

## INTRODUCTION

Neither War Nor Postwar  
*Decades of Reconstruction*

Ute Planert

“Inter bellum et pacem nihil medium.”<sup>1</sup> In historical reality, of course, the neat separation of war and peace – a notion introduced into international law from antiquity by Hugo Grotius during the Thirty Years’ War to distinguish *jus ad bellum* (the right to war) from *ius in bello* (the law of war) – constitutes the exception rather than the rule.<sup>2</sup> The fine gradations of armed violence that characterize the gray areas of internal and interstate conflicts are not a modern phenomenon. The “new wars” of the present day – in many respects not new at all – were hardly the first to raise doubts about the mutual exclusivity of war and peace.<sup>3</sup> Barely half of the hostilities classified as wars between 1480 and 1970 ended with a “regular” peace agreement.<sup>4</sup> Even during the world wars of the modern era, not all territories were affected equally by the consequences of the conflicts; nor was a peace agreement necessarily coincidental with the end of violent actions. The foreign policies of all modern powers include the

I am deeply indebted to James Retallack for his thought-provoking comments on this introduction.

<sup>1</sup> “There is no intermediate state between peace and war.” Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Philippics*, VIII, 4.

<sup>2</sup> Hugo Grotius, *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* (1625), Book III, Chapter XXI.

<sup>3</sup> See M. van Creveld, *The Transformation of War* (New York, 1991); M. Kaldor, *Neue und alte Kriege: Organisierte Gewalt im Zeitalter der Globalisierung* (Frankfurt a.M., 2000); H. Münkler, *Die neuen Kriege* (Reinbek bei Hamburg, 2002); Dieter Langewiesche, “Wie neu sind die Neuen Kriege? Eine erfahrungsgeschichtliche Analyse,” in Georg Schild and Anton Schindling, eds., *Kriegserfahrungen. Krieg und Gesellschaft in der Neuzeit* (Paderborn, 2009), 289–302.

<sup>4</sup> See Quincy Wright, “How Hostilities Have Ended: Peace Treaties and Alternatives,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 392 (1970), 51–61.

use of undeclared wars and violent acts that lie below the formal threshold of war, and starting in the early twentieth century, experts on international law began advocating for recognition of a *status mixtus* (“mixed” or intermediate state).<sup>5</sup>

The distinction between war and peace has been further blurred by the increase in the types of war and regions of conflict in the more recent and contemporary periods. The existence of a gray area between war and peace is acknowledged by the United Nations, whose Charter, unlike the Covenant of the League of Nations after the First World War, does not attempt to define the concept of war but instead formulates a general ban on the use of force. Thus war and peace are no longer understood as situations – “states of things” – but as actions. Armed conflict constitutes violent action that does not end in a conclusive peace agreement but is transformed, as it were, into a dynamic peace process working toward de-escalating the violence.<sup>6</sup>

The petrification of complex transnational and international conflicts in regions and territories with disintegrating statehood, the increased incidence of non-state protagonists of violence, and the trend toward sub-state and intra-state wars have all sharpened awareness – both in international law and in security and development policy – that military victory does not inevitably result in a sustained state of peace. It is now understood that the transition from war to peace is fluid.<sup>7</sup> Because the conclusion of a peace treaty does not necessarily make conditions safer for the civilian population, the issue of ending wars has attracted growing attention from political science research since the mid-1960s.<sup>8</sup> Burgeoning

<sup>5</sup> See the evidence in Georg Schwarzenberger, “Jus Pacis ac Belli? Prolegomena to a Sociology of International Law,” *International Law Studies* 75 (2000), 483–505.

<sup>6</sup> Art. 2/4 of the United Nations Charter. See also Bernd Wegner, “Einführung: Kriegsbeendigung und Kriegsfolgen im Spannungsfeld zwischen Krieg und Frieden,” in *Wie Kriege enden. Wege zum Frieden von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Bernd Wegner (Paderborn, 2002), ix–xxviii.

<sup>7</sup> This observation was already made in 1960 by Dietrich Schindler, “Übergangsformen zwischen Krieg und Frieden,” *Schweizerische Monatshefte. Zeitschrift für Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur* 40 (1960–1961), 113–124; see also Herfried Münkler, *Der Wandel des Krieges. Von der Symmetrie zur Asymmetrie*, 3rd ed. (Weilerswist, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> By way of introduction, see Michael Handel, “The Study of War Termination,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 1 (1978), 51–75; the surveys in Volker Matthies, ed., *Vom Krieg zum Frieden. Kriegsbeendigung und Friedenskonsolidierung* (Bremen, 1995); and, as just one example among many, Christina Steenkamp, *Violence and Post-War Reconstruction: Managing Insecurity in the Aftermath of Peace Accords* (London, 2009). For further titles, see, e.g., the works published in the International Library of Post-War Reconstruction and Development series.

fields of research and teaching, such as post-conflict studies or conflict and reconciliation studies, as well as the establishment of instruments for administering transitional justice, attest to the fact that “conflict societies” often experience a transformative period between war and peace. In such periods, the (partial) end of hostilities can be translated into a stable postwar order only at the cost of significant changes to state systems and normative principles.<sup>9</sup>

In recent years, the fields of war and violence have emerged as a major focus for historical research.<sup>10</sup> This interest is by no means purely academic, as is clear from the popular success of current publications on the First World War (1914–1918).<sup>11</sup> Studies of “hot” and “cold” wars in the recent past increasingly include global perspectives.<sup>12</sup> Comparative analyses documenting the enormous range and types of war from antiquity to the present have facilitated the task of categorizing long-term developments such as the nationalization of war since the early modern period

<sup>9</sup> See Volker Matthies, “Nicht mehr Krieg und noch nicht Frieden. Probleme friedenspolitischer Transformationsprozesse in gegenwärtigen Gewaltkonflikten,” in *Wie Kriege enden*, 327–346; Bernd Wegner, Mir A. Ferdowsi, and Volker Matthies, eds., *Den Frieden gewinnen. Zur Konsolidierung von Friedensprozessen in Nachkriegsgesellschaften* (Bonn, 2003). On current peace and conflict studies in German political science, see Bettina Engels, “Friedens- und Konfliktforschung in Deutschland,” *Neue Gesellschaft/Frankfurter Hefte* 7, 8 (2014), 34–37; as well as Susanne Buckley-Zistel, Teresa Koloma Beck, Christian Braun, and Friederike Mieth, eds., *Transitional Justice Theories* (London, 2013); and Tove Grete Lie, Helga Malmin Binningsbo, and Scott Gates, “Post-Conflict Justice and Sustainable Peace,” *World Bank Post-Conflict Transitions Working Paper* 5 (2007).

<sup>10</sup> The literature is too extensive to be listed here. On Germany, see the publications emerging from the Sonderforschungsbereich “Kriegserfahrungen” (Collaborative Research Center “War Experiences”), from the “Gewaltgemeinschaften” (“Communities of Violence”) Research Group, and from the Zentrum für Militärsgeschichte und Sozialwissenschaften der Bundeswehr (Center for Military History and Social Sciences of the German Army), as well as numerous centers for war studies in the Anglo-American sphere. For an overview, see, most recently, Christian Gudehus and Michaela Christ, eds., *Gewalt. Ein interdisziplinäres Handbuch* (Stuttgart and Weimar, 2013). For further references see Jörg Echternkamp, “Krieg,” in Jost Döffler and Wilfried Loth, eds., *Dimensionen internationaler Geschichte* (Munich, 2012), 9–28.

<sup>11</sup> Two books from among the many recent publications may serve as examples: Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914* (London, 2012); Jörn Leonhard, *Die Büchse der Pandora. Geschichte des Ersten Weltkriegs*, 5th ed. (Munich, 2014).

<sup>12</sup> Dan Diner, *Cataclysms. A History of the Twentieth Century from Europe's Edge* (Madison, WI, 2008); Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991* (New York, 1994); Bernd Greiner, Christian Th. Müller, and Dierk Walter, eds., *Heiße Kriege im Kalten Krieg* (Hamburg, 2006).

and its present de-nationalization.<sup>13</sup> One does not have to agree with Heraclitus and consider war as the “father of all things” to recognize a connection between the Thirty Years’ War and the rise of absolutism. Other interactions are equally pertinent. The war-torn decades on either side of 1800, for instance, were decisive for the development of capitalism and also for what Wolfgang Reinhardt called the first “white decolonization.”<sup>14</sup> In the same way, the decline of transnational empires was catalyzed by the First World War.

In the scholarly literature, attention has long been focused on the search for the causes of war, that is, on attempts to explain the road *into* war. By contrast, historical peace studies in Germany and other countries have rarely asked how states and nations get *out of* war.<sup>15</sup> But this position is changing now that the division of Europe has been overcome: the years after 1945 are seen in a new light, and the once-dominant *Sonderweg* thesis – that Germany took a “special path” from the nineteenth century to modern times – has been increasingly challenged and qualified. As the image of a new Europe continues to take shape following the upheavals of 1989–1991, historians no longer concentrate exclusively on how the rise of National Socialism led to war and genocide. In the twenty-first century, they have become more interested in retracing and assessing Germany’s and Europe’s paths out of the maelstrom of Nazism and in asking how new structures of society were established from the physical and moral rubble it left behind.<sup>16</sup>

Despite the plethora of studies on the “postwar” era, many of which concentrated on Germany after 1945, important questions often went

<sup>13</sup> See Dietrich Beyrau, Michael Hochgeschwender, and Dieter Langewiesche, eds., *Formen des Krieges. Von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (Paderborn, 2007). Admittedly, contentious definitions and historicizations of “state” and “nation” complicate the study of the developments cited here.

<sup>14</sup> See Wolfgang Reinhardt, *Kleine Geschichte des Kolonialismus* (Stuttgart, 1996), 97–131.

<sup>15</sup> This is also demonstrated by the sketch outlining problems of the research field by Edgar Wolfrum, *Krieg und Frieden in der Neuzeit. Vom Westfälischen Frieden bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Darmstadt, 2003). For France, a research group of the French Ministry of Defense and the Sorbonne has arrived at a similar assessment; see Jörg Echternkamp, “Wege aus dem Krieg. Für die Historisierung von Nachkriegsgesellschaften im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert,” in Jörg Echternkamp, ed., *Kriegsenden, Nachkriegsordnungen, Folgekonflikte. Wege aus dem Krieg im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Freiburg i.Br., 2012), 1–22.

<sup>16</sup> Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe’s 20th Century* (New York, 1998); Konrad H. Jarausch and Michael Geyer, *A Shattered Past: Reconstructing German Histories* (Princeton, NJ, 2002); Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (London, 2005); James J. Sheehan, *Where Have All the Soldiers Gone? The Transformation of Europe* (Boston, 2008).

unanswered or indeed unasked. When and why did the period under investigation end: with the formal division of European states into two rival power blocs, with the acceleration of the processes of societal change in the late 1960s, or only with the end of the Cold War? Does the term “postwar” not suggest an apparently “natural” caesura in 1945, a clear-cut division between “before” and “after,” even though researchers long ago refuted the fiction of Germany’s *Stunde Null*, or “zero hour,” in May 1945? The history of the European “postwar societies,” moreover, was often written in terms of their integration into two different bloc systems with too little regard for deeper questions about reconstruction during the first two decades after the war’s end.<sup>17</sup> This holds true especially for the (success) story of the Federal Republic of Germany, frequently understood in the US as a model of reconstruction built on foreign aid, which still serves as a reference point for countries such as Lebanon that are devastated by wars and terrorism.<sup>18</sup>

The fall of the Berlin Wall, however, brought a greater willingness to ask new questions about common European experiences beyond the East-West dichotomy and to emphasize the contingency of developments immediately after 1945. A few years before his death, Eric Hobsbawm (1917–2012) initiated a research project that examined the period from 1945 to 1949 from a comparative European perspective. The project showed how, just prior to the confrontation between East and West, European countries were responding in similar ways to a set of problems they shared in common: societal collapse, refugee crises, political instability, existential physical survival. Studies spawned by Hobsbawm’s project

<sup>17</sup> From the extensive literature, see for example Volker Berghahn, *The Americanization of West German Industry, 1945–1973* (Leamington Spa, 1986); Michael Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947–53* (Cambridge, 1987); Alan Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1945–51* (Berkeley, 1984); Ian D. Turner, ed., *Reconstruction in Post-War Germany: British Occupation Policy and the Western Zones, 1945–55* (Oxford, 1989); Armin Grünbacher, *Reconstruction and Cold War in Germany: The Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (1948–1961)* (Burlington, VT, 2004). The teleology is already evident in the title of works by Axel Schildt, *Ankunft im Westen. Ein Essay zur Erfolgsgeschichte der Bundesrepublik* (Frankfurt a.M., 1999); and Heinrich August Winkler, *Der lange Weg nach Westen*, vol. 2, *Deutsche Geschichte vom “Dritten Reich” bis zur Wiedervereinigung* (Munich, 2000).

<sup>18</sup> See Rudiger Dornbusch, Wilhelm Nölling, and Richard Layard, eds., *Postwar Economic Reconstruction and Lessons for the East Today* (Cambridge, MA, 1993); Howayda Al-Harithy, “The Politics of Identity Construction in Post-War Reconstruction,” in Howayda Al-Harithy, ed., *Lessons in Post-War Reconstruction: Case Studies from Lebanon in the Aftermath of the 2006 War* (New York, 2010), 71–99.

convincingly demonstrate that the first steps to rebuilding had been taken long before the war ended. They also showed the major role played by state planning and the remarkable resilience exhibited by prewar constellations. The constitutive importance of the Cold War for Europe's economic reconstruction was by no means denied, but the project also pointed to great national differences among individual countries, irrespective of their dependence on opposing supranational blocs. Lastly, these studies stressed the necessity of directing attention away from continental Europe, on which it had hitherto been concentrated, and toward the world at large, for it was on the global stage that Europe's colonial powers strove in vain to stabilize their economies by means of a new imperialism.<sup>19</sup>

Other recent work has also rejected the teleological view of bloc systems and success stories. A number of studies focus on the divergent war experiences of European societies and their disruptive legacies, stressing the intertwined histories of "war" and "postwar" periods. They direct their attention to the diverse ways in which different European societies sought to deal with the after-effects of mass violence, death and destruction, hunger and population displacement, and resistance and collaboration. They ask how, under the circumstances specific to each case, "winning the peace" and reconstructing civil society could become attainable goals. Going well beyond the examination of basic economic and political conditions, they underline the significance for post-conflict societies of cultural restoration, a process that centered on remembering and forgetting, on the elaboration of public and private memories, on the restitution of social bonds and political identities, on the open discussion of values and emotions, and on the influence of the mass media. This approach, in which the term "postwar" has an analytical as well as a temporal dimension, gives research a broader historical scope and significance, showing how war continues to shape "postwar" situations and, in so doing, helps to link the public and the private spheres.<sup>20</sup> The degree

<sup>19</sup> See the contributions in Mark Mazower, Jessica Reinisch, and David Feldman, eds., "Post-War Reconstruction in Europe: International Perspectives 1945–1949," *Past and Present Supplement* 6 (2011).

<sup>20</sup> Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller, eds., *Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe* (New York, 2010); Daniel Fulda, Dagmar Herzog, Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, and Till van Rahden, eds., *Demokratie im Schatten der Gewalt. Geschichten des Privaten im deutschen Nachkrieg* (Göttingen, 2010); Robert G. Moeller, *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (Berkeley, 2001); Klaus Neumann, *Shifting Memories: The Nazi Past in the New Germany* (Ann Arbor, 2000); Pierre Guillen and Ilija Mieck, eds., *Nachkriegsgesellschaften in Deutschland und*

to which even “hard” fields of politics are molded by experience of conflict and by patterns of cultural interpretation has been demonstrated in a powerful new analysis of the military’s role in the early Federal Republic of Germany.<sup>21</sup>

Studies devoted to the reintegration of war veterans and the significance of memorial culture for the (de)stabilization of societies link research on twentieth-century Europe with similar works on other epochs and different geographical contexts.<sup>22</sup> Regarding the period between the First and Second World Wars in particular, scholars have pointed to the bellicosity of commemorative culture. Yet it remains controversial whether, or to what extent, the first half of the twentieth century should be considered as an era of successive European civil wars or even as a second Thirty Years’ War.<sup>23</sup> Whatever the case, the new world order emerging from the First World War was anything but robust. In the successor states of the fallen empires, many territories were ravaged by a bloody wave of civil war, political terror, and population displacement, which has recently become a focus of international research.<sup>24</sup> From

*Frankreich im 20. Jahrhundert. Sociétés d’après-guerre en France et en Allemagne au 20<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Munich, 1998).

- <sup>21</sup> See Jörg Echternkamp, *Soldaten im Nachkrieg. Historische Deutungskonflikte und west-deutsche Demokratisierung 1945–1955* (Munich, 2014).
- <sup>22</sup> Among numerous relevant works, see Natalie Petiteau, *Lendemain d’Empire: les soldats de Napoléon dans la France du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 2003); Sabine Kienitz, *Beschädigte Helden. Kriegsinvalidität und Körperbilder 1914–1923* (Paderborn, 2008); Alan Forrest, Etienne François, and Karen Hagemann, eds., *War Memories: The Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars in 19th and 20th Century Europe* (Basingstoke, 2013); Horst Carl and Ute Planert, eds., *Militärische Erinnerungskulturen vom 14. bis zum 19. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 2012). On the changing of gender concepts, see Dirk Schumann and Gabriele Metzler, eds., *Geschlechterordnung und Politik in der Weimarer Republik* (Munich, 2014); with a European focus, Ingrid Sharp and Matthew Stibbe, eds., *Aftermaths of War: Women’s Movements and Female Activists, 1918–1923* (Leiden, 2011); Mary Louise Roberts, *Civilization without Sexes: Reconstructing Gender in Postwar France, 1918–1923* (Chicago, 1994).
- <sup>23</sup> Enzo Traverso, *A feu et à sang. De la guerre civile européenne 1914–1945* (Paris, 2007); Ian Kershaw, “Europe’s Second Thirty Years’ War,” *History Today* 55 (2005), 10–17; Fritz Stern, “Der zweite Dreißigjährige Krieg,” in Fritz Stern, ed., *Der Westen im 20. Jahrhundert. Selbsterstörung, Wiederaufbau, Gefährdungen der Gegenwart* (Göttingen, 2008), 9–29; critical of this approach is Bruno Thoß, “Die Zeit der Weltkriege – Epochen als Erfahrungseinheit?” in Bruno Thoß and Hans-Erich Volkmann, eds., *Erster Weltkrieg – Zweiter Weltkrieg. Ein Vergleich* (Paderborn, 2002), 7–30.
- <sup>24</sup> Robert Gerwarth and John Horne, *War in Peace: Paramilitary Violence in Europe after the Great War* (Oxford, 2012); Timothy K. Wilson, *Frontiers of Violence: Conflict and Identity in Ulster and Upper Silesia, 1918–1922* (Oxford, 2010). See also the research project at the Centre for War Studies, University College Dublin, “The Limits of Demobilization: Paramilitary Violence in Europe and the Wider World, 1917–1923.”



Finland to the Aegean Sea, the toll of human life from these upsurges of violence was comparable in scope to the combined losses of the Western European powers during the First World War itself. For this reason, Italian scholars have recently spoken of a twenty-year period of “forgotten wars.”<sup>25</sup>

Despite the great variety of studies about individual postwar periods, there have been surprisingly few attempts to subject these many modern periods of reconstruction to a diachronic analysis. An ambitious volume of collected essays edited by Carl Levy and Mark Roseman surveys the twentieth-century postwar periods in France, (West) Germany, and Italy. However, by comparing the situations after 1918, 1945, and 1989–1991, their work fails to resolve a methodological dilemma. As tempting as it may be to include the Cold War among other large-scale conflicts of the twentieth century, the Cold War era lacks the elements of extreme violence, mass casualties, destruction, and displacement. These experiences constituted a stark legacy for states and their populations after the two world wars. After 1945, however, the “hot wars” were waged outside of Europe. Moreover, 1989–1991 was the result not of a military defeat but of the collapse of a political system. In this respect, the decades following the Cold War can be compared with the aftermaths of earlier “hot” wars in limited ways. Accordingly, the authors in this collection focus on the establishment of socio-political stability following the dissolution of political systems, rather than engaging with the consequences of war and mass violence.

The Levy and Roseman volume is most convincing in the sections that emphasize the close interrelatedness of the international framework and economic consolidation, while underlining the huge differences between the aftermaths of the First and the Second World Wars. The contributors convincingly argue that while the end of the wars might have given rise to new settlements and power constellations, ostensibly new postwar orders often reflected trends that were underway long before war broke out. The development of a consumer society is an especially good example of how such trends followed their own inherent logic.<sup>26</sup>

Studies that focus on the termination of war and the way in which political entities process disruption and defeat may be better suited to

<sup>25</sup> Davide Artico and Brunello Mantelli, eds., *From Versailles to Munich: Twenty Years of Forgotten Wars* (Wrocław, 2010).

<sup>26</sup> Carl Levy and Mark Roseman, eds., *Three Postwar Eras in Comparison: Western Europe 1918–1945–1989* (Basingstoke, 2002).



meet such epistemic challenges. The term “postwar” is still almost exclusively attributed to Europe after 1945,<sup>27</sup> and few publications have taken advantage of illuminating comparisons with pre-modern eras. A small number of comparative studies have nonetheless examined the termination of wars across different periods and cultures.<sup>28</sup> The present volume joins this endeavor using an approach that is broad in both temporal span and geographical scope. Its chapters range from the Seven Years’ War to wars waged during Hobsbawm’s “age of extremes,” with the myriad wars of the nineteenth century falling in between. It focuses, therefore, on what could be called the age of world wars from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries.<sup>29</sup>

The transnational and comparative perspective on Europe and North America from the eighteenth century to the Cold War allows the authors collectively to elaborate on patterns of transition from war to peace in greater depth than is possible in specialized studies. Some conflicts, of course, have larger historical impacts than others, depending on the scale and the type of war being waged. It is the role of the historian to identify patterns and develop categories of explanation. Yet the interaction of diverse but not entirely dissimilar developments, depending on time and place, compels scholars at least to acknowledge, if not unravel, entangled histories. At the same time, the comparative approach directs attention to epochs that remain conspicuously under-researched – the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, for instance, or, even more intriguingly, the era between 1815 and 1848. The latter came to be defined by a purely temporal term – *Vormärz*, or “pre-March” – that makes explicit reference to the *pre*-history of the revolutions that broke out in 1848. Yet the first half of the nineteenth century was equally the *post*-history of the

<sup>27</sup> Dan Stone, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (Oxford, 2012).

<sup>28</sup> See Echternkamp, *Kriegsenden*; Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Die Kultur der Niederlage* (Berlin, 2001); Bernd Wegner, ed., *Wie Kriege enden. Wege zum Frieden von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (Paderborn, 2002); Horst Carl, Hans-Henning Kortüm, Dieter Langewiesche, and Friedrich Lenger, eds., *Kriegsniederlagen. Erfahrungen und Erinnerungen* (Berlin, 2004).

<sup>29</sup> On the Seven Years’ War as a first global world war, see Daniel Baugh, *The Global Seven Years War, 1754–1763: Britain and France in a Great Power Contest* (Harlow, 2011); Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754–1766* (New York, 2000); H. V. Bowen, *War and British Society, 1688–1815* (Cambridge, 1998); Sven Externbrink, ed., *Der Siebenjährige Krieg (1756–1763). Ein europäischer Weltkrieg im Zeitalter der Aufklärung* (Berlin, 2010); Marian Füssel, *Der Siebenjährige Krieg. Ein Weltkrieg im 18. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 2010); Eberhard Kessel, Thomas Lindner, eds., *Das Ende des Siebenjährigen Krieges 1760–1763*, 2 vols. (Paderborn, 2007).

Napoleonic age.<sup>30</sup> Recalibrating the historical lens in this way brings to the fore a strikingly different set of scholarly questions and agendas.

In reaction against the vagueness and frequent overextension of the term “postwar,” the studies in this volume concentrate on the situations at the end of wars and on the consequences of conflict in its immediate aftermath. During the transformative phase of these decades of reconstruction, an interplay of basic international conditions, foreign political constellations, and decisions concerning domestic politics set the course for the political, economic, military, social, and cultural reorganization of the societies emerging from war. Particularly interesting here is the interaction between domestic politics and foreign policy, often in a context of extreme economic imperatives.

Since wars are preceded, accompanied, and followed by massive changes, they represent tremendous challenges to established regimes, both domestic and international. Political leaders and economic elites are anxious to (re)gain domestic agency and international recognition. Consequently, it would be misleading to attribute the striving for a new equilibrium to postwar eras alone. More often than not, political leaders do not wait for the actual cessation of hostilities to take action. Negotiations such as those among the anti-Napoleonic Allies in early 1813 and pronouncements like the Moscow Declaration of 1943 reflect attempts, initiated long before the fighting was over, to reestablish a viable international order and functioning societies.<sup>31</sup>

That said, wars do not end merely because “peace breaks out” in societies because statesmen pick up a pen, or because economic leaders decide that they, too, have a stake in turning “swords into ploughshares.” Important socio-political forces are at work long before a war commences, and their action does not stop with the signing of a peace treaty. It is with this continuity in mind that the term “decades of reconstruction” has been used in this introduction. It represents an attempt to avoid the temporal vagueness of the term “postwar” while discouraging a depiction of years of peace as simple preludes or postludes to war. It also dispenses with the notion of a “postwar moment” – a notion dear to researchers in peace studies and students of international relations due to its supposed

<sup>30</sup> Michael Rowe, Karen Hagemann, Alan Forrest, and Stefan Dudink, eds., *War, Demobilization, and Memory: The Legacy of War in the Era of Atlantic Revolutions* (Basingstoke, 2015).

<sup>31</sup> In the Moscow Declaration of autumn 1943, the Allies determined what their joint approach to the Axis Powers would be after the end of the war.

emancipatory potential.<sup>32</sup> Historians, by contrast, are less disposed to believe in sharp discontinuities or “zero hours.” Since fundamental decisions about future developments are taken long before the guns fall silent, understanding the interwoven processes of wartime decision-making and post-conflict reconstruction is crucial to the task of exploring “path dependencies” that are subsequently difficult to overcome and may in retrospect be labeled as “inevitable.”

Used in this way, the term “reconstruction” goes well beyond its original meaning, which centered on the idea of rebuilding infrastructure in destroyed areas. Some political scientists, including those whose views find a receptive ear at the UN, claim, not incorrectly but simplistically, that the task of reconstructing war zones consists essentially of implementing the “big three” solutions: disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. By contrast, a more comprehensive definition by Sultan Barakat, the doyen of British postwar recovery studies, stresses the term’s dual meaning. “Reconstruction,” writes Barakat, is “a range of holistic activities in an integrated process designed not only to reactivate economic and social development but at the same time to create a peaceful environment that will prevent a relapse into violence.”<sup>33</sup> In this view, reconstruction never refers merely to the attempt to restore a *status quo ante*; it also implies the creation of new sustainable structures – structures that either did not exist prior to the war or not in the same form. Such a definition of reconstruction is sufficiently broad to encompass the full spectrum of potential postwar settings: from the destruction of a political entity via severe territorial losses, through to the reconsolidation of political unity.<sup>34</sup>

In the aftermath of war, societies of all kinds face a cluster of broadly comparable problems. Although these will have been shaped differently in historically shifting constellations, they can be organized into eight closely interconnected thematic fields:

1. The basic prerequisite for societal reconstruction is the establishment of a ceasefire. The goal of ending the conflict must be firmly acknowledged by the former belligerents, and their commitment

<sup>32</sup> Cynthia Cockburn and Dubravka Zarkov, eds., *The Postwar Moment: Militaries, Masculinities and International Peacekeeping* (London, 2002).

<sup>33</sup> Sultan Barakat, “Postwar Reconstruction and Development,” in *After the Conflict: Reconstruction and Development in the Aftermath of War*, ed. Sultan Barakat (London, 2005), 7–32; here, 11.

<sup>34</sup> See the criticism by Holly Case, “Reconstruction in East-Central Europe: Clearing the Rubble of Cold War Politics,” *Past and Present Supplement* 6 (2011), 71–102.

must include demobilizing troops and reintegrating combatants into civil society. In practice, such efforts are often called into question by the war-related emergence of areas not subject to the rule of law, as well as by difficulties in pacifying close-knit “communities of violence.”<sup>35</sup> Violence may originate from marauding soldiers and political activists who continue to fight, just as it can result from the “white terror” unleashed by victorious regimes.

2. Restoring order is a primary goal of any reconstruction policy. Wars have the power to bring about a systemic collapse depending on the human and material costs of the conflict and on the extent to which it has undermined the legitimacy of the existing rulers. When this legitimacy is sufficiently weakened, the end of a war is accompanied by a transformative crisis. Competing elites struggle for influence. It is essential that the question of leadership and of the place of the military within society be settled quickly, and also that functioning bureaucracies and other institutions be reconstituted. How political and economic elites ride out periods of transition is central to the issue of stabilization. Even where the outcome of war consolidates existing systems of order, the immediate postwar period will often be accompanied by reform efforts. Historians thus need to look closely at how internal power relations are organized along socio-structural fault lines of class, race, and gender. They need to look at how power is negotiated and exercised by local and regional authorities, on the one hand, and by those who represent – or claim to represent – the (nation) state, on the other. For modern societies in particular, it is crucial to understand how societal and military reforms are enacted on the stage of public opinion and how they are sold in the marketplace of ideas.
3. Wars impose substantial economic strains and sacrifices, and the victorious parties may be unable to shift the enormous costs of the war onto the defeated enemy through territorial annexations or monetary reparations. Where a country’s own territory has been a theater of operations, the war-related damage and expenditures may well exceed the gains the victors have made. The well-known saying then applies: one can win the war but lose the peace. During protracted conflicts in particular, the orientation of the economy

<sup>35</sup> See the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) Research Group “Communities of Violence,” online: [www.uni-giessen.de/cms/fbz/fbo4/institute/geschichte/forschung\\_neu/gewaltgemeinschaften](http://www.uni-giessen.de/cms/fbz/fbo4/institute/geschichte/forschung_neu/gewaltgemeinschaften).

toward armament inevitably results in conversion and adjustment crises when the war ends and resources have to be reallocated. Depending on the situation, there is commonly the additional problem of a shortage or surplus of labor. Furthermore, the physical reconstruction of destroyed areas and infrastructure initially absorbs enormous resources in the form of taxes or private reconstruction efforts, whereas its role in stabilizing the economy often comes into effect only much later. Almost without exception, therefore, the first years after major conflicts are accompanied by economic crises. Nevertheless, very different situations may prevail as to how reparations and other debts arising from war expenditures are distributed among different social strata and between states. Reconstruction may also encompass decisions on economic principles that determine the future form of the society as well as the immediate living conditions of its members.

4. Decades of reconstruction typically witness the redrawing of borders and/or changes in geopolitical and geostrategic structures through the reassignment of (nation) states to different (or differently understood) spheres of influence. New borders and new alliances may not be accepted because they run counter to existing economic and social structures and relations; such cases frequently give rise to new conflicts. Whereas a loss of territory weakens the international power and prestige of the defeated power and usually entails substantial financial sacrifice, the integration of conquered or otherwise forcibly acquired territories into an existing state entity can also present considerable challenges to the victor. When the end of a war results in the formation of new states, the associated reconstruction efforts tend to be particularly difficult, and state integration is not always successful.
5. Wars redefine international relations. When a war ends, it is crucial to establish a new political order in the areas affected and, on a supranational level, to rebalance international power relations so they are consistent with the possibly altered relative strength and geopolitical importance of the protagonists. The purpose of peace negotiations and treaties is to establish new international arrangements on a permanent basis. Peace conferences and mutual consultations serve to put in place an international equilibrium and a new peacetime order, which occasionally finds expression in reformulations of international law and in the creation of international organizations. The objective is the reconstruction of

disrupted international relations and the re-creation of a balanced system of great powers, including the appropriate treatment of the defeated. On this last point, standards have varied considerably over time, as is clear, for example, from a comparison of the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815) with the Versailles settlement of 1919.

6. Responding to the material sacrifices and suffering of large populations confronts societies with special challenges. In the case of large-scale violent conflicts, the tasks of disposing of the dead, providing timely treatment for wounded soldiers, and caring for maimed veterans can prove almost insurmountable. Another common outcome of war is epidemics, whose scale and speed can easily overwhelm medical and sanitary services. Famine frequently afflicts the defeated and sometimes the victors too, and may bring large-scale migration in its wake. Contrary to contemporary perception, war-related migration, with all its consequences for the societies affected, is not a modern phenomenon. People have fled from the effects and after-effects of war throughout history. Wars and their conclusion are often accompanied by pogroms, massacres, and mass displacements. These phenomena raise questions – no easier to answer in the twenty-first century than in the past – about the conditions for the successful integration of refugees. Flight and displacement have lasting effects on the societies from which refugees flee, no less than on those they seek to join.
7. Whereas economic and power relations within and between states are crucial to our understanding of how social and political frameworks are rebuilt after wars, any analysis would be incomplete without consideration of the cultural sphere. In the aftermath of war, the question of endowing the past with meaning assumes special importance. All societies waging war, whether legitimized in modern or traditional ways, whether oriented along secular or religious lines, face the task of translating war losses and defeats into individual as well as collective representations. The changes involved may be little short of a “resurrection”: they include the mourning process, coping with war trauma, making sense of the past, and establishing patterns of interpretation and commemoration for future generations. In the most favorable scenario, cultural coping with war contributes to reconciliation and the establishment of peace-building norms; in the most adverse, the politics of

remembrance breeds new conflicts.<sup>36</sup> Depending on the extent of atrocities, real or perceived injustices, and the levels of violence prevalent in a society, institutionalized forms of reconciliation and rapprochement may become necessary, and these may or may not include acts of transitional justice. Truth and reconciliation commissions are merely the most modern form of such practices. Equally familiar are efforts by the victors to compel the vanquished to accept their own systems of political, moral, and/or religious values. In this respect, the confessional policy of states following the Thirty Years' War or the attempts to create a sense of nationhood in the newly unified Italian and German states of the 1860s–1870s differ only in degree from denazification and other attempts at societal re-education in the Federal Republic of Germany after 1949.

8. The social upheaval and breakdown of systems of order that occur during and after wars also stimulate the production of utopian visions for a future society. In 1943, when the American historian Carl L. Becker embarked on plans to build a better world, he found the question of postwar reconstruction to be “now almost as much discussed as the war itself.”<sup>37</sup> An American commission at the time counted more than 2,000 publications on this topic.<sup>38</sup> In such troubled times, churches often devise plans for a “Christian reconstruction,” as the National Catholic War Council in Washington did after the First World War. In Britain and Canada, Ministries of Reconstruction were set up partly with the aim of forestalling unrest among demobilized soldiers and unemployed workers. Nevertheless, unions and leftist parties would not be deflected from their purpose: like the United Electric Radio and Machine Workers of America in 1944, they published treatises on the social reforms necessary to “win the peace.” As early as 1943, the Canadian Institute of International Affairs issued an extensive reading list on “postwar problems” and proclaimed, as one of its goals,

<sup>36</sup> Nikolaus Buschmann and Dieter Langewiesche, eds., *Der Krieg in den Gründungsmythen europäischer Nationen und der USA* (Frankfurt a.M., 2003); Echternkamp, *Kriegsenden*.

<sup>37</sup> Carl L. Becker, *How New Will the Better World Be? A Discussion of Post-War Reconstruction* (New York, 1944). Becker's essay “How New Will the Better World Be” was first published in the March 1943 issue of *The Yale Review*.

<sup>38</sup> Hans Aufricht, *War, Peace, and Reconstruction: A Classified Bibliography* (New York, 1943).



the recognition of “a greater Canada among the nations.”<sup>39</sup> These examples suggest how a variety of domestic interests endeavored to shape the future form of the emerging society, and also how those interests could be bound up with the ambition to play a new role in international systems.

The search for new models of order also suggests that decades of reconstruction are highly contested periods of transition in which conflicting utopias are negotiated. Societies contemplate their potential futures at the same time as they are striving for international recognition and implementing reforms to cope with the massive depletion of resources that accompanies war. In modern societies lacking the notion of the divine right of kings, the political system may be destabilized or even delegitimized by military defeat. More often than not, defeat is followed by revolution, civil war, or the disintegration of states and empires. Wolfgang Schivelbusch and the German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk both argue that conquered nations are more inclined than others to undertake reform and self-renewal. Empirical evidence indicates that changes affect winners and losers alike.<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, it can be shown that defeated societies deploy complex psychological and cultural mechanisms in order to reinterpret their loss in terms of cultural and moral superiority. During decades of reconstruction, competing narratives give way to myths, which, in turn, bestow certain meanings on the past and help lift the stigma of defeat. The experience of war can serve very different ends: it may lay the basis for a future war of revenge, yet equally it may be the origin of new international alignments intended to prevent future wars and stabilize a renewed international order.

This survey of the analytical approaches and layers of interpretation associated with eras of reconstruction should make clear the challenges – though also the rewards – of studying them comparatively. Needless to say, only a small part of the overall picture can be considered in this volume, but its chapters shed new light on the thematic fields outlined above and enable us to observe more closely the interaction between

<sup>39</sup> See “Introduction” in Ralph Flenley, *Post-War Problems, A Reading List; A Select Bibliography on Post-War Settlement and Reconstruction* (Toronto, 1943).

<sup>40</sup> Schivelbusch, *Kultur der Niederlage*; Carl et al., *Kriegsniederlagen*; Peter Sloterdijk, *Theorie der Nachkriegszeiten. Bemerkungen zu den deutsch-französischen Beziehungen seit 1945* (Frankfurt a.M., 2008). Sloterdijk’s remarks on “metanoia” and “affirmation” – meant to describe alternate ways of coping with the outcome of wars – are not sufficiently developed to stand as a theory.

domestic and foreign politics in postwar eras. In particular, they explore how foreign political objectives influenced domestic reconstruction and, conversely, how domestic political constellations affected the position of states in the international order.

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The volume is divided into five parts. Part I is devoted to the Atlantic empires of France and Great Britain after the Seven Years' War, while Part II addresses the complex situation within the territory of the "Old Empire" (*Altes Reich*) – the Holy Roman Empire – into the early nineteenth century. Part III examines the wars and civil wars in Europe and America around the mid-nineteenth century, while Part IV explores paths into and out of violence in Central Europe during the first half of the twentieth century. Part V looks at the reshaping of international political orders during the interwar period and after 1945. The volume concludes with a comparison of five postwar orders from the Seven Years' War to the Cold War.

As scholars have recently pointed out, the Seven Years' War was a conflict on a global scale, a struggle for hegemony between the nascent British Empire and its French archenemy. For the first time, the Habsburgs and the Bourbons set aside the traditional enmity of rival landlocked powers and joined forces against Britain and its seaborne empire. On this occasion, the great powers modeled their alliances not according to their dynastic interests on European soil, but with respect to the dynamics of imperial power. In short, they were fighting over commerce and colonies. From around this time, however, earlier forms of patriotism increasingly took on nationalist overtones and war propaganda began to portray xenophobic images of the enemy.

The French defeat, and the loss of what is commonly called the First French Empire, is often claimed to have marked the onset of a relentless decline that deprived France of her centuries-old great power status and led ultimately to the French Revolution. At the same time, historians have tended to accept the idea that Great Britain laid the bases for its global empire at the Treaty of Paris in 1763, after which it exercised undisputed supremacy around the globe. Both contributions in Part I challenge these conventional wisdoms. In Chapter 2, Sven Externbrink reminds us that France embarked upon continuous reform efforts after defeat in 1763. France still possessed the world's largest sugar-exporting colony and proceeded to modernize her military, while thanks to the Bourbon family alliance, it could count on the large Spanish fleet. France's occupation of Corsica was seen as a threat to British naval policy, and the defeat of

Britain in the American Revolutionary War underlined French ambitions to re-enter the global stage. We should thus be cautious about accepting the familiar interpretation, one formed with the benefit of hindsight, of a France suffering continuous and terminal decline after the Seven Years' War.

Just as France's loss of global power status was not an inevitable outcome, so eighteenth-century Great Britain was not the solidly established global player as it is often assumed, again with the benefit of hindsight. Like the French, the British had serious difficulties maintaining discipline in their navy, and while France had to cope with the loss of North America, Britain faced a series of problems that included a threat to the upper classes from the disaffected poor, the king's descent into insanity, growing unrest in Ireland, and widespread sympathy for the French Revolution. Julia Angster explores how Britain adapted successfully to these new challenges in Chapter 1. In an age of emerging capitalism, abandoning formal control over conquered territory in favor of informal power exercised through the creation of a maritime zone dominated by British norms and cultural values proved to be a remarkably successful formula. It was an approach embodied in and upheld by the Royal Navy, which showed itself to be well suited to defend this loosely constituted empire and, as such, was a key factor in the rise of British supremacy.

The creation of conditions favorable to British interests was a sophisticated way to exert power, yet it was not the only policy Great Britain had at its disposal. In Chapter 3, Ulrike Kirchberger questions the notion of a clear-cut distinction between war and postwar eras with respect to the Native Americans who took part in the Anglo-French conflict over North America. For these indigenous peoples, the reconstruction of the British colonial empire after the Seven Years' War was an era of actual war, since they were now more exposed than ever to British westward expansion and settler colonialism. Based on an examination of indigenous accounts, Kirchberger downgrades 1763 as a watershed of broad historical significance. Rather, Pontiac's War represented just one point in a history of persecution and deprivation dating back to the seventeenth century. As happened in parts of Europe after the First World War, states that signed peace treaties did not necessarily stop fighting. Pontiac's War illustrates that the continuation of war in so-called "postwar periods" was by no means unique to the twentieth century.

If Ulrike Kirchberger stresses the importance of grassroots experiences, Reinhard Stauber turns to the field of high diplomacy in Chapter 4,

showcasing the Congress of Vienna as a turning point in European history. Resulting from experiences of warfare on a global scale, the Order of Vienna deliberately disconnected the new equilibrium of Europe from international politics. It imposed a tightly integrated network of intra-European regulations. Whereas interference in the domestic affairs of another state was considered an unacceptable breach of sovereignty in the age of cabinet wars, the Quadruple Alliance against Napoleon agreed in 1814 to pursue the military defeat of France, depose the emperor, and install a government amenable to its interests. This break with the traditional idea of state sovereignty would form the blueprint for intervention in the affairs of sovereign states – a still-prevalent practice among modern nation states. The Order of Vienna is in some respects a textbook example of war experiences translating into new regimes, though this view remains contentious among historians for several reasons.

That the most important nineteenth-century peace congress took place in Vienna was due not least to the political influence of Austria and its foreign minister, Clemens von Metternich. With their essay (Chapter 5), Charles Ingrao and John E. Fahey join the ranks of revisionist authors who question the long-standing historiographical consensus that the Habsburg monarchy was reactionary and incapable of reform. Ingrao and Fahey point to Vienna's limited room for maneuver, reflecting Austria's geopolitical position at the heart of Europe. They show that although reforms in domestic policy were relatively easy to impose after wartime defeats in the eighteenth century, this changed after the Congress of Vienna: foreign success and economic prosperity seemed to render further reforms unnecessary or at least less urgent. The authors assess domestic politics in post-1815 Austria as scarcely less liberal than in neighboring countries. In the light of the problems caused by nationalism, they advocate a re-evaluation of Metternich's foreign policy. They pose the intriguing question of whether – given the radicalizing tendencies of democratically structured politics – a liberal autocracy might not be preferable to an illiberal democracy.

Robert Beachy, in Chapter 7, gets to the heart of the linkage between domestic and foreign politics by examining Saxony's *Rétablissement* after the Seven Years' War. Long years of devastation and Prussian occupation and exploitation had brought this middle-sized German state to the brink of economic collapse. A reconstruction scheme initiated primarily by Thomas von Fritsch launched comprehensive political, economic, and administrative reforms, including renunciation of Saxony's traditional ties with Poland. The combination of cameralist principles and dynamic

commercial markets accounted for Saxony's remarkably quick return to economic prosperity. Beachy interprets this reform policy less as a program of enlightened absolutism than as the triumph of the aristocratic estates (*Stände*) over princely absolutism, reinforced by the influence of urban merchants and manufacturers (*Bürgertum*) in the economy and, later, on a Saxon electorate blessed with a formal constitution. Beachy thus views the Saxon *Rétablissement* in the context of productive synergies that brought together traditional corporate institutions with bourgeois principles of transparency, public debate, and fiscal accountability. Those synergies endured well into the nineteenth century.

In Chapter 6, Christopher Clark examines a wide swath of Prussian history from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth century. He shows how, after the devastations of the Thirty Years' War, Frederick William, the "Great Elector," initiated a model of political action to which protagonists in subsequent periods also had recourse, particularly in the wake of 1806. After 1660, and again around 1810, domestic political interests were subordinated to foreign political resurgence, and Prussian rulers relied on crushing particularist and corporatist privileges to create a more cohesive state structure. And yet, turning points of a comparably far-reaching nature failed to materialize following Frederick the Great's victorious Silesian Wars in the 1740s. Clark is thus skeptical about the significance of war as a driver of political developments. Wars, he concludes, do not determine the character of reform; they merely provide the occasion or opportunity for implementing reforms that might have already been planned in peacetime.

Transitions from war to peace are fraught with complexities and social tensions. Katherine Aaslestad's conceptualization of the years between 1815 and 1840 as a postwar period provides new insights into how wars influence society long after hostilities cease. In Chapter 8, she presents case studies from the Hanseatic cities of Bremen, Hamburg, and Lübeck as they faced the challenges of caring for civilian war refugees, demilitarizing local militias, and planning military reform. As the cities rebuilt their economies after 1814, inhabitants discussed the new role of the military in the republican city-states. Legacies of war experiences, especially military occupation and the patriotic mobilization of local militias, generated a debate on the role of organized violence in civil society and shaped public discussions on military reform, the status of veterans, and support for civilian victims of the war.

Whereas Aaslestad calls for the examination of Europe's so-called restoration era as a postwar period and a time of reconstruction with

respect to European history, the term “Reconstruction era” has long been used to denote the years after the American Civil War. Christopher Wilkins’s contribution (Chapter 9) demonstrates the close interconnections between republicanism, domestic race relations, and foreign policy in the aftermath of the Civil War. Wilkins’s argument runs counter to a widely held view among scholars. Rather than analyzing the controversy that emerged about US expansionism after 1865 as a debate over imperialism and colonial empire-building, Wilkins contends that the early Reconstruction era created a space for envisioning alternative versions of American nationalism and the political map of the United States. Republican advocates of expansion identified the establishment of racial equality before the law as a potential catalyst for territorial expansion based on the belief that neighboring peoples from Canada and Mexico, admiring reconstructed US institutions, would be eager to join the Union. That plan ultimately failed. Yet it is noteworthy that advocates of expansion sought to annex Caribbean islands not as colonies but as federal states, with their inhabitants becoming citizens and thus an integral part of the American nation. This little-known aspect of the Reconstruction era served as one model Americans used to understand the project of incorporating black-majority Caribbean states into the Union.

A very different civil war and its outcome provide the subject of James Retallack’s essay (Chapter 10). The Kingdom of Saxony was defeated and occupied by Prussian soldiers and administrators in the course of the “German civil war” of 1866. This conflict, which is commonly called the Austro-Prussian War or the Seven Weeks’ War, was not the first time Saxony had been defeated by its northern neighbor. After the instances documented in Robert Beachy’s chapter on Saxony in the 1760s, came the humiliation inflicted when the King of Saxony, Frederick Augustus, was slow to switch sides from Napoleon to the Allies in 1813; it took the form of partition, then occupation by Russian and later Prussian administrators, with the king not regaining his throne until June 1815. As Retallack demonstrates, these precedents were in the minds of negotiators on both sides in 1866 when the time came to decide Saxony’s fate in the emerging German nation-state. In his analysis, Retallack shows that the reinvigoration of political life, together with the Saxons’ emotional difficulty in dealing with unexpected defeat and occupation, had a direct impact on Prussian King William I’s (and Bismarck’s) decision not to annex the kingdom outright. Instead, they forced its incorporation into the North German Confederation. Using hitherto untapped archival sources, Retallack is able to show that even in this small corner of Central

Europe, “mopping-up operations” after armed conflict was a messy and protracted business. Between June and October 1866, Saxony’s continued existence hung in the balance. During those months, contentious definitions of nationality, confederacy, sovereignty, and dynastic loyalty added to the difficulty of peace-making and state-building.

In Chapter 11, Elizabeth Vlossak reminds us that the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871 transformed not only the two belligerent nations but the entire European order as well. It left a particularly deep mark on French society. The humiliating defeat led to the collapse of Napoleon III’s Second Empire, a bloody civil war, and foreign occupation, resulting in loss of territory and payment of a heavy indemnity. Reconstruction involved rebuilding what had been destroyed, but it also required creating new institutions, reimagining the nation state, and renegotiating citizenship. The loss of Alsace and Lorraine provoked a national trauma that had far-reaching repercussions in such diverse fields as education, the military, population policy, and the settlement of Algeria. Drawing on paintings, caricatures, maps, and popular culture, Vlossak focuses on three challenges that ultimately shaped the central institutions of the Third Republic: reconfiguration of France’s geographic boundaries, reconstruction of the French population, and reassertion of traditional gender roles.

Although the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871 remained confined to the belligerents, it already contained the seeds of confrontation on a global scale. Whereas analyses of the First World War have traditionally focused attention on the western front, in Chapter 12 Jesse Kauffman follows the trend of recent research examining the course of the war in the east, where the Central Powers after 1915 held large parts of Poland under occupation. Kauffman contests the widely held view that the cultural and administrative measures undertaken by the German occupation regime simply served to conceal economic exploitation and could therefore be seen as harbingers of Nazi policies. His very different interpretation points to the establishment of Polish-language schools and the conduct of municipal self-administration. These developments, he argues, suggest an increase, not a decrease, in the political and cultural autonomy of the Poles during the course of the war. Against the backdrop of the reorganization processes in Eastern Europe, he suggests that German policies were concerned less with wartime exploitation (in the short term) than with the goal of maintaining Germany’s grip on these volatile and strategically crucial territories on its border. It was to support such a long-term goal that the idea of a dependent satellite state was formulated.



In Chapter 13, Mark Jones also deals with the outcomes of the First World War in Central Europe, where the conclusion of peace by no means brought an end to violence. Indeed, the considerable potential for violence following the official end to the war could stand as a hallmark of this epoch. The factors usually invoked to explain this continuation of violence include the uncertainty of the political situation, internal power struggles between rival groups, the existence of ungoverned areas, the brutalization of veterans and others by modern industrialized warfare, and the persistence of communities of violence in Central and East Central Europe. Jones, however, argues persuasively that the process of state-building in an era of reconstruction may actually create a violent dynamic of its own – a dynamic that the state and its principal agents must perpetrate in order to establish or re-establish their own authority. Taking the Weimar Republic as an example of this process, the author presents in detail the logical consistencies of such “foundation massacres.” He situates the German case in the context of similar dynamics of violence following the collapse of other imperial orders in Europe, for instance, during the Greco-Turkish War or in the Irish Republic.

Jörg Echternkamp shifts attention from the interwar years to the period after 1945, when Germany once again became the focus of European politics. In Chapter 14, he investigates the conflicting interpretations of war and the military in West Germany’s first postwar decade and challenges the widely held scholarly view that there was no genuine coming to terms with the past, no *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, until the late 1960s. Examining newspaper reports of the Nuremberg Trials and debates about prisoners of war as well as public protests against German re-militarization, he questions whether the Germans’ oft-cited self-image as passive sufferers was quite as widespread, let alone as hegemonic, as historians have claimed. He argues that Germans were well aware from an early stage of the criminal character of the war and the tragic fate of its principal victims. Thus conflicting representations of contentious subjects, not uniformity or complacency, shaped Germany’s political sphere in debates over future civil-military relations. They can be seen as a first step toward staging peaceful democracy in post-Holocaust (Western) Europe.

The penultimate section of the volume broadens the perspective to the international dimension of postwar orders in the twentieth century. Kimberly Lowe’s essay (Chapter 15) examines the humanitarian assistance regimes of the International Red Cross and the League of Nations during the interwar period. The extension of protective provisions of the Geneva

Convention and the Hague Convention to civilian “victims of war” had made possible the repatriation of prisoners of war from Russia and the protection of war refugees from the eastern Mediterranean. Although the refugee groups created during the 1920s remained relatively well protected even in the face of growing anti-immigrant sentiment, refugee-assistance institutions failed to address the plight of those fleeing fascist persecution during the 1930s. This was especially true for German-Jewish refugees fleeing the Third Reich. As Lowe shows, the reason lay largely with a humanitarian consensus that was based upon wartime understandings of the war victims’ moral claims. Her chapter explores the conceptual origins of these interwar protections in order to demonstrate the extent to which nineteenth-century traditions of sympathy for wounded soldiers remained the predominant framework determining the boundaries of international humanitarian action after the First and Second World Wars.

Just as the League of Nations failed Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany, so in the context of the Cold War, the UN and the US displayed few scruples vis-à-vis the Franco dictatorship in Spain. In Chapter 16, Adrian Shubert addresses the reconstruction processes after the Spanish Civil War, the establishment of the Francoist dictatorship, and its international integration. He suggests that Francoist reconstruction actually began before the end of the Civil War in 1939 and, in some respects, even continued after Franco’s death in 1975. Political reconstruction was premised on abolishing liberal democracy, independent trade unions, and an autonomous civil society. Economic reconstruction consisted of fascist-inspired autarky, including government allocation of key resources, the creation of state enterprises, and the use of forced labor, especially in the 1940s. Cultural reconstruction included the restoration of the Catholic Church’s power and a reassertion of earlier gender roles that deprived women of civil rights and even condoned honor killings. Large numbers of Franco’s opponents simply “disappeared.” Thus, reconciliation was not part of Francoist reconstruction. Nevertheless, because of Cold War politics, Franco became a crucial ally of the United States, which signed a military treaty with Spain in 1953 and helped the country gain admission to the UN two years later.

Jörn Leonhard interprets the dissolution of multiethnic empires in favor of newly founded nation states not as the cause but as a consequence of the political dynamics of the First World War. In Chapter 17, he shows that empires and nation states were not in irreconcilable opposition to each other over the course of the long nineteenth century, but they tended in fact to converge. Empires integrating elements of the nation state coexisted with

imperializing nation states – such as the US, Japan, and many European countries – that sought to acquire colonies. Although the adoption of secessionist ideas by national elites in multiethnic empires from the second half of the nineteenth century created tensions, Leonhard does not consider the dissolution of the European continental empires to have been inevitable. He attributes this outcome rather to the mobilization logic of national mass warfare and to the repercussions of Woodrow Wilson's proclamation of the right to national self-determination (albeit limited to Europe). Whereas the model of the homogeneous nation-state proved a catalyst for displacements and ethnic violence, the victorious powers extended their imperial influence further. In no respect, argues Leonhard, did the end of the First World War usher in the end of the imperial age.

In the concluding essay of this volume (Chapter 18), James J. Sheehan examines five European postwar orders from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. He demonstrates how a system of European great powers that emerged in the mid-eighteenth century was able to evolve and survive in its essential features until the end of the nineteenth century, notwithstanding many ideological challenges, revolutions, and rivalries that threatened to disrupt European stability. For Sheehan, the dissolution of this system did not begin with the limited wars fought from the 1850s to the 1870s. He argues that truly destabilizing effects only set in quite late, toward the end of the century, with the formation of blocs as a result of imperial rivalries and the inability of the great powers to rein in the nationalist and expansionist policies of the smaller European states. The peace negotiations after the First World War had already departed from the Concert of Powers system that had been established in the eighteenth century. At Potsdam in 1945, the dominance of the Soviet Union and the US made it clear that Europe no longer stood at the center of global power politics. Sheehan considers the European institutions created at the very end of the Second World War to have been remarkably successful. This framework permitted the transformation of former dictatorships into democratic states, as well as the absorption of new states after the collapse of the USSR. For Sheehan, the revolutions of 1989–1991 represented not an end to the European order established in 1945, but rather its expansion and consolidation.

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The era from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries was one of wars fought by and among the European powers, although the theater of conflict was never limited to Europe. The ideologization and politization

of war, the role of the mass media, and the homogenizing tendencies of the nation-state made Clausewitz's "battle in and of itself" ever more lethal and destructive.<sup>41</sup> On a number of occasions – in 1815, 1919, and 1945 – the German question formed a central problem. The concert of European great powers established in the eighteenth century proved to be surprisingly adaptable, and although signs of strain began to appear in the second half of the nineteenth century, it survived well into the early twentieth.

In the process of reconstruction, foreign and domestic policy cannot be separated. The interdependencies between a state's internal politics and its international position are multifold. Domestic reform measures serve to consolidate and extend the position of a state in foreign affairs. Conversely, foreign political constellations serve political elites as an argument to push through their internal political agenda. In this context, neither foreign affairs nor domestic policy can claim primacy; they influence and shape each other, they are symbiotic.

There is strong evidence that societies of defeated states emerge from wars more willing than those of victorious states to undertake reforms. Periods of reconstruction often witness defeated societies seizing upon successful recipes for reform previously implemented by their former adversaries. For their part, victorious societies have a marked tendency to impose their own societal order, which they consider superior, on the larger sphere of influence they now dominate. This holds true particularly if ideological differences formed part of the actual *casus belli* or persisted long after meaningful "victory" ceased to be a realistic prospect.

The desire to create a new, peaceful world order increases in proportion to the ravages caused by a particular conflict. Following devastating wars, the end of hostilities is usually accompanied by multilateral efforts directed toward stabilizing order, resulting in the development of new international instruments and consultation mechanisms. The lessons that are drawn from these processes are based mainly on past events. Where future possibilities differ fundamentally from older patterns, lessons from the past have a limited capacity to provide solutions for future problems.

Yet history and historical precedents matter. This volume reminds us that international diplomacy has seldom succeeded in preventing violent conflict for more than a few decades at a time. This is true particularly in areas remote from state control or in territories experiencing a breakdown of governmental order. Acts of unregulated violence by paramilitary

<sup>41</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, ed. and trans. Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, NJ, 1976).

groups are no more a modern phenomenon than are weak states that seek to establish their authority by committing foundation massacres. After a succession of wars with millions of victims, it is hard to share Immanuel Kant's vision of human history moving inexorably toward the achievement of perpetual peace. What is certain, however, is that the absence of war and violence does not in itself constitute peace. Peace must be built on political preconditions that have their own histories. As the philosopher from Königsberg wrote during the Napoleonic Wars, peace must be understood and established and preserved. In short, peace must be fought for.