Nation-States, Empires, Wars, Hostilities

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A starting point for thinking about war and preparations for war is that today the average citizen in Western countries has absolutely no interest in fighting in war him or herself. The best study of this is James J. Sheehan's aptly titled *Where Have All the Soldiers Gone*?[1] Here, Sheehan rightly notes that what might be called the "great refusal" of ordinary people to involve themselves in actual war making reflects what might be called the "great disillusionment" with war itself. However, this has not meant the end of war or of preparations for war, but rather war's transformation. Within the European context, Sheehan suggests that while states "have retained the capacity to make war with one another they have lost all interest in doing so."[2] He cites a 2003 poll conducted by the German Marshall Fund that asked if, "under certain circumstances, war was necessary to obtain justice"; only 12 percent of people in France and Germany agreed that it was.[3] This means that the percentage of French people believing in war was significantly less than those believing in flying saucers.[4]

The United States seemed to be the outlier on this issue. The same 2003 poll reported that 55 percent of Americans "strongly agreed" that war was sometimes necessary to obtain justice. At the start of the Iraq War, massive anti-war demonstrations in Europe led bellicose voices like Robert Kagan's to proclaim that Europeans and Americans now inhabited fundamentally different worlds. "Americans are from Mars and Europeans are from Venus," he pithily stated, insisting that only Americans—that is, the people from Mars—still understood

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that, in the "real world," power and military might "are still essential" because international problems require "showing who's boss."[5] Voices across the political spectrum agreed that showing who's boss meant an explicit commitment to empire. Michael Ignatieff wrote that Americans should acknowledge that their war on terror was an "exercise in imperialism" and, as such, "the last hope for democracy and stability alike."[6] Indeed, it was the British empire redux. America's pursuit of Osama bin Laden mirrored Britain's nineteenth-century pursuit of the fundamentalist Mahdi, and the quick U.S. victory over the Taliban replayed Kitchener's crushing of Al-Khalifa's forces at Omdurman. But, proponents of far-reaching U.S. interventionism argued, the imperial project could only be achieved if Americans set aside any squeamishness about war making. As Niall Ferguson bemoaned in 2001, perhaps "the greatest disappointment facing the world in the 21st century" is that "the leaders of the one state with the economic resources to make the world a better place lack the guts to do it."[7]

Well, the War on Terrorism debacle certainly took the bloom off that rose. No sooner had the United States invaded Afghanistan than its leaders discovered that, while most Americans supported war, few wanted to fight in it. Enlistments in the military dropped dramatically, especially among African Americans (down 40 percent) and women (down 23 percent), who were, in the words of one report, "marching away from offers to join the army."[8] In the past, the main barrier to young Americans enlisting had been the attractiveness of other options. Now, studies were showing that the greatest disincentive to military service was the "fear of death or injury"—that is, the fear that they could get hurt.[9] I discuss this defection from military service in my 2009 polemic, *The Chickenhawk Syndrome*.[10] The military responded in various ways, all futile. Before this, a criminal record had been grounds for disqualification; now, drug dealers, skinheads, and other felons were welcomed, but even these policy changes could not fill the gap.[11] The conservative military writer Max Boot urged creating a "colonial office" to "tap" the "big pool of manpower" to serve in the United States military in cities like Bangkok, Cairo, and Mexico City.[12] Mexico replied that such recruiters would be arrested. But this is not to say that Americans had joined Europeans among the Venusians. In the last year of the Obama presidency, Americans dropped an average of seventy-two bombs a day across seven countries.[13] Obama greatly expanded the use of drones for targeted assassinations and other military purposes. And despite the drawdowns in Afghanistan and Iraq, total military expenditures have continued to increase as America remains committed to a

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doctrine of military supremacy. So, U.S. policy remains very much from Mars, but Americans' Venusian refusal to do the dirty work themselves means that now the principal challenge for engaging in large-scale military operations is finding other people to do the work and finding some far-off place in which to do it—so that those at home can remain oblivious to what is being done. And the principal danger to American political culture comes from this "externalization" of war building.

In his excellent *Ethics, Security, and the War-Machine*, Ned Dobos poses fundamental questions about the costs to political communities of their preparations for war. He assembles in one place, and gives structure to, an impressive variety of concerns about the ethics of war building. But he writes of these concerns rather abstractly, speaking of "polities" in general, of "preparations for war" in general, and of "war" as if it were always the same sort of event. Although this is an appropriate starting point for analysis, what I want to do in the following is move to a further level of complexity to address three issues: (1) the differences *between* polities in their relation to war; (2) the divisions *within* polities that result from that relation; and (3) the fundamentally different *types* of war they fight. I conclude by considering how this illuminates the political landscape of the United States today.

My move will be from "ideal" to "less ideal" theory. While the contrast between Dobos's anti-militarism and pacifism is not my focus here, my discussion bears on it. As I understand what I call political pacifism, its quarrel with just war thinking begins with how abstract—and unrealistic—the latter is.[14] You can justify war and preparing for war in the abstract because you can justify *anything* in the abstract. Rousseau's critique of such thinking still holds: what philosophers say sounds great in books, but come read us your books on the battlefield. I call my own more historically and institutionally oriented approach "critical war theory." The following discussion draws on the current literature on the nation-state and imperialism, especially as it relates to the United States. It will be schematic to the extreme but will succeed if it inspires philosophers of war to explore this literature more fully.

The Rise and Fall of Nationalized War

I began by suggesting that all the questions related to war preparations are now constrained by the fact that few citizens are willing to fight in war themselves.

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But the significance of this great refusal can only be grasped by considering how it came about.

War and its relation to the polities that wage it have changed dramatically, so much so that Sheehan terms it "a revolution as dramatic as any other in human history."[15] That change has been a recent and largely "invisible" one, in Sheehan's words.[16] In the best short discussion of it, "War and the Nation-State" (1977), Sir Michael Howard speaks of it as the end of "nationalized" war and the emergence of "postnationalized" war, the latter term suggesting that the future character of war is an open question—rendering all the more important Dobos's concern with the place of war in our political communities.[17]

Militarily, nationalized war can be dated from the Battle of Valmy (September 1792) to the Tet Offensive (January 1968). In the first, or so the myth went, a ragtag army of ordinary French citizens triumphed over professional Prussians by dint of nationalist fervor, cheering, "Vive la nation!" This nationalist model started losing steam in Europe after World War II but persisted in the United States until it was done in by the Vietnam War, such that by 1968 the favorite song of GIs was "We Gotta Get Out of This Place."[18]

Dobos notes that the concern with war preparations first emerged among eighteenth-century republican thinkers like Kant. Republican anxieties were central to the founders of the United States. The U.S. Constitution was written to reflect a deep suspicion of "permanent military establishments" on two grounds. First, they were seen as a source of potential domestic tyranny, either from direct military takeover or from the corrosive impact of martial values on the political realm. (Dobos speaks to these things in chapters 2 and 5 of *Ethics, Security, and the War-Machine*, as does Neta Crawford in her contribution to this symposium.) Second, they were viewed as a catalyst for adventurism abroad, as evidenced in the British empire's penchant for overseas conflict. The founders sought to orient the republic toward peace in part through a distinctive approach to war building: the power to wage war was divided between the executive and legislative branches of government and its exercise was grounded in the consent of the people.

The worry among eighteenth-century war skeptics was the segregation of military arrangements from the rest of society. The key to nineteenth-century nationalized war was the military's integration into society. This was achieved via a kind of bargain between the state and the populace, which I have elsewhere termed the "war contract."[19]Andreas Wimmer puts it thus: "Increasing state centralization and military mobilization led to a new contract between rulers and ruled: the

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exchange of political participation and public goods against taxation and the military support by the population at large. The idea of the nation as an extended family of political loyalty and shared identity provided the ideological framework that reflected and justified this new compact."[20] Implicit here was the paradoxical fact that nationalized war building could be an agent of *democratization*. Individuals received political and social rights, qua citizens, in exchange for military service, qua soldiers.

The upshot was a new form of polity: the "nation-state." Political philosophers speak of "the" nation-state as a simple thing. But the very term suggests a bifurcated entity: *both* a "nation" and a "state." The relationship between the two parts could be deeply problematic, as was demonstrated in how war building could also be an agent of *radicalization*. Starting with the French Revolution, the dilemma facing rulers (that is, the state) was how to mobilize the people (the nation) while maintaining control over them, lest they take war into their own hands. This fear was realized in the Paris Commune when French citizens felt betrayed by their rulers and took up arms in their own defense. The response was what Michael Mann argues is a distinctive feature of the nineteenth-century nation-state: While society as a whole was engaged in war, control over war remained with a small group. Democratization may have advanced but the most important decisions—regarding war and peace—remained effectively beyond democratic control. This led to a fundamental *irrationality* of the nation-state in the context of war: decisions about war tended to be arbitrary and haphazard in their content, yet systemic and often catastrophic in their consequences.[21]

And nineteenth-century polities had a further complexity.

The imperatives of war building meant not only the reorganization of society within but also its expansion without—so that imperialism, previously a commercial affair, was now increasingly regarded as key to a state's power. Great Britain exemplified this. Though the nineteenth century's dominant military power, its domestic military expenditures were quite low—only 2 to 3 percent of GNP after 1815. But this was because war building was largely externalized. Half of all soldiers under British control were in India, ready to be dispatched elsewhere—for example, to China in 1860 and then 1900–1901; to Sudan in 1885 and 1896; and to Egypt in 1882. Remarkably, two-thirds of the cost of all British soldiers was funded by Indian taxpayers.[22] In time, Great Britain came to see its scattered possessions as constituting a single polity and increasingly saw India as central to its defense. Henceforth, British war making became

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oriented toward securing India and British access to it, principally through securing its sea routes.

The "nation-state" and "empire" are typically seen as contrasting types of polities. But Great Britain exemplified how many European polities as well as the United States were a conjunction of the two, which some have termed "nation-state empires."[23] Geographically, they were scattered affairs. The British Empire, for example, was a hodgepodge of colonies ruled by Great Britain, settlement colonies, protectorates, mandates, military fortresses, and so on. Politically, they were hybrid affairs. Put simply, as nation-states they consisted of a distinct "homeland" defined by clear borders; as empires they consisted of ambiguous "territories" defined by vague "frontiers." And the relation of homeland and territory proved even more problematic than that between nation and state.

These distinctions were reflected in the different types of wars that nation-state empires fought. On the one hand, conflicts between nation-states and other nation-states were what one might call "war proper." Here, war was a discrete act of periodic "battles," with a finite beginning and end. On the other hand, the conflicts between empires and less "civilized" peoples were what were often referred to as "hostilities." These were an ongoing condition, comprised of constant "skirmishes," with no apparent end absent the complete subjugation or elimination of the adversary.

I think all this points to two different logics of war preparation. A polity's war building, qua nation-state, was a largely internal affair. Human and material resources were organized domestically, with a dramatic impact on the society's political structure. Qua empire, its war building was an externalized affair, with resources organized elsewhere so that the domestic impact was minimized. The upshot was that the relation *between* war building and war making was inverted. Qua nation-state, a polity engaged in war building for the sake of war making; hence it made sense to talk of its "preparing" for war. But qua empire, a polity engaged in war making for the sake of war building. For example, nineteenth-century Great Britain engaged in constant conflicts on various frontiers largely to secure its war-building resource, India. So talk of preparation is ill suited here. Empires do not organize *for* war so much as they are organized *around* war, which is why global relations became increasingly bellicose in the late nineteenth century as the imperialist side of nation-state empires grew.

Let me stress again the schematic nature of these remarks. If unpacked, though, I think they offer a framework for understanding the culmination and subsequent

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unraveling of nationalized war in the twentieth century. World War I dramatized Mann's view that the fundamental irrationality of the nation-state lay in the tragic disparity between the blinkered perspective of leaders and the destructive impact of their decisions. It even led to revolutions of people/nations against their state, as in Russia. World War II dramatized the remorseless logic of empire. In one sense, it was a conflict between aspiring empires seeking the resources for war building (Germany and Japan) and established empires defending theirs (Great Britain, the Soviet Union, the United States).[24] The ferocity of this war reflected how it was conducted more on the logic of hostilities than what I have termed war proper; that is, allegedly "civilized" Europeans treated one another as they had previously treated alleged "savages."[25] The Cold War that followed can be understood in terms of how war proper between the United States and the Soviet Union was replaced, on the one hand, by a secretive and wasteful nuclear standoff between the two countries and, on the other hand, by hostilities elsewhere in which many millions perished in conflicts engendered by the Great Power struggle.[26]

Sheehan details the skepticism that arose in postwar Europe about political arrangements with such a penchant for war. Members of these polities increasingly questioned the logic of using nationalism to justify anything and everything. They further questioned the sacrifices demanded by the state for such war making and the logic of empire that seemed to justify invading anywhere and everywhere across the globe.

Things took longer to unravel in the United States, but when they did, they did so dramatically. The Vietnam War demonstrated once again the democratizing impact of nationalized war, as the vote was extended to eighteen-year-olds. But it also demonstrated the radicalizing impact of nationalized war, as this conflict brought about the greatest political crisis for the United States in a century. Civilian disenchantment was evidenced in the refusal to serve. The government classified 570,000 young men as draft offenders and formally accused over 200,000 of draft violations. Even more dramatic was the turmoil in the military. Department of Defense figures reported over 500,000 desertions between 1966 and 1973.[27] After the Tet Offensive, combat avoidance turned to outright mutiny. *Armed Forces Journal* stated that "our army that now remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse, with individual units avoiding or having refused combat, murdering their officers and noncommissioned officers, drug-ridden, and dispirited where not near-mutinous."[28] Nixon's chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman,

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informed the president, "If troops are going to mutiny, you can't pursue an aggressive policy."[29]

The United States and Empire

At the conclusion of his essay on war and the state, written soon after Vietnam, Sir Michael Howard asked: "What next?"[30]

His answer was that what was to come was mainly a mordant return to the eighteenth century. Postnationalized war would be denationalized to become what it once was, an affair of states rather than peoples: "The State apparat is likely to become isolated from the rest of the body politic, a severed head conducting its intercourse with other severed heads according to its own laws."[31] The alienation would be twofold. The citizenry would be less willing to participate in war or contribute in any significant way, though it would also be less tolerant of immoral state practices resulting from blind patriotism. Leaders would be less patient with policies impeding their actions since they would no longer be required to ensure popular participation. They would seek more ways to insulate what they did from popular assessment. Ironically, democracy's triumph over totalitarian forces meant that war would become increasingly undemocratic.

But I think there is some truth in Niall Ferguson's suggestion that the best parallel for today's United States may be nineteenth-century Great Britain.[32] The similarities start with the fact that the American polity has always been a hybrid one.

Despite the founders' republican anti-imperialism, the country they founded was both a republic and an empire, and this has remained a defining tension in its politics. The United States began as both an ensemble of distinct states, defined by clear borders, and a set of ambiguous territories, defined by vague frontiers. Up until the twentieth century, the expansionist impulse of this "empire of liberty" was the main source of domestic conflict. After the dispossession of Native Americans, U.S. expansion was driven by slaveholders seeking a slaveholding empire. This involved constant designs on the Caribbean and Central America, but its principal result was the Mexican-American War, which set in motion the conflicts leading to the Civil War.[33] The Civil War transformed the United States from a loose collection of states into a single nation-state. After the Civil War, expansion was driven by the interests of industrial capitalists first aiming

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to bring the rest of the continent under their control and then proceeding to expand to other continents, starting with the 1898 Spanish-American War and the annexation of the Philippines.[34]

Its hybrid character meant that the United States always fought two types of war. The revolution against the British was what I have termed a war proper, fought by the European laws of decorum. But once concluded, the mission of the regular army became engaging in hostilities against Native Americans provoked in the pre–Civil War era by a policy of "removing" them from their native lands and moving them to new territories.[35] The Civil War was a war proper; indeed, it has been regarded as the first truly nationalized war in both sides' strategy of attacking the entire populace. After the Civil War, hostilities with Native Americans resumed, but the policy was no longer removal but elimination. Former Civil War generals like Philip Sheridan adopted "total war" tactics in attacking Native American populations and resources directly. It was a short step from the "pacification" of Native Americans to that of Filipinos in America's first experience in overseas colonialism—a conflict that, prior to the contemporary Afghanistan war, was the longest war America ever fought (1899–1913). But the annexation of the Philippines proved to be an exception to America's approach to empire, which, like nineteenth-century Britain, preferred economic controls backed by occasional military force.

What eventually distinguished the U.S. empire from its British forerunner was the paramount role of naval bases. The half-dozen naval stations it possessed in 1900 grew to three hundred overseas bases by the mid-1950s and to around eight hundred in seventy countries by the end of the Cold War. It became, in Daniel Immerwahr's words, a "pointillist empire," one that began a "new pattern of global power, based less on claiming large swaths of land and more on controlling small points."[36] The American "polity" became best conceived of as a multinational corporation, or an archipelago, or even an octopus; in any event, nothing like the billiard-ball bounded-territory model that talk of the (singular) nation-state evokes. Its great advantage was its hiddenness from the American citizenry, so that war became something that happened elsewhere. Moreover, with the growth of proxy wars, war was not only fought elsewhere but also by somebody else. This was also something of a return to the eighteenth century, when European countries hired others to fight their wars (for example, the Hessians in the American Revolution), but it gained new urgency as a response to what might be called a new security dilemma facing the United States: how to engage

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in ongoing conflicts abroad without relying on the citizenry at home, and avoiding the type of public scrutiny that such participation might bring. It is especially valuable in maintaining the "deniability" now regarded as essential to American efforts. It is this "externalization of the burden of warfare" that has allowed the state "to return to a premodern mode of war: the rational cabinet war removed from the passions of the people."[37]

This externalization of war building has meant that war building's capacity to corrupt the body politic proceeds as much from the outside in as from the inside out. Scholars such as Alfred McCoy have detailed how many of the more corrupt political practices in the United States involving violations of civil liberties, harassment of activists, and so on were first developed by the United States in the Philippines and then imported to the United States.[38] After World War II, practices of counterinsurgency and policing that were developed abroad to manage Cold War conflicts were imported back into the United States, especially for dealing with urban racial conflicts. The upshot was the blurred distinction between the domestic and the foreign. As scholar Stuart Schrader put it, "By the 1960s, professional policing did not possess two repertoires, one for deployment at home and one for deployment abroad. Rather, it possessed a single repertoire, which experts vigorously attempted to institute wherever they could."[39]

Conclusion

What have been the costs of this new type of polity and its approach to war building? The clearest costs have been the conflicts it has provoked, which augment Dobos's insightful discussion of how war building can be a source of war. Indeed, if one needs an example of how foreign bases and war-by-proxy can lead to conflict, he or she need look no further than the events of 9/11, carried out by a former proxy of the American military—al-Qaeda—protesting America's military presence in the Middle East. This speaks to how externalized war building endangers a polity's physical integrity. Let me conclude with why I think that, in the case of the United States, the more dire threat is to its political integrity.

Recent years have seen a spate of studies on why, starting with Korea, the United States has seemed incapable of decisively winning wars despite being the greatest military power in the history of the earth. Books on this topic include *Why America Loses Wars: Limited War and US Strategy from the Korean War to*

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the Present; *Anatomy of Failure: Why America Loses Every War It Starts*; *The Right Way to Lose a War: America in an Age of Unwinnable Conflicts*; and so on.[40] Various explanations are offered, but a consistent theme is that American leaders are insufficiently clear about the reasons for entering the conflicts. Donald Stoker writes that "the US and other modern liberal democracies" "too often fail to clearly define what they're fighting for."[41] This was amply demonstrated by the Vietnam War. The so-called "Afghanistan Papers" published in 2019 confirmed that this was also the case for that conflict. "We didn't have the foggiest notion of what we were undertaking," said Douglas Lute, the former army lieutenant general who oversaw operations in Afghanistan for the White House during the Bush and Obama administrations.[42]

The aforementioned books treat this as a policy problem akin to, say, the problem of traffic safety, and as being shared by all "liberal democracies." But America's founding ideology held that republics were supposed to approach war differently. The idea that the United States could wander into a war with no clear purpose and then meander around for a decade or so with no idea of what "winning" looked like (and hence what "losing" looked like) would have been anathema to the republican vision. It was indeed to counter this possibility that America's very political identity involved the distinct approach to war building of the sort sketched above. Wars would be fought and paid for by ordinary citizens so that its costs would be present to them, thus inducing caution about them. The corruption of this model is a long and complicated story. It begins with the ambivalence that has been present from the country's founding, that about republic vs. empire. It is not obvious what it means to realize this republican model in today's conditions if one feels that war remains a worthy endeavor. My own view is that polities—and I am thinking especially of the United States—should take what I have termed the "great refusal" to heart. If its members are not interested in fighting their country's wars themselves, they should not find ways for *others* to do the fighting for them. They should eschew war making for peacemaking and war building for peacebuilding, starting with determining what this means in an era of postnationalized war.

NOTES

[1] James J. Sheehan, *Where Have All the Soldiers Gone? The Transformation of Modern Europe* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2008).
[2] Ibid., p. xx.
[3] *Economist* (June 5, 2004), quoted in ibid., p. xvi.
[4] Chris Bockman, "Why the French State Has a Team of UFO Hunters," BBC News, November 4, 2014.

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[5] Robert Kagan, "Power and Weakness," *Policy Review*, June 1, 2002.
[6] Michael Ignatieff, "Nation-Building Lite," *New York Times Magazine*, July 28, 2002, sec. 6, p. 26; and Michael Ignatieff, "The American Empire; the Burden," *New York Times Magazine*, January 5, 2003, sec. 6, p. 22.
[7] Niall Ferguson, *The Cash Nexus: Economics and Politics from the Age of Warfare through the Age of Welfare, 1700–2000* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), p. 418.
[8] Robert Burns, "Blacks, Women Retreat from Army," Associated Press, March 9, 2005. See also David Walsh, "Opposition to Iraq War Hitting US Military Recruitment," World Socialist Web Site, March 12, 2005, www.wsws.org/en/articles/2005/03/mili-m12.html.
[9] GFK Custom Research, quoted in Walsh, "Opposition to Iraq War Hitting US Military Recruitment."
[10] Cheyney Ryan, *The Chickenhawk Syndrome: War, Sacrifice, and Personal Responsibility* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009).
[11] See Lolita C. Baldor, "Military May Ease Standards for Recruits," *USA Today*, November 6, 2007; and William Matthews, "Lawmaker: Recruiting Criminals Unwise," *Army Times*, November 9, 2007.
[12] Max Boot, "U.S. should look beyond borders for more troops," TribLive, February 27, 2005, archive.triblive.com/news/u-s-should-look-beyond-borders-for-more-troops/.
[13] David C. Hendrickson, *Republic in Peril: American Empire and the Liberal Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 1–2.
[14] Cheyney Ryan, "Pacifism," in Seth Lazar and Helen Frowe, eds., *The Oxford Handbook on the Ethics of War* (Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 277–293.
[15] Sheehan, *Where Have All the Soldiers Gone?*, p. xx.
[16] Ibid., p. 179.
[17] Michael Howard, "War and the Nation-State," in "The State," *Dædalus* 108, no. 4 (Fall 1979), pp. 101–10.
[18] Christian G. Appy, *American Reckoning: The Vietnam War and Our National Identity* (New York: Penguin, 2016), p. 126. Soldiers' second favorite song was "Chain of Fools" by Aretha Franklin.
[19] Cheyney Ryan, "War, Hostilities, Terrorism: A Pacifist Perspective," in Jorg Kustermans, Tom Sauer, Dominiek Lootens, and Barbara Segaert, eds., *Pacifism's Appeal: Ethos, History, Politics* (Cham, Denmark: Springer International Publishing, 2018).
[20] Andreas Wimmer, *Waves of War: Nationalism, State Formation, and Ethnic Exclusion in the Modern World* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 4.
[21] Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. 2, *The Rise of Classes and Nation-States, 1760–1914* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2012), esp. chs. 20 and 21.
[22] John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 10.
[23] The best overview of this is given by Jürgen Osterhammel in *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2014), pp. 392–468.
[24] I draw this characterization from Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. 3, *Global Empires and Revolution, 1890–1945* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2012), esp. ch. 14, "The Last Inter-imperial War and the Fall of the Fascist Alternative, 1939–1945."
[25] See Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York: Vintage, 2000).
[26] See Paul Thomas Chamberlin, *The Cold War's Killing Fields: Rethinking the Long Peace* (New York: Harper, 2018).
[27] Accounts of this era are in David Cortright, *Soldiers in Revolt: The American Military Today* (New York: Doubleday, 1975) and Richard Boyle, *GI Revolts: The Breakdown of the U.S. Army in Vietnam* (San Francisco: United Front Press, 1972).
[28] Robert D. Heinl Jr., "The Collapse of the Armed Forces" (*Armed Forces Journal*, June 7, 1971), in Marvin Gettleman, Jane Franklin, Marilyn B. Young, H. Bruce Franklin, eds., *Vietnam and America: A Documented History* (New York: Grove Press, 1995), p. 327.
[29] H. R. Haldeman, quoted in Tom Wells, *The War Within: America's Battle over Vietnam* (New York: Henry Holt, 1994), p. 475.
[30] Howard, "War and the Nation-State," pp. 106–110.
[31] Ibid., p. 106.
[32] See the interview with Ferguson in Niall Ferguson, "Our Imperial Imperative: Niall Ferguson, the Author of *Colossus*, Laments the Emasculation of American Imperialism," interview by Frank Bures, Atlantic (May 2004); and Niall Ferguson, *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire* (London: Penguin, 2005).
[33] See Fred Anderson and Andrew Cayton, *The Dominion of War: Empire and Liberty in North America, 1500–2000* (New York: Viking, 2005) for the argument that the Civil War was a direct result of an imperialist venture, the Mexican-American War (p. xiii).

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[34] For further development of these points, see A. G. Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2019); Steven Hahn, *A Nation without Borders: The United States and Its World in an Age of Civil Wars, 1830–1910* (London: Penguin Books, 2017); Thomas Bender, *A Nation among Nations: America's Place in World History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006); Nikhil Pal Singh, *Race and America's Long War* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019); and Anthony J. Hall, *The American Empire and the Fourth World*, vol. 1, *The Bowl with One Spoon* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 2005).

[35] See Alan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America* (Oxford: Free Press, 1984) on how Indian fighting was the primary function of the U.S. military since its formation.

[36] Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire: A History of the Greater United States* (New York: Picador, 2020), p. 216. See also David Vine, *Base Nation: How U.S. Military Bases Abroad Harm America and the World* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2015).

[37] Andreas Krieg and Jean-Marc Rickli, *Surrogate Warfare: The Transformation of War in the Twenty-First Century* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2019), p. 12. See also Eli Berman and David A. Lake, eds., *Proxy Wars: Suppressing Violence through Local Agents* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2019); and Tyrone L. Groh, *Proxy War: The Least Bad Option* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2019).

[38] Alfred W. McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).

[39] Stuart Schrader, *Badges without Borders: How Global Counterinsurgency Transformed American Policing*, 1st ed. (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019), p. 6.

[40] Donald Stoker, *Why America Loses Wars: Limited War and US Strategy from the Korean War to the Present* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Harlan Ullman, *Anatomy of Failure: Why America Loses Every War It Starts* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2017); and Dominic Tierney, *The Right Way to Lose a War: America in an Age of Unwinnable Conflicts* (New York: Little, Brown, 2015). See also Gideon Rose, *How Wars End: Why We Always Fight the Last Battle* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010).

[41] Stoker, *Why America Loses Wars*, p. 5.

[42] Douglas Lute, quoted in Samuel Moony and Stephen Wertheim, "The Infinity War: We Say We're a Peaceful Nation. Why Do Our Leaders Always Keep Us at War?," *Washington Post*, December 13, 2019.

Abstract: A starting point for thinking about war and preparations for war is that today the average citizen in Western countries has absolutely no interest in fighting in a war him or herself. The best study of this phenomenon rightly notes that what might be called the "great refusal" of ordinary people to involve themselves in actual war making reflects what might be called the "great disillusionment" with war itself. However, this has not meant the end of war, or of preparations for war, but rather war's transformation from a "nationalized" to a "postnationalized" arrangement. For the United States, this has meant expansion into a new type of empire. As part of the symposium on Ned Dobos's *Ethics, Security, and the War-Machine,* this essay explores these developments and the challenges they pose.

Keywords: war, war building, nation, state, hostilities, Vietnam War, republican

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