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Title	Towards an interconnected history of World War I: Europe and beyond
Author(s)	Barry, Gearóid; Dal Lago, Enrico; Healy, Róisín
Publication Date	2016
Publication Information	Barry, Gearóid , Dal Lago, Enrico , & Healy, Róisín (2016). Towards an interconnected history of World War I: Europe and beyond. In Gearóid Barry, Enrico Dal Lago, & Róisín Healy (Eds.), <i>Small Nations and Colonial Peripheries in World War I</i> . Leiden: Brill.
Publisher	Brill
Link to publisher's version	https://brill.com/view/title/31696?rskey=R3dKu6&result=1
Item record	http://hdl.handle.net/10379/15565

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PART ONE

SHIFTING IDENTITIES IN THE GLOBAL WAR

CHAPTER ONE
TOWARDS AN INTERCONNECTED HISTORY OF WORLD WAR I:
EUROPE AND BEYOND

Gearóid Barry, Enrico Dal Lago and Róisín Healy

In recent years, the historiography of World War I has undergone a very significant transformation in terms of its geographical scope and thematic reach. While most studies of World War I up to the 1990s focused on national experiences, a generation of new scholars subsequently began analyzing the War in comparative perspective across Europe and the world.¹ The following decade saw the emergence of a global approach to First World War studies, pioneered by Hew Strachan and Michael Neiberg and developed in a range of recent reference works.² Jay Winter has identified a significant increase in studies of the War as a transnational phenomenon, defined by Ian Tyrell as an emphasis on “the movement of peoples, ideas, technologies, and institutions across the border.”³ Due to both the transnational training of World War I historians and the collapse of political and ideological dichotomies with the end of the Cold War, a transnational view has emerged in opposition to an international approach which privileges the diplomatic history of the War.⁴

The historiography of World War I no longer fixates upon the actions of the Great Powers, but now embraces all the nations and regions of Europe, whether directly or indirectly involved in the War.⁵ Ireland, Serbia and the Netherlands are among the hitherto understudied locations that have been examined in recent volumes.⁶ The increasingly global focus of World War I studies has resulted in the

systematic inclusion of the colonies and, as a corollary of that, the role of race in military and civilian experience. French soldiers' views of their own indigenous troops were ambivalent, ranging from admiration to fear. Both the British and the French favoured particular groups within their colonies. The British enthusiasm for the Gurkhas endured into the War.⁷ The Senegalese elite considered it a matter of pride to assist the French in the War and expected to be rewarded for their efforts at the end of hostilities. The same cannot be said, however, for the rest of the Senegalese population. Comparable cleavages, whether based on class or ethnicity, also operated in other European overseas colonies and were responsible for uneven investment in the war effort among the indigenous population.⁸ The use of racialized language reverberated through Europe. In her recent historiographical review, Heather Jones has claimed that recent studies of World War I have “also shown how imperial and anthropological discussion about race overseas now shifted to the European heartland as racialized language was increasingly used to describe the enemy and to denigrate his ethnic origins.”⁹

Taking inspiration from these studies and an earlier conference, we organized an international conference in 2014 dedicated to the comparative and transnational history of small European nations and colonial peripheries in World War I, a conference held at the Centre for the Investigation of Transnational Encounters (CITE) at the National University of Ireland, Galway.¹⁰ This conference brought together scholars from a wide variety of countries, institutions and research fields and showed the benefits for First World War Studies of combining research perspectives on small European nations and colonial peripheries. This volume builds on the discussions held at the conference.

With the seventeen essays in this volume, we intend to further contribute to this historiography by providing a transnational and comparative study of a neglected facet of the War—the particular experience of peoples on the European and non-European peripheries of empires. In his introduction to the first volume of the *Cambridge History of the First World War* (2014), Jay Winter claimed that: “The history of the Great War that has emerged in recent years is additive, cumulative and multi-faceted. National histories have a symbiotic relationship with transnational history; the richer the one, the deeper the other.”¹¹ Moreover, this volume reconceptualizes the history of World War I as a single narrative that includes both European metropolises, Europe’s small nations and extra-European colonies and thus acts as an addition to the current historiographical agenda.¹² Many of these essays draw on previously unpublished research and thus introduce the work of emerging scholars to the wider historical public. The volume also includes several specially commissioned essays. The approach is novel in several respects: it brings together essays that span the globe, from the United States through Ireland to Kazakhstan and from equatorial Africa to the Arctic circle; it replaces the conventional historical focus on the metropolises of European empires with a wider consideration of their ethnic peripheries and overseas colonies; it examines the transnational movement of members of subject ethnic populations to the European theatres of war and ruling national groups’ soldiers and settlers to the imperial peripheries. The combination of studies of soldiers and civilians on the home front and the war front helps to highlight similarities in the wartime experiences of European and colonial peripheral populations.¹³

In chronological terms, the essays in this book begin with the Home Rule crisis in Ireland in 1912 and end with the War’s legacies in Tunisia in the 1920s. John

Horne has recently argued for an expanded chronology of the War by saying that “the War was the epicentre of a larger cycle of violence that went from 1912 to 1923, from the Balkan Wars in 1912-13 to the end of violence in the collapsed border zones of the former empires in eastern Europe.”¹⁴ His periodization reflects the importance of conflicts in European peripheries in defining World War I experience of populations on the periphery of empires. The benefits of this approach are evident in the recent survey of multiple empires during this extended period, entitled *Empires at War*.¹⁵ Following the lead of Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert with their celebrated comparative study of capital cities in World War I, this volume examines a variety of regional case studies, while maintaining a cohesive interpretive framework on the importance of peripherality in the experience of the War. Thus it builds on important current work in three fields: firstly, the military service of colonial subjects in Europe’s various theatres of war; the transfer of colonial attitudes by elites to the European theatres during and after World War I; and the civilian experience of war both close to and distant from the battlefield.¹⁶

Some of the most innovative recent scholarship on World War I has dealt with topics that are either inherently transnational or are now recognized as being best approached through a transnational prism. As Jay Winter has pointed out: “The term ‘transnational’ is the only suitable one for the War’s massive effects on population movements of staggering proportion.”¹⁷ There are numerous examples of voluntary population movements during the War. In addition to conscription, economic pressures and cultural motives encouraged millions of men and thousands of women to offer their services for the benefit of their imperial metropole. Many of these saw service in war theatres very far from home, making World War I a watershed in the global history of transnational movement and cross-cultural encounters. The Battle of

Gallipoli, for example, saw participants from places as far apart as Ireland, France, Germany, Turkey, India, Australia and New Zealand.¹⁸ Another is the Battle of Verdun, which involved American volunteer soldiers and medical personnel and Indochinese labourers as well as western European and African combatants.¹⁹ Women from across the globe nursed military casualties in field units in multiple theatres of the War.²⁰ Some of the most exciting new research on the War has focused on forced population movement, most notably prisoners of war, refugees, and Chinese labourers.²¹ Civilians who remained at home were also affected by transnational developments and many recent studies have increased our understanding of the gendered experience of war.²² Residents of belligerent nations who were citizens of the opposing alliance, especially if suspected of collaboration, were liable to be arrested and interned. For example, Panikos Panayi has examined the experience of German nationals in Britain during the War, some of whom were considered disruptive enough to be interned on one of Britain's offshore islands, namely the Isle of Man.²³ Another example of the mistreatment of civilians is the proliferation of labour camps in various belligerent nations.²⁴

The communities of belief to which individual citizens of the various belligerent nations belonged helped to provide "one of the frameworks of meaning by which contemporaries sought to grasp the significance of the conflict".²⁵ Therefore, transnational ideological or religious affiliations caused a dilemma in terms of allegiance. German socialists split over the question of war credits in 1914 and an international anti-war movement emerged among radical socialists.²⁶ The papal peace note of August 1917 divided Catholics of both camps across Europe.²⁷ Civilians were also affected by transnational developments in scientific, technological and economic terms. For examples, the civilian experience of war involved aerial bombardment

from planes and airships that had flown across national borders and resulted in the deaths of many civilians in cities such as London, Freiburg, Karlsruhe and Paris.²⁸ Adam Tooze has recently argued that World War I led to a reorganization of the world economy that facilitated American expansion globally, affected the civilian populations of even non-belligerent nations and raised Japan to an international power.²⁹ A major new arena of scholarship in the transnational history of World War I is represented by humanitarianism. The staggering human cost of war galvanized the international humanitarian community to an unprecedented level of co-operation across borders, transforming humanitarianism into a truly global movement.³⁰ At the forefront of humanitarian activities during the War was the International Red Cross, spearheaded by the American branch, which has received a great deal of scholarly attention.³¹

The recent focus on the unprecedented scale and scope of violence in the War has been the driving force behind the new periodization of the War suggested by John Horne and Robert Gerwarth.³² They have situated the War in a continuum of violence which both preceded and followed the War. The violence that occurred before 1914 and after 1918 was concentrated in areas peripheral to the Great Powers, but it must be understood as part of this period of intense violence all the same. The period of intense violence began with the First Balkan War and ended in multiple arenas, ranging from Ireland in the northwest to Greece and Turkey in the southeast. The Balkans saw continuous violence from 1912 to 1923. It is no coincidence that in *The Sleepwalkers* (2012), Christopher Clark began his account of the 1914 July Crisis not in Berlin or Vienna, but in Serbia in 1903. He thus challenged the traditional mental map of the War's genesis.³³ Equally, the region demonstrates that armed conflict persisted far beyond 1918. In the wake of the Greek-Turkish War of 1919-1921,

Greeks from Asia Minor were forcibly resettled in Greece and Turks from Greece in turn resettled in Turkey after the failed Greek expedition to Turkey in 1921.³⁴ The Balkans typify the drive of small nations to liberate themselves from imperial powers through violence. They demonstrate the difficulties of achieving self-determination in a region occupied by competing imperial powers and emerging states. The multiple possibilities for political expression—full independence, autonomy within an empire, or something in between—intensified the potential for violence in the region, as demonstrated in the case of Bosnia.³⁵ In order to capture the full texture of political experiences, this volume presents case studies drawn from across Europe including the Iberian peninsula, Scandinavia, east central Europe, Luxembourg, Switzerland and Ireland. For the purpose of this study, we have defined “small nations” in terms of their relative weakness vis-à-vis the major actors in European diplomacy. Thus, while Luxembourg qualifies both geographically and politically, Spain qualifies by virtue of its weakness by comparison with Britain and France. Unlike Portugal, the small nations already endowed with statehood opted for neutrality of one kind or another and usually leaned more towards one power bloc or another. Even as neutrals, these nations’ economies and internal political dynamics were deeply affected by the War.³⁶ Nations outside Europe, such as those in Latin America, adopted similarly ambivalent policies of neutrality. Like the U.S., some of these states also found it opportune to join the War some time after the initial mobilization.³⁷

The impact of the War in fact extended far beyond Europe and shaped the experiences of a number of civilian populations in colonial peripheries across the world. The experiences were strikingly similar to those of European populations in small nations. A Catholic missionary in the Congo described the impact of the War on the local indigenous population in terms that could have been used to depict the daily

stresses of wartime in many parts of Europe: “The father of the family is at the front, the mother is grinding flour for the soldiers, and the children are carrying the foodstuffs!”³⁸ Exciting new work has emerged from Africa on the importance of the African dimension of the War and great strides have been made to provide narratives that integrate European and non-European theatres of war.³⁹ Moves to introduce conscription led to comparable resistance by civilian populations in parts of Europe and the colonial peripheries. For example, rebellions broke out in British Nyasaland, Portuguese Mozambique and in numerous French possessions, most notably the Grande Rivière Rebellion in French West Africa.⁴⁰

For the purpose of this work, we define “colonial peripheries” as those areas that were subject to colonial rule by European empires and were located far from the heartland of these empires. The case studies in this volume were peripheries in relation to their respective European metropolises, not simply in geographical terms, but also in geopolitical and economic terms. In that sense, their position was akin to that of small European nations vis-à-vis the major international state actors in Europe. The geographical regions covered in this volume include the Northern Arctic region of the Russia Empire, the Russian steppes straddling Europe and Asia, Central Asia, North Africa and East Africa. These case studies provide a broad range of peripheral colonial experiences during World War I. World War I not only led directly to the independence of several small European nations, but also provided the first major moment of crisis for European empires and therefore started the process that culminated in decolonization after World War II. As James E. Kitchen has argued, “1914-18 can be seen as paralleling, or anticipating, the events that would follow thirty years later when the Second World War invigorated a series of anti-colonial nationalist movements that would ultimately pull down the imperial edifice by the

mid-1960s".⁴¹ The Wilsonian moment, with its emphasis on self-determination, held within it the promise of sovereignty for peoples under foreign rule both in Europe and beyond.⁴² The enormous economic strain that the War put on European empires, by requiring them to transfer troops, administrators, food supplies and material resources to multiple theatres of war, shortchanged the imperial peripheries and their populations, prompting further unrest.⁴³

We are following in the path of scholars who have made connections between different regions of Europe and colonial peripheries in the era of World War I, broadly defined.⁴⁴ The novelty of this volume consists particularly in the juxtaposition of and comparison between European and non-European regions in these terms. This perspective allows us to explore the reciprocal influence of transnational movements of ideas and people on the colonies and the European metropolises. The case studies provided here demonstrate the high degree of interdependence between regions often considered separately. Ultimately, with this project we intend to stimulate further research into the transnational connections and comparisons between the paths to self-determination taken by small European nations and colonial peripheries from World War I to the mid-twentieth century.

This introduction forms the first chapter of Part One of this volume and is followed by two essays that explore the relationship between major global powers and small nations in Europe, using the example of Germany and Ireland. They demonstrate the increased significance that small nations won in international affairs, both within Europe and beyond it, as a result of the War. They also highlight the complexity of the relationship between major and minor players in international affairs by drawing attention to the role of diasporic communities in the United States.

Christine Strotmann describes how the German government sought to foment unrest in small nations and colonial peripheries belonging to Allied powers.⁴⁵ This so-called “revolutionary program” was designed to allow Germany to overcome the reputational damage caused by Allied propaganda about atrocities in Belgium as well as to weaken its enemies from within. Successful revolts of small European nations would, the Germans hoped, trigger further revolts in colonial peripheries outside Europe. She examines in particular the collaboration between the German government and Irish nationalists who sought to use the War to achieve independence from Britain. While most scholarly accounts have focused on the inadequacy of German military assistance to the Irish, Strotmann demonstrates on the basis of the records of the Imperial German Foreign Office that the German government saw the Irish alliance in particular as an opportunity less to divert British troops away from continental theatres of war than to ensure that Irish-Americans continued to support American neutrality in the War.⁴⁶

Michael Neiberg explores the particular experiences of Irish-Americans and German-Americans. Despite coming from a small nation and major European power respectively, their experiences in the U.S. were quite similar. Well integrated into American society by the beginning of the War, they both tended to be disproportionately skeptical of Allied motives as a result of their heritage from 1914 to 1916. Contrary to much scholarship, however, many of their number were not overtly pro-German in their outlook on the War, even after the Easter Rising, when the executions of its leaders intensified hostility to Britain. The need to prove themselves loyal US citizens, along with Wilson’s promises of self-determination for small nations, persuaded Irish-Americans to support the American leadership’s stance on the War. German-Americans likewise endorsed American neutrality and took a

middle course, seeking to distance themselves from Prussian aggression, while pointing out the deficiencies of the Allies. Neiberg thus concludes that domestic motives encouraged a broad consensus on American foreign policy.⁴⁷

Ireland, a “small nation”, which was not yet a state, was poised precariously during World War I between the maintenance of the union with Britain and opposition to the War coupled with revolution. Part Two thus moves outwards in a circle of comparative “national” case-studies encompassing northern and southern Europe. The ambivalent relationships of “small nations”—broadly understood—to the War and to their more powerful belligerent neighbours are examined from a variety of innovative perspectives, in the six essays in Part Two which, when taken together, have the internal dynamics of politics as their presiding concern. Thus, iterations of opposition, support or state neutrality towards the War have their place here, mediated through regional identities, the reception of enemy aliens and prisoners, education policy and the cross-cutting cleavages of religious minorities, within both recognized and aspirant nation-states.

The heterogeneity of political and religious identities within “smaller nations”, which forms one theme of this volume, is particularly well demonstrated in Conor Morrissey’s contribution, the first in this section. Morrissey considers the Irish conscription crisis of 1918, a pivotal event in undermining the legitimacy of British rule in nationalist Ireland. He asks how Irish Protestant nationalists—a political minority within a religious minority—negotiated an identity both distinctly Irish and Protestant amid a popular anti-conscription front in which the Catholic Church took pride of place. These “rebel” or, more accurately, anti-government Irish Protestants were a small portion of the Protestant quarter of the Irish population, a demographic group that in turn had strongly contrasting regional experiences as either a majority or

a minority vis-à-vis Irish Catholics. Morrissey presents us with a finessed profile of Irish Protestant political and cultural pluralism of intrinsic interest and of wider significance in the study of minorities.⁴⁸

Minorities of another sort—enemy aliens—are at the heart of our second Irish-related contribution, William Buck’s account of POWs and enemy alien civilian internees from the territories of the Central Powers held in Ireland during World War I. Viewing Irish responses to the enemy within the context of the then United Kingdom, Buck explains the material organization of such detention in Ireland and its political import for a nation at war. Dispersed, by government design, to hastily-adapted camps in various parts of small-town Ireland, this small but significant foreign presence – made up of POWs or luckless members of Ireland’s tiny Central European immigrant population incarcerated willy-nilly as potential spies - gave the “enemy” corporeal form, yet elicited quite sparse instances of active xenophobia or physical hostility in comparison with Great Britain. Curiosity, nationalism and economic self-interest could indeed trump official enmity when Germans became customers, instead of burdens, and potential allies instead of foes.⁴⁹

Michael Jonas’s chapter also scrambles somewhat the categories of friend and foe by examining the ambiguities of Scandinavian neutrality during World War I, especially as mediated through the records of German and British diplomats. Classic “small nations” negotiating fraught relations with larger belligerent neighbours, Sweden, Norway and Denmark were all affected by the British naval blockade and the German submarine campaign in which the North Sea was an important theatre of war. Their neutrality coincided with British interests more than it did with Germany’s. The War nevertheless presented business opportunities, especially for Sweden, whilst conservative, monarchist and pro-German “activism” in that country—encouraged

from Berlin—fed a perception of Swedish partiality. In all three kingdoms, though, Jonas argues that, however unevenly, the war years occasioned a shift from legalistic and commercially opportunistic neutrality to more principled, moralistic neutrality presaging an epochal turn in Scandinavian politics towards social democracy.⁵⁰

More brutally polarized, meanwhile, were Spanish politics, still anger-laden from defeat in the Spanish-American War of 1898. As Richard Gow shows, long-fraught civil-military relations deteriorated in wartime neutral Spain to the point of effective army insubordination by 1916-17. Relegated by history to “small nation” rank, the once-mighty Spanish kingdom and its military compensated for these frustrations with enhanced neo-colonial repression in Spanish Morocco while, at home, the army loudly and heavy-handedly opposed the gathering threat from anti-national forces of regional nationalism and class politics. As neutrals, the Spanish traded abroad, increasingly with the USA, while fighting a domestic war of words broadly between pro-German conservatives and pro-Entente liberals. Neutrality, overall, though, sent the army (led by a top-heavy officer corps resistant to reform) into even steeper decline as a military outfit whilst its increasingly pronounced politicization during World War I helped to pave the way for the advent of dictatorship in Spain in 1923.⁵¹

The rhetoric of small nations’ rights could, in turn, be mobilized even against neutral states that were themselves deemed small powers. Catalan nationalism posed just such a challenge, in a manner completely bound up with the World War I context, as Florian Graf’s chapter argues. Pro-Entente “Catalanist” street protesters seized on the Wilsonian moment of 1918 and took to the boulevards of Barcelona to call for, at a minimum, the decentralization of power within Spain, drawing the wrath of police and of self-styled pro-state patriots. The war context brutalized Catalan class politics

too; in the years 1918 to 1923, the streets of the Catalan capital became sites of targeted assassination of class opponents, either industrial magnates or union agitators. Barcelona was a den of foreign fugitives and of vice. World War I and its aftermath witnessed the super-abundant availability of pistols to malfeasants while normalizing violence in cultural terms.⁵²

Meanwhile, neutral Switzerland and Luxembourg had contrasting experiences of World War I. Luxembourg, akin to Belgium, was invaded and occupied by the German Empire, in 1914, even if it chose, on account of its puny military resources, the path of minimum resistance to the Germans and retained its own (circumscribed) government throughout. Switzerland went unmolested but experienced press wars between its French- and German-speaking communities. Ingrid Brühwiler and Matias Gardin discuss here how these fraught contexts played out in the realms of the Swiss and Luxembourgish education systems, using the evidence of teachers' professional periodicals. The War's raging storm imposed new priorities on teachers' magazines; first, discretion, in the case of Luxembourg in the face of an occupier but also, over time, both Swiss and Luxembourg teachers expounded a version of patriotism that would be simultaneously internationalist and multi-lingual as befitted their composite nations.⁵³

The case of wartime Poland, considered here by Jens Boysen, is essentially a story of the internationalization of the domestic affairs of a small nation, or more accurately of an aspirant Polish nation-state. Here again, complications abound: ethnic Poles were distributed amongst three dynastic empires and, in Habsburg-ruled Galicia, themselves became for the Ruthenians just another unloved dominant caste. Many Poles instinctively contested the label of "small nation" and saw the War and its end as a chance to restore an eighteenth-century Polish imperial project in the Baltic

particularly. Boysen contextualizes and recounts the creation of space during World War I for new Polish national projects, ranging from federal Austrian- or Russian-sponsored nationhood to full-blown independence backed up with the democratic rhetoric of the victorious Entente powers. Far from inevitable, as the Polish Second Republic's received history would have it, the new Poland of 1918 came to many as a surprise and to many others as an unwelcome presence, sowing seeds for future conflict.⁵⁴

Guido Hausmann relates the wartime experience of Ukraine, which, like Poland, constituted a small nation in terms of its relative powerlessness in European politics rather than its size. Ukrainian-speakers were split between the Habsburg and Russian Empires and thus, like the Poles, fought on opposite sides during the War. Hausmann demonstrates that the February Revolution of 1917 in Russia allowed for the development of a distinct Ukrainian army under Russian authority and resulted in the rapid "Ukrainization" of its soldiers. Ukrainian nationalists were also active in promoting their cause and courted the support of the Central Powers for an expansive new state drawing heavily on Russian territory. In the wake of the October Revolution, the Central Powers authorized the establishment of a Ukrainian state for the first time, but their defeat in war led to its collapse in December 1918. The experience of World War I, Hausmann concludes, led Ukrainian nationalists to realize the precariousness of the Ukrainian nation-building process, while at the same time remaining committed to it.⁵⁵

Part Three focuses on colonial peripheries, which we have defined earlier in the introductory chapter and which we understand here both as formal colonies of European empires and also as regions far removed from the metropolises that became objects of foreign interventions for ideological and/or strategic purposes. The

similarities and connections between European and non-European regions situated at the periphery of the centres of power at the time of World War I becomes particularly evident when we look at the geographical areas covered by the chapters in this section. The case-studies come from colonial peripheries in three continents, and focus specifically on the Arctic region in Northern Russia, on the Tatar and Kirgiz steppes in the eastern fringes of Europe, on Turkestan in Central Asia, and on both North Africa and subequatorial East Africa.

Part Three starts with a chapter by Steven Balbirnie, which epitomizes the transnational approach characteristic of this volume, since it looks at the influence of ideas and practices of colonial warfare learned by British officers and troops in India and Ireland and applied to the Russian Civil War. Balbirnie looks specifically at the landing of British troops in Murmansk in Northern Russia in 1918 and interprets this event as both a chapter in the history of World War I and also a chapter in British imperial history in a peripheral region of Europe. Even though the action had the specific objective of interrupting critical supplies to the Germans, the British army essentially conducted a small colonial war with a relatively small number of soldiers. As in Britain's colonial wars in Asia and Africa, the British army relied on the support of native auxiliaries and effectively employed British imperial tactics against the Russian Bolsheviks' guerrilla warfare.⁵⁶

The next two chapters in this section focus on the Russian steppes and Turkestan as important case-studies of how World War I affected local populations in colonial peripheries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Danielle Ross looks at the traditional societies of the Tatar and the Kirgiz, at the periphery of the Russian Empire, where oral and musical traditions were much more effective than written means of propaganda, given the region's widespread illiteracy. Ross focuses on the

particular use of songs and musical compositions by successive groups such as monarchists, nationalists, and finally Bolsheviks as a means to convince Tatar peasants and Kirgiz shepherds to join first the Russian effort in the War and then the Soviet side in the Russian Civil War. Ultimately, Ross concludes that “while in some ways the Great War and the Russian Revolution precipitated a decolonization of the Russian Empire, these events also refined and expanded practices of government-minority relations that were born under the old regime but were retained under the new one.”⁵⁷ In the following chapter, David Noack looks at Turkestan as another colonial periphery of the Russian Empire—one at the centre of the Great Powers’ ambitions in Central Asia since the late nineteenth-century’s “Great Game”—and at the impact of German and British plans for control of the area during World War I. Following an uprising by Turkestan’s Muslim population and the subsequent collapse of Russian power in 1917, Germany planned an invasion, which the British opposed with two subsequent expeditions, fearing the fall of a vitally strategic area located in Central Asia in enemy’s hands. Subsequently, in 1918 and 1919, the British Indian Army, headed by Wilfrid Malleon, actively supported the Whites against the Reds in the Russian Civil War fought in the area.⁵⁸

With the next two chapters in this section, our focus moves from Asia to Africa, and specifically to French Tunisia and Algeria as examples of colonial peripheries in the North African region in which anti-colonial movements anticipating future nationalist aspirations arose in the wake of World War I. Christopher Rominger shows how, at the time of World War I, as a result of the silence imposed by the French Protectorate over Tunisian papers and public opinion in the period 1912-1920, historiography has overlooked the presence of important instances of opposition to the French war effort by Tunisian anti-colonial activists. Looking at previously little

researched documents, Rominger focuses his analysis specifically on Mukhtar al-Ayari, who fought for France as a volunteer soldier during the War and then became a communist and anti-colonial Tunisian nationalist. In his chapter, Rominger concludes that the War itself was instrumental in the emergence of voices such as that of al-Ayari, which dissented from the view of the largely European Tunisian elite.⁵⁹ In his chapter, Donal Hassett looks at neighbouring Algeria, France's most important colony, and at the effect that World War I had on both the indigenous and European populations there. He argues that the War had a transformative effect, as a result of the unprecedented experience of large numbers of European and indigenous Algerians who fought for France in the European fronts. Hassett concludes that this experience helped to shape the political life of Algeria through the people's engagement in political debates in which European and indigenous leaders confronted each other on the crucial issues of equality and difference while "they recognized the potential to negotiate a new form of imperial citizenship". At the same time, though, Algerians were deeply divided over support for the opposite aims of defence of political rights for the indigenous communities and of creation of a European-dominated autonomous Algeria.⁶⁰

In the final chapter, Aude Chanson looks at German East Africa as a representative case-study of a colonial periphery in the subequatorial area of the African continent during World War I. Chanson looks first at how German forces succeeded in fending off the Allies from Germany's largest colony until November 1918, despite being few in number and completely surrounded by Allied colonies. She then focuses specifically on the impact of the four-year war period on the majority local African populations, which were extremely diverse, both ethnically and linguistically, and on the German minority's treatment of them. Looking also at the

indigenous populations' response, Chanson shows how the needs of the War led to a reconversion of the economy of German East Africa with the privileging of newly established war industries over agricultural production, while, at the same time, the war effort also led to the employment of large numbers of local *Askaris* as German troops. Ultimately, Chanson concludes that World War I had a major negative impact on the local population of German East Africa, both in terms of human cost and in terms of disruption of environment and infrastructures, phenomena that made the lives of ordinary people extremely difficult after the end of the War.⁶¹

Ultimately, we would hope that this volume demonstrates the value of an interconnected history of World War I. Our work embraces the current trend towards transnational approaches to world history, which have interconnectedness as their presiding concern.⁶² The interconnected nature of the War on a global scale was particularly highlighted by the rapid spread of the 1918-1919 Influenza Pandemic to all corners of the earth to devastating effect. Indeed the difficulties faced by Great Powers in managing the pandemic crisis exposed them to challenges from colonial populations in particular. For instance, colonial mismanagement of the pandemic stimulated indigenous peoples in Western Samoa to demand colonial reform and ultimately greater autonomy from the British Empire.⁶³ Following this example, we can envision future studies of small nations and colonial peripheries that focus on the wartime experience of groups, such as gypsies, Berbers and Bengali, which were doubly marginalized by colonial powers and neighbouring ethnic groups. It is our aspiration that scholars will generate transnational research that will continue to advance our understanding of World War I as an integrated, global phenomenon.

¹ See specifically Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert, ed. *Capital Cities at War: Paris, London, Berlin*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1999-2007).

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³ Ian Tyrell, *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective since 1789* (New York, 2007), 3; Jay Winter, “The Transnational History of the First World War,” *Teaching History* 156 (2014): 20-21.

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