer*, 14–17 Nov. 1759.

whatever motives lay behind the use of appeals of this kind, such expansive language helped to promote transnational views of why wars were necessary. The arguments, in other words, even if retrospective rationales for decisions taken on different grounds, acquired a momentum of their own.

If the justifications for armed conflicts might conjure up different kinds of wider belonging, so too could the means by which they were fought. Wars are rarely bilateral affairs; they are usually waged between sets of states, or by a set of states against a powerful and potentially dominating enemy. Alliance systems were a feature of all major European conflicts of the eighteenth century. In its first decade, the threat posed by Louis XIV inspired a grand coalition of European powers; and in the 1790s, the revolutionary regime in Paris similarly provoked the formation of a series of international alignments designed to check French expansion and influence. Less extensive but still impressive alliance systems directed against Louis XV's ambitions emerged in the War of the Austrian Succession of 1740–1748 and, as we have seen, were a feature of the Seven Years' War of 1756–1763. These international coalitions had important transnational consequences.

True, frictions and tensions undoubtedly existed within the different alliances. Indeed, allies often accused each other of bad faith or pursuing narrow state interests rather than working for the common cause. Proximity, rather than improving relations, could make them worse. The diary of Joseph Yorke, a British staff officer in Flanders during the War of the Austrian Succession, reveals his intense dislike of the Austrian generals with whom he was obliged to work at allied headquarters. Uncomplimentary comments on the Austrians punctuate Yorke's record of the campaign of 1744; so great was his hostility that at one point he came close to celebrating Austrian setbacks in Italy and Bohemia inflicted by the common enemies of both the British and the Austrians.[14] But these frictions and tensions, unsurprisingly, were most obvious when the enemy was doing well and the allies were failing to make progress. In such circumstances, the cracks in carefully constructed alliances almost inevitably widened as the partners blamed each other.

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[14] British Library (BL), London, Hardwicke Papers, Diary of Joseph Yorke in Flanders, 1744, Add. MS 36, 250, fos. 3, 6, 7, 21, 26, 39, 65.

But we can see transnational as well as national responses to international alliances. Allied victories, or victories to which allies contributed significantly, usually elicited generous sentiments towards foreigners. In the War of the Spanish Succession, Prince Eugene of Savoy, the Habsburg general, received much praise in Britain for his role as Marlborough's co-commander at the battle of Blenheim, and continued to enjoy a celebrity status after the conflict was over.[15] The British public followed the fortunes of Maria Theresa's Austrian generals with great interest during the German campaigns of the War of the Austrian Succession.[16] A few years later, they cheered on Frederick the Great of Prussia and his armies in the Seven Years' War.[17] Likewise, in the 1790s, Archduke Charles of Austria, who bettered a French army in western Germany when noone else seemed to be able to check French progress, emerged as an unlikely—and decidedly transient—British hero.[18] Eighteenth-century Britons, as these examples demonstrate, particularly lauded their allies when their own military was failing to achieve very much. Paradoxically, then, positive sentiments about allies could be just another sign of the fundamental importance of the national perspective; foreigners' successes were used as a means to criticize the failures of British generals and admirals, and as a spur to greater national effort.[19] But praise for allies can also be seen as an expression of inclusiveness, as an enthusiasm for those beyond the national community who are helping to combat the threat posed by a common enemy.

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[15] See, e.g., James Cartwright (ed.), *The Wentworth Papers, 1705–1739* (London, 1883), p. 260; BL, Journal of James Thornhill, 1711, Add. MS 34,788, fos. 47, 50; J.J. Bagley (ed.), *The Great Diurnal of Nicholas Blundell of Little Crosby, Lancashire* (3 vols., Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, Liverpool, 1968–1972), i. 91.

[16] See, e.g., *The Family Memoirs of the Rev. William Stukeley*, i (Surtees Society, lxxiii, Durham, 1880), pp. 332–333.

[17] See, e.g., Brian Fitzgerald (ed.), *The Correspondence of Emily, Duchess of Leinster* (3 vols.) (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1949–1957), i. 182; Hugh Owen (ed.), *Additional Letters of the Morrises of Anglesey (1735–1786)* (Hon. Society of Cymmrodorion, xliix, pt. i, London, 1947), 314; Donald Gibson (ed.), *A Parson in the Vale of White Horse: George Woodward's Letters from East Hendred, 1753–1761* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1982), p. 105.

[18] See, e.g., *Oracle, and Public Advertiser*, 22 Sept. 1796; British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings, BM 8835, *The Arch-Duke*, 15 Nov. 1796.

[19] See Bob Harris, *Politics and the Nation: Britain in the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 136–138.

As English gentlewoman Margaret Heathcote wrote of Frederick the Great in December 1757, 'May Providence finally grant Success to him, & all those who fight for the Common Cause of Europe'.[20]

To conceptualize distant allies in a positive way is one thing; to forge personal bonds, as Yorke's experience shows, was quite another. Yet relations between allied soldiers on campaign together could be friendly. The experience of facing danger together brought military men from different nations to see clearly what they had in common. After the battle of Malplaquet in 1709, a private in the British foot guards wrote of his regret that an 'abundance of good old experienced souldyers belonging to the severall countryes concerned in this confederacy dyed in this engagement'.[21] In the Low Countries in 1744, at the same time as Yorke was complaining in his diary about the Austrian generals, Hanoverian and British troops found it easy to establish fellow feeling. They would drink together, and, according to one source, 'talk and sing a vast deal without understanding one syllable of what they say to one another'.[22] The following year, another report tells of British soldiers who were so impressed by the Hanoverians' perseverance at the battle of Fontenoy that 'they were willing to divide a Loaf with them'—a deeply significant symbol of a willingness to be inclusive.[23]

Armies were able to come into the field only as a result of the efforts made by a great many people beyond the political boundaries of the states concerned. The largely German army that held back the French in Westphalia in the Seven Years' War was paid almost entirely by the British government. When it was joined by a British contingent from 1758, it started to draw more of its provisions from the British Isles, too, as local German sources had become seriously depleted. But Britain and Ireland were not the only external providers. The so-called Combined Army relied on oats from the nearby Dutch Republic and further supplies

[20] Bedfordshire Record Office, Bedford, Lucas Collection, L 30/9/56/35, Letter to Lady Grey, 16 Dec. [1757].

[21] John Marshall Deane, *A Journal of Marlborough's campaigns during the War of the Spanish Succession, 1704–1711*, ed. D.G. Chandler (Society for Army Historical Research, Special Publication No. 12, np., 1984), p. 94.

[22] Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Stopford Sackville MSS* (2 vols., London, 1904–1910), i. 290.

[23] John M. Gray (ed.), *Memoirs of the Life of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik* (Scottish History Society, xiii, Edinburgh, 1892), 191.

shipped from as far away as Riga, on the Baltic coast. In 1762, the army may even have consumed rice from South Carolina and coffee from newly conquered French Martinique. Such geographically dispersed sources of supply were possible only because the merchants who provided the goods were involved in established transnational commercial networks, often based on family, kinship or religious connections, which gave them ready access to large quantities of credit.[24]

If armies were like cities that consumed vast amounts of food but produced very little of their own, the same was true of navies. As avaricious as armies in their appetites, they were often similarly supplied from sources from beyond the territories of their governments. The eighteenth-century French navy, for instance, relied heavily on Irish beef and butter. The British state unsurprisingly disapproved of this trade, and sought to stop it, but Irish provision merchants were usually shrewd enough to avoid direct contact with their French customers, preferring to use Dutch middle-men to facilitate their transactions.[25] The British navy, at least when it was serving in European waters, was mainly supplied with foodstuffs by domestic producers; indeed, some historians see its demands as providing a vital stimulus to agricultural and commercial developments in eighteenth-century Britain.[26] But the Royal Navy's ships were able to put to sea only thanks to timber, hemp and tar provided by countries on the Baltic shoreline. Even the weapons on battleships often came from foreign sources: the Spanish navy's cannons were as likely to have been made in France or Scotland as in Spain itself.[27]

Money to pay navies and armies, and fund national war efforts more generally, was organized by merchants and financiers with close contacts in commercial centres across Europe. The British national debt, which underwrote a good deal of British military and naval activity, was

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[24] See Stephen Conway, 'Provisioning the Combined Army in Germany, 1758–1762: Who Benefited?', in Richard Harding and Sergio Solbes Ferri (eds.), *The Contractor State and its Implications, 1659–1815* (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 2012), 81–102.

[25] See, e.g., Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Belfast, Bedford Papers, T 2915/5/34, Richard Rigby to the Duke of Bedford, 5 Sept. 1758.

[26] Christian Buchet, *Marine, économie et société: un example d'interaction: l'avitaillment de la Royal Navy Durant la guerre de sept ans* (Paris, 1999).

[27] See Agustín González Enciso, 'Buying Cannon Outside: When, Why, How Many? The Supplying of Foreign Iron Cannons for the Spanish Navy in the Eighteenth Century', in Harding and Solbes Ferri (eds), *The Contractor State*, pp. 135–157.

supported by a significant number of foreign investors, mainly Dutch but also Swiss and German. In the middle of the eighteenth century, some fifteen percent of the British national debt was held by Dutch bond-holders.[28] Though the proportion declined during the last two decades of the century, even in the 1790s foreign holdings were far from negligible.[29] Dutch and Swiss investors also put a good deal of money into French funds, which were less secure but therefore carried higher rates of interest; Swiss financiers, perhaps encouraged by the Genevan origins of Jacques Neckar, the French finance minister, enthusiastically bought French annuities during the War of American Independence.[30] British investors, for their part, supported the loans taken out in London by the Habsburg government in the wars against Louis XIV, during the War of Polish Succession in the 1730s, and again in the 1790s, when revolutionary France was the common enemy.[31]

Even the recruitment of armed forces depended to a considerable extent on transnational actors. Nearly all armies had identifiably foreign units in their service. In the middle of the eighteenth century, the French army contained several German, Irish, Swiss, Italian and even Scots regiments. Foreign units in fact comprised about a fifth of the whole.[32] The Dutch army included a large German contingent, and employed a Scots brigade until 1782, the officers of which remained almost exclusively Scottish right to the end.[33] The Spanish service likewise relied on Irish, German, Swiss and Walloon regiments. The British army was different only in as much as its foreign component served as wartime

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[28] P.G.M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public credit, 1658–1756* (London: Gregg Revivals, 1967), 322.

[29] J.F. Wright, 'The Contribution of Overseas Savings to the Funded National Debt of Great Britain, 1750–1815', *Economic History Review*, 2nd series, 50 (1997), 657–674.

[30] See Robert D. Harris, 'French Finances and the American War, 1777–1783', *Journal of Modern History*, 48 (1976), 233–258.

[31] P.G.M. Dickson, *Finance and Government under Maria Theresia, 1740–1780* (2 vols., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), esp. ii. 4012–4013; Karl F. Helleines, *The Imperial Loans: A Study in Financial and Diplomatic History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965).

[32] Lee Kennett, *The French Armies in the Seven Years' War: A Study in Military Organization and Administration* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1967), 74.

[33] See Joachim Miggelbrink, 'The End of the Scots-Dutch Brigade', in Steve Murdoch and Andrew Mackillop (eds), *Fighting for Identity: Scottish Military Experience, c.1550–1900* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), pp. 83–105.

auxiliaries, rather than permanent parts of the military establishment. In every one of Britain's eighteenth-century wars, German troops served alongside home-grown soldiers, mainly in Europe, but also in imperial theatres: Hessian and Brunswick soldiers—as well as smaller contingents from other German states—fought in America during the War of Independence, while in the same conflict the British state employed Hanoverian troops in India.[34]

Armies were even more cosmopolitan than these examples suggest. Mixing of soldiers of different national backgrounds occurred at the micro level of military units as well at the macro level of armies. The Irish regiments in Spanish and French service, for instance, from the middle of the century drew increasingly on soldiers of many other nations as well as native-born Irishmen. In 1774, a British officer who observed the nominally Irish regiments in the Spanish army described them as full of 'deserters and vagabonds from every country in Europe'.[35] A letter in an English newspaper suggested that by 1786 the Irish brigade in French service was largely made up of 'Germans, Hollanders, Flemings, Liegeois, Spanish, and French'.[36] In wartime, the rank and file of the regular British regiments were often brought up to strength by enlisting men raised where the army was campaigning—so often in the Low Countries, or western Germany—or by contractual arrangements with foreign military entrepreneurs, who agreed to raise a stipulated number of soldiers, usually in Germany, for the use of British units. German recruiting agents found significant numbers of men in the Holy Roman Empire for the Royal American Regiment during the Seven Years' War; inspection returns suggest that in one of the Royal American battalions, twenty two percent of the rank and file were foreigners enlisted in Europe, the vast bulk of whom were almost certainly German.[37] In the War of American Independence, the Royal Americans, and many other British regiments serving across the Atlantic, benefited

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[34] See Stephen Conway, 'Continental European Soldiers in British Imperial Service, *c*.1756–1792', *English Historical Review*, 129 (2014), 79–106.

[35] William Dalrymple, *Travels through Spain and Portugal in 1774; With a Short Account of the Spanish Expedition against Algiers, in 1775* (London, 1777), 65.

[36] 'J.D.', in *St James's Chronicle; or British Evening-Post*, 12–14 Sept. 1786.

[37] Stephen Brumwell, *Redcoats: The British Soldier and War in the Americas, 1755–1763* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 318. See also, for an example of German recruits joining the regiment in America, Huntington Library, San Marino,

from the efforts of an Hanoverian officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Georg Albrecht von Scheither, who raised nearly 2000 soldiers in Germany, receiving a cash payment for every recruit he delivered to the embarkation port of Stade, near Hamburg.[38]

Officers, and to a lesser extent the common soldiers, not infrequently moved from army to army. Sometimes they went abroad because their religious beliefs or political views made service in their own state's army impossible. In the British case, Catholics of military inclination had little choice but to leave their country; they were unwelcome in the British army as common soldiers before the Seven Years' War and debarred from acting as officers until 1793.[39] Supporters of the restoration of the House of Stuart were also excluded; after the 1745–1746 rebellion, Henry Lloyd's Jacobitism meant that he was obliged to pursue a military career in the Spanish, French, Austrian, Prussian and finally Russian armies.[40] Yet mobile officers were often not religious or political refugees, but rather professionals in search of better opportunities to climb the military ladder. A far from unusual example is Harris Power, an Irish Protestant, who had served as a British army officer during the later stages of the War of American Independence. When the war ended, Power's regiment, newly created during the conflict, was disbanded, leaving him facing the prospect of years of struggling on the paltry retainer known as half-pay. He preferred to pursue his career elsewhere, and sought a commission in the Russian army, which he hoped to obtain by asking the British ambassador at St Petersburg to use his

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Footnote 37 (continued)

California, Loudoun Papers, LO 1607, 'List of Recruits under the command of Herbert, Baron de Munster embarked the 4th of June near Hamburg and arrived the 27th of August at New York. 1756.'

[38] For Scheither, see Stephen Conway, 'Entrepreneurs and the Recruitment of the British Army in the War of American Independence', in Jeff Fynn-Paul (ed.), *War, Entrepreneurs, and the State in Europe and the Mediterranean, 1300–1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 120–123.

[39] For attempts to remove 'Papist' recruits from British regiments in the 1740s, see Derbyshire Record Office, Matlock, Wilmot Horton of Catton Collection, D 3155 C 657. For the admittance of Catholics from the Seven Years' War onwards, see Thomas Bartlett, '"A Weapon of War Yet Untried": Irish Catholics and the Armed Forces of the Crown, 1760–1830', in T.G. Fraser and Keith Jeffery (eds), *Men, Women, and War* (Historical Studies, xviii, Dublin, 1993), p. 66–85.

[40] See Patrick J. Speelman, *Henry Lloyd and the Military Enlightenment of Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Westport, CN: Westview Press, 2002).

connections with Prince Potemkin, the influential Russian nobleman.[41] Francis Maclean was not satisfied with one move to secure promotion. As a young man he served as an officer in the Scots brigade of the Dutch army, distinguishing himself during the fighting in the Low Countries in the War of the Austrian Succession. Then he joined the British army with a commission in a newly raised Highland regiment during the Seven Years War (when the Dutch were neutral and the chances of promotion therefore very limited). At the end of that conflict, when the regiment in which he was serving looked likely to be disbanded, he decided to enter the Portuguese service, where he made rapid strides, becoming a senior officer and provincial governor. Finally, Maclean re-joined the British army in the War of American Independence, dying in 1781 at Halifax, Nova Scotia, as a general.[42]

Even some of those who were less peripatetic still came to see soldiering as an experience that transcended national boundaries. Ambitious young officers from many different armies saw much advantage in attending a foreign military academy, usually French or Italian in the first half of the century, more often German in the second. So, in the late 1740s, it seemed natural to the father of Robert Carr that his son, who much later rose to become a lieutenant-colonel, should study for a year at Caen in Normandy.[43] Two generations later, to the father of Thomas Hawkins it seemed equally natural that his son should go to Brunswick academy before becoming a British cavalry officer.[44] The Hanoverian connection also promoted German influence; several British officers who served in the War of American Independence had spent time at the university established by George II at Göttingen.[45] Nor should we forget that British military men, despite their reputation as anti-intellectuals,

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[41] BL, Leeds Papers, Egerton MS 3500, fo. 15.

[42] See Stephen Conway, 'Scots, Britons, Europeans: Scottish Military Service, *c.*1739–1783', *Historical Research*, 82 (2009), 126–128.

[43] Tyne and Wear Archives, Newcastle upon Tyne, Ellison MSS, bundle A30, Henry Thomas Carr to Henry Ellison, 24 Sept. 1749.

[44] For Hawkins at Brunswick, see Cornwall Record Office, Truro, DD J 2245, Diary of Thomas Hawkins. See also BL, Althorp Papers, Add. MS 75,571, Anna Maria Poyntz to Countess Spencer, 11 Oct. 1766. [John Moore,] *A View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland,* and *Germany: with Anecdotes relating to Some Eminent Characters* (2 vols., London, 1779), ii. 74, refers to British students at Brunswick.

[45] See Gordon M. Stewart, 'British Students at the University of Göttingen in the Eighteenth Century', *German Life and Letters*, 33 (1979–1980), 24–41.

read military literature, often French, but sometimes German or Italian. Earl Percy, a British officer based in Boston, Massachusetts, just before the War of American Independence, asked for a copy of the *Memoirs* of the French general the Marquis de Feuquières to help him pass the time during the winter of 1774–1775.[46] Those who felt ill-equipped to read foreign languages could benefit from English translations; the version of the Prussian cavalry regulations produced by Captain William Faucett (or Faucitt) in 1757 appeared in print thanks to the financial help provided by more than two-hundred serving officers.[47] Perhaps these officers never read Faucett's work, but at the very least we can say they were keen to be associated with the transnational transmission of military knowledge that it exemplified.

Armies, then, were not just transnational in their composition; they were transnational in their ethos and values. A common professional etiquette linked officers in all European armies in a kind of military fraternity. Irrespective of their own national military traditions, they had a shared set of values and ideas, which underpinned relations between allies, auxiliaries and even enemies. Like all professional codes, this pan-European military etiquette was clear and logical to insiders, and bewilderingly arcane to the excluded. European officers knew what was expected of them in particular circumstances. They understood the need to resist when garrisoning a besieged fortification for as long as honour required, but to surrender when further resistance was futile; they appreciated the importance of defending the regimental flags from enemy capture; they knew that non-combatants, in return for their non-involvement in military operations, should be protected from the awfulness of war. This professional etiquette owed much to the lived experience of army life, passed on to young officers by their elders, but it was buttressed by the laws of war, part of the law of nations, or what we now call international law.[48]

The purpose of the laws of war was to establish the limits of violence; identifying legitimate and illegitimate targets and acceptable and

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[46] Boston Public Library, Letters of Hugh, Earl Percy, MS G 31.39.4.

[47] *The Regulations for the Prussian Cavalry* (London, 1757). The alphabetica list of subscribers occupies nine pages.

[48] Fort the concept of 'military Europe', see Stephen Conway, 'The British Army, "Military Europe", and the War of American Independence', *William & Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 67 (2010), 69–100.

unacceptable behaviour. Codified by public law writers, the most notable of whom in the middle of the eighteenth century was surely the Swiss Emmerich de Vattel,[49] the laws of war were based partly on custom and practice, but also on principles supposed to be universal, or at least shared by Europeans.[50] Christian morality and medieval ideas of chivalry were reinforced by a more modern Enlightenment emphasis on restraint and proportionality. We might reasonably doubt whether eighteenth-century warfare, even in Western Europe, was as ordered and humane as Vattel and his fellow public lawyers suggested. But it would be wrong to dismiss the laws of war as idealistic fantasy. Even if professional soldiers deviated from their tenets, they recognized the laws of war as a guide and appealed to them as an authority. More than anything else, perhaps, their influence—even their very existence—justifies our seeing war and war-making as in many ways transnational.

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We can see the cosmopolitanism of war at the basic level of human sympathy for the suffering of others. To feel for the sufferings of those within one's own subset of humanity may simply be a demonstration of the strength of sentiments based on geographical communities, local or national, rather than evidence of a more general sympathy; but where we can see evidence of feeling for those beyond the group to which the sympathizer belongs, we are surely witnessing the putting aside of particular loyalties and the embracing of a universalist or cosmopolitan perspective.

Soldiers might seem unlikely cosmopolitans. Central to their role is the use of violence to advance or secure the interests of the state that employs them. They have to be prepared to kill, injure and destroy. Suffering is an inevitable consequence of their activities in wartime, even when they are engaged in the less bloody aspects of their work, such as collecting provisions from the local population. Soldiers exposed to violence can, of course, become so accustomed to it that they cease to see the suffering it causes as awful and distressing. But it would be a mistake to assume that all soldiers are desensitized and therefore unaffected by the violence and suffering that they see or even inflict. Those who experience the sufferings of others at first hand, rather than through reports of

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[49] Author of *Les droit des gens* (Neuchatel, 1758).

[50] See Stephen C. Neff, *War and the Law of Nations: A General History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pt. II.

eye-witnesses, can be the most keen to avoid war and its attendant miseries. If we focus on soldiers as compassionate cosmopolitans, two categories of human sympathy can be identified most readily: the fellow feeling of soldiers for their enemies, when those enemies have been vanquished; and the humanitarian concern of soldiers for non-combatants exposed to all the horrors and sufferings of war.

A famous incident at the battle of Dettingen, during the War of the Austrian Succession, would seem to exemplify the way in which suffering in war could evoke cosmopolitan sympathy for the enemy among military men. The battle, fought in south-west Germany in June 1743, was a contest between an allied army—British, Hanoverian and Austrian—and their French opponents. The twenty-two year-old William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, second son of George II, the British king, was injured in the lower leg by French musket fire. Taken to the rear, where surgeons were treating the casualties irrespective of their nationality, Cumberland insisted that a French officer, lying nearby and more badly injured than he was, should be helped first. News of his generosity to a stricken foe, soon transmitted far from the battlefield, elicited much praise; Cumberland's humanity was even lauded by Vattel in his influential work *Les droit des gens*.[51]

Consider also the reaction of the French and Spanish besiegers to the defenders of Fort St Philip, at Port Mahon, Minorca, during the War of American Independence. The fort's commander, General James Murray, agreed terms of surrender only after a siege lasting more than five months. The British and Hanoverian garrison at first believed itself safe; the enemy siege was described by Murray in early October 1781 as no more than a loose blockade: 'the Harbour as far as our Guns Command is free and open'. But in late December scurvy broke out.[52] By February 1782, the defenders' food supplies were low and their sick list was growing longer every day. Murray had fewer than 700 men fit to defend the fortifications against 14,500 enemy troops. After making one last effort to dislodge the besiegers, Murray began to negotiate, and the French and Spanish offered him the full honours of war. The British and

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[51] Vattel, *Les droit des gens*, bk. III, ch. x, § 165. See also Rex Whitworth, *William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland* (Barnsley, 1992), 32–33.

[52] The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew, Colonial Office Papers, CO 174/13, fo. 141, Murray to Lord Hillsborough, 4 Oct. 1781, CO 174/14, fo. 19, Murray to Hillsborough, 10 Dec. 1781.

Hanoverians were permitted to march out of their defences with their flags flying and to return home on condition that they played no further part in the war. A contemporary account of the surrender leaves little room to doubt that at this moment of great emotion the besiegers felt sympathy for the garrison. 'As they lay down their arms and unbuttoned their cartridge belts', a Spanish observer noted, 'there was no one present but felt a lump in his throat'.[53]

But in both of these instances, we may be witnessing something more complicated than unadulterated cosmopolitan sentiment. Cumberland's selflessness was much applauded by those who knew of it, but we should probably interpret it as evidence of a narrower form of solidarity than cosmopolitanism. After all, his subsequent career suggests that he was no undifferentiated lover of humanity. He was soon after to show that he had no scruples about inflicting the most terrible punishment on defenceless enemies who fell into his hands. He commanded British troops during the Jacobite rebellion of 1745–1746, ordering the execution of Jacobite prisoners when Carlisle was retaken, and then, after the final defeat of the Jacobite forces at Culloden in April 1746, presiding over the brutal suppression of the vestiges of rebellion in the Scottish Highlands, where his troops burnt homes, stole livestock and killed inhabitants without compunction.[54] Cumberland would no doubt have defended his actions by pointing out that his victims were rebels, who by custom were exempted from all the protections afforded by the laws of war. Even so, his sobriquet 'Butcher' is difficult to square with the idea that he was a humanitarian with fellow feeling for anyone who was suffering. At Dettingen, Cumberland was responding to the misfortune of a particular individual. The object of his generosity was the Comte de Fenelon. While not the son of a king, Fenelon was of a similar social background to Cumberland. The duke's benevolence, in other words, was influenced by his sense of class solidarity. His recognition of the ties between military men of different armies might also have been important. A prince who took his military duties very seriously, the duke was

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[53]W.N. Hargraves-Mawdsley (ed. and trans.), *Spain under the Bourbons* (London: Palgrave, 1973), 162.

[54]See W.A. Speck, *The Butcher: The Duke of Cumberland and the Suppression of the '45* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. 164–170; Jeremy Black, *Culloden and the '45* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1990), pp. 177–178; Christopher Duffy, *The '45: Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Untold Story of the Jacobite Rising* (London: Cassell, 2003), 528–534.

helping a fellow professional soldier as well as a fellow member of the European elite.

Military solidarity almost certainly played a part, too, in the reaction of the French and Spanish besiegers to the surrender of the British and Hanoverian garrison of Fort St Philip. We can surmise that the victors empathized with the defeated because their enemies were soldiers at least as much as because they were human beings. The Spanish and French admired as well as felt sorry for their vanquished and suffering enemy, for the British and Hanoverians had acquitted themselves well; hence the willingness of the besiegers to give the defeated the full honours of war. As we have seen, an unofficial transnational military fraternity existed in eighteenth-century Europe, linking soldiers of different armies through shared experiences and values, even when those soldiers fought against each other. We may, then, be seeing something less inclusive than an expression of human sympathy for the suffering of others when we consider incidents when both the sympathizers and the objects of sympathy are military personnel.

Perhaps a less compromised form of cosmopolitanism can be discerned when we consider occasions when soldiers expressed sympathy for the sufferings of non-combatants living in or near the fighting. Examples of such sympathy are not hard to find, though some of them turn out on closer inspection to be less pure than they seem at first. In December 1776, as the British called a halt to their advance across New Jersey in pursuit of Washington's disintegrating army, Captain William Leslie wrote home to his mother that the 'Desolation that this unhappy Country has suffered must distress every feeling heart'. He seems to have been moved by the great damage done to the property of the local inhabitants, and the associated terrors that they had experienced as the British forces plundered and pillaged their way to the Delaware River. Yet Leslie went on to say that 'the Inhabitants deserve it as much as any set of people who ever rebelled against their Sovereign'.[55] In this instance, then, Leslie's belief in the sinfulness of rebellion clearly eclipsed his humanitarian concern for the local people. But the War of American Independence was an unusual conflict, more a fratricidal civil war than a

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[55] National Archives of Scotland, Leven and Melville Muniments, GD 26/9/513, Leslie to Wilhelmina Leslie, Countess of Leven and Melville, 25 Dec. 1776.

struggle between two separate states or peoples, and so we should not be surprised that its sufferings created complex reactions.[56]

More straightforward were the views of British officers on the experiences of non-combatants in the traditional European theatres of war with which they were familiar, namely the Low Countries and Germany. Sometimes, admittedly, even in these locations, other considerations influenced reactions to the sufferings of the local population. The horror expressed by Richard Davenport, a young British cavalry officer, at the terrible plight of the inhabitants of the Austrian Netherlands in the autumn of 1745, for instance, was undoubtedly informed by his fears that a marauding enemy might soon inflict the same sufferings on his own country (a realistic concern at that time, given the advance of the Jacobite rebels from Scotland and the possibility of their being assisted by a French landing in southern England). Even so, the spur to Davenport's reflections was the 'misery of a country, which is the seat of war', and his starting point was sympathy for the suffering of the people of the Low Countries.[57]

Unalloyed humanitarian sentiment was far from unusual. In August 1758, shortly after the arrival of the British army in western Germany, Lieutenant-Colonel James Adolphus Oughton wrote of how the mere presence of the troops, and their need for food, meant that 'the poor Peasants are reduced to the utmost distress'. While Oughton justified to himself seizures from the local population on the grounds that his men had to be fed, and that by taking the food, the British forces were denying it to the French, his sympathy for the inhabitants is unmistakable.[58] Similarly, Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Hall wrote to his brother from western Germany at the beginning of 1759 in terms that leave little doubt that he was moved by a cosmopolitan revulsion at the sufferings experienced by other human beings. 'May I die', he told his brother, 'if it woud not make your Heart bleed to See this Poor Country … a fine

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[56] See Sarah Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

[57] C.W. Frearson (ed.), *'To Mr. Davenport', being Letters of Major Richard Davenport (1719–1760) to his Brother* (Society for Army Historical Research, Special Publication, no. 9, London, 1968), 57.

[58] Stephen Wood (ed.), *By Dint of Labour and Perseverance … A Journal Recording Two Months in Northern Germany Kept by Lieutenant-Colonel James Adolphus Oughton* (Society for Army Historical Research, Special Publication No. 14, Chippenham, 1997), 50.

Country so terribly foraged, the Trees so cut down, I don't believe the Farmers have Sav'd their Seed, & besides we are not done with them'. More than three years later, as the war in Germany was drawing to a close, his exposure to the suffering of the local people had not dulled his sensibilities. Again, Hall tried to convey to his brother the awfulness of what he had witnessed, but confessed that 'the Misery and Desolation that reigns in this fine Country is unexpressible'.[59]

Feeling for the afflicted was certainly not confined to officers. Very few accounts of common soldiers survive for the mid-eighteenth century, but we are lucky to have a detailed diary, recently published, composed by William Todd, a rank and file British soldier, and later corporal, who served with the army in western Germany during the Seven Years' War. Todd showed himself to be patriotic and moved by national sentiments at times: when he was briefly captured and offered promotion to sergeant in the Irish Brigade of the French army, he declared that he 'would not serve no Other Nation but my Own'.[60] Even so, Todd also showed himself to be a cosmopolitan. He sympathized deeply with the sufferings of the people of the parts of Germany in which he campaigned. On 16 June 1761, he wrote that he had gone out with a foraging party from the British camp at Benninghausen, near Lippstadt, and had come across a house, in which a girl was cooking the family dinner while everyone else was at Mass. Todd's reference to the family's attending Mass suggests that they were Catholics, which would have made them even more different and foreign in Todd's eyes. Yet his diary reveals his compassion for the vulnerable girl—a compassion that we can only describe as cosmopolitanism in action. Todd and his colleagues ate the meal, despite the girl's protests, but Todd prevented the other soldiers from taking anything from the house, and protected the girl from the unwelcome attentions of her unexpected military guests. The girl, in Todd's account, was grateful for his timely intervention. 'I told her', Todd wrote, 'I thought we had made them suffer too much by taking their Victuals without doing to them any more, but as I told her we had been in great

[59]National Archives of Scotland, DunglassMuniments, GD 206/2/495/9 and 20, Hall to Sir John Hall of Dunglass, 5 Jan. 1759 and 11 Nov. 1762.

[60]Andrew Cormack and Alan Jones (eds), *Journal of Corporal Todd, 1745–1762* (Army Records Society, xviii, Stroud, 2001), 229.

wants of Victuals as we came out sooner in the Morning, Otherwise we would not a taken theirs from her'.[61]

<p align="center">*</p>

War, so often associated with community solidarity and hostility to outsiders, encourages and promotes perspectives that go beyond the local or the national. In this paper, I have tried to demonstrate that eighteenth-century European wars had important transnational aspects, both in the ways in which they were justified to the publics of belligerent countries and in the ways in which they were conducted. While we can readily identify the pursuit of state and national interests, and see clear evidence of national sentiments, war was in many ways a transnational business, bringing together—as well as dividing—different states, peoples, armed forces and individuals. More ambitiously, I have sought to show that cosmopolitan sentiments—particularly fellow feeling for other human beings in distress—are not limited to pacifists, or conspicuous only in the aftermaths of international conflicts. Soldiers, unlikely though it may seem, could show themselves to be cosmopolitan in their sympathies, both for fellow soldiers in difficult circumstances and, more importantly, for those we would now describe as non-combatants or civilians. 'War', as William Sherman, the famous American Civil War general, reminds us, 'is hell'. Soldiers, who see its hellish qualities at close quarters, are perhaps especially well placed to recognize this eternal verity and respond to it with compassion.

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