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8 *Warfare and the State, 1450–1900*

War as the cause, course and consequence of state-building is an established and currently fashionable means of approaching history among both historians and political scientists: war equals state-building and state-building equals war. In place of an organic, or alternatively episodic, account that might focus on socio-economic trends or constitutional-political developments centring on domestic situations, war offers an explanatory model that makes it possible to relate international and domestic spheres and to align state-building – a central, structural feature of contemporary political society – with chronological specifics: the details of conflicts.

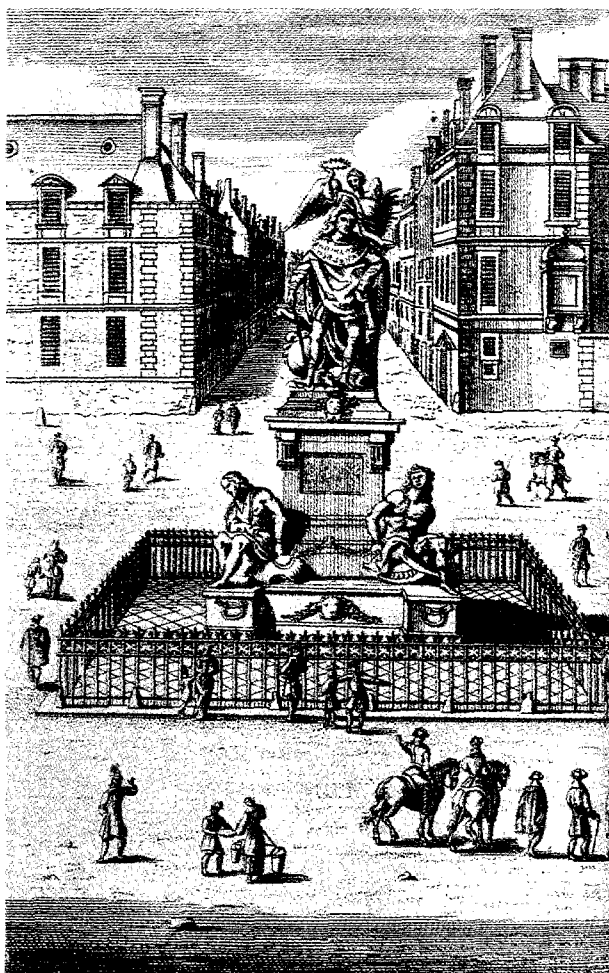
The State Monopolisation of Violence

The relationship between war and the state has a number of dimensions. The expansion of the state in order to improve its effectiveness for the conduct of war, more specifically the alterations in administrative organisation, political ethos and economic policy required to support military change, is a major theme. Also important is the degree to which the state increasingly became *the* expression of organised violence. This owed much to the ambition of governments to monopolise the use of such violence, at the expense, for example, of stateless pirates and mercenaries. Indeed, the monopolisation of violence became a definition of statehood as a functional rather than a legitimist understanding of rulership became more common.

Thus, in the nineteenth century there was a decline in a number of practices hitherto common in the European system. Military entrepreneurship, the practice of hiring and being mercenaries, became less frequent, and this influenced relations between states and those between states and non-state bodies. Subsidies and indirect recruiting were replaced by foreign aid and direct recruiting. The Crimean War was the last in which the British government recruited units of European foreign mercenaries for war service.¹

Authorised non-state violence, for example by privateers, such as the government-supported and government-supporting Barbary corsairs of North Africa, and by mercantile companies with territorial power, for example the British East India Company, was eliminated in a piecemeal fashion, mostly in the nineteenth century. The elimination of such practices owed something to the degree to which they provoked interstate conflicts by being outside full state control. The elimination also reflected a sense that they were anachronistic to states and societies that increasingly placed a premium on and identified themselves through rationality, conceived of in terms of system, that is, a

59. The glory of the Royal conqueror. Statue of Louis XIV on the Place des Victoires in Paris commissioned by Marshal Feuillade. The Austrian envoy complained to the French foreign minister in 1686 'that the Emperor was not in the condition of a slave with his hands tied in chains, other than in the fancy of Monstr. de la Feuillade. This he thought fit to take notice of, upon occasion of one of the figures under the new statue, representing a slave in chains, with the arms of the Empire, the spread-eagle by him'.



clearly defined organisation and explicit rules of conduct, and state-directed systems. The territorial and military roles of the companies were ended. Thus in 1882 the Italian government took over the coaling base at Assab in Eritrea near the mouth of the Red Sea purchased in 1870 by the Rubattino Steamship Company. In 1898 the British government bought the properties and claims of the Royal Niger Company. This brought them control of southern Nigeria and of the company's army, the Royal Niger Constabulary.

There were exceptions, but they became more uncommon. One latter-day adventurer, James Brooke (1803–68), a veteran of the First Burma War, where he had formed a body of native volunteer cavalry in Assam, helped suppress a rebellion in Sarawak, and was rewarded by the Prince of Brunei with its governorship (1841). That became the basis of a territorial position that led to him and the nephew and grand-nephew that succeeded him being termed the 'white rajahs' of Sarawak: the last did not cede Sarawak to the British Crown until 1946. However, opportunities for such activity became less common.

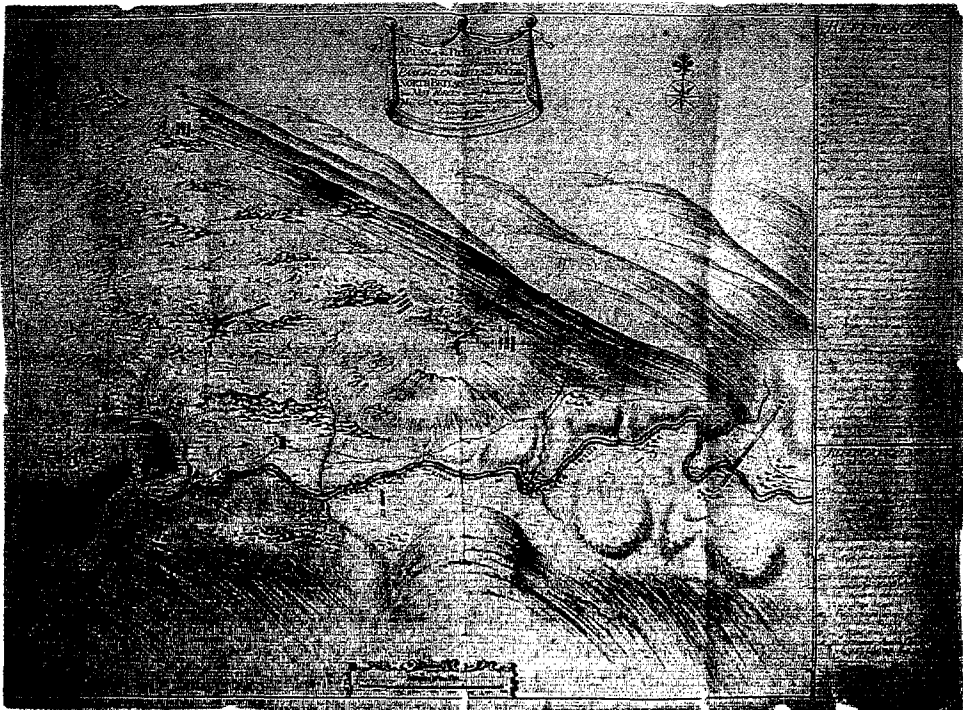
Aside from authorised non-state violence, unauthorised non-state violence, particularly piracy and privately organised expeditions designed to seize territory, was also in large part stamped out in the nineteenth century. This both demonstrated and enhanced the ability

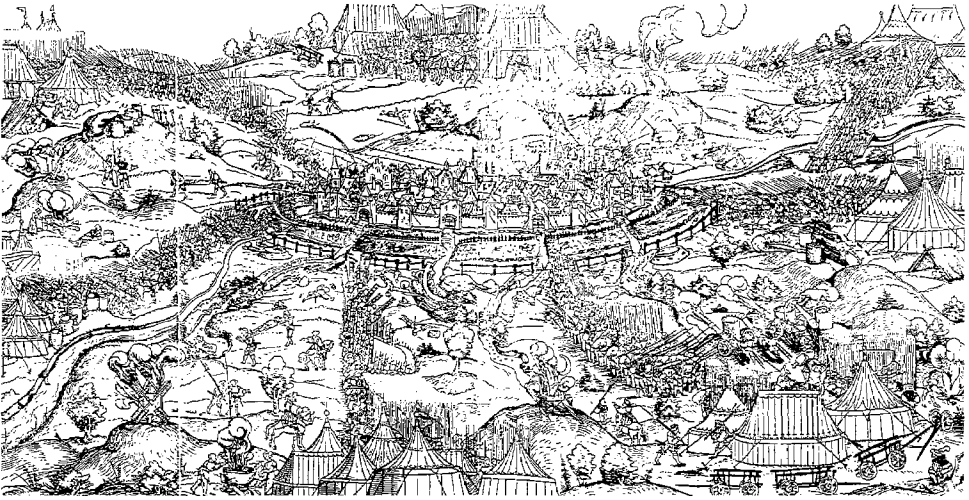
of states to monopolise power,² although in Sarawak it was Brooke who played the major role in suppressing piracy. Nevertheless, the European powers, particularly Britain, devoted much effort to suppressing piracy, especially off China, in the East Indies, off British Columbia, in the Pacific and in the Persian Gulf. In 1819 a British naval force from Bombay destroyed the base of the Qasimi pirates at Ras al Khaima in the Persian Gulf and wrecked their fleet. This forced an agreement to end piracy signed in 1820. The British capture of Aden in 1839 owed much to the desire to end local piracy.³

The banning of the slave trade and the subsequent measures taken to extend and enforce the bans were important examples of moves designed to end authorised, and then unauthorised, non-state violence. The British navy was active against the traffic in slaves, particularly from Africa to the Middle East, employing violence to stop the destructive trade.⁴

The European powers sought to monopolise military force, both within their European territories and in their colonies, on land and at sea. The gradual bringing of the Cossacks of both Ukraine and south and south-east European Russia under state control (c. 1650–1800) was an important example of a state establishing a monopoly of violence.⁵ The red-shirted volunteer force with which Giuseppe Garibaldi conquered Sicily and Naples in 1860 was absorbed into the Italian army, and in 1862, when he subsequently formed a private army to capture Rome, then an independent Papal state, it was defeated by the Italian army.

60. The battle of Glenshiel, 10 June 1719. British victory over a Spanish-Jacobite force in the Scottish Highlands. European warfare was not uniform. There were major differences between British and Jacobite forces. At Glenshiel, the government forces, assisted by mortar fire, took the initiative and successfully attacked the Jacobite flanks. Lacking resolve while it remained on the defensive, the Jacobite army disintegrated.





61. *The Siege of Münster* by Erhard Schoen, 1535. This woodcut illustrated the siege of Anabaptist-held Münster by an army combining numerous pikemen with batteries of cannon. Münster's fortifications had not yet been modernised; the city fell and the Anabaptists were killed.

Monopolisation of violence was also linked to the internal pacification, and thus control, of societies. This was a gradual process, the scale and scope of which varied greatly, and one that was to be challenged and, in part, reversed after 1945 with the rise of terrorism and other violent challenges to the authority of the state. Essentially, however, European states sought to prevent the use by partisan groups of organised violence for the pursuit of domestic political objectives. They also took steps against feuds. At the personal level, the activity of the state was less insistent, but measures were, nevertheless, taken to abolish, or at least limit, duelling, and to restrict the ownership of arms.

The last was a crucial aspect of social specialisation and the professionalisation of warfare. If, paradoxically, moves to restrict the ownership of arms were pursued in the nineteenth century, at a time when there was an increasing emphasis on conscription and the availability of military reserves, that, nonetheless, underlined the determination of governments to control both the practice of mass recruitment and its consequences.

More generally, there was a distinction between arms that had a battlefield capability and others whose value was largely restricted to personal violence. The first were monopolised by governments. This was true both of artillery from its initial development, and of flintlock muskets in the eighteenth century. The diffusion among civilians of hunting rifles and other personal firearms was of little military consequence. By the sixteenth century most sophisticated fortifications were under central governmental control, and by the eighteenth they all were; only states had the resources to maintain such fortifications. Cannon were used against the fortresses of recalcitrant cities and aristocrats, as in Scotland in 1456 when the Earl of Douglas's castle at Threave surrendered in the face of a 'great bombard'.

Outside Europe, the pattern of control over weaponry and fortifications varied considerably. Among the native Americans, for example, there was considerable individual control, while this was not the case in China, and, still less, in Japan. Personal ownership of weaponry was a feature of the societies deemed barbarian by Gibbon, and was indeed crucial to their military character. It can be argued that such ownership and the limited control wielded by tribal authorities made the Europeanisation

of warfare by such societies highly unlikely. ‘Barbarians’ are definable as militarised but individualistic; the ‘civilised’ as members of states, created by war, and in which arms, certainly battlefield arms, are centrally organised.

The extension of European colonial control entailed the spread of European practices and views on the ownership and use of weapons. This was an aspect of Europeanisation that proved unpopular. Furthermore, it was compromised by the delegated nature of much colonial power and the use of native military units that were not part of the regular colonial army.

Within Europe a highly competitive and combative international system led to pressures for governmental change,⁶ although this process was not restricted to Europe. To take a few prominent examples from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Mughal India under Akbar (1556–1605), Burma under Bayinnaung (1551–81), Mataram under Agung (1613–45), Persia under Abbas I (1587–1629) and the Ottoman empire under the first two Köprülü Grand Viziers, Mehmed (1656–61) and Fazil Ahmed (1661–76), also demonstrate the interaction between international ambitions, enhanced military capability, especially the development of permanent forces, and administrative reform. However, such ‘reform’ often centred on the search for a new consensus with the socially powerful, rather than on bureaucratic centralisation, not that the latter process was without its ideological tensions, legal difficulties, administrative limitations and political problems. The pursuit of a new consensus was centralising – in that it focused the attention of regional elites on the centre – but not centralised.

Competitive military systems that put a premium on the size of armed forces and the sophistication of their weaponry enhanced the position of centralising rulers, while those

62. *Landscape with Ruined Castle of Brederode and Distant View of Haarlem* by Jan van der Croos, 1655. Thanks both to cannon and to the concentration of military strength by sovereign rulers, most medieval fortifications became obsolescent. Furthermore, new fortified positions were concentrated in frontier regions, such as Breda, which fell to the Spaniards in 1625 and was regained in 1637.



international and military systems that were not dominated by such armies and navies did not lend themselves to control by such rulers. Consensus was less necessary if rulers employed foreign mercenaries.

War and Government

However, stronger government was not simply a function of the nature of warfare. Political and religious cultures were important, as was the role of individuals. For example, royal authority in Aceh (north-west Sumatra) was greatly increased under two Sultans, Alau'd din Ri'ayat Syah al-Mukammil (1589–1604) and Iskandar Muda (1607–36), both of whom terrorised the nobility. Iskandar Muda created a new nobility that was responsible for raising a new army, and used a standing force of foreign slaves, akin to the Turkish janizaries, to control the capital. This situation reflected the ambitions of the rulers, not a competitive international situation or changes in the nature of warfare. There was a reaction against Iskandar Muda's policies, but, irrespective of the domestic situation, a Dutch blockade in 1647–50 led to the Dutch gaining control of the crucial West Sumatran dependencies that produced the pepper and tin on which Aceh's prosperity rested.⁷

Teleology is so tempting in military history because of the apparent objectivity of technological progress. However, the nature of this progress can be queried and the role of other factors in military history can be emphasised. If the emphasis in military capability is to be placed on administrative sophistication and, more generally, on the nature of the state within its various contexts, rather than on firearms, then the course of military history becomes considerably more complex. In essence it becomes an aspect of general history. Competing powers are competing systems; consequently, the potential for and the impact of war are strongly mediated by pre-existing structures, both administrative and social. In addition, the question of the nature of the state leads to a wider-ranging enquiry about the character of societies and their cultures. However effective a given state might be in raising resources, that does not explain the degree to which its people are willing to accept deprivation and risk death for its ends, whether defence or expansion, and yet that was, and is, crucial to its military character and capability.

The states with the most effective global range during this period (1450–1900) were western European. The willingness and ability of these societies to organise their resources for maritime enterprise were combined with a degree of curiosity about the unknown world, a wish to question rather than to accept received knowledge. This independence of mind and action was especially manifest in the explorers: they sought governmental support but were not constrained by it. Yet the global links that individuals established could only become a sustainable military reality with resources and institutional support. The willingness of western European governments to decide that such a goal was important reflected views on space and on the acceptance of new developments that were not shared by all states.

Governments not only set goals, they also realised them by altering political parameters and allocating resources. To these ends some states developed what were, by earlier, although not nineteenth-century standards, impressive bureaucracies that sustained far-ranging patterns of activity and action, although elsewhere war could trigger a reversion to more primitive military arrangements, with private entrepreneurs organising and local populations paying. While it is true that in the early seventeenth century structures for the financing, supply and control of European armies were inadequate to



63. *Battle of the Spurs*. This battle of 1513 earned its name from the speed with which the French fled from Henry VIII's cavalry. The French were exposed to archery fire when their advance was checked and this led them to fall back, eventually in disorder. The battle itself arose from an attempt to get supplies into besieged Théroutanne. The painting concentrates on the cavalry engagement, although it was the English archers who played a crucial role.

the burdens that the sustained warfare of the Thirty Years War (1618–48) was to create, it would be inappropriate to paint too bleak a picture. By global standards, European military administration was well developed, and had been so for centuries, and, in addition, accounts of deficiencies in army administration are not too helpful as a guide to the situation at sea, where the introduction of numbers of specialist warships led to a development of admiralties.⁸

European warriorism, its ethos and practices, depended heavily on clerks and, after an initial stage of partly free enterprise conquest in the sixteenth century, this was especially true of overseas military activity. Although affected by internal disputes, the 'centralised and systematic authority structure' of the Dutch East India Company gave it a continuity and stability in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that many indigenous states lacked. Despite waging war in Europe, Spain in the 1620s and 1630s was also committed to conflict around the world, and its bureaucracy showed remarkable agility, dedication and inventiveness in keeping the fleets supplied. Private contractors and public officials worked fruitfully together: forest legislation sought to conserve timber stocks; efforts were made to provide sailors and soldiers with nutritious food and good medical care. Severe discipline was enforced on erring fleet commanders and bureaucrats alike.⁹

The last was a crucial aspect of state control of warfare: the enforcement and acceptance of discipline. Martial elite culture was transformed as knights became officers. This helped to ensure the continuation of ancestral political and social privilege, but their technically different battlefield roles required a more predictable and disciplined response. As a result, the relative effectiveness of European forces improved. Both officership and generalship became more professional, or rather professionalisation increasingly entailed a greater measure of bureaucratisation and discipline than had been the case with the autonomous forces that had been characteristic in European warfare till the seventeenth century and that, thereafter, were still typical of armies elsewhere. Successful European generals, such as Oliver Cromwell, frequently displayed a painstaking attention to detail,



64. Defeat of Spanish army near Canal of Bruges, 31 August 1667. Attacked by larger French forces, the Spaniards, already at war with Portugal, were unable to offer successful opposition. The major fortress of Lille had fallen three days earlier. The rapidity of the French advance in 1667 indicated the decisiveness of European conflict under propitious circumstances.

especially with regard to the recruitment, training and organisation of their forces. Training was crucial to the effective use of weapons, because it was only thanks to training and discipline that different types of troops could combine effectively in battle tactics. For example, early handgunners were vulnerable to infantry and cavalry attack and therefore needed to combine with troops, such as pikemen, who could provide protection against hand-to-hand attack: advances in technology themselves were of limited use.

The European states were also able to utilise a wide-ranging resource base, one that was enhanced by transoceanic expansion. Within Europe there was heavy forest cover and abundant mineral resources; both essential for naval construction and metallurgy. Europeans probably had access to larger quantities of cheaper metal than was available elsewhere: some of this metal, in the form of nails, was used to hold European ships together. In contrast, the planks of Indian Ocean ships were sewn together with rope and therefore vulnerable to the recoil of heavy guns and to storms at sea. It has also been argued that by the close of the Middle Ages Europe contained the most advanced industrial technology and organisation in the world, with water mills, windmills, heavy forge work and mechanical clocks.¹⁰ Such an argument may underrate the Chinese achievement, but, at the very least, Europe had one of the most advanced industrial systems of the time, and European primacy increasingly became the case. Along with a relative openness to new ideas, this economic strength helped Europeans in their adaptation and improvement of technology developed elsewhere, such as gunpowder or ship design.

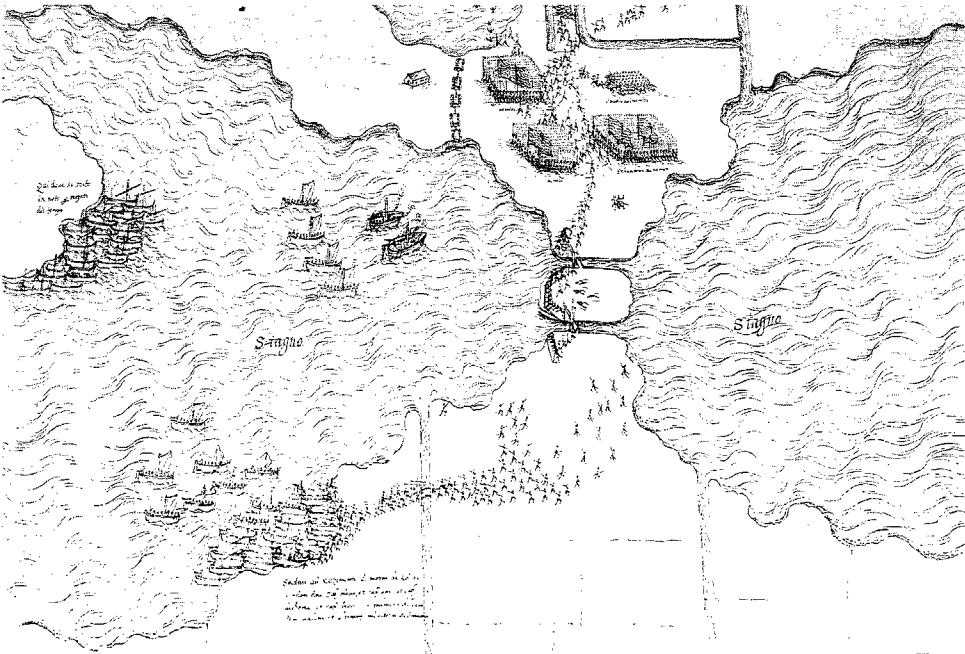
This lead over the rest of the world was also true of European governmental administration, although there were many and important limitations by the standards of modern bureaucratic ideology. These affected the process of technological and scientific development and application.¹¹ Furthermore, the Europeans were well advanced in the field of

international finance, enabling states, such as Spain in the sixteenth century, the United Provinces in the seventeenth and Britain in the eighteenth, in part to finance their activities through an international credit system.

Conflict led to pressure for improvement. For example, Dutch naval operations in the first half of the seventeenth century were affected by the autonomous nature of their five admiralties, but in the second half of the century, as a result of war with England and France, naval activities and administration were better coordinated. The Dutch navy was then well manned: the supply of seamen on the labour market and the regulations during wartime were such that all available and required men-of-war could always sail and could be commanded by qualified and motivated officers. The protection of economic interests and the political situation in Europe constantly compelled the Dutch ruling class to ensure that it had a strong navy.¹²

If European attitudes set the context for transoceanic activities, because such activities were launched by European states, the situation concerning inter-European conflict was less distinctive on the world scale, although the propinquity of a number of competing states was important. What is clear is that the use of force was expensive. It cost the British government £6.8 million to conquer and suppress opposition in Ireland in 1649–52. The incessant nature of competition between European states in very close proximity placed heavy burdens on governmental structures and led to attempts not only to utilise the resources of society, a traditional objective, but also to a wish to understand those resources and to appreciate the wealth-creating nature of economic processes and social structures. Such an appreciation was seen as a basis for the pursuit of measures to increase wealth.

65. The Dutch War, 1572. Drawing made for Gaspar de Robles. The Dutch War involved amphibious operations, a type of conflict too often ignored by studies concentrating on land warfare. The Dutch ability to gain naval superiority gave them a vital advantage in the provinces of Holland and Zeeland. In 1572 the Sea Beggars, a force of Dutch privateers, seized the Zeeland towns of Brill and Flushing. The Duke of Alba was unable to regain these positions and in 1574 the Dutch captured Middleburg.



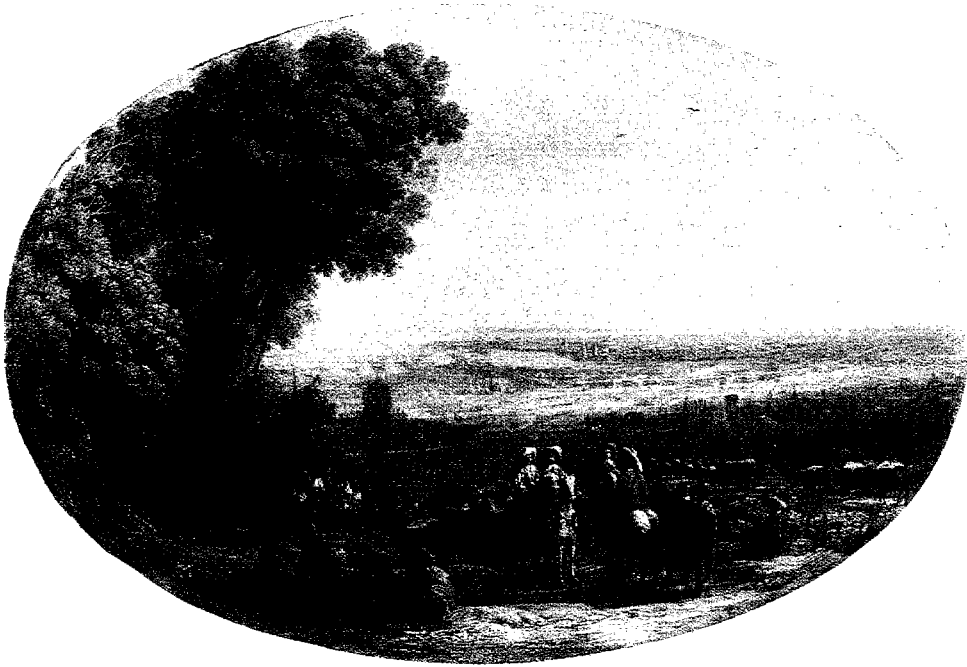
These attitudes are sometimes described, in a seventeenth-century context, as mercantilism or cameralism. They required planning, information and a notion of secular improvement: the capacity of and need for humans to better their condition on earth and one that could be achieved through state action. Attitudes to the goals and practices of European states were greatly altered in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The notion developed of the state as an initiator of legislative and administrative rules designed to improve society and increase its resources: the theory and policy of cameralism. These two goals were also seen as directly linked. A central role was envisaged for the state, represented by an absolute sovereign authority assisted by a corps of professionalised officials. The state's legislative scope was universal, covering the mores of subjects as much as their economic activity, because the ability of a subject to participate in the latter was held to be dependent on the former. In this sense, the equation came to be: disciplined culture, rich resources, strong military.

Regulatory aspirations were not always successful in practice – far from it, but they indicate the degree to which eighteenth-century European Enlightenment attitudes towards government and the purposes of the state were in fact prefigured by and in large measure based upon the goals, and in part policies, of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century governments. These in turn drew on the corpus of legislation passed by medieval European towns: there was an important continuity of regulation and planning in Europe. Europe's broad urban development led to an expansion of state authority, likewise of resources, and thus of military power.

However, it is important not to adopt too black-and-white a picture and to overstate the conflict between cameralism and traditional institutions and views; not least because it seems clear that cameralists sought to work through such institutions. Rather than seeking to monopolise power, European central governments co-opted subordinate institutions, which issued ordinances as well as implementing them. Similarly, sovereign is a problematic term: early modern European sovereignty – theoretically irresistible and limited at the same time – was different to the modern sense of the term.¹³

The potential of European government, especially as a means to mobilise the resources of society in order to maximise the public welfare, however defined, was increasingly grasped. Pressure for stronger and more centralised administration had universalistic implications that clashed with traditional conceptions of government as mediated through a 'system' reflecting privileges and rights that were heavily influenced both by the social structure and by the habit of conceiving of administration primarily in terms of legal precedent. European rulers varied in their willingness to exchange the traditional foundations of royal absolutism in legal precedent and a particularist social order for a new conception of government. Potentially there was a clash between a mechanical/unitary/natural law concept of monarchy and one that was traditional/sacral/corporate/confessional. But this did not become apparent in Europe until the mid-eighteenth century. Previously the former was very much in check, except in Russia under Peter the Great: corporate and intermediate institutions were generally lacking there.

Many of the reforms in early modern European government can often be understood in habitual terms, both the response to new problems and the attempt to make existing practices work better. Nevertheless, even if rulers were dependent on the consent, assistance and often initiative of local government and the socially powerful, especially the aristocracy, the ability to raise formidable armies and navies and to conduct aggressive foreign policies reflected the strength of political-administrative structures and practices.

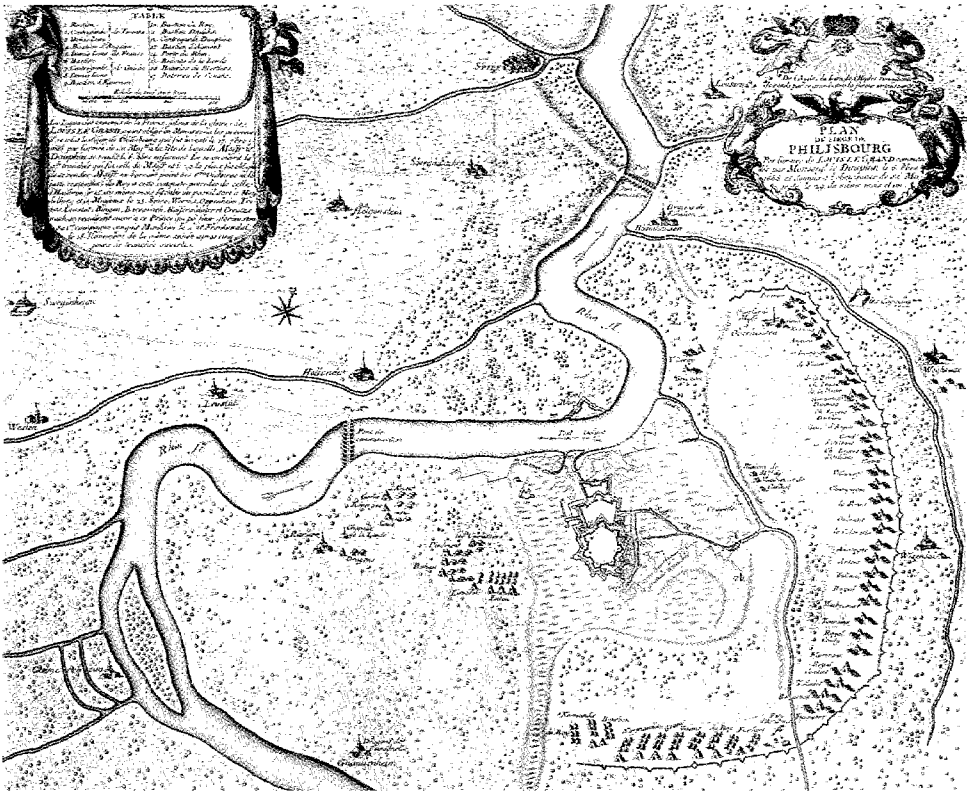


66. *The Siege of La Rochelle by Louis XIII* by Claude Lorrain. The leading Huguenot (Protestant) stronghold in France was besieged and starved into surrender in 1627–28. An English relief attempt was beaten off in 1627. Thus, although the French royal army of the period was relatively small and weak by the standards of neighbouring Spain, it was able to bring an effective end to a major challenge to the military, political and religious authority of the crown.

European rulers viewed the government machinery as a source of funds for war and foreign policy, and increasingly looked to it to tackle the administrative complexities of warfare, such as recruitment. Thus, the growing role of the European state gradually replaced the semi-independent military entrepreneurs of earlier days. Indeed, it would be mistaken to separate administrative and legislative reform from the political and fiscal background. The relationship between states, military forces (land and sea) and societies was different in the early eighteenth century to the situation a century earlier, although there were also important elements of continuity.

War finance was as important in forcing the pace of reform as changes in intellectual views or political culture were in providing the opportunity. However, it is important not to lose sight of the cultural aspect of warfare. The martial rituals and ceremonies at court played an important part in defining elite social roles and in maintaining elite cohesion. The rituals and ceremonies remained traditional and stressed the monarch's role as the head of the feudal hierarchy.

Enlightened absolutism, the term used to describe the governance of several of the leading European states in the period 1740–90, especially Austria, Prussia and Russia, encompasses two separate emphases on governmental aims and policies. One stresses the influence of new ideas on the purpose of society – the Enlightenment – and concentrates on a relatively idealistic approach to domestic reform. The second approach emphasises the role of war, not least the need to maximise state resources in order to prepare for it. Thus, for example, Peter the Great's reform programme in Russia was in part a consequence of the demands posed by the lengthy struggle with Sweden in the Great Northern



67. The siege of the principal Imperial fortress on the middle-Rhine, Philippsburg, 1688. Taken by a large French army under the Dauphin after the French cannon had prevailed over those of their opponents, and the outworks had been taken by storm. A crucial accretion of prestige for the Dauphin.

War of 1700–21, while Catherine the Great's governmental reforms of 1775 are explained as a consequence of the problems of resource mobilisation and control revealed in the Russo-Turkish war of 1768–74 and the Pugachev frontier rebellion by a variety of disaffected people who lived in the south-east borderlands of European Russia. Austrian policies in the early 1750s were a consequence of the loss of Silesia to Prussia and a prelude to an attempt to regain it in the Seven Years War (1756–63). The war was followed by a widespread attempt throughout Europe to tackle the financial burdens arising from the conflict and to prepare for what appeared to be another inevitable round of warfare.

More generally, the states of continental Europe were militarised (and with a matching social structure), and, therefore, very responsive to changes in military circumstances; although in western Europe there was far less serfdom, labour control and conscription than in eastern Europe. Conscription, with its concomitant regulation and data gathering, was crucial in changing the relationship between state and people in eastern Europe.

Failure in international relations can be related to an inability to adopt a necessary level of militarism, militarism understood as implying an effective politico-governmental system, a militarised social structure and a militaristic ethos. Poland, which was partitioned out of independent existence in 1772–95, can be seen as lacking the first, while the United Provinces (Dutch Republic), which was successfully invaded by Bourbon France in 1747–8 and conquered by revolutionary France in 1795, lacked the last. Poland

fell victim to Austria, Prussia and Russia, each of which, by Polish standards, was a centralising monarchy. Resistance to attempts to increase royal power in the 1650s and 1660s prevented political support for the development of a more effective Polish army.¹⁴ The control that the Polish landlords wielded over their peasantry was matched in the partitioning powers, but, unlike Poland, their social structures and political practices served the pursuit of military strength.¹⁵ The Partitions were the most significant territorial redistribution in Europe since 1718, when the Turks had ceded extensive territories to Austria, and, with the exception of gains at the expense of the Turks (1718, 1774, 1792), the most significant since the partition of the Spanish empire by the Peace of Utrecht of 1713.

However, the dialectic of war and reform also created political tensions that could lead to military weakness. Joseph II's attempts to reform Austria in the 1780s and French attempts in the same period to strengthen the state through the process and contents of reform, can both be seen in this light; as, indeed, can the attempts to widen the tax-base of the British imperial system after the Seven Years War: the last led, especially in the Stamp Act crisis of 1765–6, to a marked deterioration in relations with the American colonies. After *c.* 1750 monarchs were more prepared than hitherto to risk abandoning traditional norms, a shift due to a different ideology, not to changes in military technology.

Britain

Britain was clearly different in some important respects from the other major European powers, not least in self-image. It was of course a formidable military power, with the strongest navy in the world throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The British state was able to deploy its strength effectively: in 1762 British forces captured both Havana and Manila. In addition, the English state was able to dominate the British Isles. The achievement that had eluded Charles I, that is secure military control over the British Isles, had been realised in 1649–53 by Parliament's leading general, Oliver Cromwell, whose New Model Army was the first to conquer Scotland. This control was strengthened later, by William of Orange (William III) in 1689–92, and was sustained by the Hanoverian dynasty.

Nevertheless, the social context of military power was very different in Britain to the rest of Europe, not least because of the large role of the navy, the small size of the British army and the absence of a system of conscription for the army. After 1690, army finances depended on Parliament, not the Crown. Compared to Austria, Prussia and Russia, Britain was not a militarised society, although it was still a militaristic one.

In the military dimension, it would be unwise to emphasise exceptionalism. Instead, Britain was more akin to the other major European Atlantic powers in devoting much of its military expenditure to naval and colonial forces. These were spheres that did not lend themselves to a nexus of control by aristocratic proprietorship (control, indeed ownership, by aristocratic commanders), as was commonly the case with army units, but rather to state-controlled enterprises such as the great naval bases at Brest, Cadiz, Havana, and Portsmouth, or institutional corporate control, as by East India Companies. Naval infrastructure and warfare demanded a professionalism that was lacking from land conflict. Civil war and, later, industrial capitalism undermined the status of a 'warrior' aristocracy in England and indeed most of Britain; the defeat of Jacobitism encouraged this process in the Scottish Highlands. In addition, the combination over



69. *Battle of the Boyne*, here in a painting after Jan Wyck, was the decisive battle that delivered Ireland to William III on 1 July 1690. The outnumbered James II, his forces drawn up behind the Boyne, was outflanked and then under heavy pressure the Jacobites were pushed back. Dublin fell five days later.

government of British India, pressure for parliamentary reform, and by William Pitt the Younger's policies for fiscal regeneration and new commercial links.

In this context, it becomes possible to view the French revolutionary-Napoleonic period as another stage in the dialectic of war and state development. For Britain there was the introduction of income tax (1797), parliamentary union with Ireland (1800–1), the first British national census (1801), the mapping of the country by the newly created Ordnance Survey and the abolition of the slave trade. These moves scarcely constituted social revolution, but they did not really conform to the organic model of change discerned and advocated by Edmund Burke, the leading conservative polemicist of the 1790s. Instead, individually, each was a decision for change and, collectively, these steps represented a new age of political arithmetic. Britain was moving from a pre-statistical age to a period when the provision and control of information could serve as the basis for government action and reform agitation.

Reform and Warfare

The chronology and specifics were different, but similar processes were at work on the Continent. The Napoleonic enterprise was defeated not by an unreconstructed *ancien régime*, but by polities that had absorbed many of France's developments. Across much of Europe, the modernisation of political structures and administrative practices was influenced by French occupation or models, or by the need to devise new political and administrative strategies to counter the French. The changes introduced in the Prussian army and society after defeat at the hands of Napoleon in 1806 are an obvious example, although these changes were not limited to Prussia and, while Prussia did accept French ideas, there was also considerable continuity with the enlightened reforms of the pre-revolutionary period. Clausewitz's thinking reflected the impact of the Napoleonic challenge.

It is also mistaken to see any simple correlation between 'reform' and enhanced military capability. Political and administrative confusion and disjunctions frequently accompanied reform, and a lack of bureaucratic continuity was especially serious in the case of naval power. Thus, the French Revolution reduced a navy that had recently been expanding in size and improving in organisation and construction, to chaos. It led in 1793 to the surrender of the Mediterranean fleet at Toulon to the British and to the mutiny of the Brest fleet. To reassert the authority of central government in the navy and create a republican navy, the revolutionary Committee of Public Safety used terror. Sent to Brest in 1793–4, Jeanbon Saint-André restored order and subordination in the fleet by destroying alternative claims to represent the nation. The notion of popular sovereignty expressed in the direct democracy of sailors was curbed, as was the independence of local administrations. He also dramatically improved the navy, for example by ensuring that naval conscripts received appropriate training.

Nevertheless, on 1 June 1794 in the battle of the Glorious First of June, the Brest fleet was defeated by the British. The French lost seven warships and had over 5,000 men killed, wounded or taken prisoner, while the British suffered fewer than 1,100 casualties and returned to Portsmouth with all their vessels. The battle revealed the continued superiority of British gunnery, and the inexperience of French crews, and was followed by the dismissal and arrest of several captains. Only the fall of Robespierre saved two captains from the guillotine. French naval authority remained weak and its leadership divided, and, thanks to the Revolution, professional disagreements were given ideological significance. Despite defeats, the navy furthered the Republic's war aims simply by continuing to pose a threat to Britain, but chronic shortages of construction materials, money and sailors greatly weakened it. It was clear from the experience of the 1790s that navies required effective executive power.¹⁶

It is unclear how far the thesis of reform under the stress of competition and war can be extended further afield. An acutely competitive international context was not restricted to Europe and nor was the European international context thus restricted. Napoleon invaded Egypt and negotiated with Persia. The British impact on South Asia had parallels with its Napoleonic counterpart in Europe. It is, therefore, unclear how far and how best the analysis of modernisation in the context of the international situation can be extended. Must one include the reform policies in Turkey under Selim III, the attempts by Maratha leaders to develop Europeanised military systems; or, indeed, pressure to create or extend federal institutions in the USA, for example agitation in favour of a national bank to be better able to finance the state?

In the case of the USA, it can be argued that its very distance from a bitterly contested international sphere enabled it to dispense with strong armed forces and the politics and practices of state and military centralisation. The USA thus represented an aspect of what certain British political thinkers, such as Bolingbroke and John Stuart Mill, would have liked for Britain: a state where, thanks to an ability to avoid international commitments, government was limited in authority and power and constrained by checks and balances. Although defeats at the hands of native Americans prompted military reform, as in the 1790s, the native Americans were not in a position to challenge the centres of American power and by the 1820s their strength east of the Mississippi was limited. The American lead in hand-held weaponry over the native Americans was minimal, but the Americans benefited from greater numbers and from a socio-economic system that permitted the development of a standing army. The army was able to remedy its initial incompetence in its conflict with the native Americans by developing training, discipline and effective operational techniques.¹⁷

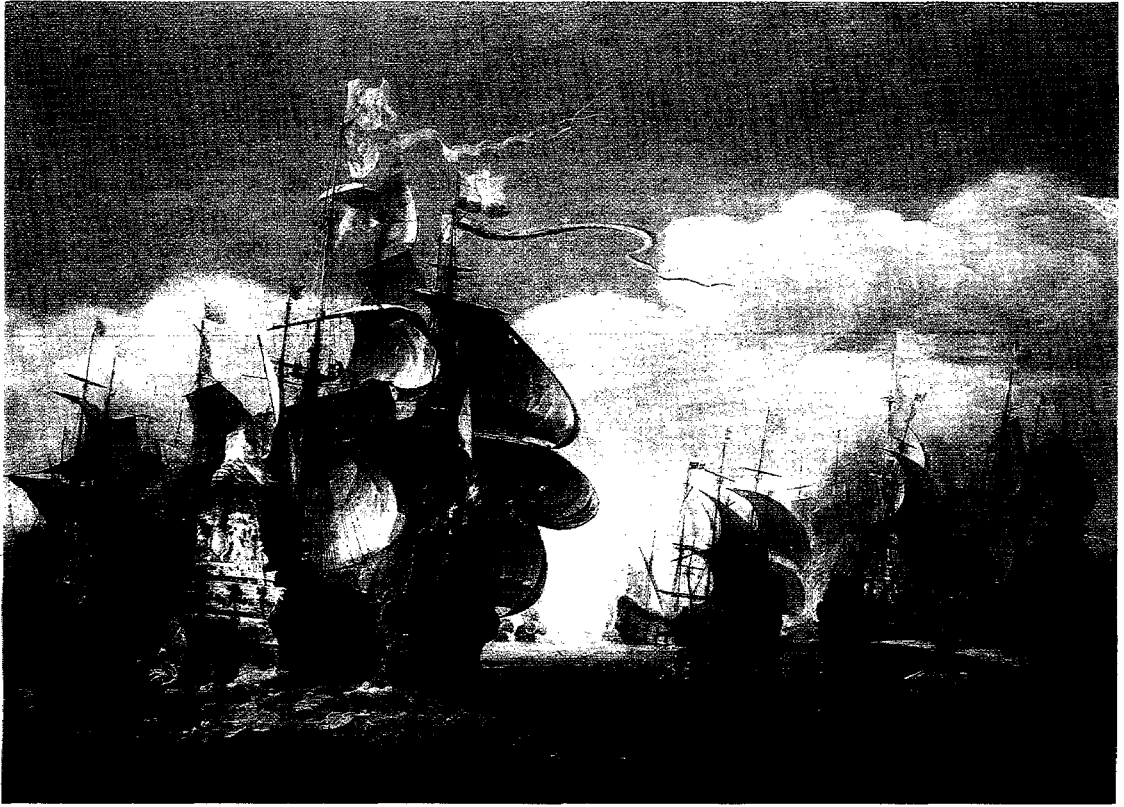
War and Resources

Throughout the world, warfare required resources, and the major tendency in the early modern period was for an increase in military costs.¹⁸ This owed much to the new equipment required by firearm forces on land and sea, changes to fortifications necessary to limit the impact of cannon, and the increase in the size of armed forces that was general in the sixteenth century and, not least in relation to population stagnation, also over the following 150 years. This increase was true of both land and sea warfare. It pressed on a European economic system that benefited from direct access to South Asian trade and from the benefits of New World bullion, but that did not have high growth rates.

War or, more specifically, military capability, increasingly became a matter of the intersection of capitalism and the state. This was central to the ability to marshal resources, and was focused and symbolised in institutions such as the Bank of England, which was founded in 1694. Thus the military-financial combination of the early modern period preceded the military-industrial complexes of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. An economic system stressing values of labour, thrift, efficiency and accumulation enjoyed a military advantage over a large, settled state such as China in which capitalism and trade enjoyed only low esteem. The claim that 'European armed forces were not yet backed by an overwhelmingly more productive industrial system'¹⁹ than those in Asia may be questioned. In addition, European forces do appear to have been supported by more effective financial systems, at least by the eighteenth century, and their industrial system appears to have been better adapted to producing and supporting a large number of warships. Resources were crucial not only for the creation of European forces, but also in order to maintain political and operational control over them. For example, in 1581 the Duke of Alençon captured Cambrai in the Netherlands, but his unpaid army then disintegrated.

Yet it was not only the Europeans who could afford, or be made to afford, the greater expenditure that was required. In southern India in the sixteenth century, for example, the state of Vijayanagara under Aliya Rama Raja (1542–65) combined expenditure on military modernisation with monetisation and increased customs revenue. Also in southern India, Sultan Ibrahim Qutb Shah of Golconda financed an artillery corps in the 1560s and 1570s, thanks to his monopoly of diamonds, a newly discovered source of wealth in the region. In the 1530s, Bahadur Shah of Gujarat in western India used his state's maritime wealth to finance a large army equipped with new cannon. To a certain extent, India may be seen as a variant of Europe, consisting of a conglomeration of states, some of similar size and strength, perhaps with mutual influences in culture, and developing militarily in response to each other. However, in Europe there was no equivalent to the seventeenth-century hegemony of the Mughals.

Unfortunately no global indices exist for potential military expenditure and, therefore, it is not possible to assess the effectiveness of particular states in raising resources for warfare. This effectiveness was a matter not only of governmental efficiency, but also of socio-cultural attitudes to the state and to warfare. In short, the power of the state has to be understood in terms of consent as well as coercion. If government at one level was a means of extorting resources for the pursuit of policies that reflected the interests of rulers,²⁰ the willingness to contribute resources rested in part on ideological considerations, such as patriotism and religion. Furthermore, the vitality of intermediate bodies, such as town councils, whether representative or oligarchic, was also important. They could mediate between and reconcile the interests of central government and localities in



70. *Battle of Lowestoft*, 3 June 1665 by Hendrik van Minderhout. The English, under the Lord High Admiral, James, Duke of York, later James II, defeated Jacob van Wassenaer-Obdam, whose flagship was destroyed by an explosion. Fleet actions of this type were a feature of naval warfare in European waters, but they did not become more common between European navies outside Europe until the following century.

a way that could not be done by centralised bureaucracies and their local agents. This was exceptionally important in imperial/multiple monarchies, in which local elites were successfully integrated through voluntary coalescence. The traditional dualistic model of rulers versus estates (parliaments) can be challenged.²¹

Political Cohesion

Indeed, compromise emerges as a theme, not only in internal politics within European states, but also in their territorial expansion within Christian Europe. Thus, for example, the expansion of French interests in Picardy in the late fifteenth century was achieved in part by means of compromise. Alongside the role of force in extending French authority, the winning over of a wide range of local notables by peaceful means was also crucial. Their continued local power was complemented by the extension of the royal 'affinity' (following) into the region.²² Repeatedly praised in sixteenth-century France as an ideal monarch, 'the Father of the People', Louis XII (1498–1515) combined an aggressive foreign policy with stability within France. He used consultative assemblies, indeed created several *parlements*, and avoided any active policy of reducing the power and autonomy of the nobility. Louis did not feel threatened by the latter as a group.²³

These consensual elements were put under great pressure within Europe during the period of religious and civil war, which was most intense from 1560 until 1648. Religious divisions lent new intensity to conflicts between and within Christian powers; indeed religion, earlier the prime force for social and ideological cohesion, came to play a major role in a culture of violence within Christian Europe.²⁴

Domestic tensions in this period channelled and exacerbated the role of war in creating policy and financial pressures that weakened Crown-elite ties. These pressures also wrecked military effectiveness. For example, Charles I (of England and Scotland) sought to suppress opposition in Scotland without the support of the Westminster Parliament. The English army was poorly prepared and deployed and its logistics wrecked by inadequate finance. As a result, the army collapsed when attacked by the Scots in 1639 and 1640. Equally, in the Far East religious divisions were clearly important, although serious and sustained internal conflict in sixteenth-century Japan and seventeenth-century China indicated that civil breakdown did not require such divisions.²⁵

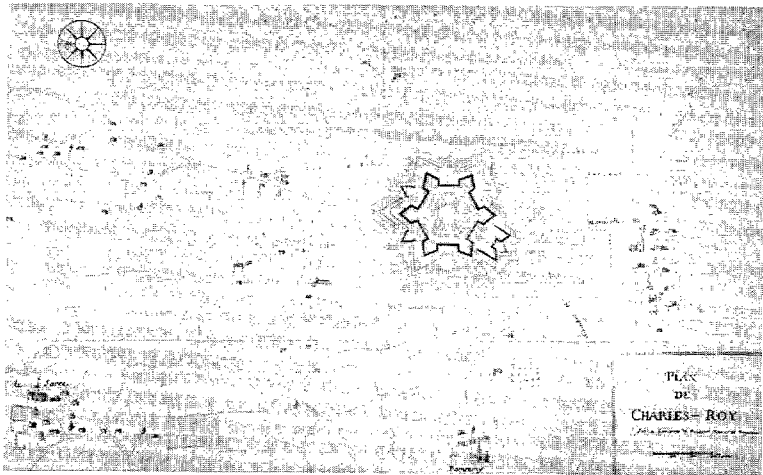
In Europe, in the second half of the seventeenth century, as domestic, especially religious, tensions eased, consensual elements in political structures, culture and practice helped better to elicit support for governments. Indeed, the greater military strength of the leading European powers in the century from 1660 can be seen as a product of this cooperation, however restricted in social scope it might be.²⁶ It is significant that during this period rulers and governments seeking to acquire territory generally sought to do so with the cooperation of the local elite. Thus, Louis XIV of France maintained the distinct identities of Artois and Franche Comté when he acquired them through war (1659 and 1678); William III accepted that Scotland and England should have different established Churches; and Peter the Great of Russia guaranteed the privileges of the local German Protestant nobility when he overran Estonia and Livonia in 1710.

The aristocracy officered the new standing armies that rulers instituted, and did so even if there had been initial concern about their creation. Armed forces strengthened the control of the social elite over their labour force. Towns, where people were most concentrated and least under traditional patterns of social control, were brought under political control. Paris had defied and expelled royal forces in 1588 and 1648, but, thereafter, did not do so again until 1789. Responding to a riot by weavers in London in 1719, a senior official wrote, 'I could not help wishing that the Guards here were in barracks as they are at Dublin, where upon such an emergency, the best part of the garrison may be got under arms in half an hour'.²⁷ The Royal Barracks in Dublin had been constructed in 1705–9.

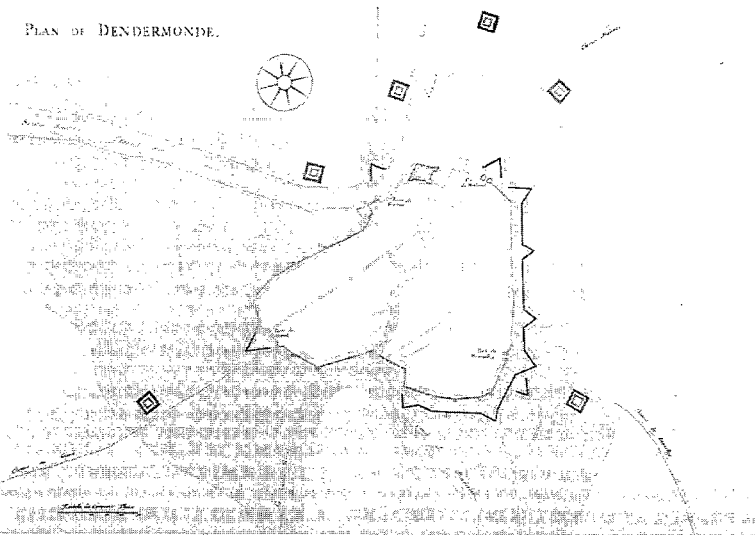
It is unclear how far similar themes of Crown-elite cooperation and intermediate institutions as a means to forge consent, are appropriate in many other regions of the world. Ethnic and religious divisions between rulers and populace were a major problem in some regions, although this was also true of parts of Europe, especially eastern Europe. Such divisions did not prevent successful conquest, as the Mughals showed in northern India in the sixteenth and southern India in the seventeenth century, the Manchus in China in the seventeenth century, and the Chinese demonstrated in Xinjiang and Tibet in the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, they weakened the cohesion of states and left them scant powers of resilience when they were defeated.

An ability, both of elites and populace, to accommodate to the demands of new invaders, in, for example, India, did not translate into a system of mass consent that maintained the strength of government, although at the elite level there was such consent and cooperation. Thus the Hindu Rajput nobility adapted to Islamic Mughal rule under Akbar, and this extended to the raising of troops.²⁸ Nevertheless, there were important

71. Plan of Charleroi. Captured by the French in 1667, 1677 and 1693, Charleroi was crucial to control of the Sambre. The 1693 siege was masterminded by Vauban who claimed that the success of his systematic siege gave Louis XIV 'the finest frontier which France has enjoyed for a thousand years'.

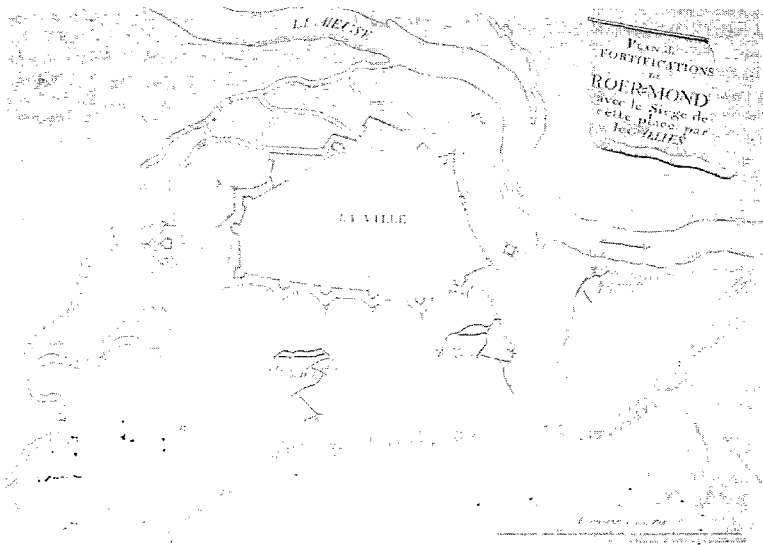


PLAN DE DENDERMONDE.



72. Plan of Dendermonde. Part of the Scheldt defensive system, Dendermonde relied on its riverine surroundings to enhance its defences. The low countries were the most fortified part of Europe, and siege warfare played a major role in operations there.

73. Strategic advantage and siegecraft: Plan of the Fortifications and siegeworks at Roermond, 1702. Captured by Anglo-Dutch-German forces under John Churchill, then Earl of Marlborough, 7 October 1702. This was part of a campaign in which Marlborough rapidly captured Venlo, Roermond and Liège, winning the Grand Alliance an important strategic advantage. The French would not be able to threaten the United Provinces from Germany, as they had done in 1672.



rebellions by distinct ethnic-religious groups in the Mughal and Chinese empires in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. However, it would be difficult to argue that several European ‘states’, especially Austria, but a group also including Britain and Russia, were more ethnically homogeneous than their major Asian counterparts.

Aside from the obvious point of their variety, it would be foolish to exaggerate the deficiencies of non-European governments, while, more generally, it is necessary to be cautious in developing views of the ‘East’ as backward and in presenting its institutions and cultures as static and hostile to modernisation and capitalism.²⁹ In his discussion of the transience of Timur’s empire, Gibbon referred to the failure to maintain or create governmental structures (VII. 70). This was not, however, true of invaders such as the Ottomans, Mughals and Manchus, and, indeed, Gibbon contrasted the Ottomans with what he termed ‘the transient dynasties of Asia’ (VII. 78). One such transient state was the pan-Mongol confederation created by the Dzhungar leader Ba’atur in 1640, a bold alliance designed to provide unity, not least by declaring an official religion – Tibetan Buddhism – but one that lasted less than 120 years.³⁰

In the late seventeenth century, however, Ottoman Turkey, Mughal India and Manchu China all ruled populations that were larger than any European state, and each state had been able to cope with serious problems in mid-century and then to revive in strength. It is all too easy to minimise the dynamism of systems categorised as conservative, although it is clear that, by European standards of military progress, there were deficiencies. Thus, for example, Akbar’s successors failed to match his interest in muskets and cannon, particularly in research and development.³¹

Yet, while true of the late seventeenth century, this dynamism was less apparent a century later, although, as a recent study of elite politics and military society in Egypt has indicated, it is important not to ignore signs of significant change. Alongside their failures, Ottoman Turkey, Persia and the Barbary states of North Africa were each able to achieve defensive successes, but they failed to regenerate their domestic structures and political processes. Whereas in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals had been generally successful in linking their frontier areas with their imperial objectives and also in controlling interregional trade routes, in the eighteenth century they were to suffer at the hands of Afghan, Arab, Persian and Türkmen tribes.³² Their armed forces lacked the degree of standardisation, order and training that the Europeans increasingly achieved. The gaps between elite and non-elite, regular and non-regular armies that affected non-European forces were much greater than those in their European counterparts. The Ottomans used their period of peace in the 1750s and most of the 1760s to improve revenue collection and reserves, in order to build up a stronger army for future war in the Balkans, but this army lacked the effectiveness of its Russian rival.

Furthermore, the Mughal state collapsed: provincial governors became autonomous and at the centre imperial power was taken over by nobles. This helped to ensure a weak and divided response to the Persian invasion of 1739, and some key Mughal figures refused to take part in the battle of Karnal that year. In response to the defeat, an attempt was made to raise a new imperial central army, but in 1743 this was abandoned due to financial problems, and by 1748 the empire was totally bankrupt.³³ Already, in 1724, the Nizam of Hyderabad had defeated a Mughal army and gained effective control of the Deccan. Mughal India disintegrated into warlordism over a century before China did so. Although some individual Indian rulers displayed considerable dynamism, especially Haidar Ali and Tipu Sultan of Mysore, the parts did not amount to the sum of power wielded by Akbar, Jahangir and Aurangzeb, effective Mughal rulers in the seventeenth century.



74. The Capture of Mons by Louis XIV, 1691. The surrender of the Spanish garrison, heavily bombarded by a large siege train and greatly outnumbered, provided a fresh triumph for a monarch who gloried in his victories. Louis XIV saw victory as a crucial source of *gloire*. The iconography of kingship, the theatre of display and ceremonial, within which monarchs lived, and through which they sought to have their role perceived, stressed martial achievements.

The imperial Islamic states – Ottoman Turkey, Safavid Persia and Mughal India – were challenged by other Islamic states, and in Persia the Safavids were replaced. Although the successor states in Persia and Afghanistan deployed considerable power in the eighteenth century, patrimonial autocracy – the style of government in much of Asia – seemed increasingly unable to produce a scale and regularity of resources sufficient to sustain military competitiveness in the context of mounting European pressure; such pressure was of increasing importance in India from the 1750s. It was also more serious for the Turks from 1683 and for Persia from 1723, although the process of increasing pressure was not continuous. Furthermore, it was of limited importance for China, Burma, Siam and Indo-China until the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, the relationship between structures of command and longer-term developments affecting resource mobilisation were no longer favourable to non-European societies.

Furthermore, whereas similar processes did not take place elsewhere, in Europe the era from 1660 to 1760 witnessed the important linkage of Newtonian science to military engineering, artillery and military thought. This was most dramatically demonstrated in European ballistics which was revolutionised between 1742 and 1753 by Benjamin Robins and Leonhard Euler. Robins invented new instruments enabling him to discover

and quantify the air resistance to high-speed projectiles. His other achievements included an understanding of the impact of rifling. Euler solved the equations of subsonic ballistic motion in 1753 and summarised some of the results in published tables. These theoretical and empirical advances greatly increased the predictive power of ballistics, and helped turn gunnery from a craft into a science that could and should be taught.³⁴

The Limitations of Imperial Cohesion

Christopher Bayly has argued that the years 1780–1820 witnessed a ‘world crisis’, that ‘the European “Age of Revolutions” was only one part of a general crisis affecting the Asian and Islamic world and the colonies of European settlement . . . when the long-term political conflicts unleashed by the decline of the great hegemonies of the Ottomans, Iran, the Mughals and the monarchies of the Far East and southeast Asia came to a head’.³⁵ Certainly, the conflicts of the period absorbed formidable quantities of munitions and other resources, and thus posed a challenge to governments and economies alike. Even the relatively brief naval bombardment of Algiers in 1816, designed to ensure the abolition of Christian slavery, cost the British 40,000 round-shot and shell.³⁶ It is unclear whether the crisis described by Bayly was as widespread as he claims – the description is inappropriate for China and Japan, while earlier peaks of crisis can be given for Persia, Burma and Siam – but Bayly’s argument directs attention to an important aspect of the political context of military power, namely the tension between, on the one hand, empires, imperial structures

75. *Royal Artillery in the Low Countries, 1748* by David Morier. The number, manoeuvrability and use of European field artillery increased in the eighteenth century, far more so than in non-European armies. The tactical integration of artillery with both infantry and cavalry was also further advanced and this gave the Europeans an important advantage when units were deployed outside Europe.





76. The battle of Minden, 1 August 1759. An Anglo-German army under Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, a protégé of Frederick the Great, defeated the French under Broglie and Contades, inflicting 7,000 casualties while suffering 2,762. The courage and fire-discipline of the British infantry won the battle, six battalions defeating sixty squadrons of French cavalry by misunderstanding orders, advancing across an open plain, and then repulsing two charges by French cavalry. Most of the cavalry casualties were caused by musket fire, but those who reached the British lines were bayoneted. These charges were followed by a French infantry advance that was stopped by British cannon fire, and then by another French cavalry attack, which concentrated on the British flanks and rear, only to find the rear flanks turn about. The French did not fight well: their planning was poor and their artillery out-gunned, but the British cavalry failed to cement the victory by charging.

and ambitions, and, on the other, smaller, more compact states and their policies. Such a tension had also been discerned by Fernand Braudel when he contrasted imperial Spain in the late sixteenth century with England, France and Tuscany.³⁷

If global, or at least extensive, reach is held to be a characteristic of empires, indeed a definition of them, then any systemic change against imperial power would diminish such reach and the reach capability that is and was an important aspect of military strength (although imperial overreach directly weakened the military strength of Britain and France in the twentieth century). Thus, in one respect, the history of global, or at least extensive, military strength is a history not of the military ability to enforce and extend power, but of the politico-socio-cultural factors that inhibited support for such power. In the absence of traditions of large-scale organised autonomy, or a powerful ideology, resistance to imperial power was often gravely weakened by a lack of unity.³⁸ However, nationalism from the nineteenth century and international ideologies in the twentieth, especially

Communism, were powerful subverters of imperial military range, not only because they resisted its further extension, as with, for example, the Americans in Vietnam, but also because they challenged the internal cohesion of imperial states, as nationalism did in the Soviet Union. In the early 1990s, the latter lost more power and military strength as a consequence of the disintegration of the state resulting from nationalism than it had done in the unsuccessful attempt to control Afghanistan in 1979–89.

Prior to the nineteenth century, there were other sources of subversion. Religion was the most potent because it was crucial to the creation and sustaining of senses of identity: religion was both structure and agency, practice and discourse. Yet, in each polity, the Church or its equivalent as a national institution was potentially divisive because of the pluralistic confessional nature of most states: identities were multiple and often contradictory and atavistic. Identity seen as a process of definition by inclusion was challenged by religious heterodoxy.

Military strength could be employed to impose such senses of religious identity, but in the eighteenth century inclusive and secular notions of identity centred on allegiance to a ruler or state were increasingly adopted within Europe. Toleration was endorsed by ‘enlightened despots’, such as Frederick the Great of Prussia (1740–86) and Joseph II of Austria (1780–90), as well as by ‘liberal’ states where monarchical authority was absent or weak, such as the United Provinces (Dutch Republic) and Britain. Inclusive, secular notions of identity and allegiance were central to the ideologies and constitutions of new states, such as the United States of America, revolutionary France, and Poland under the Polish Constitution of 1791.

Nationalism

Nationalism added a further dimension of inclusion to some, but by no means all, European and European-American states in the following century. Nationalism as a term implying a socially comprehensive and insistent mass movement cannot reasonably be applied to most European states prior to the nineteenth century, for it was the changes of that period – stronger states, improved communications, national systems of education, mass literacy, industrialisation, urbanisation and democratisation – that were crucial preconditions, although important ideological and intellectual changes were also involved.³⁹ National consciousness became nationalism across Europe, the latter more politically potent and energising than the former. Nationalism channelled and fulfilled the ritual aspects of community. More than accommodating the rise of the universal male franchise in the nineteenth century; it could also welcome and benefit from it.

Nationalism also had a direct impact on military capability. Although systems of conscription did not require nationalism, they were made more effective by it, as was seen by the large numbers raised by both sides in the American Civil War. The Confederacy introduced conscription in 1862, the Union in 1863. Nationalism facilitated conscription without the social bondage of serfdom, because conscription was legitimated by new revolutionary and nationalist ideologies. It was intended to transform the old distinction between civilian and military into a common purpose.⁴⁰ The traditional republican preference for militia over mercenaries, a disciplined populace, not foreign troops,⁴¹ was given a new political context. However, conscription could be unpopular, especially if introduced with exemptions that were seen as discriminatory. Major riots in New York greeted the introduction of conscription in 1863, while the Confederate forces were badly affected by desertion.⁴²



77. (left) Medal struck by the Dutch to commemorate the capture of Bonn by John Churchill, 1703. About 300 light or 'cohorn' mortars, named after their inventor Menno van Coehoorn, were employed in the siege. First used the previous year, at the siege of Kaiserswörth, the rapid increase in the number employed – from 74 then – indicated the metallurgical and organisational capacity of European states.

78. Medal struck to commemorate battle of Blenheim. Such medals testified to the range of propaganda devices employed by the governments of the period. Blenheim led to the expulsion of French forces from Germany. It saved the Austrian Habsburgs and pushed Louis XIV back onto the defensive. It indicated the potential decisiveness of battles in *ancien régime* Europe.

Conscription, nevertheless, helped nationalism. Young men at an impressionable age were exposed to state-directed military organisation and discipline and this state direction was centralised: the sub-contracting of military functions to entrepreneurs and the autonomy of aristocratic officers were both ended or, at least, greatly eroded. Conscription was less expensive than hiring soldiers, at home or abroad, but it required a structure of training and authority that was under government control, and did not guarantee a high degree of preparedness, a situation that helped to account for the frontal attack tactics of the First World War.⁴³ Although the inclusive nature of conscription should not be exaggerated, especially in Russia, it helped in the militarisation of society,⁴⁴ so that the major social changes in nineteenth-century Europe did not lead to more pacific societies: competitive governing elites were able to draw on greater economic resources and patterns of organised and obedient social behaviour. Austria, France, Germany and Russia developed large reserve armies: conscripts served for about two or three years and then entered the reserves, ensuring that substantial forces of trained men could be mobilised in the event of war, and that the state did not have to pay them in peace. Combined with demographic and economic growth, this increased the potential size of armies. Troops were frequently stationed away from their localities. This practice, found for example in France and Italy,⁴⁵ delayed mobilisation, but it helped to break down the local identity of soldiers and encourage an awareness of the nation. Moreover, the practice was greatly assisted by the spread of the rail network.

Due to nationalism and the attendant increase in the scale of mobilisation of resources in the nineteenth century, it became more apparent that war was a struggle between societies, rather than simply military forces. Thus, Robert E. Lee, the leading Confederate general in the American Civil War, was a keen supporter of conscription, advocated the subordination of state rights to the Confederate cause, and believed, as a member of his staff testified, 'that since the whole duty of the nation would be war until independence

should be secured, the whole nation should for the time be converted into an army, the producers to feed and the soldiers to fight'.⁴⁶

Victory in the American Civil War and the mid-nineteenth-century European wars – all wars of national creation and identity – owed much to superior resources, not only military equipment, but, more especially, manpower. This led to an emphasis on larger regular armies and on reserve forces, on the Nation in Arms,⁴⁷ although the absence of external threat ensured that the USA escaped this development. The demobilisation of the massive land and naval forces created to wage the American Civil War was one of the most important military-political developments of the century.

Force in the nineteenth century was increasingly concentrated at the disposal of authority, especially the authority of the state. Thus in Spain the Carlists were suppressed in 1839, and in the 1860s a large army and the use of terror subdued peasant opposition in southern Italy. This process was seen even in the USA where traditions of individualism were strong and the ownership of personal weapons widespread. Lawlessness was brought under control, although the recently settled nature of the West, an open frontier only lately closed, ensured that this process was still an issue in the early twentieth century. For example, in California's 'Little Civil War' over water rights, ranchers in the Owens Valley blew up the aqueduct to Los Angeles and seized the aqueduct's principal diversion works in 1924. When, three years later, the bombing of the aqueduct was resumed, the City of Los Angeles sent trainloads of guards armed with submachine-guns and this show of force proved effective.

Nationalism was also a crucial aspect of the process by which the expression and manipulation of public opinion came to play a greater role in political culture. This influenced the context within which decisions were taken for war, and the manner in which wars were conducted. Thus the brutality of Spanish counter-insurgency measures taken against the nationalist rebellion in Cuba that began in 1895 outraged important sections of American public opinion and this was exploited by the yellow press, especially William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal*.⁴⁸ War became an expression of nationalism, rather than dynasticism. This was obviously the case with the republican states of the Western Hemisphere,⁴⁹ but was also, increasingly, the case in Europe as dynasties adapted to the mass politics and increasingly urbanised and articulate societies of the states they ruled. Nationalism also made it easier to rally support against invaders deemed foreign. Religion fused with patriotism in the Ethiopian resistance to Egypt in the war of 1875–84, and in Egyptian opposition to the British in 1882.

An increasingly important element in the dialectic of war and reform, nationalism affected many states. Defeat led to political pressure for change, both in Europe and outside, for example in China and Japan. The failure of the Prussian mobilisation against Austria in 1850 led later that decade to a drive to improve the army, organised by Moltke, who was appointed Chief of Staff in 1857. The deficiencies revealed in the Crimean War of 1854–6 led to post-war pressure for change among the combatants. Russian defeat by Japan in 1904–5 was followed by a period of reform, including the establishment of a Council for State Defence in 1905, a major increase in military expenditure and the introduction of very modern artillery. Turkish defeat in the First Balkan War in 1912 led to pressure for military reform; a German military mission arrived at the start of 1914. Competing for influence and contracts, the British sent a naval mission.

However, nationalism did not strengthen all states. If it did so for France, or even, in the case of Germany and Italy, helped create states, nationalism also undermined imperial states, such as Austria-Hungary, by giving their mix of peoples a sense of new nationhoods, although some historians would question just how much damage internal



79. Plan of Québec, showing the principal encampments and works of the British and French armies during the siege by General Wolfe in 1759. Québec, the major French base in North America, surrendered to the British 18 September 1759 after British victory on the Plains of Abraham outside the city five days earlier.

nationalism was doing to Austria before and after 1914. Its forces stood up to the strains of war fairly well until 1918, although their campaigning depended in part on German reinforcements and resources.

Yet, while nationalism weakened empires within Europe, challenging the Austro-Hungarian empire, the Russian position in Poland and the relationship between Britain and Ireland, it did not undermine the European position in the Old World. The British in India and the Dutch in the East Indies were not affected in the nineteenth century by the internal and external pressures and defeats that shattered Iberian authority in Latin America; although the British faced a major mutiny in India in 1857 and there were rebellions against the Dutch.

The pattern of Crown-elite cooperation that was so important in Europe was, in part, replicated in the colonies, although there power was delegated, rather than shared: certainly there was no sharing at the level of the central government of the colonies. Thus, in India, and later Nigeria, the British cooperated with local rulers, as, to a certain extent, did the French in Morocco.⁵⁰ The British made few attempts to disrupt existing patterns of social and political authority or religious belief. Thus on the North-West Frontier of British India the tribal system was left in place and its leaders rewarded with payments, while Islam was respected; the Indian Mutiny of 1857 was in part suppressed by loyal Indian forces.

In colonies of settlement, where large numbers of Europeans migrated, the colonial powers came to rely on them to provide most of their own defence. In Canada, after 1871, there were no British bases apart from the coastal positions of Halifax and Esquimalt, although this was more than a matter of just leaving it to the colonists. By 1871 the British were convinced that they could not defend Canada in the light of the extraordinary military efforts made in the American Civil War. The United States could have taken Canada if it so desired. Gladstone and other British ministers also welcomed the opportunity to make defence savings and reduce imperial overstretch. The British were to appease the US at the expense of the Canadian periphery in the settlement of frontier disputes in the 1900s. However, Canada was vulnerable to the US, a state that had western military technology and vast resources. In the nineteenth century there was no equivalent challenge to European power anywhere else in the world.⁵¹

The combination of nationalism, a sense of imperial mission and global range capability, helped to make nineteenth-century European states particularly effective abroad as power systems. They controlled and benefited from the relationship of technology and capitalism. European states not only benefited economically from their global effectiveness; they also gained military strength. The core–periphery model of economic development can be extended to the military, and indeed it can be suggested that the two were closely related. Thus, for example, in the early modern period Spain drew on Italian, German, Irish and Netherlandish manpower, while in the eighteenth century France drew on Irish, German and Swiss. Subsidy treaties helped Britain to have a freer use for her own labour and affected the states that produced troops for Britain, especially Hesse-Cassel.⁵² Such a model can be extended in the eighteenth century to note the extensive recruiting for the British army in the Scottish Highlands after the suppression of the Jacobite risings in 1746, and, although on a smaller scale, in Ireland later in the century; as well as the results of the massive expansion of the recruitment of local soldiers for the army of the East India Company from mid-century on.

In the nineteenth century the European powers were able to use this model and the weakness of Asian-African nationalisms to create large and effective imperial armies, such as the KNIL, the Royal Netherlands-Indies Army, and particularly the British Indian Army. Similarly, the Ottoman army in Iraq was composed of locally recruited rank and file commanded by Turkish officers trained in Constantinople. The Irish contributed more soldiers than their population warranted to the British army; indeed, in 1830 there were more Irish than English in the army.⁵³

However, as with weaponry, gaps in capability proved difficult to sustain. The global diffusion of European notions of community, identity and political action, and of practices of politicisation, were to help subvert imperial structures in the twentieth century. In 1885 the Indian National Congress was formed; in 1897 the Egyptian National Party. This subversion was not simply a matter of the introduction of European concepts – it is important not to underrate indigenous notions of identity and practices of resistance, many of them central to a peasant culture of non-compliance⁵⁴ – but such concepts were disseminated within the very empires they undermined. ‘Modernisation’, understood as an imperial project, proved difficult to control, rather as subsequently, after 1945, the USA was on occasion to find unwelcome the consequences of the introduction of democratic practices it advocated around a world now more heavily militarised and structured by powerful states than at any time in its history. Changing practices of political behaviour and ideological cohesion were to lead to a situation after 1945 in which the incidence of internal relative to interstate wars rose.⁵⁵ The combination of nationalism and the mass mobilisation of people and resources that characterised industrialising nations in the nineteenth century⁵⁶ spread to the non-European world and helped to undermine the logic and practice of colonial control. Imperialism became ideologically and politically bankrupt, and this factor was to be more important in the collapse of European control over most of the world than the changes in economic resources and military capability.