The University at War, 1914–25

Britain, France and the United States

TOMÁS IRISH

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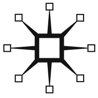

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List of Abbreviations

AAUP	American Association of University Professors
AGS	American Geographical Society
AN	Archives Nationales
AUU	American University Union
BIR	Board of Inventions and Research
BLSC	Bodleian Library Special Collections
CCAC	Churchill College Archive Centre
CEIP	Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
CPI	Committee on Public Information
CUACF	Columbia University Archives Central Files
CUAWWI	Columbia University Archives World War One Collection
CURBML	Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library
DSIR	Department of Scientific and Industrial Research
ENS	École Normale Supérieure
HUA	Harvard University Archives
IAA	International Association of Academies
ICIC	International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation
IRC	International Research Council
IUA	International Union of Academies
IWM	Imperial War Museum
JYA	Junior Year Abroad
KCAC	King's College Archive Centre
MID	Munitions Inventions Department
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MUA	McGill University Archives
NCF	No Conscription Fellowship
NLI	National Library of Ireland
NRC	National Research Council

OTC	Officer Training Corps
PPE	Philosophy, Politics and Economics
RFC	Royal Flying Corps
ROTC	Reserve Officer Training Corps
SATC	Student Army Training Corps
SJCLC	St. John's College Library, Cambridge
TCDDM	Trinity College Dublin Department of Manuscripts
TCLC	Trinity College Library, Cambridge
TNA	The National Archives, Kew Gardens, London
UCL	University College London
UDC	Union of Democratic Control
UGC	University Grants Committee

Introduction

'This War', wrote the British historian and politician H. A. L. Fisher in 1917, 'in a degree far higher than any conflict in the whole course of history, has been a battle of brains.'[1] A battle of brains may seem a peculiar way to describe the conflict of 1914–18; after all, the war is synonymous with the death and disablement of millions of soldiers as well as battlefield deadlock which meant that the main theatre of war, Europe's Western Front, saw little movement from late 1914 until the middle of 1918.[2] What Fisher was describing was a much greater phenomenon by which intellect – in its many guises – became subsumed by and engaged in the war. The mobilization of knowledge in wartime became most apparent at universities and that process forms the subject of this book. Fisher's 'battle of brains' will be interpreted in its broadest sense to show how intellect, the institutions that nurtured it, and the individuals who practiced intellectual endeavours became combatants in the First World War.

The Great War transformed the world in myriad ways. It was a conflict greater in scope than anything that had come before and, by its termination in 1918, had come to encompass whole societies, radicalizing warfare and forcing states to mobilize the entirety of their national resources in order to both wage the war and finance its prosecution. The contribution of universities to the war was essential in making the conflict radically different to wars of the nineteenth century and in establishing new means of waging the wars that followed. Universities became vital resources of knowledge, simultaneously contributing to the broadening scope of the war and helping to solve problems prompted by the new, increasingly 'total', form of warfare of 1914–18.[3] The application of academic knowledge and resources to state-led prosecution of a war effort posed a direct challenge to academic self-understandings

and threatened notions of scholarly impartiality both during and following the war and forms a central theme of this work.

This book is simultaneously a contribution to the history of war and the history of higher education. In examining the experience of the latter, it implicitly makes arguments about the former, demonstrating how the First World War became much more than a military conflict waged on remote battlefields. The war is often taken as a hiatus in the history of educational institutions where classrooms and lecture halls were emptied, international connections were severed, and the usual functions of universities were severely curtailed, if not halted outright. This book will challenge this notion by arguing that universities were more than lecture halls, examinations, and libraries; they were communities, formed of students, staff, and alumni. Communal identity manifested itself differently depending on the institution in question; however, in general the bonds tying members of university communities together were significant and long lasting. In wartime, as the integrity of these communities was challenged by displacement and death, the strength of these ties became more apparent; normal university function at the institution itself may have ceased, but its members did their utmost to maintain something of institutional life, irrespective of where they happened to find themselves in the world.

The community framework applies equally to the wider world of scholarship. The outbreak of war is traditionally seen as marking the end of the 'long nineteenth century', where information was exchanged quickly and efficiently and scholarly exchange flourished. The turn of the century was notable for the rapid growth of exchange mechanisms between scholars and universities in different countries. The outbreak of the war, which saw a breakdown of official international exchanges between scholars and institutions on opposed sides, did not end pre-war internationalism outright. At an informal level, ties between scholars in different countries were often much more durable than has been credited, while at an official level, the war inaugurated a move to redefine international exchange in accordance with wartime geopolitical configurations.

The invocation of the idea of academic communities requires a shift in emphasis from traditional institutional histories, which tend to be narrowly focused on the administrative workings of universities.[4] While the book looks at official university and college records, it also makes extensive use of scholarly correspondence, which in turn shifts the focus away from the bricks and mortar of the institutions themselves to wherever scholars happened to find themselves in the world. In this

sense, the university was not necessarily fixed to any one location, and could be imagined and performed in foreign climes.

Why universities?

Few institutions were as profoundly impacted by the First World War as universities. There were three key axes of university experience in wartime that render higher education not only worthy of wider study, but central to understanding the changes wrought by the First World War.

First, universities were home to tens of thousands of young men of military age who were earmarked for mobilization as junior officers. The mobilization of young men into the officer corps in 1914 and 1915 through universities reflected the assumptions underpinning the early prosecution of the war where the moral attributes of educated men were seen as essential qualities in leading men at the front in what was assumed to be a relatively quick and decisive conflict. Moreover, in August 1914, relatively little attention was paid to the applications of scholarly expertise, which was in turn necessitated by the end of the war of movement and the strains which the prosecution of modern warfare placed on national resources. The mass mobilization of student populations into belligerent armies from 1914 transformed the university campus and the scholarly community, causing a rupture from which it would take almost a decade to recover.

Universities were also centres for both research and teaching, forming the second axis of wartime experience. Research would intensify as the war effort became more determined by specialization and the applications of specific branches of learning to war-related problems. The mobilization of intellect was one of the central themes of the war and one which distinguished it from previous conflicts. By the war's end, a division of labour had taken place in all belligerent societies, and this was especially pronounced amongst academics as specialist knowledge was leveraged by national governments in wartime.

The importance of the university can also be seen through its international connectedness. Academia has long been marked by mobility, and notions such as the Grand Tour had been established for centuries before 1914. The academic world took on many of its distinguishing features in the half-century before 1900, as disciplines were codified, institutions were founded, and international associations were established. Scholarship benefited from the mid-nineteenth century revolution in communications and academic networks became increasingly global in their reach. Within these networks, agency emanated from individuals,

ideas, publications, and institutions; all were the lifeblood which animated scholarly networks before the First World War.[5] Universities were uniquely well-connected institutions and this connectedness was simultaneously threatened by the outbreak of war while also constituting a resource which was itself subject to wartime mobilization.[6]

These three axes of university experience in wartime, which might be broadly described as the local, national, and international, are rarely, if ever, addressed together when discussing university history in this period. Studies of universities and university academics in the period are usually framed nationally, while the study of academics has been part of an overlapping but distinct focus on intellectuals or disciplines.[7] Institutional histories, with some notable exceptions, tend to be narrow in their outlook and often hagiographical in approach.[8] Recently, there has been a move towards a more dynamic and networked approach to the field, epitomized by the works of Tamson Pietsch, Thomas Weber, and Elisabeth Fordham.[9] This book will examine the multifaceted experience of universities in wartime by examining the physical space of the university, the function of the university, those who constituted the university community, and how each of these elements interacted in different ways. In so doing, a greater measure of wartime change can be discerned, and, moreover, a greater sense of what a university was – and is – can be broached.

Even such a relatively broad conceptualization is, by definition, selective in its approach. The book uses scholarly networks to explore certain themes and often these did not intersect with certain issues, institutions or disciplines. This book does not deal with gender and higher education, a subject with a burgeoning literature.[10] Similarly, the book does not deal with all academic disciplines, and takes case studies (such as history and the natural sciences) at certain points to exemplify wider arguments. Professions, such as law and medicine, are largely omitted as they had important hubs away from the university (at hospitals and courts, for example) and did not penetrate the scholarly networks in question here to a large extent. Finally, there is a degree of selectivity with regard to the choice of universities; the book looks at scholarly networks which reflected both a strong institutional identity as well as a well-developed international connectedness; as a consequence, the focus is often – although not exclusively – on elite institutions such as Oxford and Cambridge in Britain, the University of Paris in France, and Harvard and Columbia universities in the United States. These institutions gravitated towards one another; proof of this came during the war itself and especially at the Paris Peace Conference, where scholars from these

institutions were especially prominent. While these examples are placed in their wider national and international contexts throughout, and while they often exemplify wider national trends, they cannot always be taken as entirely representative national examples. National university systems are simply too diverse to make statements that are wholly representative, but, as will be demonstrated, certain overarching themes informed the wartime experience of most universities considered here.

Britain, France, and the United States

This book will examine the experience of academic communities in Britain, France, and the United States during the First World War. It is a comparative work which is at the same time transnational, owing to the inter-connectedness of academics, institutions, and disciplines spanning many national borders in this period. However, the decision to focus upon the three primary allies during the Great War – and to exclude Germany – requires justification. The choice of Britain, France, and the United States as points of comparison derives from the fact that all three nations fought the same war on the same side, utilizing many of the same methods. All of this was essentially improvised, and a comparison of Britain and France (and later the United States) shows how this manifested itself in various ways in different cases; moreover, allied liaison and collaboration demonstrates how 'new' wartime mobilization was, and how contemporaries searched desperately for precedents and guidance from fellow allies.

The choice of the main allies is important for a second reason. A central argument of this book is that an inter-allied component to cultural and material mobilization for war had emerged by 1917 which was simultaneously vital to both the winning of the war and in imagining the peace. Alliance was conceived and constructed not only politically and militarily, but also culturally, and universities were central actors in this process. By examining the development of cultural alliance, the United States of America, which only entered the war in 1917 and whose importance before that year has traditionally been underestimated, is restored to a more central position.[11] It is argued here that the American academic community mobilized in the autumn of 1914 much as their European counterparts did, and were fighting a proxy war for most of the conflict, a consequence of the networked scholarly world of the early twentieth century.

The inter-allied component of the study explains the absence of Germany. Germany and the Central Powers were officially ostracized

from the rest of the academic world in 1914 (although some informal contacts remained). Thereafter, many academics in allied countries both denigrated and undermined Germany's cultural achievement, now presented as a 'Fallen Idol'. The vitriolic assault on Germany's cultural heritage was a characteristic of the first half of the war, where national ideas became weapons wielded by professors. However, the denigration of German scholarship was a transient and unsustainable phenomenon, forged in the heat of war and lacking substantial basis. As the war developed the negative demonization of Germany proved unsustainable; it was substituted for a positive expression of allied cultural values and an attempt to reorient traditional flows of information and scholars by tying higher education in allied nations closer together. This wartime development – essentially, the flipside to the demonization of German scholarship in 1914–15 – has never been examined and had a profound long term influence in the composition and structure of the League of Nations and learned societies in the 1920s, as well as in systems of higher education as they exist in the present day. German scholars and German scholarship cast a long shadow over allied cultural politics during the First World War. They were present through their absence and this absence informed attempts to structure an inter-allied academic world during the war and beyond.

Universities in 1914

On the outbreak of the First World War, universities in Europe and North America were going through a period of intense modernization and coming, via different routes, to take on many of their modern characteristics.[12] The revolutions in technology and communications shrank the world, facilitating greater exchange of information and mobility of people and the birth of internationalism.[13] In this context, universities and scholarship flourished; by the outbreak of war, disciplines such as geography, political science, sociology, psychology, history, philosophy and the natural sciences had emerged as discrete professional pursuits, structured by the existence of faculties, departments, journals, and learned associations. Universities, too, became sites of symbolic ceremonials, with anniversaries and honorary degree ceremonies forming cosmopolitan displays of scholarly collaboration, transnational connectedness, national pre-eminence and institutional uniqueness. While scholarship and institutions were developing internationally in broadly similar manners in the second half of the nineteenth century, institutions, and the contexts within which they existed, had some

key differences in the three cases to be examined here. These differing national contexts would prove to be fundamental in understanding wartime experience.

Education was a central policy of the French Third Republic and the reform of higher education was integral to this. The German victory of 1870, widely seen as 'the victory of the Prussian schoolmaster', prompted an overhaul of national education, intended to create national unity and support for the new state.[14] Universities, which had been disestablished during the Revolution, were formally re-established in 1896, meaning that the various faculties in a city were united under the umbrella of the university.[15] The French system was highly centralized and closely monitored by the state. Moreover, it was dominated by Paris, the seat of both political and intellectual power. Evidence of the latter can be seen in the existence in Paris of the Sorbonne, the Institut de France, and the major intellectual journals such as the *Revue des Deux Mondes* and the *Revue de Paris*. Universities were funded and administered by a chain of command which extended from the Minister of Public Instruction in Paris and radiated outwards to the provincial institutions. Leading academics overlapped considerably with politicians in France, with frequent movement from one sphere to the other.

The republican reform of the university was more than just structural; it was ideological too. University curricula were radically reformed reflecting the growing influence of positivism and science.[16] All of this was to the detriment of traditional education which was rooted in the study of the classics and boasted a religious element. The Third Republic was a secular state, underscored by the 1905 separation of church and state, and higher education was the jewel in its crown. As the reform of education was republican, university academics were generally friendly to republican politics and shared many of the same cultural values.[17] The university in France was a uniquely political and politicized institution, unlike its counterparts in Britain or the United States.

The corollary to this meant that for enemies of the Third Republic, of whom there were many by 1914, the university was reviled as an institution. The reform of education had privileged scientific education over the traditional emphasis on the classics, and thus traditionalists in society – Catholics, Royalists and many conservatives – attacked the university. The traumatic Dreyfus Affair further entrenched the fault-lines between secular, scientific, and republican university academics and their anti-republican, Christian, and conservative rivals.[18] The dominance of Paris, the centralization of the system, and the traditional prestige of the Sorbonne, meant that the latter came in for particular

vitriol and was subjected to a number of polemical broadsides in the years before 1914. In 1913 the *Action Française* journalist Pierre Lasserre criticized what he called the Sorbonne's 'scientific materialism' which emphasized the accumulation of information over great ideas.[19] Henri Massis and Alfred de Tarde, writing in 1911 under the pseudonym 'Agathon', took the Sorbonne to task for embracing the scientific method to the detriment of the classics, claiming it overly democratized education and would allow in too many mediocre students, ultimately preventing the emergence of a national elite.[20] By 1914, the French university, and especially the Sorbonne, was besieged.[21]

The nineteenth century saw much diversification of higher education in Britain. At the beginning of the century, England had only two universities, Oxford and Cambridge. These venerable institutions existed primarily to train students for entry into the clergy and the professions. A combination of government commissions, pressure from new utilitarian colleges, and desire for change on the part of resident academics led to the secularization of academic posts and the encouragement of research according to the German model. Slowly, Oxbridge began to change. However, Oxbridge, the preserve of public school elite, while boasting political and professional influence, did not reflect British society at large, especially in the wake of industrialization.

British universities encompassed more than Oxford and Cambridge. The Scottish universities also had a long tradition but had developed differently, and were generally less elitist, grooming students for careers in teaching and traditional professions.[22] The Irish universities followed their own peculiar path. In England, new universities and colleges emerged which challenged (and sometimes imitated) the traditional hegemony of Oxford and Cambridge. The non-denominational University College at London (1828) and Owens College in Manchester (1851) were founded in opposition to this dominance. New institutions also sprung up which were in line with the Anglican Oxbridge ideal, such as Durham (1832) and Birmingham (1843).[23] At the same time, many more institutions offering more applied and utilitarian courses emerged, but often at the behest of private businessmen, and not the state. Many of these colleges became universities in the period before 1914. In general, the utility of referring to a coherent British 'system' of higher education in 1914 is limited; universities performed different functions, were governed differently, and funded in myriad ways. This diffuse structure informed wartime mobilizations and was, in turn,re-shaped by the wartime experience, with the state taking a more hands-on role in higher education – across the board – by the war's end.

Higher education in America took its own distinctive forms. Rather than referring to a single American university system, American higher education can be best understood as several co-existing systems. The older universities, such as Yale, Princeton, Columbia, and Harvard, were founded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on the model of Oxford and Cambridge, primarily to train clergymen. These were transformed into research orientated universities in the half century before 1914, a process spurred by the establishment of the Johns Hopkins graduate school in Baltimore in 1876 – the first in the United States – and the expansion of the American city. There was also a large number of smaller liberal arts colleges, mainly founded in the aftermath of independence, which looked to the example of Oxbridge, but retained their own distinctive character.[24] More significantly, in 1862 Congress passed the Morrill Act which paved the way for the establishment of Land Grant, or as they later became known, state colleges. These were initially established to provide a more utilitarian training, especially in agriculture and the mechanical arts. They too expanded rapidly in the following decades with many becoming elite research universities. By 1914, some American institutions drew funding from state legislatures, while others remained privately run and funded institutions. The distinction between private and public universities is not always clear; the fourteen self-styled elite universities who formed the American Association of Universities in 1900 were a mix of private and public institutions, from Harvard, Columbia and Johns Hopkins on the one hand to the Universities of Wisconsin, California, and Michigan on the other.[25] The eleven largest research universities in this period were also a mix of private and public institutions.[26] Moreover, while some public universities felt the intrusion of the state legislature in their affairs, others conducted themselves like private institutions. With the exception of the Morrill Act, the lack of federal engagement in and regulation of American higher education left universities free to innovate in the fields of fundraising and international relations, with the latter being most pronounced at the private, east coast institutions which would become known as the Ivy League.[27] These international connections took on a great importance during the First World War.

While many shared features were common amongst these institutions, there were important factors which distinguished the respective national examples. Nomenclature is especially pertinent. In France, the term 'university' did not refer to an institution of higher education. From the time of the Revolution until 1896, the university as a discrete institution did not exist in France, and the term *université*

was taken to refer to the system of secondary education implemented under Napoleon. Indeed, the 'university' did not exist as an abstract concept, and an adjective or a modifier was always required to refer to institutions of higher education. For example, one would refer to 'les universités françaises' if describing the national network of universities, or to the specific institution, such as l'Université de Bordeaux. Similarly, the French term *universitaire* did not specifically refer to the 'university man', as one might assume, given the prominence of the latter phrase in England. The *universitaire* has been defined as either all those involved in secondary education, or in secondary and higher education.[28] Here, for clarity and consistency of expression, the terminology used in English-speaking contexts, which was broadly speaking interchangeable between American and British cases, will be used to refer both to universities and those who worked at them in all three examples.

Comparative history requires sensitivity to the development of words and concepts in different national contexts.[29] For example, the history of intellectuals has grown at different paces in different countries in the past decades, with the object being to identify the birth of the intellectual as a social type and establish how intellectuals developed a consciousness of their own action.[30] Intellectual engagement in wartime, and the question of whether it was justifiable as part of one's professional vocation, is another theme of this book. The First World War was a cultural conflict which engaged members of the academic community from the outset (Chapter One). University professors increasingly spoke up – either in newspapers, journals, or through the publication of books – to address war issues with reference to the expertise which they possessed in their respective disciplines.

Intellectual engagement of this sort emerged in contrasting ways in different national contexts. In France, the use of the term intellectual – as a noun – traces its origins to the Dreyfus Affair. In January 1898, *L'Aurore* published the so-called 'Manifesto of the Intellectuals', which boasted the signatures of 1,200 academics, journalists, and artists. This was not the first mass petition in modern France, but it was the first time that the qualifications and positions of academics had been invoked in a context outside of their usual domain, in an attempt to add credence to their defence of Dreyfus.[31] The term 'intellectual' quickly became politicized and divisive; it was embraced by – and pejoratively applied to – Dreyfusards and left-wing figures in France. It made its way into British English with specific reference to French politics and slowly began to acquire a greater meaning.[32] In the United States, the term's importation

has not been dealt with whatsoever in secondary literature.[33] While the term began to be used in a more general sense during the First World War, and in so doing, freeing itself of its politicized French origins, understanding this wider cultural context is imperative, and much care needs to be taken in labelling individuals or groups of the period as intellectuals. Thus, the term intellectual (noun) will used here either when referring to a specific contemporary usage or as an adjective to describe this new process of engagement. However, the term 'academic' will be frequently utilized to describe the protagonists of this book. This will be taken to refer to men who spent some portion of their lives working at university institutions and who identified, either through their social networks, their public utterances, or their research preoccupations, as members of a university community. The noun 'academic' was infrequently used by contemporaries but provides a useful umbrella term.

The book is organized into three parts, each reflecting a distinct stage in the war's progress and the engagement of universities in it. Part I looks at the period 1914–16, which was essentially marked by reactive and improvised responses to the outbreak of war. Academic engagement in this period was primarily undertaken on national lines, and scholars were slow in collaborating with fellow allies. While the United States features in these chapters, the emphasis is on the British and French experiences as both nations were, unlike the Americans, participants in the war at that point. Part II takes the period 1916–18 which was distinguished by a greater sense of allied collaboration – underscored by American participation in the war – and an increasingly forward-looking attitude amongst academics and politicians regarding scholarly mobilizations, the role of the university in society, and the peace of the world. Part III looks at the legacy of the war for both individuals and institutions, as well as the international community of scholars. The book finishes in 1925, the year of the Locarno Treaties which began the process of normalizing international relations in Europe.

Part I
Mobilizing for War

1
The University Goes to War

Shortly before midnight on the evening of 25 August 1914, German soldiers set fire to the library at the University of Louvain using petrol and inflammable tablets. The blaze soon took hold and within ten hours the seventeenth century building was reduced to 'four walls and ashes,' its 300,000 volumes incinerated. Many of the other university buildings were destroyed in the process. The destruction of the library took place amidst rampant atrocities committed by German troops not only in Louvain – where 248 civilians were killed in three days – but at points across Belgium during the German Army's advance in mid-to-late August 1914. There was no one cause for this violence against civilians; in some instances it was intended to deter civilian resistance, in others as reprisals, while in some cases it emerged from misplaced fears of civilian aggression. In some instances it emerged organically while in others it was ordered from above.[1]

The grisly and still-shocking story of German atrocities committed in August 1914 placed a university at its heart. The University of Louvain could rightfully boast of being one of Europe's 'ancient universities'; dating from 1425, it claimed fraternity with institutions of a similar vintage across the continent who saw themselves as embodying the Republic of Letters. The library's special collections were significant in their own right, and, by the beginning of September 1914, gone forever.[2] The destruction of the university library of Louvain quickly came to epitomize German violence, and transgression of the norms of war, in Belgium; amidst all of the atrocity stories and rumours which circulated in allied and neutral countries, this one had the most resonance and the greatest longevity.

The events at Louvain quickly became central to the war's narrative. The images of the burnt-out shell of the university library demonstrated

that universities were on the front line; knowledge was literally at war. After all, the university was a site of cultural, not military significance. News of the incident travelled quickly, outraging learned and non-learned opinion alike; it was a rallying point in an escalating propaganda war. That the institution in question was a university was significant for two reasons. First, the destruction of the library by definition engaged an international audience, such was the networked and transnational nature of the university world. Second, and more pertinently, it immediately rendered the university – and the wider academic world – participants in the war, whether they desired it or not.

* * *

Europe went to war on 4 August 1914, the culmination of a complex diplomatic crisis which rapidly encompassed all of the main European powers. The outbreak of war came as a shock to the academic world; universities were on their summer vacation and scholars were scattered across Europe and the world enjoying their time away. There was a staggered response to the outbreak of war; scholars had their travels disrupted and were immediately engaged with the war's issues. At the same time, universities – as institutions – had a period of almost two months to decide the nature of their engagement with the conflict.

The outbreak of war was a surprise. It also came with a number of assumptions. In the French case, the war was more tangible as France was invaded, but it was still initially expected to be relatively short. From October 1914, with the stabilization of the fronts, people began to conceive of a longer conflict.[3] While there was greater physical distance between Britain and the war, the latter immediately made its presence felt across all strata of society, through the mobilization and departure of troops, encounters with refugees and injured soldiers, and the phenomenon of the 'enemy within.'[4] People speculated over the probable duration of the war in Britain, with most hoping that it would be over sooner rather than later and assuming it would end decisively.[5] American distance from the war – allied to their neutrality until 1917 – facilitated 'unique opportunities for reflection,' and American elites were quickly consumed by the European conflict and what it could mean for their country.[6]

Scholarly responses must be understood in their specific national contexts as well as in the wider international context. Most academics in these countries shared a sense of outrage at news of German atrocities in Belgium and specifically in Louvain. At the same time, their responses were frequently shaped by their membership of distinct

national communities and the context in which each nation entered – or did not enter – the war.

Fernand Baldensperger wrote that at the Sorbonne, 'no sudden passage … from ordinary activities to new emergencies was noticeable' with the German invasion on 4 August 1914.[7] Given the summer vacation, most students and many staff were away; the real transformation was to follow. However, the character of Paris immediately changed; young men, conscripted into the armed forces, left the city en masse and it became, in the words of one observer, 'impossible to walk down any street or avenue in the city without feeling the sting of sudden tears.'[8] The invasion of France, taken in tandem with the fact that France had a system of compulsory military service, meant that there was little reflection upon support for the war. The stakes were simply much higher in France in the early weeks of war, and people quietly but resolutely accepted what needed to be done.

The sense in which the war came as a surprise was encapsulated by H.A.L. Fisher, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield, who wrote 'there has never been a great war with so little antecedent preparation of public opinion.'[9] At Cambridge University, a prominent anti-war movement had been building in the weeks before 4 August. A manifesto featuring the names of professors from Cambridge, Oxford, Aberdeen, and Harvard universities was issued on 1 August claiming that 'at this juncture we consider ourselves justified in protesting against being drawn into the struggle with a nation so near akin to our own,' and pointed out that British academic culture was indebted to German scholarship.[10] Sixty-one academics signed a manifesto on 3 August urging Britain to remain neutral in the 'existing situation,' adding that 'at the present juncture no vital interest of this country is endangered such as would justify our participation in a war.'[11] The German invasion of Belgium on 4 August changed everything.

Of those who had signed the Cambridge manifesto, only Bertrand Russell, a lecturer at Trinity College, would continue to publicly speak out against the war.[12] There was a volte-face amongst the majority of signatories, even by Denys Winstanley, the Trinity historian who had aided Russell in compiling the document. Winstanley wrote later that 'it would have been very difficult for this country to have avoided going to war.'[13] Russell wrote on 5 August that he was 'terribly alone' and of how one of his colleagues who had been instrumental in compiling the petition had 'gone over completely because of Belgium.'[14]

The almost immediate and complete dissipation of the Cambridge anti-war movement from 4 August shows how academics had no special

foresight into the course of events. However, an important distinction should be made between support for intervention in support of Belgium and support for the war as it developed.[15] Many of the Cambridge academics who changed their position became pro-intervention in that instance; however, their attitude to the war, like that of other scholars, would evolve with the progress of the conflict itself.

The outbreak of war was not such a defining event in American universities. American scholars observed events in Europe with a sense of detachment and were not galvanized into activity until the aftermath of the destruction of the university library of Louvain and the beginning of the cultural war. Initially, American scholars mused about how a European war might impact their day-to-day running. Here, predictions of the probable length of the war became important to the university's future plans. Harvard University's exchange professor to Germany for 1914–15, Albert Bushnall Hart, wrote to the university president, Abbott Lawrence Lowell, that he expected the war to last six months. Consequently, he anticipated that professorial exchanges could be suspended for a year.[16] As such, cautious observation of the European situation marked initial American responses to the outbreak of war.

What is a university?

The question of a university's function has vexed theorists and administrators alike from John Henry Newman in the mid-nineteenth century to the present day.[17] This was very much a live debate in the early twentieth century; in 1907, Arthur Balfour's inaugural address as Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh made an impassioned plea for the full integration of research into university agendas.[18] The outbreak of war and the immediate uses which universities were put to, as well as public discussion of the role of universities in warfare, continued these debates. The early uses of universities implicitly demonstrated what scholars and politicians felt the function of the university was as well as its duties to the state, and, at the same time, expressed an assumed understanding of the nature of the war itself.

In late August 1914, a debate about university function emerged in the letters page of *The Times* newspaper. Cyprian Bridge, a senior naval officer, argued that British universities should be coerced into having all of their students enlist, either as officers or amongst the rank-and-file, and hinted that if this were done, universities ought to be closed outright.[19] This letter provoked a strong reaction from heads of academic institutions. From Cambridge, Arthur Shipley, the Master

of Christ's College, argued that students were enlisting for the armed forces and as such no coercion was required.[20] The Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, T.B. Strong, wrote that 'if I were to "close the university" and turn all our men into the ranks of Lord Kitchener's army now being enrolled, I should make an inappreciable difference to the recruiting now and extinguish all hope for a succession of officers.'[21] At this point it was accepted that the universities would train officers; these men of high moral and intellectual qualities would be integral to winning the war.

The institution of Officer Training Corps (OTC) at universities solidified this association. These were first set up in 1907 at universities and Public Schools and provided those who undertook their course of work with a certificate which would facilitate their entry into the Special Reserve of Officers. The University OTCs enabled students to train in artillery, cavalry, engineering, medical and infantry sections.[22] They soon became popular for their own sake, and were another site for the cultivation of group camaraderie. Their popularity was also the consequence of rising international tensions; before 1914, thirty per cent of undergraduates enrolled in OTCs at Oxford and Cambridge, and there was great enthusiasm for the scheme beyond the ancient universities.[23]

As OTCs already existed at most universities it meant that when it came to the provision of officers for the armies, universities were ready to quickly mobilize their human resources for war. As early as 5 August 1914, a committee formed at Cambridge to deal with the selection and recommendation of commissions for the army. This was the result of a plan implemented two years previously and involved the assessment of current and former cadets of the OTC.[24] It was much the same story at other universities; the critical issue in the first months of the war in Britain was manpower, and universities had a key role to play.

Things were different in France. Conscription meant that it was never the responsibility of the university to assess students' suitability for commissions or to facilitate their entry into the army. As war broke out during the summer vacations, the French university had very little to do with the entry of students into military service. It seems, however, that the French university, and its component institutions, took greater interest and played a greater role in a student's wellbeing once they had been mobilized. One such example is that of historian Ernest Lavisse, *directeur* of the École Normale Supérieure (ENS) in Paris.[25] He kept detailed records of the activities and whereabouts of former students who had gone to war.[26] In October 1914 Lavisse compiled a list detailing the language skills, generally in English or German, held by *normaliens*.

This was communicated to the military authorities, the intention being to recommend those who might be suitable for work as military interpreters or translators.[27] While there is no record of the response of the military authorities, this shows again that the École Normale Supérieure had a great interest in ensuring that its students – and their specialized training – were being utilized in a way that marked them as different from other soldiers who had not come through the institution. While this is but one example from one elite institution within the University of Paris, it does highlight an essential difference between the British and French experiences. The priority in the former was to get students into the armies, while the system of conscription meant that French institutions were more concerned with the wellbeing of their students subsequent to their mobilization.

It was immediately understood in both Britain and France that universities, as nurseries of the social elites, could most strikingly participate in the war through the provision of junior officers. However, there were differences between the two cases. The military culture of Britain before the First World War – in the case of the officer class – put an emphasis on values traditionally associated with the social elites who attended the public schools and ancient universities.[28] Meanwhile, the French Republic utilized a system of universal conscription. The idea of a citizen army took its inspiration from the *levée-en-masse* in the French Revolutionary Wars and posited that military service was an integral component of citizenship.[29] Citizenship entailed equality of service and thus those with academic skills would be mobilized the same as those without; this was the problem confronting Lavisse at the ENS, and, as the war progressed, the French authorities more generally.

The answer to the question implicitly posed in September 1914 of what a university should do in wartime was simple: it was to supply men. This had consequences. Emptied of students, the university campus offered a perfect facility for the establishment of military hospitals and for the billeting of troops en route to the front. Military hospitals were quickly established in empty college buildings at Cambridge, Oxford, Birmingham, and University College London.[30] As early as 6 August part of the ENS was turned into a military hospital furnished with one hundred beds.[31] Once term began anew in October, Lavisse wrote that the presence of the hospital at the ENS made the running of the institution 'certainly difficult, if not impossible.'[32] Similar disruption to college buildings could be seen elsewhere in France. In early September, with the threat of invasion looming, the French education ministry temporarily set up its offices at the law faculty of the

University of Bordeaux, while the Ministry of Finance settled at the Faculty of Medicine.[33] Buildings were also requisitioned by the military authorities at the Universities of Dijon, Besançon, Toulouse, and Clermont-Ferrand, and used as hospitals.

Invasion fears, real and imagined

The events at Louvain had shown that universities were literally on the front line; in the opening weeks of war, invasion was a legitimate fear in Britain and a grim reality in France. In both instances, universities, cognisant of what had happened in Belgium, feared for their own institutions. During the first week of September 1914 it seemed likely that Paris would be occupied by the advancing German forces. On the evening of 2 September the government decided to leave the city for Bordeaux, a symbolic act which brought to mind the defeat of 1870.[34] On 5 September, detailed plans were circulated by General Gallieni, the military governor of Paris, for the evacuation of the city.[35] The immediate threat to Paris passed by the middle of September with the conclusion of the first Battle of the Marne and the German retreat. The sociologist Émile Durkheim wrote a few days later that the German invasion of Paris had seemed both 'imminent and inevitable.'[36]

Invasion was more tangible elsewhere. Lille, a university town, was occupied by the German Army in October 1914. The University of Lille did everything possible to remain open in spite of this and the Faculty of Letters was able to submit an improvised, handwritten report for the academic year 1914–15, as required, to the French Education Ministry. Classes did not re-start until the beginning of the calendar year 1915, and did so under the constant fear of inspections by the occupying police.[37] Situated near the front lines, the University of Nancy was also threatened on a number of occasions. On the nights of 9 and 10 September 1914, shells rained down on the streets of the city. Nancy was saved from invasion after the French victory at the Battle of the Marne and on 31 October it was announced that the university would re-open for the academic year.[38]

While there was no direct threat of invasion to British universities, the fear was widespread early in the war, especially from September until December 1914. This was especially pronounced at Cambridge, which was situated near the east coast. The historian John Holland Rose warned on 7 August of the possibility of invasion: 'Germany is likely to attempt raids on our coasts, chiefly with a view of creating panic and inducing us to keep our troops within these shores.'[39] A few weeks

later, the Master of Trinity College, H.M. Butler, wrote of a rumour that as many as 30,000 men were in Cambridge to guard the East Coast in the event of an invasion.[40] Airship raids reinforced the fear of invasion; these began in the early weeks of the war and continued for its duration. Cambridge's proximity to military installations at Norwich meant that some airships flew close by and the classicist W.E. Heitland was worried by 'the danger to King's Chapel' which was 'obvious and alarming.'[41] As a precaution, all lights were kept off by night, a measure which turned Cambridge into a 'city of darkness.'[42] Universities were potentially targets in a new form of warfare where cultural sites had been prominently targeted.

The plight of Belgium had a double relevance to scholars in the first month of war. Its invasion was the *casus belli* for Britain, while the destruction of Louvain library outraged the learned world. As a result, there was an upsurge of academic solidarity with fellow academic victims of German invasion who had fled to Britain and France. Refugees began to arrive in Britain in October 1914. In September 1914, Cambridge University offered refuge to the entire Universities of Louvain and Liège, but the offer was politely declined in each case.[43] Belgian professors, expert in many disciplines, settled at Cambridge, and courses were organized in Philosophy and Letters, Law and Engineering by November.[44] The University Press also took over *Le Muséon*, a quarterly publication which had been printed at Louvain.[45] At Oxford, Grace Osler, wife of the Regius Professor of Medicine, William Osler, began organizing the settlement of Belgian scholars there and noted that 'we offered hospitality to one family and out of that has grown this business.'[46] The University of Sheffield opened a hostel for Belgian refugees in November 1914, while Belgian academics also lectured at Glasgow University and elsewhere.[47]

On 26 October the University of Paris resolved that students who had been enrolled in one of Belgium's four universities could continue their studies in Paris.[48] At the University of Bordeaux, Professor Wilmotte, of the University of Liège, was appointed to teach for the 'duration of the war.'[49] Professor Doutrepont, from the University of Louvain, lectured at Dijon in 1914.[50] By sheltering Belgian scholars universities could show their loyalty to the cause of winning the war. The presence of Belgian professors was deeply symbolic and a means through which universities as a whole could demonstrate their assent for the main issues of the war. It was also, on a more basic level, a simple act of charity which was testament to the ties which existed across the international community of scholars before 1914.

As if the war did not exist?

The university was slowly being encompassed by the war but one issue remained outstanding for the conflict's first two months; namely, what to do when term was due to recommence. After all, the majority of students had been mobilized while university buildings had been appropriated for other purposes. Could the university continue its 'normal' function?

Whatever problems French universities faced, continuity was non-negotiable. Louis Liard wrote in early October that at the Sorbonne 'the majority of our students are in the army,' however, he continued, 'for those who remain, being either not of age or not in a fit state to fight, all the faculties will open as if the war did not exist.'[51] This aspirational and contradictory idea came to underpin French university policy for the war period. The number of French university students quickly fell from 42,000 to around 10,000 due to the war.[52] At the reformed university, an institution deeply bound up with the political ideals and history of the French Republic, closing was not an option. The university was synonymous with the Republic and thus the closure of the former could seem like a defeat for the latter.[53] 'National life must continue,' argued Alfred Croiset, dean of the Faculty of Letters in Paris. 'Our work is very clear, and is the same as all French people. We are here to work at defending French civilization.'[54] The economist Henri Hauser made the same point discussing his institution, the University of Dijon: '"University life goes on" – this is the phrase that inspires us all.'[55] In Britain, it was quickly decided that term would be held as normal; after all there was not the huge disruption of invasion to deal with. As a result, this decision was made in August.[56] When term opened at Cambridge in October 1914, the Vice-Chancellor, M.R. James, said that 'there is no doubt that we are bound to carry on our work; for by it we can render definite service to the nation.'[57] James' sentiments were similar to those expressed in France; however, the relationship of the university to the nation was less clearly defined in the British case, and the means through which Cambridge might render service were still somewhat vague. British universities simply did not have the close political, intellectual and emotional connections to the nation as in France. James' invocation of continuity was not felt elsewhere. H.A.L. Fisher, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield, wrote that 'all my schemes for this university are for the time shattered.'[58] Arthur Benson, Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, wrote that the first months of the war were 'like presiding at my own funeral. Writing and teaching disappeared.'[59]

Newer institutions felt that they were validating their existence by both continuing with their educational function and providing soldiers. This was especially pronounced in France where Republican educational reforms had been divisive right up to 1914. Hauser made this clear in the case of the University of Dijon, arguing that 'the cause of our universities, and particularly that of Dijon, is henceforth won. It received the most striking of baptisms; the baptism of blood.'[60] Universities clearly did not continue their work as if the war did not exist; they continued because the war existed. Continuity became an act of defiance and self-affirmation.

Neutral observers were not convinced by outward expressions of continuity. The President of Columbia University in New York, Nicholas Murray Butler, was sceptical of the reasons given by European scholars in re-opening their respective institutions and remarked that 'the European universities are going through the motions of holding sessions, but the whole thing is an empty sham. There are practically no students and a decimated corps of professors.'[61]

The cultural war

For university administrators and politicians, the early months of the war were marked by questions of what a university ought to be doing in wartime. The answers were limited: provide officers with good moral and intellectual qualities and make buildings available to the military where they stood empty. At the same time, a new front in the war was opening up which would transform universities and their role in war and peacetime. The conflict was being understood as a cultural war and scholars had begun fighting with their pens.

The events at Louvain galvanized intellectual engagement in the war, but did not begin it, as is often asserted.[62] The philosopher Henri Bergson famously stated that 'the struggle against Germany is the struggle of civilization against barbarism' in a speech at the Académie des Sciences Morales on 8 August 1914.[63] Bergson was a philosopher of both international repute and popular appeal and his words carried weight. His speech made it clear that the war would be defined and waged on intellectual terms which posited the Western European allies as the upholders of civilization. This was notable as it came before widespread rumours of atrocities committed by the German Army in Belgium trickled back to Paris.[64] Bergson's outrage derived from the German invasion of Belgium but had deeper roots in *revanchism*. However, his vitriolic

public outburst troubled some, not for its content, but because of its perpetrator. In his diary, Romain Rolland, a former professor at the Sorbonne residing in Switzerland, wondered whether it was 'the role of a Bergson to give such speeches? And is it necessary that pure reason must be sullied by the passions of belligerents?'[65] Should scholars – men whose pursuits were scientific and theoretically unbiased by nationality or emotion – enter the fray in such a belligerent manner? This tension would inform scholarly engagement for the rest of the war, and long after.

On 26 August 1914 a group of leading Oxford historians published a book called *Why We Are At War: Great Britain's Case*. Led by H.W.C. Davis and Ernest Barker, they sought to educate the nation in the causes of the war and claimed that their own 'experience in the handling of historic evidence' would help them 'treat this subject historically.'[66] *Why We Are At War* sold well and became a key text for propounding British claims of German war culpability to audiences in Britain and beyond. While this text became synonymous with scholarly engagement in the cultural war, it also predated the incidents at Louvain.

The events at Louvain in late August accelerated the already building cultural war and galvanized scholars in outrage. This was compounded by the subsequent shelling of Rheims Cathedral in mid-September which helped solidify the belief that Germany was waging war on culture. These attacks on symbols of culture played a key role in precipitating a schism in the international academic community in which German *Kultur* would be pitted against Western European ideals of civilization. The German conception of *Kultur* referred both to Germany's cultural heritage – that of Goethe, Beethoven and Kant – and also encompassed civic virtues such as self-sacrifice, heroism and creative idealism. Many German intellectuals saw the war as an opportunity to spread these ideas which they contrasted to the materialistic ideals of civilization propounded by France and Britain.[67]

Bookending this process through which Germany's cultural heritage was vilified was the publication, on 4 October 1914, of the German 'Appeal to the Civilized World,' a manifesto which responded to claims made about Germany's culpability for the war as well as allegations of atrocities being committed in Belgium. It was signed by ninety-three eminent figures in German academia, art, and literature; many were household names in the scholarly world. As if the denials of any wrongdoing by the German Army were not galling enough to those in

Britain, France and elsewhere, the manifesto explicitly linked German militarism to German cultural heritage.[68] In other words, the manifesto asserted that Germany's military and cultural achievements were linked and at war together.

This idea was problematic as it undercut the 'Two Germanies' thesis which was frequently heard in Britain and the United States. This idea posited that there was a divide between the learned Germany of Goethe, Kant, and its envied university system on the one hand and the militaristic Prussian regime on the other, and was an interpretive framework used to make sense of the suddenly hostile German professoriate.[69] The 'Appeal to the Civilized World' made it clear that German militarism and German culture went hand-in-hand. However, many of the signatories were unaware of its contents or of the role of the government in its inception, and some would later seek to remove their names from the document.[70] However, all of that was irrelevant in the autumn of 1914; the 'Appeal' was taken as a definitive statement on behalf of German scholarship and was repeatedly cited, invoked, and criticized during the war.

The publication of the 'Appeal to the Civilized World' had two repercussions. First, it sparked a flurry of manifestos, pamphlets, and books by scholars in belligerent and neutral countries alike. It meant that there was soon a great volume of documentation to literally embody the cultural war. Second, it polarized the scholarly world; many old connections were severed and international exchange – one of the great features of pre-war academic and intellectual culture – came under threat. The manifesto also gave structure to subsequent intellectual action and scholars began to respond directly to German claims.[71] The British response, published in *The Times* of 21 October 1914, was written in the name of 'scholars and men of science representing different sides of British learning.' It argued that Britain strove for peace at every opportunity in the run up to 4 August and made it clear that 'the German professors appear to think that Germany has in this matter some considerable body of sympathizers in the universities of Great Britain. They are gravely mistaken.'[72]

The French response emanated from the University of Paris, but spoke in the name of all French universities, with the exception of Lille, and was published on 3 November 1914.[73] The French document saw the 'Appeal to the Civilized World' as a point of no return. Germany's cultural heritage, specifically as home to the world's leading universities, could no longer be invoked, it claimed; the German document meant that, breaking with 'the tradition of Leibniz, Kant, and Goethe,' German

thought had declared itself 'at one with, tributary, and subject of Prussian militarism' and its claims to universal hegemony. French universities, on the other hand, remained steadfast in the belief that civilization was the work of all humanity, and not only of a sole people.[74]

The 'Appeal to the Civilized World' polarized the learned world. On 11 October the Russian intelligentsia issued its own text in response, which was followed by manifestos in December 1914 and January 1915. Portuguese intellectuals issued a rebuttal on 23 October.[75] Documents from Switzerland and Brazil were addressed directly to counterparts in France, expressing solidarity with the allied cause.[76] In the United States, Nicholas Murray Butler wrote that 'the violation of the neutrality of Belgium, the destruction of Louvain and now the wrecking of the Cathedral at Rheims have stirred the American people as they have not been stirred since the Civil War.'[77] Butler, an advocate of peace, and his counterpart at Harvard, Abbott Lawrence Lowell, both sought to maintain the professorial exchanges which they had forged with the German state. However, the mood in American universities had quickly evolved against Germany.[78] Indeed, the German government felt that American elite opinion was already so hostile to their cause by November 1914 that they discontinued their official professorial exchanges with both Harvard and Columbia.[79] At Harvard, Lowell was sceptical of the engagement of scholars in wartime debates, feeling that it was not their place and that it was counterproductive to winning over neutral opinion. The responses of English scholars to German propaganda were, he felt, 'a mistake.'[80] In Canada, John L. Todd of McGill University noted that it had become 'the fashion among professors to make such statements.'[81]

Organizing intellectual engagement

The trading of manifestos and compilation of pamphlets and books were collaborative efforts, completed quickly but requiring much organizational effort. It soon became apparent that the war would not be over quickly and that, at the same time, its cultural manifestation would be ongoing. Scholars and academics began to organize themselves so that they could efficiently produce material touching on issues raised in the cultural war; this material was intended to continue the fight abroad, to educate people at home, and to influence neutrals. However, what began as self-mobilization by scholars who saw themselves uniquely qualified to comment on the war's issues was quickly appropriated by national governments.

In France, a committee formed which published pamphlets and books under the umbrella of *Études et documents sur la guerre*.[82] Emile Durkheim was approached on 2 October 1914 by two socialist politicians, Marcel Sembat and Léon Blum, about a project to counter German propaganda in neutral countries, and agreed to help.[83] Within weeks the project had broadened out to include the Parisian academic hierarchy as its publishing committee. Durkheim became its secretary while Lavisse was appointed its president.[84] The greatest academic minds of the republic set to work on revealing what they saw as the truth about the war and this rapidly became a large undertaking. A team of translators was required so that the pamphlets could have the greatest global reach. Durkheim reported that he was much busier in wartime than in peacetime.[85] By February the committee had assembled a team of eighteen translators who were working in eight languages.

In addition to the creation of academically rigorous pamphlets, Durkheim and Lavisse were responsible for the publication, beginning in 1915, of *Les lettres à tous les français*. These were simple texts aimed at a wide audience which explained war issues. Three million copies were published.[86] Durkheim commented upon the exceptional sales of these *comité's* pamphlets that 'our propaganda is inaugurating a new genre.'[87] The same could be said for the *Les lettres à tous les français*. Scholars were aware of a shift in their function; the war had led them into new territories where they too were combatants and their ideas were weapons.

A similar dynamic swept across the British academic establishment in 1914 and 1915. Academics engaged in war issues and published voraciously on the subject of the causes of the war, the righteousness of the allied cause, and German *Kultur*, although the tone in Britain was generally less belligerent than in France. Britain's less centralized academic system meant that work came from across the country and was not dominated by a capital city élite, as in France. The publication of *Why We Are At War* by the Oxford historians in late August 1914 established a format for academic intervention and led to a bigger project whereby academics from across Britain were asked to write pamphlets for publication by the Clarendon Press at Oxford. These dealt with diverse issues from the immediate causes of the war and German philosophy, to the impact of the war on the economy, the perception of the war in Scandinavia, France, Canada, Asia, as well as individual battles in the war itself. In total, eighty-seven pamphlets were produced by September 1915, with the print run reaching half a million.[88] Academic

interventions proved popular in the first year of the war, underlining the widely held understanding that the conflict was cultural.

The greater significance of the initiative was that in September 1914 the Foreign Office purchased 3,000 copies of the *Why We Are At War* volume for circulation amongst their embassies.[89] In North America, the Principal of McGill University, William Peterson, personally organized the dissemination of the text throughout Canada and the United States.[90] As the British government began setting up a permanent propaganda organization at Wellington House they decided to collaborate with the Oxford initiative. Certain pamphlets were distributed by Wellington House and a number of the academics working on the Oxford project began to work on the government initiative. As in France, there was self-reflection on the role that scholars were playing in the conduct of the war. The pacifist Bertrand Russell wrote in December 1914 that 'Oxford is loathsome, even more than usual. The Oxford historians' book on the war shows absolutely no attempt to tell the truth.'[91]

By early 1915, scholars were commenting on war issues in a variety of forums, and scholarly engagement was not restricted to historians. This change of function was felt by scholars and caused unease to some. The Cambridge economist Alfred Marshall wrote to his protégé John Maynard Keynes in February 1915 that 'I know so little about either war or politics that I am afraid of speaking publicly lest I do mischief.'[92] A.C. Benson, wrote in his diary that 'more and more I feel that my mistake has been to philosophize about the war. I don't see widely enough or know enough … It is as if a man gave up shoemaking to reflect about the war.'[93] Writing after the war, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson lamented the wholesale immersion of historians in war issues which, to him, saw them undermine their own credibility as scholars. 'All discussion, all pursuit of truth ceased, as in a moment. To win the war, or to hide safely among the winners, became the only preoccupation.'[94]

Historians and the war

Of all disciplines, history was seen as the most directly relevant in understanding and contextualizing the outbreak and early course of the war. The discipline, which emerged in its modern form in the nineteenth century, prioritised high politics and the emergence of the nation; thus, interpretations of the war were couched in national terms.[95] The early months of the war saw the emergence of the 'instant

history' of the war, and the initiative of the Oxford historians was the most famous of these.

Many universities put on special lecture series focusing on the war's outbreak. At Cambridge, the historian John Holland Rose began a series of lectures on the causes of the war in October 1914, and these were published as a book by the end of the year.[96] At Trinity College Dublin, the historian (and former *Times* correspondent) Walter Alison Phillips gave a series of lectures on the war's causes in 1914. James Wycliffe Headlam also published on the causes of the war in 1914. He was educated in Germany, was married to a German woman and spoke German as often as English in his home. In 1914 Headlam was moved to Wellington House to work on government-backed projects. Headlam published *England, Germany and Europe*, in October 1914, and it showed the fine line which many historians would have to tread were they to engage in these public issues. Headlam emphasized German culpability for the war's outbreak but cautioned against aiming too much invective at Germany: 'No mistake is more fatal than to despise our enemy.'[97] Not all scholars would heed this advice.

In France, the historian, senator, and former Foreign Minister, Gabriel Hanotaux wrote an article for the *Revue hebdomadaire* in 1915 in which he tried to use his historian's training to provide answers to difficult questions. How long would the war last? What sort of peace would result? At what cost? He wrote because he felt that people were beginning to accept that a short war was not going to happen.[98] Hanotaux quickly published a substantial work on the causes of the war which appeared in April 1915.[99]

Charles Andler was another member of the Comité d'études et documents sur la guerre who made a strong contribution to publications in this period. Andler was a *normalien*, professor of German studies at the Sorbonne, and native of Alsace-Lorraine. Before arriving at the Sorbonne in 1901, Andler had helped build up German studies at the École Normale Supérieure. He had written on contemporary German political developments as well as lecturing on all aspects of German culture.[100] Andler had lots to contribute to the polemics and debates raging in 1914 and 1915 but also much to lose. Whilst his specialized learning was on the issues which contemporaries wished to engage with, taking an overly belligerent tone would serve to undermine much of his life's work. Thus, while Andler's contributions were some of the most visible and oft-quoted publications of the early war period in France, he had to tread carefully in his criticisms of German cultural achievement.

Andler managed to plot this careful path in most of his published work. For example, in the introduction to his work of 1915 called *"Frightfulness" in Theory and Practice*, an exposé on the German doctrine of war, he made the case that 'none of us, unless he has suffered personally, has the right to a word of complaint … the humbler task of the student is to understand.'[101] *Frightfulness* was a scholarly work on the German doctrine of war, written in an even-handed and clear manner. Similarly, Andler's work on Pan-Germanism was a scholarly inquiry into German literature of the previous decades which had advocated the spread of German influence.[102] In this way Andler was careful not to denigrate the disciplines on which he had based his own studies and had built his career.

A more belligerent tone emerged in the work published jointly with Lavisse in 1915 called *German Theory and Practice of War*.[103] The book opened with graphic accounts of atrocities committed by the German Army in Belgium and Northern France. It then attempted to explain this behaviour with reference to German thought. However, it seems that only the middle section (of three) in this book was actually the work of Andler himself. The final section was published separately by Lavisse in the *Revue de Paris* and the tone of the opening section suggested the authorship of the bellicose Lavisse rather than Andler.[104] The middle section, authored by Andler, was a typically scholarly and even-handed analysis of the writings of Clausewitz.

There were other means through which historians in France engaged with these war issues and attempted to put the French case to a wider audience. While a number would write occasional articles for daily newspapers such as *Le Temps*, academic and learned journals took on a new importance. Most prominent were the *Revue des deux mondes* and Ernest Lavisse's *Revue de Paris*. The belligerence of Lavisse, France's most eminent and influential historian, was striking. He had been instrumental in the republican reform of primary education and in the composition of school textbooks. Having experienced the occupation of the Aisne as a youth in 1871–73, Lavisse underwent part of his education in Berlin and had been professor of history at the Sorbonne since 1887 in addition to his role at the École Normale Supérieure. He only ever left Paris to holiday at his family home in the Aisne, which was destroyed by the German Army in late September 1914.[105]

Lavisse's editorials in the *Revue de Paris* both offered a commentary on contemporary events and also sought to direct public opinion. He consistently made the case for German culpability in the outbreak of

war and for the necessity to renounce all German influence. Lavisse's belligerent tone was singled out by critics of the way in which French scholars more generally were engaging in war issues in a biased manner. Romain Rolland noted that Lavisse seemed to be welcome the war and the hatred which it had fostered.[106] The war presented a problem for historians. It was understood as a historic event from the outset and it fell to the historians to historicize it accordingly. And while historians could claim to possess the requisite skills and learning to perform this task, emotions frequently got the better of them and the results were less than scholarly. It was perhaps inevitable that history would be contested from the very beginning of the war; the outbreak of the war was deeply contentious and explicable with reference to the recent past. However, other, less obviously applicable disciplines quickly came into the firing line.

The debate about science

In the period from October to December 1914, the initial hostility towards Germany and the role of its academics in the production of the 'Appeal to the Civilized World' reconfigured itself as a movement to discredit German cultural achievement more generally. In the allied world, assent for the war was equated with scorn for German cultural achievement and scholarship. Whether one believed the claim made that German culture and militarism were one, the fact that it was asserted at all left a great deal of mistrust for the current generation of German academics. Taken at face value, the claim entailed a systematic reconsideration of the merits of German cultural heritage. *The Times* claimed that 'the conduct of war has discredited the German standard of civilization, and the defence of that conduct put forward by German intellectuals has identified them with it and has provoked a more critical estimate of their own worth.'[107]

One aspect of German achievement which was systematically undermined was science. Unlike history, the natural sciences may seem an unlikely set of disciplines to become caught up in the nationalistic polemics of the outbreak of war. Before the war, there had been a boom in the establishment of international scientific organizations. Science was a beneficiary of the growth in cultural internationalism; its claims helped to order an expanding world. Moreover, science was a unifying pursuit, theoretically unsullied by nationalist narratives due to its universalist claims. In 1906 the French physicist Gabriel Lippmann wrote that 'there is but one geometry throughout the world: the laws of nature

reach beyond the stars.'[108] This type of expression was common in the pre-war years and neatly articulated the universal claims and unifying potential of science.

The authors of the German 'Appeal to the Civilized World' had spoken 'as representatives of German science and art.'[109] The term *wissenschaft* which they employed referred not to the natural sciences specifically but to the systematic organization of knowledge in the broadest sense, similar to the French definition of the term *science*.[110] In Britain, 'science' referred more specifically to the natural sciences. The names of eminent German natural scientists on the manifesto was galling to scientists in Britain, France, and beyond, given the idealistic internationalism of pre-war scientific organization.[111] Seven of forty-two Nobel Prize winners in science to that point signed the German document.[112] It seemed, to allied academics, that this barbaric war was being given the assent of German scientists.

Émile Picard, a mathematician at the Sorbonne, published one of the most important French works to discredit German science in the *Revue des deux mondes* in July 1915.[113] He wrote a short history of science which sought to disprove pre-war German claims to scientific pre-eminence. Picard argued that it would 'require a singular complacency to claim that Germany occupies the first order of fundamental discoveries which for three centuries have contributed to modern science.'[114] To Picard, the German practice of science emphasized 'quantity over quality' and led to the accumulation of information and data but rarely produced great ideas or contributed to what he called 'real progress.'[115] More pertinently, Picard argued that the German history of science made claims to greatness but in reality merely appropriated the ideas of scientists from other nations.[116]

Pierre Duhem, a mathematician based at the University of Bordeaux, published *La science allemande* in 1915 which was a critique of German science according to the broader definition of the word. Duhem argued that the German approach to research had made science too much of a national pursuit. 'Through science,' he claimed, 'the German sees the *patrie*; these scientists are scientists because they are patriots. The interest of Germany is the end goal for these indefatigable researchers.'[117] Duhem's criticism presupposed that scientific research entailed dispassionate scholarship undertaken in an international environment. This would become a common criticism of Germany, and was a somewhat problematic one. Before the war there had been an uneasy tension between national improvement in science and other fields, and international progress, and the universal claims of science. France was far

from an innocent party in this respect; the French Association for the Advancement of Science had adopted the motto 'par la science, pour la patrie' on its foundation in 1872, and this was not unusual.[118] In claiming that German science was uniformly in the service of the state, men like Picard and Duhem were implicitly asserting the converse about France, a claim which was untrue.[119]

In April 1915 the daily newspaper *Le Figaro* began running a series of articles called 'Le bluff de la science allemande.' A number of eminent academic names were surveyed and all concluded that German claims to eminence in science were overblown. Among these criticisms, the philosopher Émile Boutroux wrote that the German emphasis on sterile organization had stifled originality which was, to him, an integral part of scientific research.[120] Cumulatively, these articles demonstrated that a narrative was emerging, positing that Germany was a nation of scientific plagiarists which had little in the way of originality and that which it did possess was directed not towards universal scientific good, but the state.

Similar narratives emerged in Britain, but never dominated newspaper editorials in the same way. In the aftermath of the German manifesto of October 1914 the chemist William Ramsay wrote that 'the originality of the German race has never, in spite of certain brilliant exceptions, been their characteristic; their *métier* has been rather the exploitation of the inventions and discoveries of others; and in this they are conspicuous.'[121] However, from the outset there was scope for argument over the relative merits of German science. In December 1914 the philologist A.H Sayce wrote to *The Times* and dismissed German claims in science as 'bluster.' He added that 'in science, none of the great names is German. We look in vain for any that can be put by the side of Newton, Darwin, Faraday, Laplace or Pasteur.'[122] Sayce framed this in the context of a greater argument about the merits of German culture. Sayce's letter sparked a genuine debate about the merits of German science. H.H. Turner of Oxford wrote that 'it should be impossible to think of Newton without also thinking of Kepler; or of Pasteur without thinking of Koch.'[123] The zoologist E. Ray Lankester wrote in support of Sayce, stating that:

> The Germans have, especially since 1870, falsified the history of science in the voluminous treatises written by them by deliberately ignoring the claims of others to discoveries and fruitful conceptions upon which their own work has been based.[124]

To the scientific reformer Lankester, what made the Germans seem to be influential in terms of scientific innovation was their abundance of laboratories and the fact that their 'organization for advanced study is excellent and abundant.'[125] The archaeologist Percy Gardner argued that while in the current climate it was 'hard to do justice to our intellectual debts to Germany; but almost every scholar and man of science would admit them to be enormous.' Gardner clung to the 'Two Germanies' thesis; the Prussian political and military elite caused the current problem.[126] While the overall debate was hostile to current German academic and scientific practice, there was no consensus on whether this entailed a dismissal of all German discoveries over previous decades.

An editorial in the scientific journal *Nature* in January 1915 made similar arguments to those in France by questioning the role of the nation in German science. It also condemned the role accorded to science in German warfare. 'We in England have been always more intent on welcoming a discovery than in inquiring into the nationality of the discoverer,' it began, 'but we are beginning to revise our verdict … The aims of science are the antitheses of those of war … to degrade its applications to the destruction of life and property is the most unscientific act of which a people can be guilty.'[127]

The international community of science was split not by the fact of the outbreak of war, but by the way in which the war was conducted in its first two months, as well as the way in which the actions of the German Army were defended by German academics. As methods of warfare became increasingly scientific, the scientific heritage of Germany became suspect to many allied scholars, leading to a reappraisal of the entire history of science.

Conclusion

In 1914 and 1915 the academic world went to war. Scholars became combatants and ideas were refashioned into weapons. This dynamic emerged quickly and its key reference points were the debate over war origins, the Louvain incident, and the 'Appeal to the Civilized World.' Taken cumulatively, scholars and disciplines seemingly remote from the immediate issues of the war's outbreak found themselves active participants in a cultural war. Moreover, this showed that the university would have an important – and unforeseen – function in wartime, as a hub through which learned opinion could be disseminated to wider audiences, at home and abroad, to build consensus for the conflict's prosecution.

All of this changed the role of the academic and of the university as an institution. Scholars in Britain and France were doing what they criticized their German colleagues for; namely, they were putting purely scholarly concerns to one side in order to serve the state. This did not go unnoticed in 1914 and early 1915; however, few voices spoke up in opposition. Indeed, few scholars opposed the war at all in its early months. In 1914 and 1915 the only figures to do so were pacifists: Bertrand Russell of Cambridge and Romain Rolland, formerly of the Sorbonne. In a sense, their criticism of academic belligerence was only a part of their general criticisms of the conduct of the war.

Rolland was deeply troubled by the way in which academics had adopted a belligerent tone in speaking of war issues, especially as these were issues which Rolland did not necessarily feel they were best suited to speak about.[128] Rolland wrote about this in his diary, but also in the *Journal de Genève*. His most famous article was *Au-dessus de la mêlée*, in which he criticized the hostility which had permeated all areas of society and culture, and which caused a stir in France. In October 1914, Alphonse Aulard, who held the chair in the History of the French Revolution at the Sorbonne, attacked Rolland, labelling him a Germanophile and seeking to distance the Sorbonne as an institution from Rolland.[129]

Russell signed the Cambridge anti-war manifesto on 3 August but, unlike most of his colleagues, he remained opposed to war after the German invasion of Belgium. While he was outraged at German actions and encouraged the overthrow of German militarism, he felt that this work was for the German people themselves. Russell wrote a number of articles as a self-styled defender of humanity. The dominant narrative in August 1914, he argued, concealed 'the simple fact that the enemy are men, like ourselves, neither better nor worse.'[130] In a later article he claimed that he wrote publicly as 'an advocate of humanity … justice and truth.'[131] However, it was this attitude which brought him into direct conflict with academic colleagues, both nationally and within his home institution of Trinity College, Cambridge.[132] In two letters which were reproduced in the *Cambridge Magazine* in October 1915, Russell wrote that 'so far from hating England, I care for England more deeply than for anything else except truth' and 'while others are sacrificing their lives for their ideals, I cannot seek a cowardly and ignoble comfort in silence.'[133] Perhaps more than any two standalone statements, these help to explain what lay at the core of Russell's objection to not only the war, but the way in which his learned

colleagues were engaging with its issues. Perceived challenges to truth motivated academics to engage with political issues and slowly to take on the function of the public intellectual. However, Russell was to remain an exception for the war's duration, publicly saying what was generally deemed unsayable.

With few exceptions, scholars mostly stayed quiet as wartime belligerence infected scholarly outputs. There are some traces of shock in private correspondence from men of high standing who were part of the establishment. H.A.L. Fisher wrote to his friend Gilbert Murray in April 1915 the following line: 'But oh William Ramsay! I thought he was an educated man.'[134] He added nothing more, but this was clearly a criticism of the public utterances of Ramsay, who was notable as probably the most hostile academic towards his German counterparts.

An exception to this trend was an article published anonymously in the *Aberdeen University Review* in June 1915. Entitled 'The Universities – Intelligentia [sic] and the War,' it took aim at the way in which university academics were promulgating certain myths about Germany in fighting the intellectual war. The author worried that British universities were becoming 'homes of reaction' and concluded that the universities – who could re-make the world once the conflict was over – were undermining their own suitability for this task. The 'young idealist' needed for this task would not be found there in the wartime climate.[135]

The sociologist and *normalien* Robert Hertz wrote to his wife in December 1914 about one of Bergson's belligerent speeches.[136] Hertz criticized the way in which Bergson – as many others had – projected absolute values onto the two sides. One could not claim that Germany was devoid of spiritual values and drew its strength solely from its massive organization of society. Similarly, Hertz criticized the simple polarity of good versus evil which was also prevalent in Bergson's commentary, and claimed that there was a great temptation for theologians and philosophers to project the values which informed their thought onto the conflict in an erroneous manner.[137] Implicit in Hertz's criticism was distance: Hertz was at the front and could experience the war at first hand. Bergson, writing from Paris, was projecting his ideas onto the conflict.

The university had been dislocated. Its acknowledged functions before the war – to provide officers – had been performed, but new ones had quickly emerged. With the emergence of these new functions, concomitant tensions arose, and Robert Hertz embodied them well.

A soldier-scholar, he was perfectly placed to observe both the brutality of modern war as well as the contradictions of scholarly interventions into the cultural war. The cultural war came to engulf many disciplines, from history, philosophy, literature, to the natural sciences. However, a far greater mobilization of disciplinary knowledge would take place from 1915 which would further challenge acknowledged university and scholarly functions.

2
The Application of Specialist Knowledge

On 26 July 1918, a violent explosion shook the École Normale Supérieure in Paris. The German Army had been within forty miles of the French capital since their Spring Offensive and the city had been subject to regular bombardments leading to many civilian casualties. A new front had opened in an all-encompassing war, leaving Parisians gripped with a new sense of anxiety and panic.[1] However, the blast at the ENS was not the work of the German Army.

The explosion, which originated in the ENS's chemistry laboratory, was the result of experiments being undertaken by a Professor Chilowsky, a chemist who had appropriated the laboratory on government orders to conduct experiments on military explosives. This blast left a number of staff in hospital with serious burns and was one of a number of similar explosions to take place over the preceding year. For Paul Dupuy and Ernest Lavisse it was the final straw. They decided to take firm action, appealing to the relevant government minister that Chilowsky should be removed to a venue where he was a liability only to himself. The ENS was, first and foremost, an academic institution, and such incidents put too many lives at risk.[2]

The Chilowsky incident encapsulates one of the defining characteristics of the First World War: its scope. The war increasingly required the mobilization of the entirety of a nation's resources – be they military, social, economic, industrial, cultural or intellectual – for its successful prosecution. The conflict came to envelop whole societies. Historians such as Arthur Marwick initially explained this phenomenon under the umbrella of 'total war.' This concept unsatisfactorily suggests finality, stasis, and a *fait accompli*.[3] It is more useful to think of the expanding scope of the war as a process which developed at differing speeds and intensities at different points in time.[4] This was a

phenomenon which contemporaries, be they professional politicians, generals, civilians, or scholars, grappled with and tried to understand. The process of working out just what winning the war would entail resulted in responses which were initially improvised and *ad hoc*. The mobilization of scholarly knowledge emerged in precisely this unstructured form but came to be a key element in the waging of modern warfare by 1918.

The war saw the wholesale mobilization of academic knowledge into the apparatus of wartime government, a process initiated in 1915.[5] While some scholars – such as the scientists of the Royal Society and the Académie des Sciences – had offered their services to their respective governments from the earliest days of the war, it took until the midpoint of 1915 for a systematic state-led division of labour to be implemented. Nineteen fifteen was a 'turning point' in the First World War and in the development of modern warfare more generally; the stabilization of the fronts and the apparent futility of the military offensive posed an intellectual challenge for politicians and generals alike.[6] Simultaneously, the demands which modern industrial warfare placed upon societies meant that new measures would have to be instituted to both sustain the effort of wartime and ultimately win the conflict.[7] From mid-1915, these problems began to be addressed, and one way in which this was achieved was through mobilization of scholarly networks which were set to work either on solving specific war-related problems or on managing the rapidly evolving war bureaucracy efficiently.

This chapter will examine the process through which academic knowledge was integrated into the machinery of war by national governments. The tripartite examination will demonstrate how this process was experienced on the same timeframe in both Britain and France. What is more, neutral America, too, was impacted by the mobilization of specialist knowledge, and events in Europe were monitored closely both for scholarly purposes and on the assumption that the United States might have to address these problems in the near future.

The process inaugurated in 1915 was revolutionary. National governments had appropriated academic expertise in the past, in both peace and wartime.[8] Individual scientists and learned societies had aided the French government during both the Revolutionary Wars and the Franco-Prussian war. Scientists occasionally acted as seconded advisors to the British government in peacetime.[9] However, what began in 1915 was different. The length of the war meant that scholarly activity became deeply ingrained in its prosecution; this was not a passing fad, but an integral part of the conflict.

The university had emerged in the previous half-century in its modern form. Drawing their inspiration from the research-led institutions of Germany, universities in Britain, France, the United States and elsewhere were dynamic homes to research in a wide range of codified disciplines which did not exist as such in the mid-nineteenth century; these ranged from the humanities to the social sciences to the natural sciences. There was a greater diversity of distinct expertise with potential application, and this expertise found its institutional base at the university. And while the action did not always take place at a university campus, scholarly networks – the bonds formed in the course of an academic life – were crucial in solving war problems.

The systematic state direction of scholarly research was a new and contentious departure in each of the three national examples considered here. Moreover, it was deeply ironic given the criticisms made of state-led research in Germany. The application of scholarship to war, understood at the time as a temporary expedient, has never been undone; once the potential for scientific warfare was understood it took on its own momentum which would continue as long as war was still seen as a possibility. The marriage of science and weaponry, of intellect and combat, has remained a feature of twentieth and twenty-first century warfare, and it began in 1915.

In the First World War, intellect – in the cultural, military, industrial, and economic fronts – was crucial to national survival. A reciprocal relationship emerged, one in which scholars had a duty to the nation, and vice versa. Far from harmonious, it ensured that the state-university relationship was increasingly regulated and streamlined, and, in some cases, established for the first time. Thus, the turning point of 1915 was crucial not only in the history of warfare but in the history of academic institutions and scholarly research.

Towards mobilization

Scholars who lived through the First World War were aware of the novelty of its innovations. In 1917, H.A.L. Fisher noted that 'the Professor and the Lecturer, the Research Assistant, and the research student have suddenly become powerful assets to the nation.' This phenomenon was not only restricted to the sciences:

> Even the teachers of subjects apparently so remote from the practical world as Archaeology and Ancient History find their new and proper spheres of activity. A lecturer in Hellenistic Greek is sent out

> to Salonika to interpret for the British Forces, an ancient historian is impounded by the War Office for his singular knowledge of the Levant, philosophers and poets leave the quiet groves of Academe to blockade Germany or to shepherd neutral trade from the busy centre of a Government office in Whitehall.[10]

An American account, published anonymously after the war, noted the same phenomenon: 'the khaki has been worn by many a knight of learning, who had never met any crisis but a crucial experiment, or handled any weapon but a pen, or faced any foe but a hostile audience. The military and academic professions have interpenetrated in this war.'[11]

Scholars identified the potential for their engagement in the conflict almost from the outbreak of war. On 3 August 1914, the Académie des Sciences – home of the France's scientific elites – resolved to put all of its resources at the disposal of the government.[12] The Académie made a similar pledge in 1870 and in August 1914 history seemed to be repeating itself. By the end of the month commissions on Surgery, Medicine and Hygiene, Nutrition, Aviation, Wireless Telegraphy and Explosives had been set up to liaise with the Ministry of War.[13] However, the French government did not take serious interest in their work until June 1915 when the War Ministry asked for a closer collaboration between the government, the Académie, and officers returning from the front with specific problems to be solved.[14]

In London, the Royal Society, the British equivalent of the Académie des Sciences, undertook a similar initiative. An editorial in the leading scientific journal *Nature* of 29 October 1914 made the case that 'it is evident that we are in for a long job', and wondered if any effort had been made 'to coordinate the efforts of the devotees of physical, chemical and engineering science, so that they may work together at what for us is the supreme problem of all – how to conquer the Germans.'[15] Accordingly, the Royal Society formed a committee on 5 November 1914 to assist the government 'in conducting or suggesting scientific investigations in relation to the war.'[16] However, at this stage, there was little interest from government in the activities of Britain's scientific elites. David Lloyd George, who would later organize the British munitions effort, noted a 'pitiable breakdown of initiative in facing the new task' confronting the British War Office in the early months of war.[17]

The national governments of Britain and France were slow to react to the realities of modern war and to see the important role which intellect would play in sustaining the war effort and ultimately achieving a successful outcome to the conflict. Scholars were quicker to grasp this

potential. This was especially pronounced in France, where the system of national conscription meant that men with specialist skills were frequently mobilized as junior officers, effectively undermining their utility. This complaint was heard early and often amongst the academic élites of the École Normale Supérieure. By the end of October 1914, Ernest Lavisse had compiled a list of mobilized *normaliens* with language skills and communicated this to the military authorities, suggesting that these men could be better utilized as military interpreters.[18] However, it is questionable whether Lavisse recognized the wider application of intellect to warfare at this point. More likely, he wished to ensure that members of the elite and intimate community of scholars were in as safe a position as possible while also maintaining their sense of difference. In any event, in these instances, Lavisse was generally unsuccessful in having *normaliens* re-designated as military interpreters, and was told in no uncertain terms by Alexandre Millerand, the Minister for War in December 1914, that the need for officers at the front outweighed the need for interpreters.[19]

Individual scholars who were mobilized into the regular forces were aware of their potential for work elsewhere. The *normalien* and sociologist Robert Hertz, writing to his wife from the trenches on 11 November, wondered if his own language skills could be put to better use than they had been at that point.[20] The physicist Jean Perrin wrote to his colleague and fellow *normalien* Paul Langevin (who had been mobilized as a sergeant in an engineering battalion) in early 1915 that 'if you could only use your intelligence as a PHYSICIST you could be of more service than a thousand sergeants.'[21] Perhaps the most shocking misapplication of expertise was the use of the Institut aérotechnique of the University of Paris (at Saint-Cyr) as a barracks from the outbreak of the war, reflecting thinking about the probable length and form of the war. In 1916, as contemporaries grasped the unprecedented scope of the conflict, the Institut was overhauled, its function reoriented towards experiments on aircraft.[22]

Paul Painlevé was a former professor of mathematics at the Sorbonne and deputy for the Quartier Latin; in effect, he was the parliamentary representative of French intellect. Though possessing no ministerial portfolio, Painlevé was a focus for the claims of scholars who had been mobilized into the regular forces but felt their learning could be better utilized elsewhere. Lucien Favre, who had studied psychology at the Sorbonne, wrote to Painlevé on 30 August 1914 of his 'ardent desire to be useful' to the nation, but claimed he was prevented from doing so as he was stuck in an administrative job but would be better served

working 'in the domain of scientific applications.' Favre addressed Painlevé as 'a deputy, but above all, as a scientist and a patriot.'[23] Many such letters were addressed to Painlevé in this period.[24] In Britain, volunteering ensured that people had a choice and could take up war-work loosely related to their vocation if they so desired. Until 1916, those volunteering for military service on the British side can be assumed to have done so with some knowledge of the type of work that would be required, and there were fewer complaints of specialists being inefficiently mobilized.

However, men with scholarly backgrounds and specialist knowledge still found that government departments were not receptive to their offers of assistance; the utility and applicability of different branches of academic learning was not understood by those in power early in the war. The mathematician William Burnside, a fellow of the Royal Society, offered his skills to the Admiralty but was declined.[25] In June 1915, Geoffrey Keynes, the brother of John Maynard Keynes and a medical doctor mobilized in France, wrote that 'I think it is a mistaken policy on the part of the authorities to make difficulties in the way of changing one's job. They would get better work done if they made it reasonably easy', adding that the existing situation was leading men to 'staleness' and 'boredom.'[26] George Paget Thomson, a Cambridge physicist and future Nobel laureate who went to France with the Queen's Regiment in September 1914, recalled that 'the employment of scientists for war purposes in the First World War was a very haphazard business. Most of the young scientists joined ordinary combatant units and were sorted out afterwards, if at all.'[27]

The death at Gallipoli of Henry Moseley, a gifted young atomic physicist, in August 1915, caused outrage amongst the scientific community, not only due to Moseley's age (twenty seven), but for the wastefulness of it. A life been lost and untold knowledge had gone with it. The Nobel Laureate Ernest Rutherford, a former colleague of Moseley's, wrote a moving and angry obituary for *Nature* which concluded that:

> It is a national tragedy that our military organization at the start was so inelastic as to be unable, with few exceptions, to utilize the offers of services of our scientific men except as combatants in the firing line. Our regret for the untimely end of Moseley is all the more poignant that we cannot but recognize that his services would have been far more useful to his country in one of the numerous fields of scientific inquiry rendered necessary by the war than by exposure to the chances of a Turkish bullet.[28]

There were exceptions to this trend. On 2 August 1914, the Cambridge economist John Maynard Keynes went to London to work for the Treasury in light of the coming economic crisis.[29] Keynes was known to Whitehall; he had worked at the India Office between 1906 and 1908 and sat on a commission on Indian finance in 1912.[30] His Treasury work in 1914 was not permanent; within a month he was back to his regular work as an academic economist in Cambridge. Still, there was a sense of novelty in Keynes being called to the Treasury which was noted by his Cambridge colleague, the theologian and historian T.R. Glover, who remarked at the time that he had heard a 'strange story' of Keynes being called to London.[31] Keynes' experiences were indicative of the general attitude towards specialist knowledge at this point in the war, as it was not anticipated that expertise would be required indefinitely. Keynes did get a job at the Treasury in January 1915 which he was intended to hold for the duration of the war.[32]

Early in the war, scholars were eager to make themselves useful by undertaking work which made the best use of their academic vocations. Their motivations were many. Clearly, a residual elitism born of a university education informed their desire to mark themselves as different from ordinary privates. At the same time, they desired intellectual stimulation to reassert their peacetime identities and to bring 'added value' to the war effort. By mid-1915 the situation changed, as state administrations of Britain and France recognized the necessity of mobilizing and applying academic resources for the successful prosecution of the war.

The changing nature of warfare and government

> The war was to be a short one. It was understood that mobilization, by summoning every able-bodied man to the colours, would suspend the country's economic life. While the crisis was being solved at the front, the only duty of those behind the lines was to wait, with composure. The army would subsist on its own reserves and stores of munitions. But the war dragged on. All forecasts were upset and the end of the crisis lay in a dim and indefinite future. The army called on those in the rear to supply it with arms, and to equip it for the new forms of warfare. The country required all its strength, all its resources, to sustain the struggle. The Government distributed the parts, and organized an industrial mobilization.[33]

Writing in 1927, the historian Pierre Renouvin succinctly described the reasons for the sudden revolution in government and war administration

which began in 1915. One was psychological and rooted in the mistaken belief that the conflict would be resolved quickly and decisively. The other main reason was the antiquated assumption that the war would be a matter for the military and the military alone. Renouvin argued that the French government was not cognisant of the demands which modern war would make upon entire societies. It learned rapidly and improvised accordingly.

The same assumptions informed the British experience, more or less. One difference which should be noted was the logic of national defence. For the French, the overwhelming priority in 1914 was arresting the German advance and ensuring that Paris was not overrun, as it had been in 1870. This urgency was never felt as acutely by the British, which was instead concerned with the practicalities of raising a mass army. By the early months of 1915 a number of 'pressures of necessity' began to commonly impact both Britain and France such as shell shortages, scarcity of food, inflation, and shortages of raw materials as a result of wartime economic blockades.[34] To Renouvin, 'state control was a necessary consequence of exceptional circumstances.'[35]

In Britain and France, the responses to these problems were solved in the same way, through greater state intervention, centralization, and requisitioning of resources. By April 1915, the body which would later become the Ministry of Munitions was established in Britain. The Munitions of War Act of July 1915 made provisions for the regulation of labour in munitions factories. Increasingly, national policies sought to address problems of scarcity and public debate began preoccupying itself with the idea that the government needed to become interventionist, abandoning *laissez-faire* economic principles.[36] There was greater state regulation of the French economy. Produce was requisitioned according to demand and prices were fixed. Ultimately, the entire economic life of the country would be directed by the government.[37] To facilitate all of this, organizations had to be set up which would study the new war conditions and lay the foundations for government actions.[38] This sort of government-led specialization formed the context for the division of labour in the academic sphere.

Other questions demanded novel solutions and were, increasingly, understood as beyond the capabilities of professional politicians or army generals. At the front, the war of movement became a memory and bloody stalemate emerged as the dominant characteristic of military engagements. Trench warfare made it virtually impossible to achieve a decisive breakthrough. This new form of warfare which had exhausted conventional notions of how wars should be fought

required innovative solutions, and scientific intellect emerged as especially valuable. To hammer this point home, in April 1915 the German Army used poison gas in the Battle of Ypres. This was the first such use of an asphyxiant in war and was seen as a potent illustration of the unchartered territory being entered in the war. It immediately drew attention to science.[39] Although both the British and French had been working on their own poisonous gases before the German initiative, this landmark event spurred a public debate about both the utility of science in its application to warfare and also the changing nature of battle itself.[40] It also revealed another dynamic in the war: irrespective of the moral qualms of the allies in using chemical weapons, once the enemy had done so, they had to follow suit or face oblivion. The application of science to warfare was motivated not only by a desire to find solutions to the battlefield stalemate, but increasingly by a fear that if science were not mobilized, it would presage national capitulation.

Mobilizing science

> One must never lose sight of the fact that one of the essential factors in the superiority of one army over another is to always be ahead of the adversary technologically … It is necessary to strive to precede the enemy without cease and to maintain these gains by a constant evolution of our formidable tools of war, researching, everywhere and always, improvements and perfections of all of our engines of combat.[41]

The mobilization of the natural sciences was the most obvious demonstration of changes in warfare and of the need for new approaches when waging war. While other disciplines such as geography, history, law or economics could be of great use in planning the post-war future, science was seen as imperative for winning the war itself. From 1915, war became scientific. Writing after the cessation of hostilities, the English mathematician Lord Moulton noted ruefully that modern war was 'all that of the accumulated powers with which science has endowed mankind can effect when used for destruction.'[42]

Scientific mobilization had three main characteristics. Committees were formed of experts – generally men who were older and eminent, and thus, not of military age – which discussed specific problems and their solution. Younger scholars with scientific training were set to work on specific scientific projects using both their knowledge of fighting

conditions and their expertise, and this took place both at home and behind the lines. Finally, university laboratories were taken over by the state and had their research directed towards war problems. These three categories were not mutually exclusive of one another and, in many instances, scientific networks were mobilized, which integrated all three of these elements to work on one specific problem.[43]

A flurry of activity in mid-1915 showed how knowledge was suddenly being appropriated by the state in the war effort. In July, General Sébert presented a report to the French Government outlining the problems of developing inventions for the war effort which boiled down to a lack of centralized planning. He also outlined eight specific military problems which needed addressing.[44] In the same month, the parliamentary sub-committee for armaments created nine sections to deal with scientific problems or applications to the war, such as explosives and asphyxiating gases, aviation, heavy artillery, trench weapons, and portable weapons.[45] Although these sections – or committees – were populated by politicians, they demonstrated a preoccupation with the applications of science to warfare. That same month, Albert Thomas, who was newly appointed to the position as Under-Secretary of State for Armaments – in effect, overseeing the entire munitions effort – wrote to Painlevé of the need 'to mobilize men according to their aptitudes.'[46] Painlevé became Minister of Public Instruction in October 1915, an act emblematic of the changes taking place. Between the appointments of Painlevé and Thomas, two *normaliens* deeply embedded in scholarly networks were overseeing two key areas which were the consequence of modern war. Thomas and Painlevé were important not only because of what they knew, but whom they knew.

Thomas was appointed to his position in May 1915 (and would later be appointed as Minister for Armaments in November 1916). He gathered around him colleagues from the École Normale Supérieure as part of his new body in May 1915. Since the Dreyfus Affair, students at the ENS had developed a strong affinity for socialism, through inspirational figureheads such as the librarian of the ENS, Lucien Herr, and the Germanist, Charles Andler.[47] Coupled with the centrality of the ENS to the development of modern sociology, through the work of Emile Durkheim and Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, a generation of brilliant young scholars emerged from the Rue d'Ulm, all sharing a similar political outlook and a belief in the applicability of the social sciences to contemporary society. When Thomas was given his portfolio he assembled these men to help with the production of munitions and the rationalization of industry. One of them, Maurice Halbwachs, wrote that they had

'a common belief … and a collective strategy towards the outside world.'[48] The importance of Thomas' appointment came from what he knew, of course, but was also rooted in something deeper, namely, the assumptions and working methods and outlook which he shared with his fellow *normaliens*. The undertaking of an unprecedented mobilization of French industry and economy required not only intellect, but trust.

One of these *normaliens* who became part of Thomas' bureau was Hubert Bourgin. At the outbreak of war he was teaching at the Lycée Louis-le-Grand in Paris.[49] Due to a medical condition he could not be mobilized into the armed services at the beginning of the war and sought to make himself useful in other ways. Bourgin wrote to Painlevé on a number of occasions bemoaning the fact that his skills were not being appropriately employed, and describing the aptitudes which he and his cohorts possessed. They were 'predisposed by their temperament, by the form and the particular habits of their intelligence, and prepared by their studies and their training to read, understand, analyse, summarize received documents, and on the other hand, to draft, put together and order … documents to be sent out.'[50]

Thomas brought together many of the members of the *normalien* and Durkheimian circle to work for him in March 1915, including Bourgin, Halbwachs, François Simiand, George Weulersse, Paul Mantoux and William Oualid, and later, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl. Maurice Halbwachs was, for example, put in charge of aluminium supplies, sales, and requisition.[51] The mobilization of Thomas' network was one of the first of its sort in the war, but one which would be repeated again in many different national contexts. It demonstrated that the prosecution of the war would require not only the mobilization of specialist skills, but the identification of connected men who could build departments themselves by leveraging their pre-existing scholarly networks. This trait was seen repeatedly in the mobilization of natural sciences in Britain, and most famously, in the case of the Inquiry, formed in the United States in 1917 to plan the peace settlement.

Painlevé's appointment as Minister of Public Instruction was symbolic and was seen as a measure born of the war. After all, a mathematician was being charged with a leading government ministry which was, in turn, deeply invested in the war's prosecution. One of Painlevé's first acts as minister was to establish a Directory of Inventions in November 1915. This office acted as a central hub in the harnessing of France's inventive nous. A report written later in the war asserted that it was 'necessary to effect the scientific and technical mobilization of the country in liaison with the competent organs and the ministerial

departments which they depended upon.'[52] Significant too was the fact that this was initially seen as the responsibility of the education ministry, not the war ministry. This directory built upon an existing army commission which examined inventions. By December 1916 it became an under-secretariat of state in its own right. By early 1917 Albert Thomas wrote that its duty was to oversee 'all scientific research of a general nature.'[53] Accordingly, in April 1917 it was renamed as a Sub-Secretariat of State for Inventions, Studies and Technical Experiments, under the direction of Jules-Louis Breton.[54]

The records of this body showed the importance of universities as engines of scientific research in France, and, in turn, the close relationship of universities to the state. By 1917, Breton's office was organized into thirteen different sections which in turn sponsored the research of twenty-two different academic laboratories.[55] The work being done varied from research into the fabrication of asphyxiating gases at the École Normale Supérieure, to protection against the effects of gas in the physiology laboratory of the Muséum, to research into smoke bombs in the electrochemistry laboratory at the University of Grenoble, and research on the failings of shells fired from the 75 millimetre gun at the University of Clermont. A number of physics-based projects tried to establish the location of both field guns and submarines using acoustics.[56] Few university laboratories went under-utilized in the war effort.

By the war's end, the inventions body claimed some 781 inventions of 'immediate application.' Aside from numerous improvements in both portable arms and artillery, it created means of communication onboard aeroplanes, luminous instrument displays for aeroplanes, devices to establish the location of guns by light and by sound, a system of secret infra-red communications, protection against gas attacks, materials for camouflage, anti-aircraft weapons and bombs designed specifically for use from aeroplanes.[57] Most of these came about as a result of the use of university facilities and men with university training.

This sort of comprehensive mobilization was possible in France due to the already centralized nature of French education, a characteristic of the Third Republic.[58] All universities were state run and state funded, and thus it was a relatively straightforward task to begin directing the work undertaken in their laboratories. The direct chain of command which was already established allowed different levels of bureaucracy to gather information about and communicate with different university based specialists. A perfect example of this came in the wake of the creation of the Directory of Inventions in November 1915. A circular letter was sent by the Vice-Rector of the Academy of Paris, Louis Liard, to all

university rectors, faculty deans, and laboratory directors in France. This circular was drawn up by Painlevé and expressed the desire of the government to produce an inventory of the nation's scientific potential, which they took to mean both individuals and laboratories.[59] Forms were supplied where relevant qualifications, knowledge, or facilities could be detailed.

The creation of a national inventory helped efficiency in the division of labour. It also helped avert problems such as in May 1915 when Lavisse made a request to have a number of mobilized chemists given leave to work on projects in the chemistry laboratory of the ENS. The request was turned down on the grounds that more information was needed on the type of work being done at the ENS and whether it was truly of 'national importance' or not.[60] Few complaints were heard in France after November 1915 and there were few instances where the state came into conflict with university administrators like Lavisse. The physics laboratory at the École Normale Supérieure was particularly busy. Detailed reports are available for the projects undertaken there in the last years of the war, which ranged from the establishment of systems to allow for submarine communications, to the location of enemy batteries by sound and other means.[61] The chemistry laboratory was, by June 1918, being used for experiments on military aeronautics.[62] The entire process was seamless and allowed qualified experts to apply their skills to relevant problems with suitable equipment. The unforeseen consequences of mobilization, demonstrated in the Chilowsky anecdote above, were relatively rare.

The role of Painlevé was crucial to this process. He understood the worlds of science and politics and could institute structures to ensure that scientific knowledge was effectively mobilized. As a representative of the scientific community holding an important ministerial post he reassured members of the academic and amateur scientific communities, one of whom sent him the following acrostic to thank him for his work.

> Puisque le grand maitre de l'université
> A fait à mon projet tout l'accueil mérité,
> Il est de mon devoir de bien saluer,
> N'ayant que ce moyen pour le remercier!
> Le service qu'il rend au corps de nos savants,
> Est bien assurément l'un des plus éminents.
> Vénérons ce Chef qui de ses grandes lumières
> Eclaire un beau pays dans ce sombre univers![63]

In Britain, the same process played out in this period; however, its organization and efficiency bore a direct relation to the pre-existing relationship of the universities to the state, and within this, the prestige afforded to science within the universities. In short, the British system – if it can be spoken of as a system at all before the war – was less centralized.

British universities and learned societies were not centrally organized, but existed within a hierarchy of structures which exacerbated the fragmented organization of British intellect. While the frustrations of scientists would boil over by 1916 owing to the haphazard mobilization of British science, it was still enough to get the job done. Moreover, it demonstrated that there was no straight path to harnessing scientific knowledge; while centralized government-imposed structures were effective, the dispersed and disparate academic network was still a key channel for communicating information.

Scholars who were known to the government were set to work on war problems from the early days of the conflict, although these men were exceptional. The physicist J.J. Thomson of Trinity College, Cambridge, a Nobel Prize winner in 1906, wrote in November 1914 that 'we are making experiments too at the request of the War Office on a hot wire receiver for wireless messages.'[64] Similarly, in April 1915 J.S. Haldane of Oxford and H.B. Baker of Imperial College were called upon to determine the type of gas used in the first German gas attack on the Western Front.[65] This spoke more to the shock of this new form of warfare which took the allied armies effectively by surprise than to any deeper desire to enlist intellect in a more systematic way.

British scientists were enlisted into the war effort from mid-1915 as were their French counterparts. However, the decentralized nature of British government departments, universities, and learned societies, meant that a plethora of committees were set up, often with overlapping responsibilities. The Admiralty took the most interest in academic science early in the war. It established the Board of Inventions and Research (BIR) under Lord Fisher in July 1915, which was similar to the French body in considering inventive solutions to problems posed by modern warfare, with a particular emphasis on submarine warfare.[66] The BIR suffered from not always being given the necessary resources or support within the Admiralty, and as a result J.J. Thomson claimed that its main achievement was cosmetic: 'If there had not been the BIR, many would have written to the newspapers, and created an impression that the government was too casual about the war.'[67] Thomson added that the *ad hoc* approach taken to the mobilization of science had led

to many problems and that what was really needed were permanent structures which made 'the transition from the laboratory to the workshop or to the ship' as short as possible.[68] In this instance, the tactic of appointing eminent experts to a committee to consider problems was too ethereal, or, at least, it was only part of a solution to a bigger problem.

The body which came to be known as the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) was established as a committee of the Privy Council in July 1915.[69] Its aim was to make the application of scientific knowledge to industry a smoother process. While the DSIR was not directly involved in the application of science to military problems, its establishment can be seen as part of the mobilization of industry to meet the needs of an increasingly total war. However, the DSIR suffered from the depletion of university laboratories on account of researchers being away on war work with other departments, and a general scarcity of scientists to help in its own project. Indeed, by 1916 it reported that 'almost all advanced students left in the faculties of science and technology, men and women alike, are working for the Ministry of Munitions, the Admiralty, or the War Office.'[70] This underlined the rapid change which had taken place in a year but also highlighted a shortcoming, the dearth of appropriately qualified researchers to partake in wartime projects.

A further body, the Munitions Inventions Department (MID), was established in August 1915 to perform a similar function as the BIR, only acting directly under the Ministry of Munitions. It used laboratories at the University of London, as well as those belonging to the DSIR, in its work. By 1918 the Advisory Panel of the MID had forty-eight members, seventeen of whom were Fellows of the Royal Society.[71] So, while the British government and its agencies were trying to harness the nation's scientific and intellectual reserves from 1915, the process was often fragmented, leading to dissent amongst academic scientists.

At the annual meeting of the British Science Guild in July 1915, the chemist William Ramsay – himself a Nobel laureate – criticized the government's attitude as it had 'not yet realized that we are engaged in a war in which ancient practices may have to be superseded.'[72] What was needed was radical change. This was articulated in an editorial in *Nature* of October 1915:

> Nothing has been said about the unscientific method of appointing committees of experts without well-qualified officers to direct or co-ordinate their work … [The Press] are unable to distinguish a

> quack from a leading authority in science, and prefer to exercise their imaginations upon sensational announcements, rather than discuss the possibility of sober scientific discovery … Neither the political nor the official mind in this country yet realizes the power which science can give to the modern state; because classical and literary studies still form the chief high-road to preferment in Parliament or in public offices.[73]

Despite the lack of a coherent and centralized mechanism for the mobilization of scientific knowledge, research was still being undertaken at universities and learned societies much as in France. The British development of chemical weapons and defences against them would mobilize laboratories at St. Andrews, Cambridge, Oxford, Manchester, and Birmingham Universities as well as ones at Imperial College and Finsbury Technical College.[74] High explosives were both developed and tested at Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham Universities.[75]

The fragmentary nature of the scientific mobilization of British universities led to problems of communication, and occasionally, it was unclear where ultimate authority for specific tasks lay. For example, in September 1917 the War Office asked each British university for a summary of the war-work undertaken in their respective laboratories, months after a different section of the War Office had made an identical request. Representatives of Imperial and St. Andrews – two universities central to the development of chemical weapons – refused to divulge any further information on this occasion for reasons of confidentiality: they had established channels through which they worked at the War Office and were suspicious of this new request for information coming from a hitherto unknown source.[76]

When specific problems needed to be solved and individual pieces of research needed to be undertaken, the scholarly network proved invaluable. Much as the *normalien* social science network was quickly mobilized through a set of scholarly connections, the same process can be seen with Cambridge physicists. Sound ranging – a problem which vexed physicists on all sides during the war – was cracked by a brilliant young Cambridge physicist called William Lawrence Bragg. At its essence, it sought to locate enemy field guns by sound alone. Through collaboration with the Royal Engineers at the front, with fellow mobilized Cambridge scientists, and correspondence with engineers at his alma mater, Bragg solved a long-standing problem. Bragg's father, who shared the Nobel Prize in physics with his son in 1915, wrote after the

war of the breakthrough in sound ranging that it was 'clear that the all-important suggestion could have been made only by a man who had had scientific training and experience [and] it could have been made only by such a man actually on the spot.'[77]

The scientific community at Cambridge became consumed with war-time problems. By the end of 1915, the Department of Experimental Physics reported that 'the work of the research students has been mainly directed to the solutions of problems of importance in connection with the war.'[78] Cambridge came to dominate the British development of aviation and related equipment. At Farnborough, Cambridge physicists, led by Richard Glazebrook and Horace Darwin, undertook research into many different facets of aviation, and were invited to join the cohort on the personal recommendation of other members.[79]

Academic networks were often perfectly situated to solve war problems once they had been identified and empowered to do so by national governments. They had the expertise, the equipment, and crucially, they knew who else was working in the field and could quickly set up a collaborative network. Trinity College Dublin's Botany school undertook research into the relative merits of different timbers used in aeroplane construction and their rates of deterioration. This work was possible because of the scientific network which existed around the Professor of Botany, Henry Dixon. Dixon's laboratory assistant in the School of Botany, W.R.G. Atkins, was appointed to a position in the National Physical Laboratory in 1916 where he worked in the division for Aeronautical Chemistry. Atkins led this project and was able to acquire different types of timbers from Africa which were in turn sent to Dublin where Dixon tested them in the Botany laboratories.[80] The result was that Atkins' team was able to establish that fifteen per cent of airscrews used in British aeroplanes were unserviceable before use, of which walnut screws made by a particular manufacturer were especially vulnerable.[81]

The mobilization of science did not occur on the same scale in all universities, nor on the same timetable. The University of Sheffield was a good case in point. Due to pre-existing connections with the local steel industry the university very quickly mobilized its resources to help bolster production. The Sheffield Committee on Munitions of War, formed in early 1915, brought together academics and local industry to discuss war problems and how to adapt local industries to the production of munitions. As early as October 1914 the university had formed a committee to advise local industry of how best it might replace raw materials previously sourced from abroad which were no

longer available due to the war. This body was in contact with 450 local companies and advised them of scientific literature as well as the facilities available at the university. Its report of November 1915 claimed that it was the only such body in the country.[82] The University of Sheffield was exceptional in its ability to liaise with local industry in this way, due to the centrality of the steel industry in the city.

The mobilization of science was the most obvious manifestation of the division of labour which began in 1915. It can be seen, albeit in less obvious ways, in other disciplines too, as the war came to subsume all men of learning in wartime. A tongue-in-cheek report in *The Times* in August 1916 claimed that 'the professors serve the King by sea and land, and the voyager in the Aegean may be stopped and searched by spectacled and studious men, dressed, it is true, as naval officers, but really *archéologues en peau de loup*.'[83] The article went on to make the startling assertion that even classicists, the archetype of the stereotypical cloistered professor who was 'absent minded to the verge of half-wittedness,' could indeed render themselves useful in wartime, using their knowledge of Greek as intelligence officers and interpreters in the Eastern Mediterranean. J.C. Lawson, a fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, experienced this change himself: 'Being competent to discourse in modern Greek and French, and possessing withal some insight into the Greek mind and character, acquired in travel some twenty years ago, I had placed these assets at the disposal of the Admiralty, War Office, or other unnamed department.' However, it took a number of months before there was a 'sudden competition' for his services, won by the Admiralty. Lawson noted with tongue firmly in cheek that his work as a Naval Intelligence Officer required 'no naval training.'[84]

The introduction of conscription in Britain in 1916 added a new element to the division of labour. Hitherto, academics could continue their studies and not volunteer for active duty if they did not wish. Now, one had to be engaged in work of national importance to avoid active service. This led to a new drive to get academics with relevant skills to utilize them as best they could, be they of military age or not. In mid-1916, the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, T.C. Fitzpatrick, sent a circular to all resident members of the Senate of the University asking each to specify 'any sort of national service which he would be willing to contribute.'[85] At the end of 1916, H.A.L. Fisher was appointed President of the Board of Education in David Lloyd-George's new cabinet. Fisher was a historian who had spent most of his career at Oxford before his appointment as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sheffield in 1913. While his appointment was not a response to direct

war problems *per se*, it was seen as part of the greater process. Letters of congratulations received by Fisher all repeated the same point: for the first time an expert with genuine knowledge of the area would occupy such a post.[86] The Fisher appointment was indicative of a new mentality in the perception of university education in Britain. There was a similar response to the appointment of Painlevé as Minister of Education in late 1915, but in France, there were precedents to this. Painlevé's rise would be simultaneously meteoric and fleeting; he was appointed Minister of War and Prime Minister successively in 1917, but both ministries were short-lived. Painlevé's ascent was, on the one hand a symptom of the rise of academic expertise in wartime, and on the other, a reflection of the instability of French politics faced with the crises of morale of 1917.

Resonances of scientific mobilization in the United States 1915–17

The mobilization of university knowledge was initially a national endeavour; it was conceived and enacted in terms of national needs and national resources. However, within the networked world of scholarship, information was shared, if not directly. While there was no formal liaison between Britain and France early in the war, protagonists in each instance were aware of what was happening in the other case from their readership of scholarly journals. As the integration of academic expertise into the war government was a new departure, it was reported upon and discussed with regularity in periodicals. Paul Painlevé kept a close eye on how the British were organizing their scientific effort.[87] The French also made special provisions to circumvent the official blockade of Germany in order to acquire the latest scientific periodicals and – ironically – keep abreast of the latest discoveries from the nation whose scientists had been 'discredited' only months before.[88] In early 1916, as the allied cooperation in the war became more pronounced, Sir Henry Norman was appointed as scientific liaison between the British and French scientific efforts (discussed in Chapter Four).

The transmission of information through scholarly journals and correspondence networks meant that neutral countries were sensitive to changes taking place in Europe and the application of learning to warfare. So, while this period was, for politicians and scholars in Britain and France, one of quick and reactive improvisation to a rapidly radicalizing situation, in the United States it provided an opportunity for scholars to acquaint themselves with the dynamic of

the war and what American entry would entail for them. *Science* was the journal of record for the academic scientists and it carried articles from its European counterparts, especially *Nature*, throughout the war. As discontent grew amongst British scientists as to the misapplication of their expertise, American readers were exposed to the debates. Not only were American scholars aware of what was happening, they were aware of the potential pitfalls encountered elsewhere. Practically speaking, American scholars and government officials had a head start in mobilizing their expertise before the United States formally entered the conflict in April 1917.

When the civilian ship, the *Sussex,* was sunk in April 1916, the American astrophysicist, George Ellery Hale, announced that in the event of war, the National Academy would place its resources at the disposal of the government. This mirrored almost exactly the moves of the Royal Society and Académie des Sciences in August 1914. Hale went a step further. Together with a delegation of scientists, he met with President Woodrow Wilson and explained that the Academy could form what the historian Daniel Kevles termed an 'arsenal of science' to defend the country. Wilson gave his assent, leading to the formation of the National Research Council (NRC), a body to coordinate research between universities, industry, and the government.[89] While some derided the body as dangerously centralized and militaristic, the alliance between science and industry was important, while federal intervention was a novelty. The NRC immediately began working on war-related problems, before the United States had entered the war proper. The foundation of the NRC demonstrated that the preoccupations of European scientists were shared by their colleagues in the United States. Where their soon-to-be allies were mostly reactive, they could be pro-active; this was a testament to the power of the scholarly network as a means of disseminating information.

Conclusion

Contemporaries were acutely aware of the wartime division of labour and mobilization of academic expertise. It was frequently written about in public forums as an example of something new and unique to the present conflict. However, the respective discourses which emerged in Britain and France deviated sharply in how they represented wartime changes and speak to the different spaces which university education held in national life.

The overwhelming theme in Britain was utility. Writing in 1917, H.A.L. Fisher argued succinctly that 'before the war some people may have doubted whether the universities were properly discharging their function in the economy of the National Life. Those doubts have now been effectually and finally dispelled.'[90] John Burnet of St. Andrews wrote of the war-work done in university laboratories in his monograph on higher education, arguing that this had been done for the nation, and hinting at the necessity of a new arrangement between university, state and industry after the war.[91] Richard Glazebrook devoted an entire book to scientific mobilization at Cambridge and argued that 'bravery and self-sacrifice without the aid which science could bring would fail to give us victory.'[92] In his opening address at the beginning of the new academic year in October 1915, the outgoing Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge, M.R. James, spoke of those who were involved in scientific work and those who had 'engaged in work in governmental offices, and have placed their attainments, linguistic, economic, administrative, historical, at the service of the country.'[93] Gilbert Murray emphasized the 'response to the requirements of the war' when speaking of Oxford in September 1916.[94] The application of specialist knowledge, and the service which universities were performing for the state, was part of the public discourse in Britain.

The division of labour was rarely, if ever, spoken of as one of the wartime achievements of the French university. Instead, the emphasis was always on the moral qualities and sacrifice of university men at the front. Painlevé wrote an article about the École Normale Supérieure and the war for the *Revue Scientifique* in March 1916. The piece made no reference to the scientific work being undertaken at the Rue d'Ulm, but instead focused on the bravery of *normaliens* at the front.[95] Raymond Thamin, rector of the Academy of Bordeaux, wrote in a similar manner in 1916. He noted how 'we learned of the natural military qualities and the degree of heroism in men of study.'[96] Thamin's book gave an overview of academic life in the first few years of the war but steered clear of the practical work of the university, focusing instead on valour and sacrifice. Both Painlevé and Thamin recounted individual stories of bravery and courage amongst university men. In a later work, published in 1920, Thamin devoted an entire chapter to the idea of sacrifice. In it he wrote that sacrifice rested on an optimistic premise: 'If a man gives his life for humanity or for his country, it is because he has faith in progress; it is because he has absolute faith in the certain triumph, in the near or distant future, of the ideas for which he died.'[97] In France, it was the moral values which a university education provided which were

most important in war, irrespective of where or how they manifested themselves.

This discrepancy can be explained by two issues. The first is conscription. The absence of conscription in Britain before 1916 gave people scope to adapt their skills towards war-related problems. On the introduction of conscription, exemption was still allowed were one engaged in work which was deemed to be of 'national importance.'[98] In the French case, mobilization in 1914 was geared towards one goal: the repulsion of the German invasion and the maintenance of national integrity. Men of all skills and vocations were conscripted into the armies en masse where their academic expertise was of little value, but where valour was the only characteristic of any worth. Moreover, the university, whose reform under the Republic had been so divisive, needed to prove itself in this immediate context, and thus moral values took on a great importance.

The second issue is a more general one and relates to the relative interrelationship of the university and the state in each case. In Britain, the struggle by academic reformers to modernize universities – especially when it came to the full integration of the sciences into syllabi – was an old and on-going one, and is discussed in Chapter Five. The war was cited as evidence that reformers had been right and that the state needed to accommodate their calls for change. Indeed, David Edgerton has argued that this was the dominant narrative of British scientific intellectuals throughout the twentieth century.[99] The reform of universities in France, coupled with the traditional proximity of the academic elite to political power meant that this was not an issue. The battles for educational change had been fought – and won – by the reformers in France before 1914. However, they were still contentious and subject to attack from the Republic's political enemies. This also helps to explain the emphasis on moral qualities in the French academy; it responded to claims from the conservatives and the church that the reformed, secular, university was lacking in these qualities.

Cumulatively, in each instance professors and politicians faced the same dilemma, whether they were in Britain, France, or the United States; namely, how to harness the great potential of scholarly research and apply it to warfare and war-related problems. In each instance, this had great consequences for university-state relations; and in each case, the university's proximity to the state was different. The common theme was the scholarly network; personal knowledge was a prerequisite for accessing academic knowledge.

3
War at the University

In April 1918 the Faculty of Letters of the University of Paris issued a startling warning to all staff and students. 'In the event of bombardment by planes during the day,' it read, 'all the exercises of the faculty: classes, demonstrations, and exams will be interrupted immediately.' It advised staff and students to 'shelter themselves under the Sorbonne' and established that 'oral examinations will be recommenced shortly after the alert or the following day, written exams will be recommenced on a date to be indicated to candidates.'[1] Following their Spring Offensive the German Army was within forty miles of Paris and the city was coming under bombardment from long-range guns. While the direct threat to the Sorbonne was new in 1918, it was a shocking and violently immediate expression of something which had been experienced throughout the war. In France, Britain, and even in the United States, war was all pervasive, and even when the literal distances between front and rear were great, the metaphorical distances were not.

This chapter will examine the functioning of universities in wartime, focusing on their day-to-day operations and the impact which the war had upon them. Universities were transformed on account of the war. From the outbreak of the conflict the war was palpable on university campuses as functions changed, social relations became strained, and academic communities encountered death on a hitherto unknown scale. In a report issued in 1917, the governing body of the University of Bordeaux argued that 'our university, like all of its sisters in France, is divided, since August 1914, into two unequal parts: one which went to the front and the other which remained in the rear.'[2] This division was experienced at all universities to some extent and contributed to the sense that the war had come to the institution. Despite the desire

to continue with business as usual, universities found that as long as the war went on, life would be anything but normal.

Universities were more than campuses, lecture halls, student rooms, playing fields and laboratories; they were communities. Although the composition and collective identities of these communities varied from institution to institution, and from nation to nation, in general the bonds forged in the course of a university education were meaningful and long lasting. The university was where men – and it was primarily men – grew from adolescence to manhood and lived, socialized, and studied together. These ties were meaningful, and the rupture of wartime would demonstrate just how important the social bonds of higher education were, at home and at the front. Once the community was dispersed in wartime, with students leaving for the front and the space which they used to inhabit at home left relatively idle, the whole community was out of kilter. The absence of students at the university meant that in many cases societal and sporting life began to die, another sign of the impact of the war. Most palpable, and infinitely more traumatic, was death, which rendered the wartime division between those at home and those at the front permanent. At the same time, the wartime militarization of the university space, and the transformation of social relationships which came about as a result of the war and its issues, meant that universities – and university communities – were in turn shaken by the war. This chapter will examine how academic communities experienced the war and how the anxieties of the front were transmitted home and vice-versa.

Business as usual?

The war quickly became palpable for those who remained at universities from 1914. As men either volunteered for the armed forces or were conscripted, classrooms, lecture halls, and student rooms were emptied of their usual vibrancy. Cambridge University saw its student population fall from 3,181 in 1914 to 408 by 1918. Oxford was similar, with a pre-war population of 3,000 being reduced to one eighth of that figure by 1918.[3] The number of degrees awarded by the University of Sheffield halved during the war.[4] In France, where conscription was applied throughout the war, the population of the Sorbonne fell from 20,000 to 4,000. The École Normale Supérieure had 211 men enrolled when war broke out but only twenty remained by March 1915.[5] At Cambridge, John Maynard Keynes wrote in October 1914 that he was only lecturing to ‘blacks and women’, Bertrand Russell noted in November 1914

that 'I have few pupils.'[6] In Dublin, the historian Walter Alison Phillips noted that one of his classes was attended only by 'four girls and a callow youth.'[7] As early as October 1914 the Principal of McGill University in Canada, William Peterson, noted that 'many of our students have actually gone to the front, and the general attendance ... has been considerably reduced.'[8]

The reduction in student populations threatened the non-academic aspects of student life. Student societies – traditionally more prominent in British academic culture than in France – either ceased meeting or struggled to continue as in peacetime. The boat club at King's College Cambridge could not function in Michaelmas term 1914 (October to December).[9] In early 1915 it was 'felt that rowing would become a lost art unless some effort were made to produce continuity' and the club continued to improvise organized activities – of wildly fluctuating standards – in the four years that followed.[10] In Britain, societal and sporting life was important and its cessation was a visual reminder of the rupture in the wider life of a university.

The absence of students made the war ubiquitous. It disrupted the basic rhythms and flows of daily life at what were once vibrant institutions. Instead, they became militarized, as soldiers were temporarily billeted in empty student rooms, and military uniform replaced academic gown. E.M. Forster described the following Cambridge encounter of the old university and the new one.

> A solitary undergraduate in cap and gown came round the corner upon them, and [a group of] soldiers naturally burst out laughing. They had never seen anything so absurd, so outlandish. What could the creature be? To me the creature was the tradition I had been educated in, and that it should be laughed at in its own home appalled me.[11]

The absence of students was even more acute in France where conscription was enforced from the outset of the war, leading to many symbolic absences. In February 1915, Albert Sarraut, the Minister for Public Instruction, decided to cancel the *concours*, or entry examination, for the École Normale Supérieure. Sarraut felt that to run the *concours* in 1915 would be unfair to those on active service who were unable to sit the exam.[12] The cancellation meant that no new cohort of students would enter for the year 1915, a rupture in the life of the ENS which built its idiosyncratic identity upon the language of *promotions*. However, the mantra of the French university during the war was

continuity 'as if the war did not exist'. Thus, Sarraut made the decision to run the *concours* in 1916, although this was officially announced by his successor, Paul Painlevé.[13] Painlevé also arranged for a special *concours* to take place at the end of hostilities for those whose studies had been interrupted by the war. In the *concours* of 1916, thirty-five students were admitted to the letters section, while thirty-seven were admitted to sciences.[14] Students went to war and war came to the university.

This was even the case in the neutral United States. 'Even the sleepy campus of Brown University dozing in the hot sun heard the news' in August 1914. Brown, located in Providence, Rhode Island, was dealt a double shock early in the war with the death of Professor of Romance Languages, Henri Ferdinand Micoleau, at the first battle of the Marne on 9 September 1914.[15] It was a similar story at Northwestern University in Illinois, where a lecturer in French had been wounded and an Austrian graduate killed before the end of 1914.[16] As early as August 1914, Clark University in Massachusetts decided to make as complete a collection as possible of war literature for the university library (as did Cambridge University). The university's account of its collection of German publications noted wryly that 'these now lie in all their incompleteness awaiting the later issues which we assume are being held for us in Germany' noting that the library had received nothing from Germany since the end of 1915.[17] As will be discussed in Chapter Four, official exchanges between the elite American universities and the German state had ceased by November 1914. Referring to Louvain and presumably to his own university, Columbia president Nicholas Murray Butler stated firmly in December 1914 that the fabric of a university 'may be bombarded and burnt, but its spirit cannot be touched by cannon or by fire.'[18] However, he and many of his colleagues would see this assertion challenged in the years that followed.

The absence of students disrupted the basic life of the university, but it also had a knock-on effect. The relative absence of undergraduates meant that the university had no steady income from student fees. The University of Glasgow lost over £50,000 in income during the war years.[19] The ancient universities in Britain differed from the newer civic institutions, and from their counterparts on the European continent, in that they were not state-run bodies, and maintained much financial independence.[20] The absence of student fees quickly became a pressing problem with the administration of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Before the war, the issue of taking state aid was discussed but proved controversial as it was seen as compromising the academic independence of the ancient universities. In the summer of 1915,

Cambridge's Professor of Classics, William Ridgeway, invoked Butler's line of argument in claiming that to take a state grant would be to kill 'the spirit of a great university, [to kill] the freedom it had had for generations, and put it under the heel of officialism.'[21] A state grant was accepted in that instance and the precedent was an important one; it set the stage for further state intervention into the affairs of the ancient universities. Universities also had to make cost-cutting decisions to balance the books in wartime. It was normal that prizes and fellowships were not given out and frequently appointments were not made to chairs when they became vacant, most notably at Oxford.[22]

The University of Paris' budget for 1915 projected receipts being down more than 900,000 francs from 1914.[23] The university decided to cut expenditure on ceremonials, leave unoccupied chairs empty, and to cut personal research funds.[24] At the same time, state subsidies to the university were being reduced. The university operated at a deficit throughout the war and, in the French case, state support was no remedy, as the resources of the French state were overwhelmingly tied up in the war and subsidies to higher education decreased as the conflict progressed. In all belligerent societies, universities found themselves in straitened circumstances owing to the absence of student fees. Outward expressions of business as usual were one thing, but the normal functioning of the institution was being squeezed by financial imperative.

French universities decided to combine a wider sense of allied kinship with institutional pragmatism during the war. In 1916, the French government inaugurated a new policy to bring students from war torn regions to study at French universities. This meant that students from Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, and parts of invaded France had their university fees waived.[25] This served a number of important purposes. The influx of foreign students helped to fill classrooms, especially at the provincial universities which tended to have a more uniformly French composition and thus were more severely impacted by the war than the relatively cosmopolitan Sorbonne. As a result of this, the universities of Lyon, Caen, and Bordeaux, and many others, boasted significant numbers of students from Serbia by the latter years of the war. Mixing pragmatism and cultural alliance, the presence of students from far-flung nations brought home the abnormality of the wartime situation; it rendered the war tangible. At the same time, the Sorbonne saw its student composition change too, with the numbers of international students generally being diminished, and its traditional preponderance of Russian students being significantly reduced. Business as usual was simply impossible. [26]

The war was experienced at universities through the meaningful absence of students. Where universities sought to take action to mask this, such as through the active recruitment of foreign students, it still pointed to the abnormality of wartime life. While the United States did not enter the war until 1917, college presidents were wary of the effect which mass recruitment could have upon student numbers, but this was felt unevenly across American universities. At east coast institutions, enrolments dropped by between forty and twenty-five per cent in a year following American entry, while at west coast institutions they fell by around ten per cent. The financial repercussions were still severe, with Harvard reporting a shortfall of $400,000 in tuition income for 1917–18 alone.[27] However, American involvement in the war was sufficiently short that resources were never stretched to the extent that they were at European universities.

The war and academic identities

The war was palpable on the home front in more sinister ways. Continuity was impossible for those who remained, not only on account of the transformation of the university space, but because of the reconfiguration of social relations on campus. The war, its issues, and public support for its prosecution, all became potential pitfalls for members of academic communities. Academics and students could have a strong allegiance to the university, their college, a society or club, while they could also feel a deep attachment to the national community, which was invigorated by the war. When war cultures trickled down to university campuses, these traditional identifiers and assumptions were challenged. Xenophobia became a particular problem in Britain where there was a significant German immigrant population, and British universities, with their strong connections to German academia, became sites where this was played out.

In the early months of the war, minorities often found themselves marginalized as they did not fit into the vision of the national community at war. The cosmopolitan university became a site of both exclusion and inclusion, but this process was far from uniform. The elite society of the Cambridge Apostles mourned the loss of Férenc Békássy, a Hungarian aristocrat and graduate of King's College who enlisted in the Hungarian forces on the outbreak of war and was killed on the Eastern Front in June 1915. Békássy was not seen as an enemy. Keynes had pleaded with him not to enlist in the Hungarian Army and he remained in regular contact with his friends in Cambridge while mobilized.[28]

Ludwig Wittgenstein, an Austrian, was in a similar position to Békássy. He studied under Bertrand Russell at Trinity before the war. In December of 1914, Russell wrote that he had heard nothing of Wittgenstein since the war's outbreak: 'As he is a "Modern Hun" and therefore wicked, it is much to be hoped he has been killed.'[29] However, while both Békassy and Wittgenstein were on the 'enemy' side, neither was German, and this made a difference in the frenzied early months of war.

The Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, Henry Montagu Butler, housed a young German student called Fritz Sommerkamp at his lodge for periods of the war. Sommerkamp had arrived in Cambridge shortly before the outbreak of hostilities. Butler's son James remembered that 'the situation required adroit manoeuvring when other guests – Belgians, for instance – were in the house.'[30] Gordon Butler wrote home from the front that 'it must be comic having the young Hun. When does he manage to put in his Morning Hate, at 8.45 AM in his bed-room, or does he come down to prayers?'[31] This summarized the disconnect which many scholars, especially younger ones, felt between the anti-German invective being promulgated in newspapers and periodicals and the reality that, through it all, the 'enemy' was still a colleague and a human being.

The position of German scholars in Britain was greatly damaged in December 1914 when Kuno Meyer, a professor of Celtic Studies who had worked in Britain for many years, delivered a controversial address to the *Clan-na-Gael* society in New York, which *The Times* claimed had the intention of 'stirring up sedition in Ireland and endeavouring to stab in the back the country to which he owes so much.'[32] Following this incident, *Nature* published an editorial where it derided a man who spoke 'English without an accent, who has spent thirty years of his life in an English university, a man who has (or had) many intimate friends in this country' but whom had shown himself to be 'a dastardly enemy'. It concluded that henceforth 'all naturalized aliens of Teutonic extraction' must be treated with suspicion. 'The individual, in these days, must suffer for the crimes of his countrymen.'[33] German-born academics across Britain, or academics with German sounding names, were often treated with suspicion, especially in the aftermath of the sinking of the Lusitania in May 1915.

The radicalization of warfare and the demonization of the enemy overlapped in mid-May 1915. Siegfried Ruhemann, a chemist working at Cambridge University, was the subject of an article in the *Cambridge Daily News* which claimed that he should not be working in the university's laboratories given the important work being undertaken there. Ruhemann was shunned in the local community, received hate mail,

and eventually resigned his post.[34] There were similar cases elsewhere in Britain. In the same month, five German-born university professors. Karl Breul (Cambridge), H.G. Fielder (Oxford), R. Priebsch (London), A.W. Schüddekopf (Leeds), and K. Wichmann (Birmingham) published a remonstrance in *The Times*, pledging allegiance to the country of their adoption to which they felt bound by 'gratitude, family ties … and a deep sympathy born of common work and intimate knowledge of the nation's life and character.'[35] The demonization of German scholarship which was a hallmark of the early war years sometimes had grave consequences for Germans working in Britain, but this was a transitory phenomenon which dovetailed with wider anti-German sentiment following the sinking of the Lusitania.

There were few non-French academics working in French institutions as universities were state run and thus lecturers were civil servants. Moreover, the French university system had been built to bolster republican national sentiment. However, the phenomenon of the enemy within which emerged in wartime Britain also emerged in wartime France. The political truce of 1914 had temporarily suspended some deep-rooted and bitter debates between right and left and the republican university and its professors were at the heart of this. These suspended debates occasionally resurfaced in wartime. In March 1916 the right-wing senator Adrien Gaudin de Villaine called the sociologist Émile Durkheim a 'Frenchman of foreign lineage' and accused him of being in the pay of the German *Kriegsministerium*. Durkheim was a divisive figure before the war; he was typical of the secular and scientific republican professor and closely associated with the reformed Sorbonne, so derided by critics on the right. He was also Jewish, which seems to have informed much of de Villaine's attack. Louis Liard rode to Durkheim's defence, claiming that not only was Durkheim's honour at stake, but that of the university and the education ministry.[36] Paul Painlevé defended Durkheim in the Senate, detailing the propaganda work which Durkheim had conducted since the war began in his defence.[37] Durkheim's position was defended not by reference to his scholarship before the war but his conduct during it. This distinction shows how the university in France was still in a precarious position when confronted with those on the political right who had opposed the deeply political process of reform.

The changed social relations at the university were also felt at the neutral American university. While the United States did not enter the conflict until 1917, most scholars were ideologically aligned long before that. Much like their counterparts in British universities, American

educators had strong links to Germany in the pre-war years; many of them had Ph.Ds from German universities and American university administrators were deeply influenced by the German model.[38] While there was much sympathy towards the allied cause from the outbreak of war, the fact that the United States was not aligned in the conflict meant that there was space for professors with pro-German sympathies to express their views. This was especially pronounced in areas with large ethnic German populations, such as the Mid-West. Most famous was the case of the German psychologist Hugo Münsterburg, who, from his base at Harvard, enthusiastically defended the German position in the war and was pilloried for it. National and international newspapers held him up as an example of all that was wrong with German scholarship. By October 1914 Münsterberg felt such an outsider in his own institution that he could no longer attend faculty meetings; by that point, some of his colleagues were agitating for his removal while an anonymous Harvard alumnus was offering 10 million dollars to the university for him to be removed from his post.[39] Münsterberg did not resign, nor was he removed, and once the initial hysteria had died down he resumed lecturing, dying in 1916.

At Columbia University, John Burgess, the retired professor of political science, soon found himself in a small minority. Burgess was a key figure in founding the Kaiser Wilhelm/Roosevelt professorial exchange with Germany and had met the Kaiser on a number of occasions. When the war broke out he instinctively spoke in defence of the German cause and argued with reference to anti-German sentiment that, in history, 'the majority is generally on the wrong side of every great question in the beginning.'[40] Burgess described the Kaiser as a man of peace and 'the only ruler I ever saw in whom there appeared to be absolutely no arrogance.'[41] Burgess experienced much hostility in New York and consequently he advised Nicholas Murray Butler to cancel scholarly exchanges with Germany and Austria-Hungary in wartime. The respective national governments would make this decision in any event.[42] Burgess's letters demonstrated his dismay with the prevailing anti-German sentiment amongst elite American audiences. From 1915, his public pronouncements in favour of Germany diminished, and after the war (and Burgess's death in 1931), Butler wrote euphemistically that Burgess had done 'his best to look facts sternly in the face and, without being either anti-German or pro-German, to see the moving forces in the Great War as they really were.'[43] However, this sought to mask the fact that Burgess had felt the fury of many of his pro-ally academic colleagues, one of whom dismissed him as a 'doddering old idiot' with

another labelling him senile.[44] Social relations between scholars could be transformed by the war, irrespective of whether the society in question was a belligerent or not.

Dissent

Social relations on campus were further transformed by the emergence of dissent. The 'enemy within' was initially understood to be German scholars or those supportive of the German cause. This phenomenon was limited to the early years of the war. As the war progressed universities felt the full brunt of its brutality. It soon became apparent that many of the gaps in classrooms would never be filled. The war dragged on, the death toll rose, and few solutions seemed immediately apparent. Consequently, some members of academic communities began speaking out in opposition to the conduct of the war. This phenomenon was especially prevalent in Britain following the conscription in 1916.

Objection was especially pronounced at the University of Cambridge and further frayed the already tattered fabric of community life. Objection to the prosecution of the war was not as pronounced at other British universities, a phenomenon which can be linked to the unusual overlap between the liberal 'Bloomsbury' group, the Apostles, and the influence of these connections at Cambridge, especially amongst younger scholars.[45] This peculiarity meant that Cambridge was central to the July 1914 petitionary movement to prevent war and also in various anti-war currents which emerged subsequently, be they in opposition to the war's conduct, or to the introduction of conscription in 1916.

Bertrand Russell was the only scholar to publicly dissent when the anti-war movement dissolved in August 1914. Russell's criticisms of the conduct of the war gained more and more publicity as the death toll rose and with the introduction of conscription in 1916. He was exceptional amongst academics in condemning the war and its conduct through his publications and work on behalf of the Union of Democratic Control (UDC) and the No-Conscription Fellowship (NCF), two organizations with limited goals which became increasingly populated by pacifists. This led to him being deprived of his lectureship at Trinity College in 1916, the great academic scandal of the war.[46]

While Russell was the focus in the early war years, the *Cambridge Magazine* became the touchstone for pacifist opinion in 1917 and 1918, not only in Cambridge, but far beyond. Founded in 1912, the *Cambridge Magazine* was not an official university publication, although

it was written and edited by university members. Its editor, C.K. Ogden, saw the protection of civil liberties as the magazine's wartime duty. The magazine published articles and letters by contributors of all persuasions, be they pro-war, pacifist, or anywhere in between. In May 1915 it translated Romain Rolland's *Au-dessus de la mêlée*.[47] The newspaper frequently boasted the contributors of Russell, G.H Hardy, and Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, as well as the poetry of Siegfried Sassoon.

One of its most popular features during the war was its review of the foreign press, edited by Mrs C.R. Buxton, which presented the view of Britain's enemies as well as allies, and led to the circulation of the publication exploding to 200,000 by 1917.[48] Its content and influence were such that it was discussed in the House of Commons in November 1917.[49] Thus Cambridge became associated with pacifism and anti-war sentiment. It was a hub for both the UDC and the NCF, both of which attracted many student members, and bitter divisions soon emerged. In 1917, James Butler was brought into conflict with his father, the master of Trinity College, for the college's dismissal of Russell.[50] Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, who although not a pacifist, critiqued the war's prosecution, came into conflict with many pro-war figures in Cambridge, notably the philosopher E.M. McTaggart. He found himself alienated, melancholy, and 'lived and ate alone.'[51] The classicist, William Ridgeway, alienated many when he refused to admit students who were known to be members of the UDC into his lectures.[52] The *Cambridge Magazine*, and many of those associated with it, became distanced from the university mainstream and the publication's offices were attacked by a mob when the Armistice was announced in November 1918.

There is little evidence of opposition to the war in French universities, either amongst its academics or students. The logic of national self-defence and the reality that France was part occupied trumped all. The great labour unrest and mutinies crises of 1917 seem to have had no reverberations within the university. Thus, the integrity of the university community was not challenged by critiques of the conduct of the war, a testament to the centrality of education to wider understandings of republican identity. Rather than emerging as a site of dissent like Cambridge, the Sorbonne and the provincial universities became sites of mobilization and the arenas in which many official pro-war ceremonies were held. Attended by statesmen, military figures, educators, and foreign dignitaries, the ceremonies demonstrated unequivocally that the university was central to wartime mobilization.

The introduction of the American example into the comparison is complicated by the fact that the United States did not enter the war until 1917. However, even allowing for this, the experience of Columbia University in New York was remarkably similar to that of Cambridge, although both cases cannot be said to be wholly representative of national trends. In 1915, as talk of preparedness began to gain greater traction in New York, newspapers recorded how students were holding demonstrations and counter-demonstrations on the topic.[53] A report in the *New York Sun* of May 1915 claimed that 63,000 American college men were against the introduction of military drill, while 17,000 supported it. The survey canvassed opinion in thirty-seven colleges and was undertaken by the Anti-Militarism League whose president was a Columbia student.[54] In June 1916 Congress approved the creation of Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) to train a reserve of officers at universities but this proved divisive, especially at Yale University, with pacifism cited as a major reason.[55]

By the time of American entry into the war interventionism was the dominant spirit at American universities, but dissent still emerged. The well-known cases of scholarly protest at the suspension of academic freedom in wartime are discussed in Chapter Four. What is less well known is outright pacifist activity on American university campuses, with Columbia again prominent. In March 1917, a number of pacifists were forcibly evicted from a pro-war rally attended by 500 Columbia students, while in June of that year, three students drew much attention to themselves when they were arrested for failing to comply with the draft.[56]

Support for the American war effort was not unanimous. Academics – much as the public at large – were split over Wilson's decision to intervene, the way in which public opinion was being groomed, and the constraints being placed on academics themselves. At the University of Michigan, a public university based in Ann Arbor, a town with a large ethnic German population, President Harry Burns Hutchins resisted the preparedness movement before 1917 and felt that his university's role was to produce leaders for the nation, not privates for the army.[57] Edmund Janes James, the president of the University of Illinois, was German-educated and married to a German woman; he opposed American entry into the war fearing it would lead to a reaction against adherents of German culture in the United States.[58]

Critical voices emerged, none more so than Randolph Bourne, a radical journalist, Columbia graduate, and formerly a disciple of the eminent Columbia philosopher, John Dewey. In his writings in the journal

Seven Arts, he criticized what he perceived as a war made by intellectual élites.[59] He was especially critical of Columbia for its attitude in suppressing pacifist activity, claiming that the university's trustees did not 'represent the free and liberal intellectual spirit of Columbia, the spirit that stands out in these younger men against militarism and reaction.' Instead, they sought to 'give the false impression that the university presents a solid chauvinistic front.'[60] Bourne reserved particular scorn for Dewey who was intellectually troubled by the war and struggled to justify support for it, but eventually did so on the grounds that it could lead to a healthy and pluralistic American national culture after the conflict.[61] Bourne noted scathingly that Dewey's support for the war undermined the pragmatist philosophical school with which he was synonymous.[62] Bourne's very public split with Dewey showed how intellectual, institutional, political and personal relationships both mediated and informed academic attitudes towards the war.

The relationship of students and scholars to the war, as expressed privately or publicly, had great consequences for normal social relations within university communities. Continuity on the home front simply was not possible as in the decades before 1914. The war was all pervasive and deeply divisive amongst colleagues, friends, even family. These wartime ruptures would have long afterlives, but these paled in comparison to the ultimate rupture: death.

Dealing with death

Most troubling to the structures and function of academic communities in wartime was death. University communities were destroyed by losses in the war and this was a striking and deeply traumatic way in which the war itself was experienced on the home front. Contemporaries soon learned that many of the gaps in institutional life which were brought about by mobilization in 1914 would never be filled. The casualty rate amongst university men was disproportionately high as most students and alumni were mobilized as junior officers in the army. The transformation of temporary absences in university life into permanent ones was cause for much grief and reflection. Fundamentally, it underlined the importance of the social relations born in the course of a university education and a university life; these were frequently intimate and, while they varied from institution to institution, long-lasting.

The intimate network of Cambridge Apostles was shaken by the war. G.H. Luce wrote 'many poems of vulgar rage' when he heard of Ferenc Békássy's death.[63] John Maynard Keynes wrote of the death of one of his

students that 'I can't bear that he should have died.'[64] T.R. Glover noted in his diary that with the escalating death toll 'Keynes [is] losing [the] edge of his marvellous accuracy [and] getting frightened about it.'[65] It quickly became apparent that the rising body count, allied to the close personal bonds formed at university, would impinge on the ability of those at home to continue whatsoever. A.C. Benson felt compelled to address the death of Rupert Brooke in 1915, despite not having known him intimately. 'When he died, I wrote down careful recollections of him in minute detail, hardly to be reproduced.'[66] Across British universities, rolls of honour were compiled from the early months of the war, listing both service and death. These were frequently printed in student newspapers and magazines; death became inescapable.

Contemporaries were aware of death; it destroyed families, towns, clubs, churches, and so on. For academics, the damage being wrought on their communities was registered. The letters of the *normalien* Marcel Étévé illustrate this. Étévé carefully noted the death of *normaliens* as he became aware of them, whether they were friends or merely acquaintances. He kept on top of the lists of the missing and dead as his mother sent him the *annuaire* of the ENS.[67] Étévé – who would be killed in 1916 – prepared himself for death by investigating who of his academic family had already made the supreme sacrifice. Death was experienced in the university too. Lucien Herr, the librarian of the École Normale Supérieure and mentor to many students, described the feelings of melancholy felt by those at Rue d'Ulm. There was 'too much bad news, too many losses, too much slaughter of our best men, of an entire generation that was supposed to replace us.'[68]

There was much symbolism in the death of university men. In a war where intellect itself was presented and understood as a combatant, the combat of those engaged in symbolically important work gained wider audiences than usual, while their deaths became microcosms of the wider conflict. Pierre-Maurice Masson finished his thesis on the religion of Jean-Jacques Rousseau in the trenches while maintaining regular correspondence with his mentor, Gustave Lanson, at the Sorbonne. He was seeking leave to return to Paris to defend his thesis when he was killed at Verdun in April 1916.[69] Masson's work on the religion of one of the philosophical inspirations for both the French Revolution and the Republic was a microcosm of the *union sacrée* at war; a Catholic, he embodied the spirit of the wartime political truce. As such, his death was widely reported and mourned and he was awarded his doctorate posthumously by the University of Paris.[70] Masson's thesis was also awarded the Académie Française's literary

prize for 1916.[71] His supervisor, Gustave Lanson, wrote an academic report on his dissertation which was remarkably personal, describing their friendship, Masson's sensitive nature, 'nobility of character', and his 'tender soul.'[72]

Oliver Lodge, the respected physicist and principal of Birmingham University, had, like many at the time, an interest in spiritualism. When one of his collaborators, F.W.H. Myers, died in 1901, Lodge claimed that they continued to communicate through psychical mediums. Raymond Lodge, Oliver's son, was killed at Ypres in 1915, strengthening his father's belief in this process. He and members of his family claimed to communicate with Raymond in séances and claimed that Myers had all but adopted Raymond. In 1916 he wrote a book about his son and the process through which he claimed to contact him after his death.[73] Lodge's experiences were part of a larger preoccupation with spiritualism as a means of understanding and dealing with death during the Great War.[74]

A number of French academics lost their sons in the Great War, with Durkheim, Lanson, Raymond Thamin, Ernest Denis, Émile Picard, and Paul Vidal de la Blache being amongst the most prominent. Durkheim had his son, André, and his nephew, Marcel Mauss, at the front. The news of the deaths of other *normaliens* shook him and made him think increasingly of the mortality of his family members. The death of sociologist and *normalien* Robert Hertz in 1915 was the first time that a former student who had 'a place in [his] heart' died, leading Durkheim to 'think of others.'[75]

In January 1916, André was reported missing in Salonika. André's death was confirmed in April of 1916. Durkheim wrote to Georges Davy that 'it is at least a satisfaction to me to have discovered that I found comfort in the ideas that I teach.'[76] Thus, Durkheim found a means of coping – temporarily at least – by escaping into his teaching. By retaining as much of the structure of the pre-war university as he could control, Durkheim could cope better with the trauma of war. Gustave Lanson also found solace in academic work. Lanson's son was killed in October 1915.[77] Nicholas Murray Butler at Columbia University asked Lanson to take a one-year post there for the year 1916–17. Lanson initially refused, citing 'grave and serious reasons' for remaining in France; Masson was still alive and correcting his proofs in the trenches.[78] He then changed his mind, and his letter of acceptance indicated a certain hardening of attitudes over previous months. Lanson now decided that, with his son and star pupil dead, lecturing in New York was the best way in which he could serve his country.

Death was omnipresent at universities. The principal of McGill University, William Peterson, wrote in 1915 that he could rarely look at *The Times* without seeing a report of the death of someone 'quite near to me.'[79] The institutional connection was important too; in 1916, Peterson was sent an extraordinarily detailed letter recounting the circumstances of the death, temporary interment, exhumation, and formal funeral of a McGill student called R.P. Campbell. In death, the university community of mobilized students and alumni had intervened to ensure Campbell got a fitting burial; part of this process was to ensure that the news was communicated to alma mater.[80]

Death was not as ubiquitous at American universities. Even during the years of formal neutrality the experience of cultural mobilization for war was, in many respects, similar to that of their fellow universities in Europe. However, a fundamental difference remained that, while the war crept into American campuses in speeches, debates, newspaper and magazine articles, and a slow militarization of student life through the activities of ROTC units, American universities remained relatively less menaced by military mobilization and death. However, a trickle of alumni still volunteered for service abroad before American entry into the war. By mid-1916, the number of Harvard men who had died was such that it was deemed appropriate to erect a university memorial in their memory. While America was technically neutral, the decision to remember all fallen Harvard men – including two who died fighting for the Central Powers – outraged large swathes of the pro-allied alumni community in Cambridge, resulting in a campaign being started which successfully halted the war memorial project.[81] One alumnus wrote a letter of protest to President Lowell expressing his disgust that Harvard would erect a monument 'in honour of the Harvard men who helped rape Belgium, sink the Lusitania, and murder Edith Cavell.'[82] Death was traumatic, and, when it came to alumni who were fighting on the 'wrong' side, it could be divisive.

The academic community at the front

> The joys of study became that bit sweeter when they could do it, and time lost by necessity made them long for that which they could not lose. They say that the trench is an excellent *pensoir*.[83]

Across the world, the war transformed millions of ordinary men into combatants. Once mobilized, they were taken from their families,

friends, and local communities and scattered across global fighting fronts. While lecture halls and classrooms fell empty, what became of the men at the front? The wartime experience demonstrated the importance of academic community as a form of sustenance at the front. While those at home sought to continue as if the war did not exist, those at the front also sought to achieve some form of continuity of university life – through study, group activities, and intense correspondence with friends and colleagues – as it provided normality and stability in what was a fundamentally abnormal situation. Above all, the wartime experience spoke to the strength of ties formed in the course of a university education.

From the outbreak of hostilities in August 1914, Georges Roth, who was Cambridge-educated but serving in the French Army, had been making arrangements to ensure that he received the *Cambridge Magazine* at the front. In a letter to C.K. Ogden he explained why this was so important to him. 'It does one good to feel the Cambridge breeze thus wafted over the war and smoke of our guns, and bringing a kind of refreshing peaceful atmosphere to people in trenches and uncomfortable shelters.'[84] The *normalien* Marcel Étévé sought, but struggled, to maintain an interest in academic work in the trenches. While stationed near Bourges in April 1915, he visited the cathedral and wrote to his mother that the visit inspired him to re-read the works of Émile Mâle, who lectured in art history at the Sorbonne.[85] Étévé was sent to the front shortly after and wrote of the availability of a library to the officers.[86] However, he found it deeply troubling that the war was 'intellectually exhausting.' 'The efforts which I must go to to pick up a book or write!'[87] For the historian Marc Bloch, the war presented no such impediments, and his war notebooks were littered with reading lists and bibliographies.[88] Gordon Butler wrote (from a training camp) in October 1914 that 'my academic mind yearns for a Thucydides, but at present I have only a Virgil.'[89] Fighting in the Austrian Army, Ludwig Wittgenstein wrote to Russell in February 1915 that he had been working on a manuscript on logic since the beginning of the war.[90] Russell was amazed at this, commenting that 'since the war began, it has been impossible for me to think about philosophy.'[91] The continuation of academic work in wartime was important; it allowed contemporaries to reclaim part of their peacetime identity which had been denied to them on account of the war.

In many cases, the correspondence of university men at war reflected the day-to-day concerns and politics of the university itself. Moreover, it was important that scholars correspond with their university professors

and colleagues; maintenance of the link was essential in maintaining a sense of self. Professors frequently corresponded with students at the front, discussing both the highbrow and the banal. The director (Lavisse) and secretary (Paul Dupuy) of the ENS both began a regular correspondence with the many *normaliens* at the front.[92] So did the master of Trinity College, Cambridge, H.M. Butler, as well as many dons who were not fighting, such as Bertrand Russell, John Maynard Keynes, and A.C. Benson.[93] The philosopher and *normalien* Émile Boutroux also kept in regular correspondence with many of his former students who were at the front. 'With shells bursting all around, they tell me what they are doing, and relate their impressions with the same lucidity and mental calm they showed when studying with me.'[94] Boutroux's correspondents did not write to him of philosophy or academic matters; however, it seems that there was meaning in maintaining this link in such trying circumstances. It was similar in the American case; students felt an obligation to correspond with their superiors at home, and these were often published in university newspapers and magazines, and they demonstrated similar concerns as with mobilized students elsewhere. Students from the University of Maine wrote from the front to the university president of how they had gone from thinking of examinations to having 'more things to think about' but promised 'to put the University of Maine on the map of Europe.' Another remarked that the war experience had put his time at university into perspective: 'if I ever do get back again, you can bet your last cent that I'll get every last bit out of college there is to get.'[95]

The American example differs from those of Britain and France. For American students and graduates enlisting from 1917, the war was not only metaphorically far from home and the scholarly life, it was literally far from home. However, as the *Columbia Alumni News* remarked in October 1918, students and alumni had to accept that 'the scholar was once the soldier's antithesis. He is that no longer.'[96] American scholars who found themselves at the front went to even greater lengths to normalize the abnormal. In this instance, university service bureaus – or alumni offices – were quickly set up in Paris in 1917 to provide mobilized students and alumni with 'a home away from home.' The Columbia Service Bureau claimed to represent alma mater abroad and to be a 'foreign representative of every Columbia family', being a 'friend and advisor in health' and a 'visitor and comfort in sickness.'[97] Service bureaus were expected to look out for the needs of students and alumni from the university in question; the college connection was altruistic, palliative, and above all, familial. An article in the *Columbia Alumni*

News noted jealously that 'one of our sister universities has had a large supply of [chocolates] donated to it … will any Columbia man feel moved to do the like for alma mater?'[98]

These individual university bureaus were soon subsumed into the American University Union (AUU) which catered for the needs of all American university men in Europe, from private and public universities, large and small. However, the private east coast institutions were especially represented at the AUU. Its Paris base retained separate rooms for students and alumni of Columbia, Harvard, MIT, Yale, Princeton, Michigan, Virginia, Michigan, Amherst, Brown, Dartmouth, Williams and Bowdoin. In his report about the activities of the Columbia Service Bureau, its director, Horatio Krans, noted that were it not set up it would have left Columbia men on active service with 'a sense of being neglected, and would have reflected unfavourably upon the sense of devotion of our alma mater to her sons.'[99] University service bureaus all housed indexes of students and alumni on active service, which allowed friends and colleagues to locate one another, and alumni events, such as dinners and sporting contests, were common. By February 1918 there were 115 college or university service bureaus active in Paris under the umbrella of the American University Union.[100] By early 1919, over 3,000 Harvard alumni, 2,200 Yale alumni, and 1650 alumni of Dartmouth had registered at their respective service bureaus.[101]

Conclusion

Writing in May 1919, Anson Phelps Stokes, the secretary of Yale University, described the scene at the Yale service bureau in Paris: 'Almost every evening men will be found there from the front, and the war and Yale are the two absorbing topics of conversation.'[102] It was where the normal and the abnormal were juxtaposed. Alumni networks and alumni clubs were important to combatants during the First World War because they reaffirmed their personal and collective identities at a time when these were being eroded in the most brutal way possible. American college men were further from home and came from institutions that were better resourced, and for this reason bureaus could be set up in France. Moreover, alumni networks were better established and resourced at American institutions in this period.[103] However, these networks were important in many university cultures during the war; alumni of Trinity College Dublin held dinners in locations as disparate as Cairo, Jerusalem, and Baghdad during the war, and this was not unusual.[104] Men wanted to fraternize with other men who, irrespective

of whether they were friends before the war, shared something of their worldview and with whom they could speak of life at home.

The reconstitution of university-based ties at the front underscored the durability of bonds formed at university. This sense of community, ruptured by the outbreak of the war and the flight of men from campus into their respective armies, proved an important resource to combatants as the war progressed. It also demonstrated the difficulty in distinguishing between front and rear during the war; universities went to war between 1914 and 1918, but the war also came to them.

Part II
The Consequences of Mobilization

4
Towards Cultural Alliance

On 21 December 1918, President Woodrow Wilson of the United States received an honorary degree from the Sorbonne. On the day of the ceremony, the *grand amphitheâtre* of the venerable university was decked out in French and American flags. The most powerful man in the world, himself a former university president, was in Paris to ensure that war never again scourged the world, but took the time to be part of the ceremonial in Paris' Quartier Latin.[1] The President received multiple orations from the assembled heads of the various faculties of the University of Paris, and his every move was greeted by thundering ovations. *Le Temps* remarked that the ceremony honoured the man who would lead the French nation 'by the hand towards the horizon of universal justice.'[2]

The ceremony epitomized the alliance that had won the war; it was rooted in cultural, political and military co-operation. Special legislation had to be enacted to allow Wilson – as a foreigner – to receive this degree *honoris causa*.[3] Wilson's honorary award at the Sorbonne was not an isolated event, but the culmination of a systematic attempt to bring the universities of the major allies closer together which had gathered pace from 1916. In other words, it presented an alternative to the negative demonization of German scholarship which had prevailed since 1914 by claiming – not always in a coherent manner – that shared history, ideas, and practices united scholars in the nations allied against Germany. This chapter tells the story of how cultural alliance was conceived and performed.

The First World War has traditionally been presented as a hiatus in international cultural exchange.[4] August and September 1914 witnessed a breach between Germany and her opponents which was simultaneously political and cultural. The public cessation of interaction between

British and French academics and their German counterparts did not mean the death knell for all international cultural initiatives. Indeed, international exchange was soon revived and given a new energy on account of the war. The scope of the conflict meant that by 1916 it had become an allied war in most respects: militarily, politically, economically, and culturally.

Scholarly exchange amongst allied nations flourished from 1916, for a multitude of reasons. Much of this co-operation hinged on the United States (which entered the war in April 1917); as such, the process through which American learning was brought closer to its counterparts in Britain and France will be referred to here as the inter-allied project. This project had antecedents in the pre-war period and simultaneously served institutional as well as national interests. Inter-allied scholarly exchanges sought to cultivate American opinion in favour of the allies, and, once America had entered the war, this trend became further pronounced. The campaign to convince America to enter the war resulted in the conflict itself being presented as a war for democracy and the self-determination of subject peoples.[5]

Universities, with their international connections, claims to scholarly impartiality, and deep engagement in many forms of war mobilization, seemed perfectly positioned to symbolize and drive a sense of inter-allied kinship. This development showed that universities were sites where the cultural, political, and military dimensions of the First World War overlapped and where alliance – in all of its incarnations – was performed. In placing the emphasis on inter-allied connections, the intellectual world was once more animated by cross-border exchange, but with one important caveat: it did not include Germany, Austria-Hungary, or other 'enemy' states. While protagonists were careful to distinguish themselves from the 'Fallen Idol' of German scholarship, the invocation of inter-allied values and scholarly practices proved more challenging, especially given the varying and often conflicting histories of Britain, France, and the United States.

Transatlantic professorial exchanges in peace and war

The decade before the First World War witnessed the creation of a multitude of international scholarly connections, through the foundation of international learned societies and journals, the holding of international meetings, the establishment of professorial exchanges between universities, and the exchange of theses and students between universities.[6] In this era of increasing national rivalry, education became

a useful tool for the projection of a positive image of a state. There was no better practitioner of this sort of cultural diplomacy than Germany, which was well known as home to the greatest research universities in the world and a magnet for graduate students in other countries, especially the United States and Great Britain.[7] The French Republic made education central to the inculcation of a republican national identity and eyed German educational dominance jealously.[8] Thus, there was an uneasy interplay between national rivalry in international education and the desire that greater international scholarly exchange might help ensure peace as international tensions escalated from the turn of the century.

A number of private American universities, being independent of federal control, were free to conduct their own foreign policy in this period, and their interests often overlapped with those of the European states with whom they dealt. In 1905, the Kaiser Wilhelm/Roosevelt professorial exchange was established. This was negotiated directly between the president of Columbia University, Nicholas Murray Butler, and Kaiser Wilhelm II.[9] This exchange allowed one representative of German higher education to come to lecture in America for a year, while an American academic visited a German university in a similar capacity. The Prussian Minister of Education made the nominations for both positions, with the trustees of Columbia overseeing the entire scheme.[10] Bearing the name of the heads of state of both nations at the time, this was a tremendously prestigious post for the German state, for the professors involved, as well as for Columbia, which held the keys to power for this most prestigious exchange over its rivals.

In the period before the war Columbia also established exchange professorships in direct negotiation with the governments of France and Austria-Hungary. While neither held the same prestige as the Kaiser Wilhelm professorship, they were further evidence of where Butler and Columbia University saw themselves in the world.[11] Harvard University forged a similar path, establishing professorial exchanges with both France and Germany. It also created a body called the Harvard Foundation which sponsored American scholars who were already overseas to lecture at French provincial universities. As with Columbia and the Kaiser Wilhelm/Roosevelt professorships, Harvard could benefit from the work of other universities' scholars and gain institutional prestige through the Foundation.[12]

The outbreak of the First World War showed how scholarly networks could be leveraged by belligerents and demonstrated the motivations of the different participants in setting them up. As we have seen, the

events of August 1914 split the international community of scholars but also had a wider resonance in forming public opinion in aligned countries. Pre-existing scholarly connections were energized as belligerents sought to win over neutral populations. International law was central to the debate about Germany's culpability for the war in 1914. Consequently, both the French and German governments tried to send legal experts as exchange lecturers to Columbia in September 1914. The German government proposed sending Theodor Niemeyer, while the French government put forward Geouffre de Lapradelle, both eminent legal scholars. Columbia's President Butler found himself in the unusual position of having too many legal scholars on hand and diplomatically suggested that Niemeyer return the following academic year, 1915–16.[13] He never did.

Within months, the mood in American universities had evolved against Germany.[14] Indeed, the German government felt that American elite opinion was already so hostile to their cause by November 1914 that they discontinued the Kaiser Wilhelm exchange, although Butler – seeking to maintain the prestigious exchange for his university – did his best to avoid the outright cessation of the exchange.[15] It was the same situation at Harvard where the official German-American exchange was suspended by the German government for the same reasons.[16] However, at Harvard there was traditionally a stronger German influence amongst the professoriate, and President Lowell did his utmost to ensure that this was not stamped out by growing allied sympathy, by defending academic freedom of speech.[17]

Unlike his German counterpart, Geouffre de Lapradelle, the French professor from the Sorbonne, took up his position at Columbia in autumn 1914.[18] Predictably, he used his position to present the French (and anti-German) point of view in lectures and in the press.[19] Lapradelle remained in the United States until May 1917.[20] Lapradelle's success in subtly putting forward the French case soon became official policy. French academics became agents of the state and the conduits through which soft power was exercised during the war. This policy was conceived in response to what was seen as over-vigorous German propaganda in America.

A less bombastic course was advocated by the French Ambassador to the United States, Jules Jusserand, and academics were perfectly positioned to pursue this.[21] The desire amongst belligerents to win over neutral opinion, taken in tandem with the inherent internationalism of scholarship, revealed a new potential in academic exchange; academic expertise was being mobilized internationally as well as nationally.

At the same time, both Lowell and Butler sought to maintain international connections where possible for the interests of their respective universities, but, as Butler wrote privately of the greater geopolitical pressures, 'circumstances [proved] too strong for us.'[22] While academic exchange with Germany was ceasing across Europe and the neutral United States, the French government continued sending exchange professors across the Atlantic. These men were given additional responsibilities: they were to exert gentle propaganda and communicate information on the state of American public opinion to the government in Paris.

The French scholar of German, Henri Lichtenberger, lectured at Harvard University in 1914–15. The report which he sent back to the Sorbonne showed how he viewed his role in the context of the war. Lichtenberger decided to stick rigidly to his agreed pre-war lecture schedule, avoiding overt reference to the war in order to distinguish himself from outspoken visiting German academics elsewhere in the US.[23] He was uncomfortable with changing his academic function on account of the war and maintained good relations with German professors at Harvard such as Kuno Francke.[24] Lichtenberger also gave a detailed account of American opinion, speculating on the likelihood of American entry into the war and on the influence of German-American opinion.[25]

In a similar manner, Anatole le Braz of the University of Rennes was sent by the French government to lecture at the University of Cincinnati in 1915 as that city was home to one of the largest ethnic German communities in the United States.[26] In other words, his work could have maximum impact there. The following year, the educationalist Émile Hovelaque undertook a lecture tour of the United States and wrote a long report back to the Education Ministry on the state of public opinion in America.[27] Visiting professors increasingly took on pseudo-diplomatic functions on behalf of their national governments, monitoring and reporting on neutral opinion in the United States. At the same time, scholarly exchange was encouraged by American universities to continue the process through which they could add to their own prestige through their international connectedness. Rather than this being a dead period where international scholarly exchange ceased, Raymond Thamin claimed that 'never before had professorial exchanges been more active.'[28] The early years of the war presented an opportunity for both institutions and nations to exploit the void left by the absence of the 'discredited' German university system. However, the move towards cultural alliance was yet to come. Internationalism was not dead; it was simply being reshaped.

The turning point in cultural relations

From 1916, the dynamic of the war began to change. Culturally, politically, and militarily the conflict was understood and represented as an allied war. Military offensives – such as the major Somme engagement of the summer of 1916 – were now planned and carried out as allied endeavours. Greater allied co-operation was a consequence of the political and military realities of waging a 'total war.' At the same time, the cultural war too began to be understood as an allied one, involving the invocation of shared inter-allied ideals.

There was a specific reason for this change of emphasis. To date, cultural mobilization of academics for warfare was, on the allied side, essentially negative, in that it denounced the 'militarized' German universities and the state-driven doctrines which they disseminated as having caused the war and led to the debasement of warfare.[29] However, this solely negative cultural mobilization for war was never envisioned as a long term narrative – nor was the war seen as a lasting as long as it did – and thus allied nations began invoking positive ideals for which they claimed to stand. These were forward looking, not reactive, and addressed a future beyond the war. Practically speaking, this involved the re-designation of the conflict as a war for democracy and was a means by which American entry into the war could be conceptualized.

While American entry into the war was the dominant theme of this period, cultural relations between the other major allies were also redefined. The mutual sense of cultural isolation between Britain and France spurred attempts to foster more intellectual co-operation. In the spring of 1916, H.A.L. Fisher was sent to France on a special mission by the British Government. His mission was twofold. First, he was to make the French public comprehend the great scale of British involvement in the war, something which it was felt that they did not understand to that point. Second, he wanted to see how the French organs for controlling public opinion worked and what, if anything, could be learned for the British effort. Fisher was picked for this task because of his work on the Bryce Report into atrocities in Belgium but, more importantly, because of his connections in the French academic world. Fisher leveraged these connections and predominantly dealt with French scholars undertaking war work in Paris. He met with academics such as the sociologist Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, the mathematician and education minister Paul Painlevé, the historian Ernest Lavisse, the English scholars Louis Cazamian and André Chevrillon and the educationalists Lucien Poincaré and Émile Hovelaque.[30] He also met with the financier,

educational philanthropist and pre-war internationalist, Albert Kahn. Cumulatively, these men were connected across all branches of learning, were deeply engaged in domestic and international propaganda, and had contacts throughout the political world.

Fisher quickly learned of the depth of French ignorance about British involvement in the war. Maurice Barrès, the famous author, told Fisher of his hope that Britain would not 'wait to intervene effectively until the last Frenchman is killed', to which Fisher responded that he had personally lost forty friends in the war, a fact that shocked Barrès.[31] To remedy French ignorance of the British war effort, Fisher proposed familiarizing the French with British activities in the war and making the French public more aware of British cultural achievements. To do this, he proposed to his superiors in Wellington House that works of English literature should be published in translation in France, while also suggesting that eminent authors from each nation – such as H.G. Wells or Barrès – write articles in the other's press.[32]

Fisher also met with Paul Painlevé. Within months, Fisher would himself occupy the equivalent position to Painlevé in Britain, meaning that in both Britain and France, university professors had been appointed to lead education ministries owing to wartime contingencies. More significant still, these men were discussing means of facilitating mutual understanding between the two major allies in the greatest war the world had ever seen. Universities, and university men, were conducting important cultural diplomacy, and their actions would deepen the level of engagement of the universities in the war.

In their meeting, Painlevé declared himself 'extremely anxious to promote a cordial understanding between the two countries in every way possible.' It was agreed that a visit of French professors to British universities as well as a reciprocal exchange of scholarly war literature would be appropriate.[33] In May 1916 a delegation of sixteen French academics came to Britain to tour a number of universities. The group as a whole visited Oxford, Cambridge, and London together, before splitting into smaller groups to visit the universities at Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield, Leeds, Glasgow, and Edinburgh.[34] Unlike later visits of academic delegations to universities, this French visit made no mention of the exchange of educational ideas. Rather, the emphasis was on highlighting the suffering of British university communities.[35] The symbolic value of the university as an institution ravaged by the war could communicate a sense of Britain's losses to an educated French audience who were all too aware of the depletion of their own intellectual elite owing to the war.

Fisher's trip produced other outputs such as publications with an allied flavour. In late 1916, a volume appeared under the auspices of the 'Fight for Right Movement.'[36] Painlevé contributed a chapter called 'The Fight for Right' in which he emphasized that although Britain and France had been opponents in the scramble for colonies, they had conducted themselves correctly in that endeavour, in contrast to German conduct in the present war.[37] This was just one of a number of similar volumes and journals which emerged in this period which brought together British and French scholars, and significantly, which involved many of the men whom Fisher had met in Paris.[38]

At the same crucial juncture in the war, a scientific liaison was appointed by the British Ministry of Munitions to the French Ministry of Inventions in late April 1916. Sir Henry Norman, a journalist, Francophile, and confidant of David Lloyd George was chosen for the role. Norman set up his base in Paris and relayed information pertaining to scientific developments back to London. He claimed that he was 'on the best possible terms with the heads of all branches of the service, and there is no technical information, however confidential, which I cannot immediately procure.'[39] The common link in this process was Painlevé, with whom Norman was friendly and who had stressed the need for greater co-operation to Fisher. So, not only were French and British universities co-operating to ensure better mutual understanding of the other's contribution to the war effort, they were also putting structures in place to facilitate the exchange of information pertaining to the application of specialist knowledge in wartime. Fisher's trip began cultural co-operation amongst allies for the first time in the war, and while it would continue on a Franco-British level, the transatlantic dimension – exacerbated by America's drift towards war – would emerge as the primary focus for inter-allied ceremonials.

American entry into the war

The United States finally entered the war in April 1917, the *casus belli* being Germany's renewal of unrestricted submarine warfare and the threat which it posed to American shipping.[40] American entry into the war was carefully justified on the premise that the war was a crusade for democracy and the right of national groups to self-determination. This was made famous in President Wilson's 'Fourteen Points' speech of January 1918.[41] However, much of the intellectual groundwork for American entry into the war was undertaken in 1916 and early 1917 through the activity of academics.

In February 1917 Henri Bergson returned to the United States where he had lectured before the war (at Columbia). This time, he had new responsibilities, as the primary focus of his mission was diplomatic. Bergson met with President Wilson to elucidate the war aims of allies and to discuss American entry into the war. Bergson was chosen by Prime Minister Aristide Briand for this role for a number of reasons. First, the mission was intended as a secret one; the visit of an academic would attract less attention than that of a professional politician or diplomat. Second, Bergson knew the country and spoke good English. Third, and most importantly, Bergson was a philosopher, and could speak of the moral issues of war and peace with Wilson, himself a political scientist and former president of Princeton University.[42] In May 1917 André Tardieu was named as French High Commissioner in America.[43] This role meant that the ENS alumnus and former journalist was the most senior representative of the French Government in the United States. Tardieu was well suited for this crucial role for many of the same reasons as Bergson, for he had been an exchange lecturer at Harvard in 1908. The Franco-American academic connection which had been cultivated before the war proved important in wartime.

French scholars with combat experience were sent to the United States to lecture at American universities where they could literally embody French learning at war. Paul Hazard and Fernand Baldensperger (who had lectured at Harvard before the war) took teaching posts at Columbia. In advance of his 1917 visit, Baldensperger wrote to President Lowell of his pre-war stay at Harvard when he faced 'the students of the Law School who possibly had never heard of the Dreyfus case! I don't suppose there will ever be found a human being who should not have heard of the events going on now!'[44] Joachim Merlant, a professor of French Literature at the University of Montpellier, was invalided out of active service in the Argonne in 1915 and undertook a lecture tour of North America from January to May 1916.[45] Merlant wrote that the US and France shared the same goals: 'to fill the world with more compassion, justice and dignity.' The difference was that in 1916, America's work was peaceful, while France's was 'hard and bloody.'[46]

These exchange professors and visiting lecturers began to emphasize shared values and history in their lectures and writings. These inter-allied connections rested on the invocation of eighteenth-century history. Here, the philosophical underpinnings of the respective revolutions in America and France could be found while the remembrance of French assistance to American insurgents during the War of Independence could also be invoked. Merlant referred to these shared

values in a book published in 1918 which was translated as *Soldiers and Sailors of France in the American War of Independence 1776–1783*. While the subject matter told the story of the alliance of the eighteenth century, Merlant argued that this was of the utmost relevance in the Great War. Due to a shared 'belief in human dignity and in progressive political emancipation', he claimed that a 'national oversoul' linked together France and the United States.[47] Thus, as they had in the eighteenth century, the two great republics (as they were presented) were to once more lead the way in the new war for democracy.

Attempts to posit cultural similarities between France and America became more commonplace. In a lecture in New York in November 1916, Gustave Lanson, who was then based at Columbia as a visiting scholar, discussed French literature. 'We have not developed in the sense of particularity, of locality, but in that of universality, of humanity … we know only the truth, the truth of all men.' Lanson drew a distinct line between regionalist German *Kultur* and French civilization without explicitly naming the former. The implication was that the United States was on the side of France; both countries were kindred spirits and bastions of civilization.[48]

On taking up an exchange position in Harvard in February 1917, the geographer Raoul Blanchard found that pro-allied sentiment was 'very developed … above all for France.'[49] The new ideological construction was an allied one, but in reality it only spoke for Franco-American alliance. The rhetoric of shared history, ideals and war aims was not natural but constructed; as such, Britain often found it difficult to reciprocate. Britain had an Empire and history of conflict with the United States, both of which were complicated by its seeming desire to deny Irish claims to national self-determination. The British Ambassador to Washington D.C., Cecil Spring-Rice, expressed this well in a series of cables to British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour in London. 'The danger', he wrote, 'is that we should imagine that because we have a common origin with many Americans, talk the same language, read the same books, and profess the same democratic principles, that we are any the less foreign.'[50] In March of 1917 he remarked that America had become 'pro-ally but anti-British, and it is pro-ally because it is anti-German.'[51] As such, while there were calls for Britain to adopt a more vocal propaganda in the United States, this proved difficult in practice, and meant that Britain was a conspicuously silent partner in the inter-allied project.

The Franco-American model found coherent expression through a body called the French League in America, which was established

after American entry into the war in 1917. The League bore the names of many eminent Americans figures from the world of academia and diplomacy, such as the former American ambassador to France, Myron T. Herrick, Harvard scholars Charles Eliot and Barrett Wendell, and the historian William Roscoe Thayer. The League's objects were:

> To promote a thorough comprehension, by the peoples of France and the United States of America, of their respective civilizations; to strengthen the bonds of intellectual and moral sympathy, based on their historic traditions and present collaboration; to encourage between these two great democracies a free interchange of ideas, information, and methods in solving their national and international problems and in furthering their national ideals.'[52]

This sentiment was increasingly invoked by American scholars. John H. Wigmore, the dean of Northwestern University's law school, edited a volume called *Science and Learning in France* in 1917. The work featured contributions from many high profile American academics and aimed 'to put before the American public the contributions of France in all fields of scientific knowledge, and to show her status at the forefront of the world's progress.'[53] Wigmore wrote that the project sought to 'strengthen and confirm that comradeship of scholars which symbolizes the enduring friendship of the two nations.' The book was significant for three reasons. First, the title and the project more generally brought to mind the academic bickering of 1915 when the German conception of science was 'discredited' and French academics tried to promulgate their own national heritage as superior. Second, it bore a striking resemblance to *La Science française*, the two-volume work put together by the French academic elite for the 1915 San Francisco exhibition which used experts to write short chapters on the history and significance of French scholarship.[54] Third, Wigmore's book aimed not only to inform people about the rich heritage of French learning, but to make students aware of the opportunities available to them in the French system. The project went far beyond merely expressing admiration for French civilization; it actively sought to encourage American graduate students to study in France, thus ending the half century-old habit of American students taking Ph.Ds in Germany. All of this was due to the war, according to Charles Eliot. American students 'have now learned through the Great War that the French are an heroic people, constant to great political and social ideals' and have come to see that 'the peculiar national spirit of France is one of the great bulwarks and resources of civilization, which ought

to be not only preserved, but reinforced.'[55] George Ellery Hale wrote that 'France, indomitable in the face of sudden invasion, will draw to her universities in the coming days of peace many a student who would taste for himself the qualities he has admired and envied from the comfortable security of the United States.'[56] Not only were American academics claiming kinship with French academia and culture; they were encouraging changes in the international circulation of students.

The new emphasis on cultural relations which emerged in 1916 had important repercussions. Before the war, French (and German) interest in the United States was frequently an expression of cultural imperialism.[57] It entailed the one-way projection of French cultural values into the United States. The wartime invocation of shared cultural values suggested that, rather than France being intellectually and culturally superior, there was a degree of equality linking the two nations. Suddenly, France was interested in American modes of thought. The exchange of American scholars with French universities was neither voluminous nor high profile before the war. The work of the Harvard Foundation funded scholars already present in Europe to give short lecture tours in the French provincial universities. These men suddenly became people of great interest to the French public and their activities were used as an opportunity to entrench a sense of cultural alliance. Significantly, it was the French, and not the American professors in question, who drove this.

The Harvard philosopher James Woods was in France as the Harvard Foundation lecturer for 1915. In addition to touring the provincial universities, Woods was asked to give a regular course at the Sorbonne, and was later given a reception there in his honour. He clearly enjoyed the attention and wrote that 'fifty-one members of the Faculties [were] present, an indication of the cordial feeling towards Harvard and America.'[58] Woods stayed an additional year in France – unpaid – to build upon the new research networks which he had developed. On the back of this, he was asked to once more tour the provincial universities in the spring of 1917. The report which he wrote of his experiences showed the symbolic importance now ascribed to American university professors in France.

> After my conference there was a series of patriotic manifestations. The *Préfet* and the General commanding the divisions were usually present at the conference or the dinner. Several times the mayor met me at the station. I addressed two big schools. The scholars marched under our colors.[59]

Jesse Benedict Carter, a classicist, religious scholar and Harvard Foundation lecturer for 1917, had a similar experience. Lecturing on 'The Humanity of America', Carter spoke to 500 people on average, peaking at 1,200. Frequently, his lectures were moved from the university to the Hôtel de Ville, or home of the local administration. At Rouen he noted that 'all the notables of the town were present', while at Nancy his lecture was 'made the occasion for a Franco-American fete.' Altogether, Carter estimated that he had addressed 6,000 people, but noted that at a number of venues would-be attendees were turned away. Carter felt that he was doing more than just lecturing: he was a cultural ambassador for the United States.

> It was a very rare privilege to be able to interpret the Spirit of America to these stalward [sic] and self-sacrificing souls who had been forced into the war without the slightest knowledge of who would be with them and who would be against them.[60]

More important, perhaps, was the westward shift in cultural power which came as a result of this. Woods noted in a letter of May 1917 that '[i]t is clear also that they are ready to learn from us.'[61] America would soon be tied much more deeply into the university systems of Britain and France through the reciprocal exchange of students, professors, and ideas. While this was a tripartite phenomenon, Britain was not so enthusiastic in its treatment of American scholars based there during the war. Woods' Harvard colleague George Santayana, who was stranded in Britain for the duration of the war, was never feted like his fellow philosopher.[62]

The American university goes to war

'Total war' necessitated the mobilization of a nation's resources in their entirety. This was as much the case in the United States as it was in Europe, and as such when America entered the war in April 1917, it followed that intellect too would become an instrument of the government. Unlike their European counterparts, the mobilization of American universities was neither improvised nor *ad hoc*. American scholars had been watching events in Europe carefully since 1914. Increased contact between allied scholars and American academics also had a practical side to it; American institutions could learn from the successes and failures of their allied counterparts when it came to mobilizing their material and intellectual resources. Generally speaking,

the American scholarly mobilization was a seamless process, albeit one which posed acute questions regarding academic freedom in wartime.[63]

Preparedness for war had been a contentious topic in America since 1915. Proponents of preparedness argued that the war was one which would necessarily involve the United States, which should in turn take precautions with that eventuality in mind. The movement grew to a substantial body by the end of 1916, and while President Wilson was re-elected on the platform of keeping America out of the war, preparations were taking place to deal with that eventuality, notably through the establishment of the NRC.[64]

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) was also founded in 1915. Its establishment has been described as the culmination of the process of professionalization of the American university. It issued a report at the end of 1915 where it established the right of university teachers to academic freedom on the premise that academic work was for the public and as such, university administrators and trustees had no powers to limit or sanction their freedom of expression.[65] Such a definition of academic freedom did not exist in either France or Britain and, under the pressures of wartime, it was frequently challenged. On 13 April 1917, the Committee on Public Information (CPI) was established by executive order under George Creel. The CPI became a government propaganda agency, disseminating the American interpretation of the war to audiences at home and abroad. University scholars quickly and enthusiastically participated in the CPI's programme.[66]

The American declaration of war radicalized university politics. At Columbia, President Butler suspended academic freedom for the duration of the war from 1917, prohibiting staff members from speaking 'in opposition to the effective enforcement of the laws of the United States.' This led to a number of notorious and highly publicized dismissals and resignations of faculty, with the historian Charles Beard, the literary scholar H.W.L. Dana, and the psychologist James McKeen Cattell among the intellectual casualties.[67] At the public University of Michigan, six members of Department of German were dismissed for alleged 'disloyalty' following American entry into the war. In this case, pressure came not from an officious university president but from a powerful alumni base who argued that the university had an obligation to both state and nation in wartime, and not to academic freedom.[68] In Texas, the state governor, James Ferguson, who had meddled in appointments at the University of Texas before the war, questioned the university's patriotism in 1917, and two faculty members were subsequently dismissed for disloyalty, and another at Rice Institute in Houston.[69]

In Texas, academic dismissals were provoked by both political interference and these public institutions' fear of the potential impact of adverse public opinion. On American entry into the war, President James of the University of Illinois immediately contacted President Woodrow Wilson to place the resources of the university at the disposal of the nation. Despite James' previous misgivings about American involvement, in November 1917 he announced that academic free speech could not continue in wartime; the future prosperity of both nation and university required a temporary cessation of academic freedom.[70] Professors who were accused of disloyalty lost their jobs at the universities of Oregon, Wisconsin, Virginia, Nebraska, Minnesota, and elsewhere.[71] The AAUP followed suit and in March 1918 subordinated academic freedom to war aims for the duration of the conflict.[72] While Butler's actions at Columbia remain best known, it is clear that American universities felt pressure to conform from a multitude of sources, both internal and external, and academic freedom became a casualty of the war in many cases.

American universities mobilized their intellectual resources quickly and efficiently. At Columbia, a meeting was held on 6 February 1917, where ways in which 'the university might be of service to the nation' were discussed. Those in attendance resolved that the university should compile a personnel index, detailing the qualifications and skills of all university members. More dramatically, the university's whole structure was reorganized for war. Schools and faculties were split up and grouped into eight different 'corps.' For example, the medical corps encompassed all the medical departments as well as pharmacology, dentistry, biology, and university laboratories. The technical corps took in geology, geography, mining, metallurgy, chemistry, physics, mathematics, astronomy, engineering and fine arts. The economics and social service corps encompassed economics, statistics, history, civics, philosophy, psychology, anthropology, and religion.[73] Grouping these often disparate disciplines and schools together to address war-related problems presaged the great collaborative research of the Inquiry, discussed in Chapter Six.

Harvard also efficiently mobilized its intellectual resources. The university quickly established a war office which compiled detailed inventories of specialist skills and war work being undertaken by students, staff, and alumni. There was an allied flavour to this too; ten weeks before the declaration of war Lowell successfully petitioned the French Government to send some disabled officers to Cambridge to help train the members of the university's Reserve Officer Training Corps in the

latest methods of warfare.[74] All of this stood in stark contrast to the terms in which universities in Britain and France went to war in 1914 and 1915, but was clearly influenced by their experiences, successes, and failures. Cumulatively, the American mobilization of academic expertise was both efficient and methodical, and was aptly described in a piece from the *Atlantic Monthly* of 1919:

> The military and academic professions have interpenetrated in this war. Just as it appeared that modern warfare embraces, in addition to the homicidal agencies of battle, virtually all organized activities, including trade, industry, agriculture, research, and education, so the personnel of modern armies and navies embraced almost every type of human talent and skill. And these new warriors did not all wear the costume of war. Besides the colonels of chemistry and majors of history, there were the 'plainclothes men' to whom no man gave orders, who were quite at ease with generals and admirals, and who were not unaware that the Secretaries of War and the Navy, and the Chief Magistrate himself, were also civilians. And what have these professors been doing? Let us observe a few of them at their work. Professor A compounds poisonous and death-dealing gases more terrible than any the world has known; Professor B devises masks to counter-act these same gases; and Professor C, a cure for the bodies which they torture. Professor D discovers that, by pouring sodium bicarbonate into the veins, it is possible to save thousands of suffering and dying men from the effects of surgical shock; and he revolutionizes the care of wounded men throughout the great Allied armies on the Western front. Professor E organizes a score of ground and flying schools to train a hundred thousand fliers; while Professor F devises tests by which these schools may be supplied with apt pupils. Professor G devises and carries out a system of occupational classification, by which three million soldiers are ticketed, tabulated, graded, and sent where their talents are needed. Professor H (who was formerly a Chaucerian scholar) unravels codes and ciphers, and invents new ones by which military secrets are sent to and fro upon their epoch-making errands. Professor I, who has hitherto corrected themes in English composition, now corrects the redundancy of cable messages, and saves a dozen fortunes at thirteen cents per word. Professor J plots and charts the commerce of the world, finds ships for cargoes and cargoes for ships, and by this shrewd manipulation and that, finds the tonnage to transport to Europe the two million fighting men who arrive just in time to fix the destiny of Europe.

> Professor K has his finger on the pulse of Germany, and detects by a hundred signs her waning morale and predicts her mortal sickness. Professor L mobilizes the entire educated youth of America, converts five hundred colleges into army camps, and all the diverse agencies of science and learning into a vast training course for officers. Professor M, with his eye on the Peace Conference, cuts and trims and patches the map of Europe, or frames a new constitution for the world.[75]

Not only were universities and scholars allied in the same political and military cause, they were also allied by the same processes. Scholarship and research had been well and truly appropriated by the war.

Performing alliance at the university

The period after the United States entered the war saw a great increase in the number of ceremonials, publications, and initiatives which stressed the shared inter-allied identity. The university became the symbolic site where alliance was performed in wartime, as the military, political, cultural and scientific elements of the war overlapped there in a manner which was at the same time national and international. The awarding of honorary degrees was one of the main ways in which alliance was enacted. Frequently, those who were being honoured in this manner were military or political figures, underscoring the confluence of cultural, political, and military alliance.

After the American entry into the war in 1917, the French and British governments sent diplomatic missions to the United States. The former Prime Minister, Réné Viviani, was head of the political section of the French delegation, while the former Commander of the French Army, Joseph Joffre, headed the military section.[76] During their stay in America, both were given honorary degrees at Columbia, while Joffre also received an honorary degree at Harvard.[77] André Tardieu received an honorary degree at Yale University in the same period. These ceremonies linked American intellectual achievement with French political and military conduct of the war. Above all, they showed that it was the universities – especially the private east coast institutions – which were central to the newly intimate Franco-American relations.

British universities were a little slower to engage in inter-allied ceremonials of this sort, and most activity took place at the end of or just after the war. Cambridge University gave an honorary degree to President Wilson (in absentia) in 1918.[78] In July 1919, a group including

King Albert of Belgium, and Generals John Pershing (United States), Ferdinand Foch (France), Joseph Joffre (France), and Douglas Haig (Britain) were given honorary degrees at Cambridge.[79] Oxford pursued a similar policy, honouring no allied figures during the war itself, but embracing the inter-allied project after the war, honouring Generals Joffre, Haig, and Pershing in 1919, Gustave Lanson, and President Lowell in 1920, and Georges Clemenceau, the French prime minister who oversaw the war's termination, in 1921.[80] Such was the momentum which had emerged behind inter-allied ceremonials that they continued in great volume after the armistice of November 1918. In this way, the cultural war outlived the military and political conflict.

Wilson's honorary degree at the Sorbonne in December 1918 was the culmination of a long process which had roots in pre-war scholarly exchanges, but bore specific relation to the diplomatic and cultural course of the war itself. While it was the pinnacle of the process which sought to create symbolic affinity between France and the United States, structures were created which sought to make this alliance permanent, or, in other words, which would reshape international scholarly exchange indefinitely. These structures were intended to challenge German cultural hegemony in the post-war world and shift the centre(s) of intellectual power west. Gilbert Murray, the Oxford classicist, claimed in 1917 that 'we could without difficulty exercise on American life the influence, intellectually and socially, that Germany has exercised in the last twenty-five years.'[81] This spirit motivated actors in Britain and France, whereas American scholars welcomed the opportunity to further their connections internationally and thus enhance their institutional prestige.

Over one weekend in May 1918, Cambridge welcomed academic delegations from Italy and the United States, which *The Times* considered to be 'significant of the attitude of English culture and education to those of the allied nations.'[82] A delegation of British academics was formally invited to tour the leading American universities in October 1918, meeting President Wilson in the course of the visit. Cambridge, Oxford, Trinity College Dublin, Manchester, Glasgow, and Birmingham Universities were represented. The purpose of this visit was to 'make easier the interchange of both students and teachers, and especially students, between British and American universities.'[83] Two French delegations visited American educational institutions in this period; one in 1917 and one in 1919.[84] In May 1919 an official delegation of British academics visited French universities.[85] The visits of academic delegations superficially continued the drive towards cultural alliance

but they also had a deeper goal. These were fact-finding missions, a precursor to the creation of new structures tying allied universities together, primarily through the exchange of students. This became a dominant theme of academic discourse from 1917.[86] The war presented a perfect opportunity for the universities of Britain and France to catch up to those of Germany. There were a number of ways in which this could be achieved.

The preference of American graduate students for study in Germany had been viewed with jealousy in Britain and France before the war. The historian Whitney Walton contends that it was a 'national affront' to the French.[87] Given the newly intimate cultural relations which were the outgrowth of alliance, this situation could no longer stand. Aside from its reputation for scholarly pre-eminence – now thoroughly 'discredited' – one other factor distinguished German universities from their counterparts in Britain and France: the Ph.D degree. Universities had become increasingly research focused in the decades before 1914 and the higher research degree was its international currency. The Ph.D degree had also been adopted in the United States and was increasingly seen as a prerequisite for professional advancement. And while American institutions were increasingly hiring scholars who had completed their educations in the United States, due to the thorny issue of degree equivalence, graduate students who wished to travel generally only had one option: Germany. Thus, for the universities of Britain and France to redirect the historic flow of American graduate students, they would have to reform their own higher degrees.

There was deep irony in the adoption of the Ph.D degree: it used a German innovation to ensure that German institutions would no longer dominate the international flow of students. So, while the Ph.D was adopted by the majority of British institutions between 1918 and 1920, in France the higher degree was reformed to make it more accessible to foreign (read: American) students, but the *doctorat* was never formally renamed the Ph.D. In a similar manner, Oxford chose to call the new higher research degree the D.Phil, as the Ph.D still brought negative connotations of Germany.[88]

In Britain, plans to attract more students from North America through the institution of the Ph.D were first discussed in 1912 by the First Congress of Universities of the Empire.[89] This proposal, interrupted by the outbreak of war, was revived in 1917 and given an inter-allied flavour. Its newfound political importance – the result of the dovetailing of culture and diplomacy – meant that it was discussed by the War Cabinet in September of that year.[90] While pressure was

being exerted on universities from above, British institutions retained the autonomy to recommend and implement any desired changes. As such, in late 1917 the University of Cambridge appointed a body to investigate the problem of attracting more international students. It concluded that 'there is a general desire in the United States and the dominions that in future the flow of such students should be directed to a much greater extent than at present to British Universities.' To the Cambridge committee, the best means of doing this was through the Ph.D.[91]

These discussions did not occur in a vacuum. The authors of the Cambridge report consulted with French educationalist Émile Hovelaque who advised that similar measures would shortly be introduced in France and were under consideration in Italy. Similarly, in 1917 reports were exchanged between French and British university representatives discussing the viability of greater exchange of students and professors and the impediments to this.[92] Two conferences of all British universities were held in May 1918 where these proposals were discussed. At the first, on 9 May 1918, a resolution was passed stating that:

> This Conference of the Universities of the United Kingdom recognized the importance of facilitating and actively developing intellectual intercourse between the various nations now allied against Germany, and cordially welcomes the steps that have been and are being taken to make attendance at the Universities more attractive to students from the United States, France, Italy and other Allied Countries.[93]

At the second conference on 17 May it was agreed that the Ph.D degree would be adopted by the majority of British universities.[94]

Changes were wrought in France too, although the emphasis was less on outright reform and more targeted on publicity, an age-old problem for French universities in attracting foreign students.[95] In 1917, a committee led by Émile Durkheim concluded that the Sorbonne needed to advertise itself better abroad and provide more amenities for visiting students.[96] In January 1918, Lucien Poincaré, Liard's replacement as Vice-Rector of the Academy of Paris, proposed changes to the higher degree to make it more accessible to foreign students.[97] As a result, an undergraduate course in French civilization was created for foreign students, whilst certificates of advanced study were introduced for foreign graduate students which would allow them gain academic credit for courses done at the university.[98] These changes were intended to

surmount problems of equivalence between the French and American higher degrees and would, it was hoped, attract American students to undertake studies in France once the war was over. Formal exchanges of students were also organized. In August 1919 a scheme was instituted whereby French students were sent to study in different American universities. While organized through Columbia University, it sent students to Berkeley, Princeton, Johns Hopkins, Chicago, Northwestern and other universities.[99]

There were more tangible ways through which inter-allied solidarity, to which universities contributed so much, was expressed. In 1919, the Sorbonne struck a medal which they presented to other allied universities as a tangible embodiment of the wartime alliance.[100] Clearly, the connections formed in wartime meant a great deal to the protagonists. Something substantial in the nature of inter-university relations had changed on account of the war; universities had come to epitomize many of the changes which the conflict wrought, and contemporaries saw value in commemorating this (Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 Medal presented by University of Paris to Columbia University.
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Conclusion

The Great War became an allied war in every respect from 1917. It was perhaps natural that universities – as sources of expert knowledge and sites of myriad forms of mobilization – would too become part of this process. The inter-allied links forged between universities reflected the many levels on which they were invested in the war effort, and the deep symbolic value which this engagement had acquired. Universities were symbols of the greater war and sites where alliance could be performed. In this endeavour, international exchange was intensified but in a limited fashion which excluded 'enemy' states.

The grand narrative of a shared inter-allied intellectual trajectory which was promulgated by scholars in Britain, France, and America in this period masked other more self-interested motivations which were grounded in institutional politics and rivalries. In the British and French cases, the creation of greater affinities and structures to bind their universities closer to those in the United States was clearly a continuation of a pre-war rivalry with German universities. This goal was frequently expressed in these terms, and as such, helps explain the paucity of connections between the two main allies, Britain and France, for most of the war period.

At the same time, American universities also acted out of pragmatic self-interest. Before the war, the United States had been a site where national rivalries were played out. Germany and France competed in the projection of cultural influence through the establishment of chairs, cultural institutions, and professorial exchanges. With some exceptions, before the war European academic culture was projected onto the United States, a phenomenon which was due in main to European perceptions of American higher education. The shift towards cultural alliance in wartime presupposed that the allied belligerents were fighting for the same ideals and informed by the same scholarly values. In other words, it suggested a sense of cultural equality amongst the allied nations, an idea reinforced by the ceremonials that took place at American university campuses. European interest in American scholarly achievements and ideas was greatly enhanced by the entry of the United States into the conflict and was institutionalized through exchanges of professors, students, and books. By the early 1920s, American academia found itself more embedded in the European mainstream in ways that it had not been before 1914.

American scholars were aware of the potential of the situation to transform the perception and standing of their institutions both internationally and domestically. The universities who engaged in this process were mostly private institutions and those who had been ambitious before the war and who saw other institutions as rivals rather than allies. Institutional rivalry was an important motivation for American universities' decision to gravitate towards the allies in wartime. In August of 1916, as America was becoming increasingly sympathetic towards the allies, Barrett Wendell of Harvard wrote to the university's president, Abbott Lawrence Lowell, of the publications being produced by Durkheim's group in Paris. He argued that 'if Harvard can be made the centre of this bureau of information [in America] it would be good for us, in every way. If we do not do something definite, the thing will very likely pass from our hands.'[101] The remark was telling and can be seen to underpin the many of the inter-allied initiatives of wartime which were dominated by ambitious and well-resourced private institutions such as Columbia and Harvard.

Britain and France's different relations to America – historically, politically, and philosophically – informed each nation's engagement with inter-allied rhetoric and explained Britain's relative silence. Moreover, in France, education was integral to republican identity. In Britain, this was not the case. This is one way of explaining the less active role of British academics and institutions in inter-allied initiatives. The inter-allied dynamic had one longer-term consequence. It was originally

framed in response to German scholarly hegemony and presented as a positive alternative to the negative demonization of Germany and her allies. In this sense, the greater links forged between Britain, France, and the United States had deep roots in the war culture which emerged in response to allegations of atrocities committed by the Germany Army in August and September 1914. Moreover, this dynamic continued long after the armistice was signed in November 1918 which ended the military conflict. In this reading, the litany of inter-allied connections formed were a continuation of the mobilization for war which had begun in 1914. As these links took root in the early 1920s, acute questions were posed for scholars and universities as they sought to demobilize from war, a subject to be treated in Chapter Eight.

5
The Organizational Challenges of War

> The war has quickened, if not created, a general appreciation of the benefits to be derived from university education, especially on the side of science and technology and subjects with a commercial value, e.g. foreign languages; public interest has however also been aroused in studies with a direct social and altruistic aspect which should form part of a university training; and in some quarters, though not perhaps the most vocal, there is a recognition of the need of the modern universities for a stronger emphasis upon subjects of a generally humanistic nature.[1]

The First World War was transformative for universities. On the one hand, normal university functions ceased and their constituent communities were shattered. On the other, universities were invigorated by the intellectual challenges of waging a 'total war', and by 1916 it was understood that intellect, in its many different disciplinary guises, was integral to the successful prosecution of the conflict. This realization was vital to the development of modern universities; it helped give them the central place in national life that many university reformers had desired before 1914. Moreover, this newly-understood importance would not only be a wartime expedient, but was necessary for national survival in the indefinite future.[2]

While external university relations – those linking the university to the nation and the world more generally – were transformed by the war, internal structures and functions were overhauled too. The war acted as a catalyst for change; in some cases these changes were specific to the war while in others they had older antecedents but were facilitated

by war conditions. Broadly speaking, the process of university modernization and professionalization was sped up in the war period. These changes were experienced in each of the cases examined here in a similar manner and in a similar timeframe. In France, Britain, and the United States, the period of the First World War placed a new emphasis on certain disciplines and brought research to the fore as never before. This is significant for a number of reasons. While the relationship of the university to the state was a central tension of the period and one which was changed by the war, each of the three cases were different in this respect. French universities were completely state controlled; British universities – with exceptions – were experiencing the slow incursion of the state into their operation; American universities were a mixture of public and private institutions where individual states exercised influence but the federal government was relatively distant. That they all experienced change with respect to internal organization and function suggests that the dominant factor was not proximity to government.

The persistence of transnational ties in wartime was significant. Global connectedness did not end because of the schism in Europe in 1914. The curtailment of various forms of exchange between the nations at war with one another did not mean that international exchange ceased altogether; in many instances, it meant that exchanges intensified elsewhere as new markets and outlets were sought for the procurement of materials and ideas which would be integral in winning the war. Moreover, the disruption caused to international commerce by the outbreak of war necessarily engaged non-combatant nations who found that many commodities were no longer available and would have to be sourced elsewhere. Universities were important repositories of expertise in addressing this problem which was, by definition, a transnational one. That many wartime changes were experienced on a similar timeframe in each case suggests that the phenomenon was exacerbated, rather than created, by the war; however, the immediate context of the conflict gave it specific inflections which it would otherwise not have had.

This chapter will deal with the consequences of the mobilization of academic expertise in war and show how this changed universities and their function. While state-led mobilization for war may have taken place on different timescales in different nations – most obviously in the case of the United States which only entered the war in 1917 – intellectual mobilization for war was a transnational phenomenon from the outset which immediately posed questions for systems of education. The changes in this period spoke to the connectedness which still

underpinned the academic world; moreover they demonstrated the degree to which universities were continuing their nineteenth-century development, becoming sites of greater specialization while simultaneously entrenching their importance to governments, business, and society at large.

The material strains of war

The material deprivation of wartime extended far beyond the lack of direct income from student fees. Material shortcomings on campus mirrored those of the nation more generally. Wartime conditions meant that imports of certain materials became difficult if not impossible to acquire, as belligerents mutually ceased trade with the enemy. This situation was exacerbated by the allied blockade of Germany, on the one hand, and the German declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare on the other. Ironically, this rupture in global networks served to accelerate global connectedness as all nations grew more aware of their need to access strategic raw materials and new markets.[3]

The quest for strategic materials presented an opportunity for university experts to make a telling contribution to the war. This potential for the production of previously imported materials was noted by the scientific journal, *Nature*, as early as 17 September 1914.[4] Over the next six months *Nature* highlighted the emergence of a new relationship between science and industry and began carefully arguing that Britain should follow Germany's lead, fostering a closer relationship between science and industry in the production of textiles, mining, shipping, agriculture, and electricity.[5] In late 1914 the British government set up a company which it was hoped would replace German made dye-stuffs with W.H. Perkin, Professor of Chemistry at Oxford, as its head.[6] In May 1915 a delegation from the Royal Society met with representatives of the Boards of Trade and Education to discuss government plans for harmonizing science and industry.

The French, too, quickly realized the inferiority of their chemical industry when compared with that of Germany and set out to manufacture compounds which were no longer available due to the blockade. French scientists began producing sulphuric and nitric acids, chlorine gas, chloride, soda, phosphates, mineral salts, and superphosphates.[7] The debate about the relationship of industry to science was an old one which quickly resurfaced during the war on account of these developments, and could be seen, primarily, in the pages of the *Revue Scientifique*. And while the United States had yet to enter the war at

this point, a similar debate was emerging there. The blockade had cut America off from its supply of dyes, optical equipment, and scientific apparatus, and the possibility of becoming self-sufficient in this area was noted at an early stage and debated in the pages of *Science*.[8] As such, the war presented an opportunity for scientists to prove the utility of their disciplines to previously sceptical governments, with the promise of future reforms.

The mobilization of university science: problems and consequences

The mobilization of knowledge and division of labour raised a number of important questions about the state of higher education as it had been on the outbreak of the war. The nature of the mobilization of science spurred much academic debate. In many cases, the enlistment of learned scientists into positions of importance at the Ministry of Munitions, Admiralty, War Office, or the Army itself, demonstrated the lack of knowledge amongst senior figures of basic scientific principles. It became apparent to many scientists that their knowledge was not being mobilized efficiently, and, given the heightened stakes of wartime, this strengthened calls for reform.

In Britain, it was frequently claimed that too many committees existed to perform the same function, a consequence of the polycentric and decentralized nature of British government and administration more generally. Advisory committees were set up by the Privy Council, the Royal Society, The Ministry of Munitions, and the Admiralty, often comprising similar membership and with the goal of harnessing invention and directing research towards specific problems. The experiences of Sir Henry Norman illustrated the frustrations of scientists during the Great War in Britain. In August 1915, the Minister of Munitions, David Lloyd George, invited Norman to join the Munitions Inventions Department which was already populated with eminent scientists.[9] In 1916, Norman was appointed to the position of liaison between the MID and Painlevé's Department of Inventions in Paris. Armed with this knowledge of what Britain's allies were doing, Norman wrote a number of blistering attacks on the British organization of science which were circulated as internal memoranda at the Ministry of Munitions. One, from May 1917, stated that:

> To find out if an invention has been devised for a particular purpose, it would be necessary to inquire of at least half-a-dozen distinct

> organizations. The natural results of this condition are a waste of time, effort and money, resulting from the same problems being simultaneously considered by independent or even rival departments, and consequent great delay in providing the services with urgently required scientific material.[10]

This frustration of the British scientific community was best expressed by a movement known as the Neglect of Science. The zoologist E. Ray Lankester coined this phrase in a letter to *The Times* in January 1916. He claimed that

> it is the conviction of many who have given a lifetime of observation and consideration to the matter that the future prosperity, and even the continued existence, of the British Empire is absolutely dependent upon a complete change in the attitude of its citizens to natural science or the knowledge of nature.[11]

A meeting was held in London in May 1916 and attended by many eminent scientists. The resultant manifesto called for the cultivation of 'the scientific habit of mind', to be achieved through educational reform, specifically, by giving the natural sciences a great role in education at the 'Great Schools', and by making the natural sciences part of the entrance examinations for the Civil Service, Oxford and Cambridge Universities, and the Army.[12] The Neglect of Science movement tapped into debates which had taken place before the war on the subject of national efficiency and the abolition of knowledge of the classics for admission into Oxford and Cambridge. Lankester had been one of the leading voices in the latter debate.[13] Indeed, the very general tenor of the argument – that those in positions of power in the state had no fundamental understanding of scientific method and thus were in no position to give it the place in national life which it merited – had been made sporadically since the 1880s.[14] However, it took a new type of warfare, with a mobilization of the nation's entire resources, to give this movement a new impetus.

It was not only within the academic world that the desire for change was noted. The Department for Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), which emerged in 1916 from the Privy Council Committee for Scientific and Industrial Research, was intended as a centralized body which would apply science to problems of the war, similar to the Directory of Inventions in France. It also wanted to bring about a closer understanding between academic science and industrial science.

However, by 1918 its advisory council was bemoaning the lack of trained scientific men available for these purposes and drawing attention to the work of the Neglect of Science lobby.[15] The lesson was clear: even if the government set up bodies to deal with immediate wartime problems, men with the requisite training were not always available in sufficient numbers. A long-term plan needed to be put in place to prevent this from happening in the future. The DSIR had one important bequest to the modern university, a report written by Viscount Haldane for the Ministry of Reconstruction in 1918. Haldane recognized the importance of independent research-based advisory bodies in assisting government departments on certain questions; however, such research departments should retain absolute independence of parliament and government. This independence became known as the 'Haldane Principle', and remained axiomatic in British higher education for the remainder of the century.[16]

The result of the pressure regarding the inadequacies of the mobilization of science was that the British Government appointed a committee to 'inquire into the position of natural science in the educational system of Great Britain' and recommend changes where necessary.[17] The Cambridge physicist J.J. Thomson was appointed as the chairman of the committee, which published its findings in 1918. The committee, which sent surveys to universities across Britain, echoed the calls of the Neglect of Science lobby. It recommended the abolition of compulsory Greek at Oxford and Cambridge as a key component in establishing science in national education. Such structural change would necessitate the appointment of a Royal Commission. The retention of compulsory Greek at Oxford and Cambridge was condemned as 'a real and irritating hindrance to the study of science.' The report also recommended that more scholarships were required to enable students to study science at university.[18] In sum, the committee's report gave government assent to the criticisms of agitators. The frustration of scientists at the conditions which they faced allied with this new respect for scientific training and led to a great public campaign which spurred the government into action and bore fruit as compulsory Greek was dropped by both Oxford and Cambridge in 1920.

There was no public critique of the mobilization of science in France. The centralized structures put in place by Painlevé worked sufficiently well to keep discontent to a minimum. Indeed, the fact that Painlevé – a former lecturer in mathematics at the Sorbonne and member of the Académie des Sciences – held this position was reassuring, and was viewed jealously by British reformers. Moreover, as was the case with

Henry Norman, British criticisms were frequently relative and premised upon national difference. Internationally circulated scientific journals played a crucial role in this process, as did transnational correspondence networks. In this context, French scholars were more or less content with their centralized structures.

The war still prompted dissent. In September 1915, the physicist Jules Violle wrote an article in the *Revue Scientifique* dealing with deficiencies of various industries which leaned on science. It was 'shameful' that France did not have a national laboratory of weights and measures, similar to those in Britain and Germany.[19] Speaking of optics, an 'essentially scientific' industry, Violle argued that while the standard was high, French production was lacking. Again, this was the result of a poor relationship between the academics and the industrialists and insufficient resources in laboratories. Drawing envious comparisons with the British example, Violle argued that 'without research laboratories, there will be no inventions, no improvements, no control, even, of daily work.'[20] While the war severed many international connections, it also amplified a sense of international competition. Understandings of national efficiency were framed transnationally.

Painlevé was aware of these criticisms. In November of 1915 he sent a proposal to the Sorbonne outlining a plan to create a faculty of applied science in every university in France. These new faculties would bear special relations to the predominant industry in the respective locality.[21] This project was superseded by a new one in October 1916, when Painlevé initiated a project to create a National Office of Applied Science.[22] He argued that 'the origin of frequently heard misunderstandings is very clear: there is not sufficient contact between the scientist who, in the laboratory, discovers previously inconceivable phenomena, and the industrialist, who would have to have great interest in such developments to fully understand and apply them.'[23] This office would be attached to the Directory of Inventions, under the general control of the Ministry of Public Instruction. It was hoped that it would end the mutual misunderstanding and ignorance of the respective work undertaken by scientists on the one hand and industrialists on the other by bringing together representatives of both. The proposal urged immediate action and was justified by and framed in the language of the war. Failure to act would mean that the sacrifices of the battlefield would be in vain.[24]

This did not put an end to the polemics. The most famous of these was the speech of Henri le Chatelier at the Académie des Sciences in January 1917. Le Chatelier started from the premise that all scientific

discovery derived from industrial preoccupations, and again denounced the 'ignorance of scientists on the subject of problems whose solutions would interest industry.'[25] However, in France it was at least clear that concrete action was being taken. It was significant that both nations sought to learn from the other, a consequence of their burgeoning cultural alliance, the wartime 'discrediting' of German science, and the persistence of international scholarly networks as a means through which information flowed and comparisons were drawn.

This latter point was most striking in the case of the United States. The cause of science was significantly advanced there during the war, and long before the USA's formal entry into the conflict, a consequence of the networked nature of the world in the 1914 which quickly rendered the war a global one. Science was relatively disorganized in the eyes of a number of American scientists in 1914; it was the antithesis to French centralization. The imposition of the economic blockade in 1914 led American academics to quickly recognize both the necessity of replacing imports from Germany and also the opportunity to establish the United States as a world power when it came to industrial and scientific products.[26]

One critique of the organization of science was published in late 1915 by George Ellery Hale, who was upset at that body being overlooked in the composition of Naval Consulting Board, a government organization.[27] In response, he published *National Academies and the Progress of Research,* a collection of essays written between 1914 and 1915, in which he made the case for the establishment of an academy similar to those found in Europe. The National Academy at that point had neither a permanent home nor did it publish proceedings to familiarize both specialists and the public with its work which would in turn create more in the way of funding for research.[28]

The war further amplified debates about the place of science in American higher education and public life more generally. *Science* carried stories and articles from its British counterpart, *Nature*, meaning that the debates which were energizing the readership of the latter periodical about the Neglect of Science were being transmitted to the United States. An article which appeared in the *Scientific Monthly* in May 1916 argued that, while the classics did not impede the inculcation of a scientific way of thinking there as in Britain, lessons could be learned from the British complaints, such as 'the supreme value of research and the importance of depending on the expert in the field in which he is competent.'[29] Moreover, correspondence still reached American universities from Europe in great quantities, although sometimes delayed.

And while America was not officially at war, many official and unofficial ties had been severed with German scholars; thus the arguments which were animating British and French scholars were also informing American debates.

The transmission of these debates from Europe dovetailed with a second phenomenon, the rise of the 'preparedness' movement in the United States. From around 1916 America began to pre-mobilize for war. This can be seen in the activities of universities, learned societies, and individuals. The question of preparedness raised the spectre of the position of science in general and the efficiency of its current organization. The idea was put well in a letter of the Princeton-based scientist, Stewart Paton, to *Science*, published in November 1915:

> We have suddenly awakened to an increased sense of appreciation of the need of adequate protection against invasion, of greater facilities for insuring the scientific development and extension of industry and commerce, of promoting research and scholarship … an extraordinary opportunity exists – one rich in possibilities, not only for coordinating but for strengthening the intellectual forces of the nation.[30]

Paton suggested that one of the great impediments to universities contributing to national issues was provincialism; universities were their own self-governing fiefdoms who frequently saw one another as rivals, not potential collaborators. Paton identified university, not national, government as the problem. University trustees were too quick to make decisions based on 'sentimental attachments without considering the relation of the institution to the nation and to the intellectual life of the people.'[31] Building on Paton's argument, Yandell Henderson of Yale argued that the collegiate ideal hindered the advancement of students with sound vocational training.[32]

The best known dissenting voice in this period was the economist and sociologist, Thorstein Veblen. His famous critique of the world of American higher education and the influence which business held over it was largely completed by March 1916 and was given new impetus by the world conflict, the preparedness movement, and the implications of modern war for the American university.[33] Indeed, Veblen pointedly noted that most of his manuscript remained unchanged, as the war served to reinforce, rather than alter, his original arguments. Veblen believed in disinterested scientific research for its own sake and was suspicious of centralization. He argued that the incorporation of technical

schools into American universities led to a situation where they held more than their fair share in shaping the direction of the institution.[34] Intimate association with such 'utilitarians', Veblen wrote, had a 'corrupting effect' on scientists and scholars. Veblen argued for bulwarks to protect 'pure' science against the encroachments of business, a process which was exacerbated by the war.

Veblen added one note on the war which reflected the larger rupture in normal international academic life. The 'insolvency' of the European academic community meant that the American community would be brought into a central position in the Republic of Letters, acting as its guardian until such point as normal relations were restored.[35] Much as economic warfare provided a sense of opportunity in Britain and France, the fracturing of the European academic world provided an opportunity for American universities to assert themselves. University presidents like Butler of Columbia and Lowell of Harvard were deeply conscious of this.

The impact of the preparedness debate on the sciences can be best seen in the formation of the NRC in 1916.[36] In Europe, scientific mobilization for war was improvised and relative; scientists looked to their compatriots in other countries to gauge the efficiency of structures in their own. By the time the United States entered the war it was in the interests of allied scholars that their American colleagues mobilize their scientific resources efficiently and quickly. It could not be improvised, as had been the case in Britain and France. And while this was not the case, due to the close attention which American scholars had paid to events in Europe, that did not stop their allied counterparts from expressing their concerns. In August 1917, Horace Darwin, a Cambridge physicist acting on behalf of the MID, wrote to Lowell proposing a scientific collaboration between British and American scientists. The reason was simple, and reflected the desire of British scientists to 'point out our errors for the USA to avoid.'[37] In the enclosed memorandum, Darwin noted that the indiscriminate mobilization of scientific men by the British government in 1914 and 1915 had put the nation at a disadvantage. Moreover, he feared that America did not have the value of 'experience and experiment' conducted in wartime, and proposed sending a number of scientific men to the United States to act as advisors.[38] American scholars were well aware of this problem. Weeks before the United States entered the war, Lowell wrote to Secretary of State Newton Baker to urge that he ensure that men with scientific training were not mobilized into the regular armies as officers but instead had their specialist vocations utilized to solve war-related problems. He noted that

'this actually happened in England and some of the most promising young physicists were killed in battle, when they would have been of enormously more value in solving some of the problems relating to aeroplanes or ballistics for the army.'[39]

The mobilization of science was a process which both validated the place of science in curricula of universities and demonstrated severe deficiencies in universities and in government administration. Scientists revelled in the opportunity afforded by the war to apply their expertise to problems and get credit for this. At the same time, they were frustrated by the conditions which they encountered. In countries where the state either exercised complete control or no control over higher education, the mobilization of science was much more successful, as there was more leeway for strong control, either from the state or from institutions themselves.

Modern languages

Linked to the gathering movement for scientific reform was a less vocal but still significant emphasis on the study of modern languages, especially those of certain nations. This came about for two reasons. First, the official severance of ties with German scholarship networks meant that universities began to look elsewhere, establishing chairs, courses, and institutes in the languages of fellow allies or strategically important neutral countries. Second, the adoption of modern languages was part of the movement to modernize university curricula, and as such, at the older universities, it took aim at the same target as did the movement for scientific reform; namely, the classics. However, the impetus which modern languages received during the war was testament to the power of contingent events in shaping disciplines and curricula.[40] In this instance, the impetus came from institutions, governments, and private benefaction.

In 1918, the British government organized a committee to investigate the position of modern languages in national education. Following a survey of educational institutions, a report was published in 1918.[41] It stated that its interests were in 'liberal education … including an appreciation of the history, literature and civilization of other countries, and to the interests of commerce and public service.'[42] The report concluded that trained staff were lacking at universities. The cure for this would be in the slow build-up of scholars with proficiency in modern languages.[43] It advocated the establishment of fifty first class professorships once the war had ended, with fifteen of these being in French, and ten being in

study of 'the four other principal countries of Europe', as well as one hundred lectureships.

The 1918 report did not emerge in a vacuum; it built on developments taking place at different institutions over the war years, which in turn accelerated a longer-term trend. The report singled out the new Medieval and Modern Language Tripos at Cambridge University for praise, as it integrated the study of history, philosophy and literature into that of language itself. It suggested that a new approach to teaching modern languages would require cross-disciplinary exchange, with historians and experts in other fields supplementing the work of language experts.[44] The new Cambridge tripos was agreed upon in a report of February 1917 which concluded 'that the recovery of the University after the war will be attended by a large increase in the number of students seeking an Honours Degree in Modern Languages.' It claimed that this would help those seeking employment in public services and business. The main languages which would be important after the war were French, Italian, Spanish, Russian, and, at last but not least, German.[45]

New impetus was given to the study of these languages at Cambridge during the war. In November 1915, it was agreed that Russian, Italian, and Spanish be included in examinations once the war had ended.[46] In December 1917 it was proposed that a Professor or Reader be established in Spanish 'as soon as advisable.'[47] In October 1918, the financier Arthur Serena put £20,000 towards the establishment of professorships in Italian at both Cambridge and Oxford.'[48] Serena also gave substantial donations to the Universities of Manchester and Birmingham to establish chairs in Italian the following year.[49] The place of modern languages in university curricula was expanding owing to the geopolitical reconfigurations of wartime; the languages of allies and desirable neutrals were in vogue, replacing ancient languages and those of the enemy.

Changes in the teaching of languages were being proposed at many universities. The University of Sheffield decided to establish a Department of Russian after the war and also began to teach Spanish, the latter seen as vital in encouraging trade with South America after the war.[50] The School of Slavonic Studies was established at King's College London in 1915. The study of language, as well as the history and civilization of Slav countries, was integral to the project. Russian and Serbian were the first languages taught. Lectureships were funded partly by private philanthropy, and partially by the Serbian government. Thomas Masaryk of the University of Prague was appointed lecturer in Slavonic Literature and Sociology in 1915.[51] His presence, as a campaigner on

behalf of minorities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (who would become the first president of Czechoslovakia) demonstrated the important geopolitical element to the establishment of the school.

Amidst these changes, the study of German emerged as a thorny issue. Greater emphasis on French, Italian, Russian, Serbian, and Spanish reflected the geopolitical configuration of wartime, one from which Germany had been ostracized. So what would become of the study of the German language? In 1918, the Cambridge Professor of Celtic, E.C. Quiggin, made an impassioned case for the retention of German amidst the proposed changes. He argued that the war had come about due to 'national ignorance of German and Germany', and that national survival should be based upon the avoidance of 'the mistakes of the past.' As such, 'one of the chief things we must set before ourselves [is] the study of the German language and Germany', as ignorance of German would mean 'intellectual death.'[52] Gilbert Waterhouse was appointed Professor of German at Trinity College Dublin in 1915 following three years lecturing in Leipzig. In 1917 he launched a scathing attack upon Germany and its cultural institutions, claiming that 'I do not look forward to any resumption of cordial relations with German scholars after the war.'[53] The study of German should not, however, be abandoned; it should be continued for reasons of patriotism and self-interest.

> We study German in order to extract from the language, the literature, the people, and the country the maximum of benefit – moral, intellectual, and material – for ourselves.[54]

French universities followed a similar policy during the war. Whilst in Britain the government-sponsored reports into Modern Languages and Science were in part caused by the traditional dominance of Greek and Latin, the newly reformed university in France had already surmounted this problem before the war.[55] However, the virulent anti-German rhetoric of the war years had a negative impact upon the teaching of that language: the University of Dijon reported in 1918 that its students had been indifferent to its teaching.[56]

In February 1916 the council of the University of Paris announced that a series of lectures on Slav civilization would be held, a direct response to the opening of the School of Slavonic Studies at King's College London. It was claimed that the new British institution would have a 'serious effect' upon the 'traditional influence' of France in the Slav world.[57] An Institute of Slavonic Studies was formally established in 1919 by Ernest Denis and with the co-operation of the Czechoslovak

and Yugoslav governments; however, by June 1916 the term *Institut d'études slaves* was already being spoken of as an active body for organizing lectures and events.[58] This example demonstrated once more the relative nature of national mobilization; its success and efficiency could only be gauged in a comparative context. In this instance, it underscored that wartime allies remained rivals in other fields.

In 1916 the University of Paris created a degree in Russian. The creators argued that a deep knowledge and understanding of the country's literature and history would need to be taught in addition to grammar.[59] At administrative discussions in June 1916, it was argued that British universities were much more advanced in their teaching of Russian than their French counterparts.[60] Most planning was postponed until the end of the war; however, in March 1917, a centre for Spanish Studies was also established at the Sorbonne which continued the trend towards studying the language and civilization of allies or strategically important neutral nations.

Languages took on a new importance during the war for a number of reasons. Knowledge of the language and culture of fellow allies (and neutral countries) was assumed to be integral to fostering good working relationships during the war period. Built into this was an assumption that the reconfiguration of international relations which took place on account of the war would be permanent. In general there was a shift towards not only knowledge of the languages in question, but the wider historical, philosophical, and cultural contexts in which the languages came about. In other words, it was not merely about learning languages but also the values which each nation – mostly allied in the same cause – claimed to embody.

These phenomena did not lead to a widespread change in the situation in the United States. Rather, they intensified dynamics of the pre-war period, when the bulk of chairs and courses in foreign languages had been established. Crucial in this process was the absence of federal direction of university policy and the autonomy of a number of (mostly) private American institutions in forging links with foreign governments. However, shared language between America and Britain meant that action of this sort was not necessary between these states. Thus, it was only the French who made efforts to reinforce their pre-war work. At Columbia, the epicentre of this endeavour, a second chair in French was established in 1916.[61] In addition, chairs in French were set up at the University of California, at Harvard University, and at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania.[62]

Planning for the future

The war did more than just accelerate the integration of certain disciplines into curricula; it brought into question the function of a university more generally. Exhortations to proceed 'as if the war did not exist' were a rallying cry for continuity but in reality practices changed radically on account of the conflict. Moreover, in many respects the war was a caesura in normal university life; it provided a moment for reflection upon the function, organization, and future direction of higher education. As the war progressed it became apparent that universities could not improvise indefinitely; concrete plans for future development would have to be made, and these plans were in many cases born of war issues themselves. This section will consider a number of organizational changes which were born of the war, as well as the larger question of the public function of the university.

Improvisation in wartime could not last indefinitely. In March 1918, the Sorbonne decided to address some of the improvised changes forced upon the university by the war; they began to look forward, not backwards. Gustave Lanson was commissioned to write a report on the status of unoccupied chairs in the Faculty of Letters.[63] His report called for the renaming of certain unoccupied chairs as well as the creation of new ones. The message was clear: the university had to be ready for the cessation of hostilities and the post-war world. In April 1918 a report on the 'needs of education' was presented to the Faculty of Letters' council by a sub-committee. The document critiqued the existing syllabi. The dean of the faculty, Alfred Croiset, proposed a reorganization of how learning was categorized; rather than having the faculty divided into discrete disciplines, it should be organized according to interdisciplinary institutes. These institutes would bring together members of different departments under the umbrella of a certain 'civilization', the intention being that the faculty would be organized in a less rigid way, with professors belonging to multiple institutes, facilitating greater exchange across the disciplines.[64] The creation of institutes was hailed after the war as 'a great innovation' as important as the creation of universities themselves in 1896. The organization of disciplines within these institutes conformed, it was claimed, to 'the nature of things and the division of research.'[65] It was no coincidence that in a war that was understood to be about safeguarding the values that underpinned civilization, that civilization itself would be prioritized within universities. This was the case in the United States too.

American universities were aware of the transformative power of the war; after all, they had time to observe its power from afar before actually entering the conflict. For Nicholas Murray Butler at Columbia, change should be very carefully considered on account of the heightened emotions, 'disturbance, unrest, and tension' of wartime. Academics were ready for changes to take place in higher education, however, 'the question is really which of these changes are wise, are rational, are constructive, and which of them are of another sort and to be avoided.'[66] According to Butler, a university was 'one of the most conservative organizations in the world.' Change was rarely the result of consensus, but attributable to the power of one or two individuals.

Perhaps the most profound effect which the war had upon teaching can be seen in developments at Columbia at the end of the war and into the post-war period. In October 1918, over 140,000 students at 516 colleges and universities across the United States were inducted into the army as part of a scheme called the Student Army Training Corps (SATC). This meant that these 'student-soldiers' would be given military training under the auspices of the War Department.[67] While the SATC was primarily orientated towards military training, it also required each participating institution to draw up a War Issues Course. This informed students of the immediate causes of the war, as reflected in the history, philosophy, and literature of all the major belligerents. Each institution was free to form its own course, and thus it varied widely from institution to institution.[68]

The War Issues course had a greater importance when it came to educational reform as it managed to breach the walls which had traditionally separated the disciplines and made room within the curriculum for the problems of the contemporary world. It also meant an end to the dominance of the elective system at some universities. The supposition was that certain ideas were required learning for every student.[69] At Columbia, the War Issues course was reconstituted as a Peace Issues course which would cut across the departmental lines and disciplinary divisions and introduce every student to the complex social issues of the time. Thus, a compulsory course in Contemporary Civilization was offered by members of the Departments of History, Economics, Government and Philosophy, starting in the autumn of 1919.[70] These inter-disciplinary courses made the notion of 'civilization' central to their teaching and emphasized the progress of reason and liberty in history.[71] The corollary was that these ideas had triumphed with the allies in 1918, where the course culminated.[72] Moreover, the course was not limited to the intellectual moulding of students; it sought to enable

students to 'participate effectively' in the civilization of their own day.[73] Butler argued that it would equip students for 'intelligent citizenship' by showing 'the movement of civilization in its great achievement of constructive progress.'[74] The Western Civilization course – as it became known – was soon taught at colleges across the United States and became a formative influence for generations of undergraduates for decades to follow.[75]

The war also left permanent traces on curricula in Britain. At Oxford, the school of Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) was founded in 1920, the culmination of a process which began before the war and was accelerated by it. The on-going debate about the merits of persisting with the classical education left philosophers – who traditionally favoured compulsory Greek – feeling isolated. Although the latter was not done away with at Oxford until 1920, philosophers had been making alternative arrangements for this eventuality for a number of years.[76] A proposal put forward in 1919 envisaged Philosophy at the centre of an Honours School for Modern Humanities. A second proposal came from the discipline of Economics which had not established itself as a force at Oxford as it had elsewhere.[77] This made the case for an Honour School in Economics and Politics. The result was the establishment of a School of Philosophy, Politics and Economics, or 'Modern Greats', in June 1920.[78] While the establishment of PPE was criticized for lacking a literary component, it succeeded in adapting what was traditionally an integral component of the classical education – philosophy – to two modern disciplines. The similarities to the Contemporary Civilization course at Columbia are also striking in the sense that, through wartime changes, the divisions between disciplines were further broken down.

The establishment of a compulsory Contemporary Civilization course demonstrated that war ideas and wartime belligerence would continue into the post-war period. However, the wartime position taken by universities would have consequences removed from mere curricula. The controversy over academic freedom which erupted in the summer of 1917 was a good example.[79] As Chapter Three has shown, professors lost their jobs at many institutions across the United States on account of their less than enthusiastic support for the war and this, in turn, brought into question the wider role of the university. Did it have a duty to acquiesce with the wishes of government or should it stand detached, independent, and critical? There was no single answer; institutional identities and preoccupations formed in different ways depending on whether a university was public or private, where it was located, and how it was managed. For an ambitious and autocratic president

like Nicholas Murray Butler, the stakes of the war were too high for a university to do anything but acquiesce to the wishes of the national government at war and he and the university's trustees enforced this rigidly. Columbia was, in the words of one of its faculty, John Dewey, 'a badly run factory'. For Dewey, academic freedom was an issue only for academics, not managers.[80]

As was often the case in the history of American higher education, dissenting voices acted both out of a sense of universal obligation as well as inter-institutional rivalry. The strongest voice in favour of maintaining full freedom of academic expression in wartime came from Cambridge, Massachusetts, in the person of Abbott Lawrence Lowell. Harvard's president steadfastly defended the rights of his faculty to say what they wished, arguing that a professor had neither different rights nor greater responsibilities than any other citizen. As such, they could pronounce as they wished on the war or any other topic outside of the classroom. 'The objections to restraint upon what professors may say as citizens seem to me far greater than the harm done by leaving them free.'[81] In a larger sense, Lowell argued that universities either had to take complete control and responsibility for the utterances of their professors, or none whatsoever. For this reason Lowell steadfastly defended the rights of his faculty to express whatever opinions they so chose in the period of the war. The issue of academic freedom did not end with the war; in a number of instances, professors were dismissed for disloyalty as late as 1920.[82] The enthusiastic engagement of American universities in the war effort, which was most noticeable in the restrictions placed on academic freedom at many institutions (including the AAUP), was ultimately a question of legitimacy and underscored the developing reciprocal relationship between university and public opinion which had been given greater impetus in wartime.[83]

The question of academic freedom did not emerge at European universities with the same energy. True, Bertrand Russell was its greatest victim when he was deprived of his lectureship at Trinity College, Cambridge in 1916, but this incident was exceptional. In Britain, academics with a critical view of the war generally stayed silent. In France, partial occupation rendered the idea of critique virtually incomprehensible. The real difference was the autocratic rule of American university presidents and their ability to gag their staff allied to the pressures brought about by public opinion and powerful alumni bodies. This would have been unthinkable in Britain, where many universities had long and proud traditions as homes of dissenting voices, or in France, where state and university were deeply intertwined.

The controversies over academic freedom demonstrated the potential of the university to shape public opinion in myriad ways. However, the question of how best to harness this power remained unclear and had profound implications for the university's public function. In 1918, the British internationalist Alfred Zimmern wrote that the universities did have a responsibility to a wider national public opinion, a consequence of the extension of the franchise over the previous half-century and the need of this expanding electorate for 'hard facts.' Universities had, for their part, recognized this trend and begun to emerge from their seclusion at the same time. All of this was energized by the war. Zimmern claimed that 'a democracy in which the university played its proper part in public life would be equally free from pedantry in its professors, and from vulgarity and rant in its politicians. There would be constant action and inter-action between theory and practice.'[84] A true democracy, Zimmern argued, required that reasoned information be made available to the widest possible public; while he had little to say of academic freedom, he implied a national obligation on the part of universities towards the wider opinion. Wartime trends were leading in this direction in any event.

Owing to financial deprivations, a special committee, known as the Advisory Committee on University Grants, had been formed in 1915 under the chairmanship of Sir William McCormick. Its goal was to survey the needs of universities, to vet their claims for remuneration, and to secure additional grants to this end.[85] It performed this function for the duration of the war, dealing with the civic universities and the technical schools. By 1919, this body had been reconstituted as the University Grants Committee (UGC) for the purpose of distributing state grants to universities. The UGC changed the way in which grants were to be distributed. All grants would come from the Treasury as 'Block Grants', awarded for five years to universities as a whole (not just to departments or technical schools). This in turn opened the way for state grants to the ancient universities for the first time.[86] It was the beginning of a coherent system of higher education in Britain.

Conclusion

The war was a transformative moment for universities; this transformation was due to the character of the conflict itself and the radicalization of warfare. However, wartime changes did not occur in a vacuum in any nation; first, they tapped into pre-war trends and debates about the direction of higher education and often accelerated them; second, they

were experienced transnationally. While specific national educational characteristics were important, the impact of the war upon existing transnational educational networks was integral to wartime changes. These provided channels through which information was disseminated to belligerents and non-belligerents alike. Moreover, the impact of the war upon global economic and commercial networks meant that intellect was stimulated in many neutral nations so they could address wartime shortages. This dynamic did not discriminate between belligerent and non-belligerent.

Changes to higher education in wartime demonstrate the persistence of transnational ties. The sense of scientific mission, articulated in terms of an internationalist spirit before the war, re-emerged in wartime and underpinned the desire of scientists for reforms which they believed would better national efficiency and, ultimately, global society.[87] Appended somewhat to scientists' reforming desires was the move to further integrate modern languages into curricula; however, this also bore close relation to the emerging inter-allied understanding of the war.

Nineteen fourteen is often presented as a caesura in both internationalism and the development of universities. It is perhaps more appropriate to think of the war as causing a temporary cessation to the development of both disciplines and university structures which were quickly reanimated before the war's end. The best examples of this can be seen in the new and interdisciplinary courses instituted (initially) at Columbia and Oxford and in the reorganization of departments and faculties in France. While they were justified in terms of the relentless and righteous onward march of civilization – the defining idea of the war – they really reflected the persistent and often dynamic development of higher education against the backdrop of rapid cultural, societal, and political change.

6
Fashioning an Expert Peace

Writing from the Hotel Crillon in April 1919, the Columbia geographer Douglas Johnson had a moment to take stock of the great changes experienced by the academic profession in the preceding years. 'There is a humorous, or perhaps you will prefer to say tragic, side to the whole matter', he remarked, 'when you think of American college professors, near-diplomats, sitting about the table with ... veterans of the diplomatic service and Foreign Office.' Johnson was in Paris as part of the American delegation to the Peace Conference, one of many experts who had been assembled to conceptualize the terms of the peace and apply their specialist training to the concomitant problems. He added that 'the future Europe will be very different in many vital respects from what it would have been but for the American "academic intervention."'[1]

The Paris Peace Conference was an epoch-defining event. It was widely expected that, following the most destructive war in history, a new departure in international politics would be required to ensure that peace endured in the future. University academics were central to this process; an experts' war would be brought to a conclusion by an experts' peace. In this respect, the peace conference was the pinnacle of the wartime mobilization of knowledge, confirmation of the rise of the specialist. However, the mobilization of intellect which culminated in Paris had a specific inflection which emerged around 1917. From that year, a remobilization for war took place against the backdrop of growing home front dissent, and, in the French case, battlefield mutinies.[2] This remobilization hinged on the clarification of war aims and the assertion that the war was being fought for democracy and the right to self-determination of national groups. In other words, it looked forward, and conceptualized the specific terms on which peace would

be concluded. University scholars were enlisted to make this proactive policy a reality.

The path to Paris was a long one. Almost from the outbreak of war, scholars, who had traditionally taken a leading role in the international peace movement, put their intellectual energies into conceptualizing mechanisms which would render future wars impossible. By 1918 it was widely understood that an international governing structure would be the primary safeguard mitigating against future conflict; this chapter will trace the emergence of the League of Nations idea and show the importance of academic networks in shaping, disseminating, and implementing it.

The international peace movement before 1914

The decade before 1914 saw an acceleration in international cultural connections and within this movement, a proliferation of organizations which aspired to foster greater understanding as an antidote to rising tension between nation-states.[3] The international peace movement acted as a forum for statesmen, academics, businessmen and other public figures to discuss the mechanics of international peace.[4] There were two specific foci in the period before 1914. First was a desire to avoid war where possible through the use of arbitration in the event of international incidents.[5] Second was the will to make warfare more humane by codifying its laws.[6] The pre-war peace movement was not pacifist in the sense that it did not reject the use of violence outright. War was seen as sometimes necessary but an irrational and inhuman means of settling disputes whose avoidance should be an overriding political priority at all times.[7] However, it was rarely repudiated outright by the mainstream of the peace movement.

The peace movement was organized both nationally and internationally. National organizations had their own manifestations; in Britain, for example, the Quaker influence was traditionally strong while opposition to the South African War of 1899–1902 gave the movement support from Liberal politicians. In France, the movement was supported by left-leaning intellectuals and shaped against the backdrop of the Dreyfus Affair. The American movement became increasingly dominated by international lawyers, while in Germany and Austria-Hungary it remained the preserve of the left, and, consequently, potentially subversive and never fully mainstream.[8] National movements came together in the international peace movement, which was spread across Europe and North America.[9] Most prominent amongst these were the

Interparliamentary Union and the Universal Peace Congress, which brought international delegates together annually to attempt to accelerate cooperation. The great achievements of the peace movement were the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907 which established a number of conventions to codify the laws of war; however, they notably failed in their desire to promote and enforce disarmament.

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP) was one of the most prominent peace bodies and boasted a significant academic population. Founded in 1910 and with offices in Washington D.C. and Paris, its aims were to prevent war through the scientific research into the causes of war and to encourage the development of international law.[10] The Endowment's great pre-war project was a report on the causes and conduct of the Balkan Wars of 1912–13, which was researched and written by a commission comprising mostly academic membership, drawn from Austria, Germany, Britain, France, Russia, and the United States.[11]

The Carnegie Endowment was hamstrung by the outbreak of the First World War, as were other peace movements. At a meeting of November 1914, it was resolved that there was nothing that the Endowment could say or do to better the situation in Europe and that it should suspend all action until the end of the war, 'when its assistance might be welcomed.'[12] Their basic programme had been discredited. The dilemma of peace activists was aptly demonstrated in 1917 when the Carnegie Endowment resolved to support the war effort against Germany, its rationale being that democracy was the only path to peace.[13] The outbreak of war had, as in so many fields, undercut the pre-war assumptions of peace activists; modern war would require novel solutions.

Conceptualizing peace

Almost from the outbreak of the war, scholars sought to conceptualize a means of preserving peace once the conflict had come to an end. By 1915, the idea of a League of Nations (although not always given that title) was being discussed by academics in many different countries, sometimes independently of one another, and sometimes in concert. The idea itself was not new. In *Toward Perpetual Peace* (1795) the German philosopher Immanuel Kant made a proposal for a federal world state which would guarantee peace based on moral compulsion.[14] A number of prewar Nobel Prize winners, with American president Theodore Roosevelt the most prominent, had suggested the creation of a supra-national body to enforce international law. The French politician Léon Bourgeois had

spoken of creating a society amongst nations as a means of enshrining the legal achievements of the Hague Conference of 1907, replete with the power of sanction for those who abrogated the agreed treaties.[15]

When war broke out, these previously vague and utopian ideas were given more precise form because of the perceived failure of the pre-war order. International organization had failed; better international organization was required. Alfred Zimmern wrote in late 1914 that 'internationalism as a political theory has broken down: for it was based on a false conception of the nature of government and of the obligations of citizenship. The true internationalism is a spirit of mutual understanding and fellowship between men and nations.'[16] The best means of achieving this would vex scholars for the years to follow.

Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson was one of the first scholars to begin formulating ideas for international reorganization. While not an outright pacifist, he had misgivings about the outbreak and conduct of the war and the way in which academics had immersed themselves in it. Moreover, he was moved by the destruction of the intimate college community in the war. Having dabbled with the idea of an international league before the war, he quickly set up a group to discuss the project which included the economist J.A. Hobson and the politician W.H. Dickinson.[17] Lowes Dickinson's group proposed a permanent council of conciliation, to be international and independent of government influence to arbitrate 'nonjusticiable' disputes. The legal scholar and former British Ambassador to the United States, James Bryce, attended a number of early meetings of the group and was taken with Lowes Dickinson's ideas. A larger group bearing Bryce's name was set up and by 1915 had attracted a following of 2,000 people.[18]

In 1916 Lowes Dickinson defined his League of Nations as a body which would ensure that international law was upheld, by force if necessary. States needed to 'construct some kind of machinery for settling their disputes and organizing their common purposes, and will back that machinery by force. If they do that they may construct a real and effective counterpoise to aggression from any power in the future.'[19] Similar initiatives were emerging internationally, and Lowes Dickinson worked to harmonize the views of these new bodies. In April 1915 he travelled to The Hague to attend a meeting on behalf of the Bryce Group. Here, he met with representatives of the newly formed Society for a Durable Peace and brought them into line with the British body. In May 1915, the Bryce Group amalgamated with another to become the League of Nations Society.[20] Lowes Dickinson would continue promoting his idea for the duration of the war.

Transnational networks were essential to disseminating and harmonizing ideas. In spring 1915, Bryce wrote to Nicholas Murray Butler in New York of his idea for the 'creation of an international object charged with the duty of endeavouring to deal with international questions likely to lead to wars.'[21] The correspondence developed and Butler attained the support of the American branch of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace for his ideas. However, the Endowment, which had been emblematic of the pre-war peace movement with its emphasis on arbitration, realized that if it were to thrive in the future, it would need to distance itself from past policy. Butler and his colleagues at the Endowment felt that the word 'arbitration' – which had been integral to the Hague agreements of 1899 and 1907 – should be done away with as public understanding of it had 'gotten beyond the point where it will be satisfied with the results of arbitration, usually a term which signifies a more or less diplomatic splitting of the difference.' Butler hoped that the phrase 'judicial determination' would be more appropriate than arbitration and emblematic of a change in the international system. Bryce agreed that a semantic change was vital to the success of a future project; however, the emphasis on semantics showed the hesitancy of two pre-war peace activists in completely abandoning their old beliefs even while Butler acknowledged that 'the old methods and ideals of diplomacy have broken down and are quite incompetent to deal with the sort of problems which move the modern world.'[22]

It was widely acknowledged that pre-war internationalism, with all of its assumptions and aspirations, had failed. For this reason suggestions ideas emerged from myriad quarters. In early 1915, an American movement called the League to Enforce Peace was formed under the leadership of former president William Taft. Twenty-nine university academics sat on the league's national committee.[23] The platform of the League to Enforce Peace required that the United States join a league of nations to settle international disputes by judicial arbitration, and, failing this, through a council of conciliation established for such purposes. This league would have full powers to use economic and military sanction against members who went to war. Thus, signatory powers would use 'economic or military forces' against any power which went to war or committed a hostile act against another signatory.[24]

Abbott Lawrence Lowell was one of the League to Enforce Peace's most vocal proponents. He was gripped by a pessimistic realism born of the war, commenting that 'utopia is a long way off and what we are attempting to do is merely to make a practical suggestion which may bring us an inch nearer to that far off goal.'[25] It was he who first used

a resonant phrase, calling for a ‘solemn league and covenant’ under which all other league members would use force to prevent aggression by a single member.[26] This phrase would be made famous later by Woodrow Wilson.

Inter-college and personal rivalries came to the fore. Before 1914, Nicholas Murray Butler saw himself as perhaps the most eminent peace activist in the United States, at the centre of one of the most vibrant peace networks, the Carnegie Endowment, and known to politicians and monarchs across Europe. The breakdown of the old system, and the challenges posed by the war, meant that he was rapidly superseded by men like Lowell, and Woodrow Wilson, onetime president of Princeton University, and then president of the United States.

Wilson, re-elected in 1916 on the platform that he ‘kept us out of the war’, could not remain aloof from war issues. The global and commercially networked nature of the war, specifically, the threat posed to American shipping by German U-boat activity in the Atlantic, meant that the United States was gradually being dragged into the conflict. In May 1916, Wilson spoke of the post-war settlement for the first time, emphasizing the centrality of ‘consent of the governed’ and the ‘equality of nations’ in any settlement. In his ‘Peace without Victory’ address to the senate of January 1917, he emphasized that morality must replace brute force in international relations and that the United States would be central in maintaining peace if it were framed in these terms.[27] This speech was widely disseminated around the world and made Wilson the leading moral authority in international politics.[28]

Butler was being eclipsed. No stranger to self-promotion in normal times, Butler chose to articulate his ideas on international peace anonymously at the end of 1916 in a series of articles published in the *New York Times* under the pseudonym ‘Cosmos.’ He placed his hope in the cultivation of ‘the international mind’, a notion derived from Kant which he developed before the war, taking friendly and co-operative international relations as a basic starting point in geopolitics.[29] Beyond that, Butler argued that the end of the war must be a cue for the continuation of the work of the two Hague conferences. Specifically, a third conference should take place to establish an effective International Court of Justice and Arbitration.[30] Butler also acknowledged that the end of the war should see the establishment of a ‘union of states to secure peace’, but it was notable that he deliberately did not use the term League of Nations.[31] He did not elaborate further on its composition, but clearly expressed his opposition to the idea that the new body could use force as a sanction, as only

Congress could make these decisions for the United States. Butler's proposals were ultimately toothless, relying on the sanction of 'the public opinion of the civilized world.'[32] This vague conclusion was due to Butler's Republican political affiliation and attachment to the Monroe Doctrine. His stubbornness also contributed to his desire not to completely abandon his pre-war views.[33] Indeed, a number of years later he criticized Wilson and the founders of the League of Nations for 'lack of knowledge' of the subject, its antecedents, and for a lack of political principle.[34]

Butler was undoubtedly embittered by his loss of prestige in the world of international peace movements and his usurpation by a scholar who had not involved himself in the peace movement while in academia, but he had a point.[35] Following his 'Peace without Victory' speech, Wilson had effectively appropriated the idea and language of the League of Nations. While the mechanics still required elaboration, the future peace was understood to be a Wilsonian one, and the tension between the vague aspirations and difficult practicalities remained unresolved.[36] This phenomenon overlapped with the reconceptualization of the war as an inter-allied one; the universal and morally-grounded war aims of one ally could be claimed and invoked equally by all. This was especially the case in France where although the idea of a league had pre-war echoes, it had received scant attention in the early war years.

* * *

The efforts of these transnational networks in the early years of the war meant that expert opinion increasingly accepted the necessity of a League of Nations as an essential part of the peace settlement. Wilson's appropriation of the idea, allied to American entry into the war and the wide international dissemination of his ideas meant that the idea had become a mainstream one by the spring of 1917.[37]

A result of the wider transnational interest in the establishment of a League of Nations was that the idea became much more prominent in France. To that point, it had been curiously under-discussed by scholars. The situation in France was, of course, different; the logic of national defence and complete extirpation of the invading enemy meant that notions of victory trumped those of peace in the early years. The League of Nations idea only took on great prominence in France against the backdrop of a wider transnational discourse.

A League of Nations was championed in France by two men who were trained as academics but had since moved to other fields: Albert

Thomas, who had overseen the munitions effort, and Ferdinand Buisson, a former professor at the Sorbonne and educational reformer who held the position of President of the influential Ligue des droits de l'homme et du citoyen. The Ligue des droits de l'homme had, in 1916, adopted the position that a lasting peace would only be possible with the establishment of a League of Nations.[38] The goal of this body, elaborated by Buisson the following year, would be to ensure 'the settlement of disputes by law and not by force.'[39] The triumph of the rule of law would be established by the victory of the Allies and the establishment of the league would guarantee to different national groups the right to govern themselves. Arbitration would be used to settle international disputes, with economic and military sanction being reserved in the event that these disincentives did not work.[40]

In late 1918 Albert Thomas founded the Association Française pour la Société des Nations. Léon Bourgeois, who had coined the term, was appointed honorary president, whilst Paul Appell was its president. The movement had a strong scholarly composition which was simultaneously rooted in national and transnational academic networks. Alfred Croiset, Charles Richet, Gabriel Hanotaux, Geouffre de Lapradelle, Ferdinand Larnaude, and André Weiss all lent their name to the movement. Through it, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which had been rendered impotent by the outbreak of war, saw an opportunity to reinvigorate itself, and placed all of its infrastructure and logistical support in the hands of the new association. The historian Jules Prudhommeaux, the secretary of the Carnegie Endowment's Paris office, was entrusted with the secretarial duties for the new association, while the Endowment's contacts lists, staff, and offices were all appropriated by the new body.[41] This was an important connection as, while the Endowment was an international body, its real power base was in the United States. As such, it demonstrated that French academic goals for peace would have a strong American influence.

Thomas argued in November 1918 that peace must see the establishment of 'a supra-national authority which, on the one hand, will be charged with the duty of defining the rights of the nations, and on the other, will have at its disposal the means to secure the recognition of those rights by force.'[42] The French Association claimed in its founding statement that the original idea for a League had originated in France and been appropriated by Wilson. The fundamental principle which the new association stood for was the idea that all peoples had the right to decide their own futures, rule themselves, and not have their sovereignty threatened by outside parties. Force should be abolished as

a means of settling disputes between nations and would be reserved by the League as the 'supreme sanction.'[43]

The idea of self-determination has become synonymous with Woodrow Wilson. It emerged in 1917, an extension of his emphasis on the 'consent of the governed', or in other words, that a democratic form of government would ensure future peace. Wilson first articulated this in his famous 'Peace without Victory' speech to the senate in January 1917, which provided a blueprint for American involvement in the war, and more pertinently, in the peace settlement. The ideas were further fleshed out in his famous 'Fourteen Points' speech of January 1918. Wilson emphasized the peaceful co-existence of democracies and America's interest in stewarding this to justify American entry into the war; it was not abandonment of the Monroe Doctrine but an extension of it to the world.[44] This idea was well received in France where the inter-allied cultural alliance of wartime stressed the shared political, historical, and cultural trajectories of the two great republics; however, the idea of peace without victory was deeply problematic in partially occupied France. At the same time, British policy makers and scholars saw the adoption of the principle of self-determination as a means of solidifying the Anglo-American diplomatic alliance.[45] By the end of 1918, the League of Nations was a widely understood and generally desired idea amongst intellectual elites.

Planning for the post-war world

The mobilization of knowledge in America drew on its European equivalent. As the United States entered the war with a post-war settlement firmly in mind, it followed that it would mobilize simultaneously for war and peace. American mobilization for war has already been discussed in Chapter Four; its corollary, the mobilization for peace, will be discussed here. In late 1917, The Inquiry was formed under the guidance of Colonel Edward House. Sidney Mezes, the President of the College of the City of New York, was its director. It brought together experts to undertake detailed studies on many topics which would be fundamental to peace negotiations. It operated on the understanding that the post-war settlement would be too complex for diplomats. As the war was being redefined as one for 'consent of the governed' and the rights of subject peoples to self-determination, it was expected and understood that myriad territorial claims and counter-claims would follow the end of hostilities. As such, a vast research project was required to ensure that these claims were handled by informed experts.

More than half of those working for The Inquiry came from five institutions: Yale, Harvard, Princeton, Columbia, and the American Geographical Society (AGS). Indeed, initial recommendations were sought from President Lowell of Harvard, before the network began expanding.[46] The composition of The Inquiry demonstrated the influence which a small number of elite private east coast institutions had come to exert. The Inquiry employed historians and geographers in large numbers, demonstrating the emphasis being placed upon territorial settlements. The primacy of geography was symbolically reinforced when the fledgling Inquiry moved to the premises of the AGS in New York, under the guidance of geographer Isaiah Bowman. One of The Inquiry's great achievements was the production of a 1:3,000,000 scale map of Europe which would become a 'cartographic currency' at the Paris Peace Conference.[47]

The Inquiry was an elite and elitist body; its composition hinged, for a great part, on personal and institutional connections. Charles Seymour, a historian at Yale University, was invited to join on the recommendation of Bowman, who had himself recently left Yale for the AGS and had been invited to work with The Inquiry by James Shotwell. Seymour was assigned to study the territorial problems of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. When he protested that this was not an area about which he had specialist knowledge, Bowman advised him to 'get down to work and become an authority.'[48] Personal acquaintance, not first-hand knowledge of the specific issues, was key.

Woodrow Wilson was central to The Inquiry's workings. A political scientist, historian, and former president of Princeton University, he told his experts to 'tell me what's right and I'll fight for it.'[49] The Inquiry set to address two connected but frequently irreconcilable issues, the first dealing with detail, the second with concepts. The experts were primarily concerned with collecting information – historic, linguistic, and geographic – on the regions which would be impacted by the peace settlement. The Inquiry was instrumental in formulating Wilson's vision of peace; it furnished him with substance and detail where he had hitherto spoken in grand but vague terms.[50]

The doctrine of self-determination would allow national groups to determine their own political future in their own national territory and, by extension, put an end to imperial conflicts and war.[51] However, the academic experts on these different territories were aware of the impossibility of a perfect settlement with self-determination for all, as subsequent events would show. Writing in 1920, the historian and Inquiry member Charles Haskins argued that 'wherever you apply it,

self-determination runs against minorities. Ireland has its Ulster, Bohemia its Germans, Poland its Germans and Lithuanians. There are minorities along every frontier.'[52] However, The Inquiry's experts were not sufficiently empowered to change big picture policies. Their expertise generally was not intended to extend beyond individual geographical regions.

Britain and France constituted similar bodies to the Inquiry in anticipation of the peace. In early 1917 the Briand government established the Comité d'études (not to be confused with the Comité d'études et documents sur la guerre). While Ernest Lavisse was the symbolic head, the real work was being undertaken by an army of geographers, of whom Paul Vidal de la Blache was the inspiration, and Emmanuel de Martonne and Jean Brunhes were both prominent. André Tardieu called the body the pride of French science and was especially proud of the statistical work and detailed maps made of the proposed settlements for Eastern Europe.[53] The majority of the members of the Comité d'études were drawn from the academic elites of the Sorbonne and the École Normale Supérieure and demonstrated 'the faith which political elites were willing to place in academic expertise.'[54]

Unusually, the French effort was not centralized in one body. A separate committee was formed under the Senator Jean Morel which dealt with economic issues. In December 1918 and January 1919 Tardieu was charged with bringing both groups together in order to reach a consensus position before the Peace Conference started. Tardieu had been a visiting lecturer at Harvard in 1908 and used his knowledge of the country, as well as his extensive contacts, in his new role. Pertinently, Cecil Spring-Rice, the British Ambassador to Washington D.C., claimed that Tardieu and Wilson were on 'very good terms', presumably through their shared academic connections.[55] In addition, Tardieu – the French High Commissioner in the United States – had, since January 1918, established a permanent and daily liaison between the Comité d'études and The Inquiry, through Louis Aubert, a member of the French Commission based in Washington D.C. In October 1918 Martonne travelled to America to compare their preparatory documents with those of the Inquiry.[56]

A similar body was established in Britain in the spring of 1917 under the auspices of the Foreign Office 'whose duty it should be to provide the British Delegates to the Peace Conference with information in the most convenient form [...] respecting the different countries, districts, islands, &c., with which they might have to deal.'[57] This did not require a specific gathering together of academic experts as in

America and France. Instead, the existing bodies in London such as the Admiralty, War Office, and Foreign Office – all of whom had experienced a significant influx of academic expertise in wartime – were utilized. The resulting handbooks which were issued to delegates at the Peace Conference were deemed to be of sufficient scholarly merit that they were published in full from 1919 under the guidance of the historian George W. Prothero.

Cumulatively, the mobilization of scholarly networks to prepare for the peace settlement demonstrated that the rise of the expert was a reality in modern society. More pointedly, it demonstrated a shift in international policy-making.[58] Diplomacy was no longer the preserve of the professional diplomats and politicians; the issues were too complex and required specialist training, expertise, and contacts.

Academics at the Paris Peace Conference, 1919

The Paris Peace Conference was the culmination of the mobilization of specialist knowledge. The conference was public evidence that the construction of the post-war world could not be left to diplomats alone; the issues were too complex for that. Instead of being closeted away in government departments in the respective capitals or in university rooms and laboratories, academics were on public display as part of national delegations in Paris.

A great influx of people descended on Paris, and academics were prominent among them. The city was vibrant and rich in ideas, much as it had been during the Great Exhibitions of the late nineteenth century. Paul Cambon wrote that the situation reminded him of the 1900 World's Fair.[59] Over 500 press correspondents came to Paris.[60] The conference was a transnational moment and presented an opportunity for scholars to begin sharing ideas again in ways which had not been possible during the war. Academic networks were, although not crucial, very important in the conduct of diplomacy in Paris. Membership of a network could open doors that would otherwise remain closed and academics were quick to exploit these. These networks were formed through a common institutional affiliation, a common disciplinary pursuit, or other connections formed in the course of an academic life. Most importantly, they traversed national delegations and presented channels through which cooperation could be fruitfully undertaken. Moreover, while scholars were officially in Paris to complete one task, they were aware of the rich academic potential presented by being surrounded by so much international expertise and were quick to exploit it.

The Paris Peace Conference saw a concentration of scholars from a small number of elite universities in each of the major allied nations; it was a reaffirmation of their sense of difference and claims to exert influence.

The young historian Charles Seymour wrote of how he 'trembled' in the presence of an esteemed figure like Charles Haskins, professor of medieval history at Harvard and part of the American delegation.[61] On arriving in Paris, Seymour went to the American University Union almost immediately to reacquaint himself with former students who were in France. On 17 January 1919 he sought out Charles Seignobos, whom he described as 'most prominent modern historian of France.'[62] James Shotwell had a busier schedule. Shotwell was originally employed as the librarian of the delegation and immediately found that his academic connections gave him a great advantage. He visited the newly established Bibliothèque de la guerre in a search for documents:

> The librarian is Camille Bloch, a historian whose volume on the care of the poor in the old regime on the eve of the French Revolution was one that I had reviewed at length in the *Political Science Quarterly* years before, and had sent him a copy of my review. It was a fortunate coincidence, for it opened the doors of French bureaucracy, and he set about getting the wheels started which would permit us to have free access to all their documents.[63]

Shotwell also met with Albert Thomas, Henri Lichtenberger, Sylvain Lévi, Ferdinand Lot, Marcel Mauss, and Paul Mantoux.[64] Shotwell connected with Mantoux through academic work and wrote that 'he was surprised to know that I used [Mantoux's dissertation on the Industrial Revolution in England] as a text book in my Columbia class in Social History.'[65] Another door opened.

The connection to one's home institution was as important as foreign contacts. In early February Shotwell met with Wellington Koo, the Chinese ambassador to the United States, who had completed a doctorate at Columbia in 1912. He recorded the incident:

> Lunch with Wellington Koo … whom I had had as a student in history in Columbia in 1909 … Mr. Wei, another old student of mine, sat across from me and helped Koo entertain the Americans. There were Red Cross workers … and some young officers of Koo's student days in Columbia. We had a very pleasant time, and when I left the young people were singing Columbia songs around the piano.[66]

Academics used the conference to start new collaborative projects. While in Paris Shotwell discovered that he had been appointed to oversee the Carnegie Endowment's *Economic and Social History of the World War* (see Chapter Eight), and remarked on a number of occasions how the present events would inform that project.[67] He took on other projects too: in conjunction with James Headlam-Morley and G.W. Prothero, he devised a plan to publish a diplomatic history of Anglo-German relations in the decade before the war for the American market, with a view to 'bringing about a permanent better understanding between America and Great Britain.'[68] Harold Temperley, Reader in Modern History at Cambridge, was part of the British delegation. Realizing that 'such a diversity of minds has seldom been associated on a single task under one roof', and recognizing the great historical significance of events in Paris, he organized a group of Anglo-American academics to write a history of the conference based on their experiences.[69] The group called itself the Institute for International Affairs and set about producing an annual register of international events as well as a history of the peace conference itself.[70] The list of contributors to its history of the conference demonstrated the influence of the ancient universities in Britain and the elite East Coast institutions of America, with five of the sixteen contributors being from Cambridge, four from Oxford, two from Columbia and one from Harvard.[71] French academics were at the centre of many of these meetings and schemes; however, owing to the fact that France did not need to bring a large expert delegation to Paris, there does not seem to have been the same sense of novelty about what was happening on their side. French academics were more sought after than seeking. The conference was a moment of great history, possibility, and energy, and academics were aware of this potential.

The American delegation had the largest academic representation, with many of the members of The Inquiry being brought to Paris to continue their research and advise the commissioners. The American delegation was different from the others as experts remained in a distinct group even at the conference: The Inquiry was reconstituted as the Intelligence Division of the delegation, which was also the largest of any of the subdivisions. This was in turn organized into eighteen subgroups dealing with different territorial areas or disciplines.[72]

The American delegation remained exceptional in its academic composition. The French, for example, brought very few scholars to the conference. In theory, they could consult any of the Parisian academic elite as needs arose. Only three full time academics were appointed to the French delegation, and all were from the Sorbonne. They were

Geouffre de Lapradelle, Ferdinand Larnaude, and André Weiss, all legal experts.[73] The official translator of the conference was Paul Mantoux, a *normalien* who had completed a doctorate in history at the Sorbonne and lectured in England just before the war. He had worked as military interpreter in 1915 before his friend Albert Thomas sent him as his envoy to London and attended many important Anglo-French meetings in the latter stages of the war. Thus Clemenceau recalled him in May 1918 to serve as interpreter to the Supreme War Council in Versailles.[74] Again, scholarly ties had long lives.

The British delegation did not have a separate group of specialists on a par with The Inquiry; more usually, experts were annexed to existing government departments, such as John Maynard Keynes with the Treasury or E.H. Carr with the Foreign Office. A great number of historians represented the British in Paris, and the emphasis on international law and geography was not as pronounced as in the other cases.

The conference was improvised and frequently chaotic.[75] In his report on the proceedings, the journalist E.J. Dillon wrote that: 'the figures cut by the delegates of the Great Powers were pathetic. Giants in the parliamentary sphere, they shrank to the dimensions of dwarfs in the international. In matters of geography, ethnography, history and international politics they were helplessly at sea.'[76] Keynes was famously scathing in his assessment of all the major parties at the conference, especially Wilson: 'There can seldom have been a statesman of the first rank more incompetent than the President in the agilities of the council chamber.'[77] Douglas Johnson remarked that:

> I used to think that for general inefficiency the average college professor had no serious competitor. But that was the judgment of ignorance. I realize now that I and my fellows would rank a bad third, with an army officer and a State Department official tied for first place. The amount of incompetence and ignorance in high places is simply astounding.[78]

Seymour made a similar comparison. 'I thank the Lord that I belong to a college faculty whose methods are perhaps unscientific but who don't get snarled up in red tape', he wrote when discussing the inefficient methods of some of the commissions.[79] Keynes, Johnson and Seymour were all articulating a growing feeling that the 'expert' peace was going to be anything but; the conflicting desires of the powers, the personal jealousies of many of the major politicians, and the fundamental impossibility of making good on the promise of national

self-determination for all ethnic groups – especially when it threatened to undermine imperial holdings of the powers themselves – meant that disillusionment quickly set in.

Wilson had promised that the peace would mark the end of secret diplomacy. Yet negotiations were soon conducted behind closed doors by a self-appointed elite. In this respect, The Inquiry was itself a problematic body as it was a private research group appointed by and reporting to Colonel House and President Wilson. It had no formal connections to the State Department which would traditionally formulate foreign policy.[80] As such, it was seen as undermining the work of the State Department. In late December 1918, Bowman succeeded in gaining recognition from the State Department and Treasury for The Inquiry.[81] This gave the academic experts of The Inquiry a lot of power, certainly much more than their equivalents on the French or British delegations, and was a remarkable transformation for men who had, two years previously, been living unremarkable scholarly lives. For this reason, and others, academics were sensitive to their own position as outsiders amongst the professional diplomats.

The work undertaken by experts in the year and a half preceding the conference was not in vain. 'In the various commissions and subcommissions the Americans have, as a rule, been the best informed', claimed Douglas Johnson. 'The French and British in particular are continually coming to us for data, maps, etc., which have been needed in the course of commission work.' The Americans were, in Johnson's estimation, only lacking when it came to the conduct of diplomacy itself.[82] Temperley's volume claimed that the British and American delegations were strongest on economic matters, the French on territorial issues, and the Italians on issues of concern in their region.[83]

The experiences of Charles Seymour demonstrated how individual scholars could exercise much influence over the final settlements. Seymour was assigned to the Balkan settlement, and specifically, the Italian border with the newly formed Yugoslav state. Seymour – and the bulk of his American colleagues – firmly believed that Fiume should be ceded to Yugoslavia, on account of its location and the Slav composition of the population surrounding the town.[84] However, the Italian delegates claimed Fiume for Italy. Seymour found Wilson's methods to be problematic, even for someone who had worked with him for almost two years. 'The trouble is that the President will not take advice unless he asks for it and even with the unanimous opinion of all the experts in the field is liable to follow his own judgment of the situation.'[85] However, at the end of May, Seymour's proposals for the border

areas between Italy, Austria and Yugoslavia were adopted by Wilson, who quickly pushed them through the Council of Four. Seymour wrote privately that 'it is a great satisfaction to me and a personal triumph, as I had the French, British, and Italian delegates on the territorial commission opposed to me as well as Johnson. But Wilson backed my point of view and persuaded Lloyd George and Clemenceau.'[86]

The details of the peace were often hammered out in secret with academics to the fore. This was demonstrated by the experience of R.W. Seton-Watson, an Oxford-trained historian, then working in King's College London and a long time advocate of minorities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He went to Paris in a private capacity and stayed near to the British and American delegations in the hope of being able to influence the settlements in Eastern and Central Europe. He was disillusioned with the scepticism regarding the League of Nations or the formation of a 'New Europe', especially when it came to Italy's claims, and decided to use what influence he had.[87] Working to his advantage was the fact that very few of the politicians present in Paris understood the Balkans in any great depth.[88] His expertise gave him power.

In his weekly journal, *New Europe*, Seton-Watson pressed the claims of Slav groups and denounced those of Italy. Significantly, Seton-Watson was a champion of the claims of the Croats and Slovenes against Serb domination within the Yugoslav delegation itself.[89] He used connections in London to ensure that the *New Europe* was mailed out to Paris in War Office bags, meaning that it reached delegates at the conference promptly, and also secured a number of sellers for the newspaper in Paris. Through his friend Henry Wickham-Steed, a foreign correspondent for *The Times*, he had access to men like Arthur Balfour, Georges Clemenceau, and Colonel House.[90] The latter connection resulted in both Seton-Watson and Steed being consulted regarding the Italian-Yugoslav settlement, and a border which they proposed became the basis of Wilson's negotiations in the Adriatic.[91] Thus, a man with no official standing at the conference managed to have a significant impact upon the territorial settlement.

Academic connections did not always gain the desired result. Wellington Koo and the Chinese delegation were left disappointed when Shantung was ceded to Japan and felt that this was a clear contradiction of the principles of self-determination.[92] The Chinese delegation was, as Shotwell discovered at a dinner in early February, both young and well educated. 'They were a very dignified set of young men, none over fifty, and all of them held doctorates from American universities.'[93] Indeed, Koo himself was known personally to President Wilson on

account of his academic work in America before 1914, and had held positive meetings with Wilson in America before the Conference which led him to believe that Chinese desires would be satisfied.[94] Academic networks could be useful to get an audience for certain ideas, but it did not mean that they trumped acute geopolitical concerns.[95]

Alongside academic achievements at the conference, there were many causes of conflict and division. Divisions were not merely between national groups, but also within delegations, between people holding different political allegiances, and also between those schooled in different academic disciplines. The American delegation was split in their attitudes towards certain settlements between historians and geographers. Seymour wrote of trouble in agreeing on certain boundaries with the geographer, Douglas Johnson, as the former was working on historical and ethnic principles, whereas the latter adhered to the best geographical and topographical features of settlements. This boiled over into argument on at least one occasion.[96]

The most famous conflict at the Peace Conference involved John Maynard Keynes, in Paris as a special advisor to the Treasury. His position on reparations was at the heart of his disillusionment with the Paris Conference. He had always maintained that German reparations should be based on their ability to pay, not what they ought to pay.[97] Moreover, Keynes favoured the cancellation of inter-allied war debts. On both projects, he encountered objections both within his own delegation and from other national delegations; in the latter case, the Americans did not want to cancel war debts.[98] He resigned from the British delegation in June 1919, frustrated and generally exhausted. He wrote to his mother of being depressed 'at the evil round me.'[99] He voiced this frustration in *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, published later that year.

Conclusion

Seton-Watson wrote that the Great Powers at the peace conference 'almost invariably disregard the advice of these experts, and sometimes do not even ask for it.'[100] Scholars had mixed experiences in Paris; some managed to impact the treaty in a manner that was consistent with their interests, while others struggled to make their voices heard and left, disillusioned. The Paris Peace Conference presented a moment where the permanence of the transformations born of the war could be tested; it was the logical conclusion to the division of labour. Moreover, it demonstrated the national importance of a small number

of elite universities who provided a great proportion of expert delegates. However, the competing interests of the various powers present, allied to the different decision making structures within delegations and the respective weight given to scholars, meant that their influence was felt unevenly. Fundamentally, the vagaries of Wilsonian invocations of self-determination – and the questionable commitment of the Great Powers to this universal aspiration – ran counter to a purely 'expert' peace settlement. Paris highlighted new elements of diplomacy, but demonstrated that many features of nineteenth century politics would remain.

The Peace Conference was the culmination of both the wartime mobilization of knowledge and the movement to ensure peace in the future. It is significant that these movements existed independent of one another and that when the time came to agree on a post-war settlement, it was the experts, not the peace activists, who were consulted. Nevertheless, the previous four years had seen ideas to prevent future wars – specifically through the establishment of a League of Nations – develop and become part of the mainstream discourse. These ideas emerged from the perceived failure of the pre-war peace movement to prevent the conflict which broke out in 1914.

Indeed, one of the few immediately contentious negotiations to take place in Paris regarded the League of Nations. This was because it was seen as a sideshow by some, especially Clemenceau. The version of the League which emerged at Paris – a pro-active and evolving body – was primarily the work of the Cambridge-educated South African general, Jan Smuts. The newly conceptualized body – with its commissions working on intellectual and economic cooperation as well as child welfare, labour, migrant and refugee rights – confirmed the rise of the expert and gave them an institutional mechanism through which to continue their transnational work, the consequences of which have lasted a century.

Part III
Legacy

7
Returning to Normal?

The Great War formally ended with the signing of the armistice on 11 November 1918. However, the war was more than a military conflict, and the cessation of military hostilities on the Western Front did not mean that life in formerly belligerent societies immediately returned to normal. Indeed, in many parts of Europe, the cessation of the formal war was the cue for a series of regional paramilitary conflicts and scholars now question to what extent the war 'ended' in 1918.[1] The university was a microcosm of wartime change, equally invested in the military, cultural, and political wars. Such was the intensity of the changes to both university life and academic practice in wartime that the mere cessation of formal hostilities could not be expected to return the situation to 1914 and peace. Here too, the war would continue.

The intellectual response to the war's end was a heightened sense of crisis.[2] The conflict was a cultural one, where ideas overlapped with national and allied causes. The war had ended in victory for the allies, but it had come at a terrible cost. What did this mean for the concepts of civilization which were invoked in 1914? The unprecedented destruction, loss of life, and preponderance of disablement meant that for many scholars, the cost of victory could hardly be said to represent civilization as it was understood in 1914 as an evolving, progressive, and liberating force. The French poet and intellectual Paul Valéry wrote in 1919 that 'civilization has the same fragility as a life.'[3] The author H.G. Wells noted in 1921 that progress 'has been checked violently, and perhaps arrested altogether.'[4] Science distinguished the modern age but its applications led to the terrible destruction of wartime. Would it be a tool of peace or war in the future?[5] Could Europe – and the ideas which underpinned its progress – go the same way as the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome? Across Europe, the end of the war prompted

a period of intense self-reflection, with modernity and European superiority being called into question.[6] The end of the war marked the beginning of a 'Morbid Age', where the pre-war past was idealized and contrasted negatively with the post-war present.[7] At universities, simultaneously intimate communities ravaged by the war and cradles of intellect, this sense of crisis was experienced acutely.

The immediate cessation of hostilities presented a number of interlinked problems for universities. They were crucibles of many forms of wartime mobilization, and by definition, demobilization would take place along different lines and on different timeframes. This chapter will consider post-war demobilization within the context of the aforementioned 'crisis of civilization.' It will look at how universities, understood in their immediate (and not international) contexts, sought to return to normal following the end of the war. To do so it will examine how the university community sought to reconstitute itself following the cessation of hostilities. It will also look at how the practice of scholarship too became subsumed by the mantra of returning to normal, and how structures were transformed by the war, rendering a return to the pre-1914 situation impossible.

Rebuilding communities

The armistice was an underwhelming moment for universities. It was an occasion for relief, the beginning of the end rather than the end itself. Mobilized men would not return home for months and so universities would not immediately take on their old appearance. The announcement of the armistice was the occasion, in some cases, for scores to be settled. Within minutes of the news breaking, a mob ransacked the headquarters of the pacifist *Cambridge Magazine*.[8] The *Magazine's* defence of free speech and pacifist leanings would not be easily forgotten now that the war was over. However, despite this unsavoury incident, the newspaper reported that 'for one week we have been permitted to forget even the problems which await us at home, abroad and in the university.'[9] In Dublin, students from Trinity College used the occasion of the armistice to attack offices belonging to the secessionist nationalist Sinn Féin party.[10] While some scores were settled, otherwise the armistice was not a central event in the life of the university; myriad problems still needed to be resolved before anything approaching normality could be broached again. Former soldiers began to return to university campuses in 1919 but this was dependent upon demobilization patterns in their respective armies. For example, the majority of French soldiers began

being demobilized following the signing of the peace treaty in June 1919 and the process continued for the remainder of that year.[11] Many chose to begin or resume higher education but there was a lag between the signing of the armistice and the repopulation of universities.

The process moved more swiftly in Britain. Universities were soon full again. At Cambridge University, only 281 students matriculated in the academic year 1917–18. In January 1919 alone, 655 students matriculated, with a further 1552 doing so between January and June of that year.[12] *The Times* made a similar pronouncement in November 1920, stating that the university was 'more crowded … than ever before.' The overall number of students in residence was put at 6,000. By October 1919 it was estimated that numbers at Oxford were 600 over their pre-war norms, with most colleges exceeding capacity by thirty per-cent. It was an unprecedented development.[13] By October 1920 there were just over 4,000 students on the books at Oxford, including several hundred women, admitted as full members of the university for the first time.[14] By May 1919, Manchester University reported that its enrolments had increased by 600 compared to the previous year, putting them back at pre-war levels. In terms of numbers, universities quickly returned to, and exceeded, pre-war levels.

It was a similar story in France, with the caveat that provisions had been put in place long before the armistice to induce students to return to study. At the ENS, plans were made in 1916 to run a special *concours* once the war had ended, catering specifically to demobilized soldiers who had been accepted in the summer of 1914 or were subsequently mobilized into the forces.[15] In January 1919, The ENS decided to give an extra year's studies to a number of ex-servicemen who had been enrolled before the war, fought for the entire conflict, but not yet passed the *agrégation*.[16] By 1920, Gustave Lanson, the new *directeur* of the ENS, reported that there were 228 students enrolled, compared to the average pre-war figure of 171, with the former figure being swelled by the number of veterans returning to study.[17] The influx caused by the 1919 *concours* – ninety-one additional students entered – strained resources and raised questions about the intellectual standards of the new cohorts.[18] Meanwhile, in the United States, there was a boom in university enrolments in the immediate post-war period. The figures for 1919–20 constituted growth of seventy-five per cent when compared to those of a decade prior.[19]

British and French universities quickly attained – and surpassed – their pre-war numerical strength. However, the situation in 1919 and 1920 was not comparable to that of 1914, in the main due to the

presence of large numbers of demobilized American students in British and French universities. This was the result of work undertaken by the American University Union. The AUU was founded in June 1917 in New York to cater to needs of mobilized American students.[20] As discussed in Chapter Three, many American universities had set up bureaus in Europe for their mobilized students, and the AUU sought to coordinate these into one body. The bureaus aimed to recreate something of their specific institutional life in foreign climes, on the understanding that larger bodies would be too busy to cater to the needs of individual student-soldiers.[21] The AUU acquired premises in Paris which were furnished with living quarters for students passing through and a library where they could study.[22] The AUU, like the university bureaus before it, was intended as a home away from home for college men.

When the war ended, the AUU's administrators began considering ways in which the body could establish itself on a permanent and useful footing.[23] Horatio Krans, the director of the Paris centre, felt that it could be a centre for 'all kinds of information about French educational opportunities.'[24] As such, the AUU redefined itself as a working link between the educational institutions of the United States, Britain, and France; almost by accident, it emerged as an engine of inter-allied exchange. The irony was that it took the end of hostilities for this transformation to occur. With a base already established in Paris and connections to over 140 American institutions of higher education, the AUU arranged for the matriculation of demobilized American student soldiers in European universities in 1919 and 1920.[25]

By April 1919 a great influx of American students had enrolled in British and French universities. Almost 6,000 enrolled at French universities, of which 2,000 undertook study at the Sorbonne.[26] At the same time, almost 2,000 enrolled in British institutions, of which 200 each registered at Oxford and Cambridge, over 700 at the institutions of the University of London, and additional 200 each at Glasgow and Edinburgh, and significant numbers at the universities of Birmingham, Sheffield, Bristol, and Manchester.[27] American students availing of this scheme had to be in possession of bachelor's degrees; their period in European universities could then lead to master's degrees.

The influx of American students into European universities meant that the immediate post-war years were far from a return to the pre-war period. The Americans were a new and foreign presence who changed the character of these older institutions. The sight of the American sport of baseball being played on the hallowed fields of Oxford and Cambridge was a shock to older members of those communities who

were conversant in cricket; moreover, the language of this foreign sport was virtually incomprehensible to many.[28] The numbers of Americans invading the ancient campuses of Oxford and Cambridge were a visible demonstration that normality – as it was understood before the war – would not be attainable in 1919. The arrival of the American students provided an unusual intercultural moment and was experienced reciprocally. For their part, American students found the experience of study abroad to be foreign to what they knew at home.

The novelist John dos Passos was underwhelmed by his experience at the Sorbonne which he described as 'a large monumental place that has up to the [time of] writing given me no other impression but that of massy dullness.'[29] Another American student abroad, Robert J. Menner, was struck by the lack of societal life in French universities. There were 'no dormitories, no clubs, no magazines, no newspapers, no athletic contests.' Menner was disappointed to learn that French universities were institutions of learning 'and nothing else.'[30] John R. Dyer, who studied at Oxford, wrote that the university's 'old and weather-beaten' buildings 'would not be considered a credit to the average American campus.'[31] He also noted the reserve of British observers of sport, especially cricket, contrasting it unfavourably to the more enthusiastic crowds who watched baseball games.

For the permanent members of European university communities, the arrival of the Americans represented a disorienting moment. The *Cambridge Magazine* was sceptical about the arrival of American students, fearing that 'the period of demobilization may bring many men to Cambridge who have no particular interest in what we can most profitably offer.'[32] French universities, which had invested much in constructing an inter-allied understanding between France and the United States, seemed to be more receptive to their American visitors. Jules Payot, the rector of the University of Aix-Marseille, wrote that the time spent by American students in Aix-Marseille allowed them to see the 'true France', not that which was portrayed in the popular media.[33] The influx of American ex-servicemen had largely ceased by 1921, when most had returned home to the United States.

This unprecedented – and largely improvised – exchange of students exacerbated unease amongst academics in Britain and France that normality – as they understood it – was unattainable. Gustave Lanson wrote that it would take until at least 1922 for the ENS to attain some semblance of the pre-war spirit, as by then the war generation would all have completed their studies. At Cambridge, J.J. Thomson feared that undergraduate life would never return to what it had been before the

war. Demobilized students, he wrote, simply did not talk of the war, and actively desired to disengage from it, an act which he suggests was palpable in post-war Cambridge.[34] Moreover, many of those who had spoken out against the conduct of the war fled their institutions once it had ended, their continued presence being made difficult by old grudges. At Cambridge, Bertrand Russell, C.K. Ogden, and G.H. Hardy all left soon after the cessation of hostilities.[35] The war remained palpable and contemporaries were acutely aware of this breach with the past. Evelyn Waugh, who began his studies at Oxford in 1921, noted that 'Oxford is not quite itself yet but the aged war-worn hero type is beginning to go down.'[36] In his memoirs, Harold Acton wrote that 'Oxford was still full of the demobilized who were making up for time lost in the army, and had not yet sloughed their military skins.'[37] A.L. Rowse, who came up to Oxford in 1921, recalled how a chaplain had tried 'to bully me as to whether or not I would have fought in the late war.'[38] John Lehmann, who came up to Cambridge in the early 1920s, wrote that 'Cambridge … was haunted inescapably by the old war; it was always there in the background conditioning the prevalent sensibility.'[39] Robert Brasillach, who had entered the École Normale Supérieure in the late 1920s, later recalled wondering what the institution would have been like before 1914.[40] Even for those who had not been present at university campuses during the war, its memory was inescapable in the 1920s, and was often actively ignored.[41]

There was a break in the life of American higher education after the war too. American universities, long seen as conservative and subservient to business interests, were suddenly viewed in a different light. Peace transformed student sensibilities; there was less frivolity amongst undergraduates than before the war. Samuel Eliot Morison recalled that American universities were no longer seen as bastions of reaction, subservient to Wall Street. Once peace was concluded, they began to be seen as 'cells of sedition.'[42] This was especially pronounced at Harvard University, which had supported its German staff during the war, staunchly backed academic freedom, and offered Bertrand Russell a visiting lectureship at the height of his troubles at Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1919, the Harvard academic Harold Laski caused a storm by publicly expressing his support for striking Boston policemen. Abbott Lawrence Lowell wrote privately that 'the nervous strain of the war has produced a state of nervous excitability which is visible in all countries.'[43] In other words, the ground had shifted under academics; wartime mentalities persisted and meant that academic freedom remained contested in peacetime. This was compounded by the acrimonious

fallout from the peace conference, with Wilson discredited and scholars of the Inquiry leading criticisms of his peace-making policy. Moreover, the Bolshevik scare which emerged in the United States following the war's end intensified the spotlight on universities, suddenly rendered suspect as potential cradles of revolution. Lyford Edwards, a sociology professor at Rice Institute in Houston, proclaimed Lenin to be a greater idealist than George Washington in a church engagement in May 1919. He was dismissed shortly after, showing that the questions of loyalty which were raised in wartime would spill over into peacetime.[44]

No institution better embodied the continuity of wartime schisms than the New School for Social Research, founded in New York in 1919. The New School was formed in opposition to Butler's Columbia. Specifically, its founders were frustrated with Columbia's business interests and business-like structures, while drawing their immediate motivation from the specific controversies over academic freedom which erupted in 1917. It quickly became a magnet for disaffected ex-Columbia faculty, such as Charles Beard, H.W.L. Dana, James Harvey Robinson, and also critics like Thorstein Veblen.[45] Its establishment demonstrated that wartime issues and controversies would have long afterlives; the war was over, but scholarly communities still felt its presence.

Mourning and remembrance

At its core, the sense of a historical breach in the life of universities after the war spoke to the unparalleled bloodletting of 1914–18 which hit scholarly communities acutely. In Britain and France, the percentage of those killed who came from universities was much higher than the death rate of the population at large, reflecting the role which men with a university education played in the officer ranks.[46] University populations may have been overflowing by 1919, but, for many, the absences were much more noticeable than those present. Table 7.1 shows how destructive the First World War was for scholarly communities in Britain and France. In contrast, American institutions, although they suffered casualties, did not share the same brutal losses as their fellow allies, in the main due to the specific context of American entry into the war.

The formal cessation of hostilities in November 1918 did not end the trauma. The end of the military conflict challenged members of the academic community to continue their pre-war intellectual vocations while simultaneously making sense of the carnage that interrupted it. It also posed a deeper question; namely, could the academic community

Table 7.1 War dead as a percentage of university members who served in the armed forces (a selection)[47]

University	Percentage Killed
Britain	
Cambridge	18
Edinburgh	15
Glasgow	16.7
Liverpool	10.5
Manchester	16.6
Oxford	19.2
St. Andrews	12.8
Trinity College Dublin	15
France	
École Normale Supérieure	28.3
USA	
Columbia	1.6
Harvard	3.3
Northwestern	2
Yale	2.3

continue to exist? This question could be answered through stock-taking – establishing who had and had not survived the war – but also by meditating on what it was that these men had died for, and how they might be remembered.

The process of remembrance facilitated the exploration of these questions. War memorials were the main means by which people attempted to perpetuate the memory of those lost in the war. They were the places where people grieved, both individually and collectively.[48] Remembrance had the function of recapturing some of the life of the pre-war world and taking the full measure of what had been lost in the intervening years. University and college war memorials in Britain, France, and the United States generally listed the dead and only the dead, arranged alphabetically. They recalled loss, not service. Remembrance took many forms in the aftermath of war.[49] Academic communities sought to remember the fallen through a number of activities; ranging from plaques and monuments of different sizes, memorial volumes, the publication of war letters or poems, scholarships, and eulogies.

The destruction wrought upon scholarly communities by the war was such that stock-taking began during the war itself. Lists of those serving, and those who had died, began to appear in university publications as early as 1914.[50] While the impulse to collect information about those at the front spoke of the sense of rupture in the life of the university community, it also pointed the way forward to new commemorative forms where lists of the dead would be focal points. Once the war had ended, universities quickly began compiling and publishing full lists of those who had served and those who had died.[51] This compilation of data was improvised and not comprehensive; it was not always possible to get accurate information about the whereabouts, movements, or ultimate fate of soldiers in the aftermath of industrialized warfare. It was also highly subjective. What constituted service? Who should and should not be included? The publication of these lists spoke to the terrible suffering experienced by university communities during the war and laid the groundwork for more elaborate war memorial forms.

War memorials proliferate on university campuses from this period. They became the main instrument through which people attempted to perpetuate the memory of those lost in the war. They were where people grieved, both individually and collectively.[52] While the term 'war memorial' was used in English speaking countries, the French referred to the *monument aux morts*. This suggested a different emphasis which was on death rather than service. This was due to the rhetoric of the *impôt du sang*, or blood tax, which held that military service was the corollary of the right to vote and an integral part of citizenship.[53] Thus, the *monuments aux morts* were republican in their inspiration and inherently political in their content.

One of the central features of public remembrance rites in the aftermath of the Great War was fictive kinship.[54] Strangers were brought together through the shared experience of loss and the act of collective remembrance, with local and national monuments providing the focus for this act. Universities differed in this respect. Their communities were built upon fictive kinship in peacetime; they constituted imagined families, constructed at a remove from blood kin groups. University war memorials tapped into this; they were important precisely because of the profundity of ties that united students and alumni of a given institution in peacetime. University war memorials sought to preserve something of these ties in stone.

Universities generally built memorials to the fallen of the institution as a whole, but as these were large undertakings, funding was problematic. The Cambridge monument, intended to serve both town

and university, had to be scaled down for financial reasons.[55] Trinity College Dublin experienced severe financial privations by the war's end and pragmatically integrated its war memorial into a pre-war plan for a new reading room to deal with overflow from the university library.[56] However, despite financial issues, war memorials were inaugurated at British campuses throughout the 1920s; at Edinburgh and Leeds in 1923, at Manchester and Queens University Belfast in 1924, and at Liverpool University in 1927.

In France, the Ministry of Public Instruction had been compiling a *livre d'or* (or Roll of Honour) from 1914. In late 1919, André Honnorat, the new Minister for Public Instruction, wrote to Ernest Lavisse with a proposal to establish a museum to the war dead of the École Normale Supérieure, underlining the symbolic importance of this elite within the upper echelons of French higher education.[57] This project was scaled down and became a more conventional memorial, comprising a list of names of the dead, arranged by *promotion*, surrounded by various allegorical bas-reliefs which juxtaposed scenes from the front with those from classical antiquity. In front, a naked figure gestured despairingly towards the list of the dead (Figure 7.1).

In order to inscribe the names of the dead on it, Gustave Lanson, the new *directeur* of the ENS, had to work out who had served and died. He completed this work late 1919 with the final tally of war dead coming to 236 of 833.[58] The monument was placed in the middle of a hallway at the heart of the institution, and was inaugurated in December 1923 by the President of the Republic, Alexandre Millerand. The presence of the President demonstrated the national importance of the sacrifice of the intellectual elites of the ENS. The *monument aux morts* became the site for the annual ceremony of remembrance which itself became a fixture on the calendar of the ENS.

Schemes for memorials were frequently controversial, as at Harvard in 1916 and 1917. The war memorial at Leeds University, chosen by the Vice-Chancellor Michael Sadler, bore a pacifist message, depicting Jesus driving the moneylenders out of the temple, suggesting that financial interests had caused the war.[59] At Trinity College, Cambridge, wartime fissures continued in peacetime and led to plans for a memorial to the 500 dead Trinity men being abandoned in 1924 due to squabbling over its form.[60] Even when dissent was not publicly expressed, memorial forms could still prove divisive, perpetuating wartime divisions. The memorial at King's College, Cambridge, located in the college chapel, did not initially list the name of Férenc Békássy, who was killed fighting for the Austro-Hungarian forces. As such, it perpetuated wartime alliances,

Figure 7.1 Monument aux morts at the École Normale Supérieure

Figure 7.2 Békássy memorial next to King's first world war memorial, by kind permission of the provost and scholars of King's college, Cambridge

negating the identity of the college community. King's later erected a separate memorial to Békássy in the memorial chapel which depicted his contradictory position as someone who was both part of the community and separate from it (Figure 7.2).[61]

The case of King's College, Cambridge spoke to the distinct composition, identity, and wartime experience of different scholarly communities. For example, Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and New College, Oxford, both listed the names of students and alumni who died fighting for the Central Powers, the latter being erected in 1930, when wartime hostilities had abated.[62]

While war memorials and *monuments aux morts* are central features of British and French universities, they are also abundant and diverse across campuses in the United States. Some universities moved quickly to honour their war dead. Northwestern University swiftly erected elaborate memorials to the fallen, even before the final numbers were known. In 1923 Northwestern completed the 'Avenue of the Elms',a pathway framed by elm trees leading to a further war memorial which commemorated the dead of both the Civil War and First World War.[63] American university memorials were more elaborate and, as a consequence, took longer to build, a consequence of the relative prosperity of

US educational institutions in the 1920s and 1930s compared to their European counterparts. Cornell University built a memorial shrine to its 264 war dead in 1931. Harvard finally built its memorial chapel to its 375 war dead, including three Germans, in 1932.[64] The University of South Carolina built an elaborate memorial hall in 1935. In 1927, a new colonnade was built onto the south side of the Yale dining hall to honour its 227 war dead.

Columbia University, so prominent during the war, was conspicuous by its lack of an official university war memorial. Most American college and university war memorials were built on the back of funds raised from alumni. Columbia was prominent in alumni fundraising in this period, but did so to contribute to the reconstruction of the university library of Louvain. Nicholas Murray Butler and the university took the lead in this resonant project, a continuation of his pre-war efforts to gain international recognition for his university – and himself. However, a contemporary booklet issued to raise money for the Louvain appeal listed the names of all the Columbia war dead on the back and suggested that Louvain was intended to be the Columbia War Memorial, stating: 'let their names be inscribed in Belgium.'[65] Whatever the symbolism of the Louvain initiative, Columbia came under pressure from alumni to erect a permanent memorial to its war dead late in the decade, underscoring the important function of memorials as sites for collective remembrance. However, the proposed memorial – which was to cost a quarter of a million dollars – never materialised.[66]

Not all commemorative forms were set in stone. There were myriad ways in which the memory of a loved one could be preserved and these were specific to the intimate networks in question. The friends of Férenc Békássy ensured that his talent as a poet was not forgotten and that a small memorial volume to him was produced. In 1925, Frank Lucas published a collection of his poems. In the preface he wrote that 'only a pale shadow of him lingers [in Cambridge]; but all who knew him, and some who did not, will be glad to have this memorial.'[67] The publication of war letters was another way in which the memory of individuals could be perpetuated, although this phenomenon was more widespread in France than in Britain. War letters gave an insight into both the personality of the author and their patriotic determination while at the front.[68]

The close connections between scholarship and group identity meant that in some instances, perpetuation of certain intellectual styles was itself an act of remembrance. In 1923, Marcel Mauss revived the *Année sociologique*, the organ of Emile Durkheim's *normalien* network which

had been destroyed by the war. In 1914, Mauss had been mobilized as an interpreter and attached to the British Army, commenting that 'I'm enjoying the life war is giving me … I was made for this and not for sociology.'[69] However, once the war was over, it became clear that the practice of sociology was also a form of remembrance. The first number of the *Année sociologique* emerged in 1923 and was a tribute to the many lives lost in wartime, centring on the father figure of Émile Durkheim and the common space which all the collaborators had inhabited at the ENS.[70] The introduction gave short biographies of the various deceased collaborators, their relationships to one another, and their academic work. It was a family tree for a lost generation. In conclusion, Mauss wrote that the belief in their science and the perfectibility of man through it was a task which could never be abandoned.[71] Thus, the ideas of the *normalien* group would continue, as both an act of remembrance and as an assurance that something of the lost generation lived on.

The sense of familial loss appeared strikingly in the work of the secretary of the ENS, Paul Dupuy. In the years following the war, he gave orations at the funerals and re-interments of *normaliens*. These orations were published in a volume in 1924 called *Mes morts*, or 'my dead.'[72] The title speaks of the connection between the institutional administrator and his students, which went far beyond a mere bureaucratic or academic one. As far as Dupuy was concerned, *normaliens* were all his family. Dupuy's attitude was perhaps best expressed in the oration which he gave for Jean Vigier in 1922, where he claimed that the grief of Vigier's family was also 'my grief.'[73] Dupuy blended this familial language with the language of sacrifice, the *patrie*, and the *lévee-en-masse*. *Mes morts* exemplified the multifaceted nature of remembrance: it was deeply personal, shared with close friends and colleagues, and reflected national discourses.

While academics and university administrators spoke of the need to return to normal once the war had ended, the basic human need to grieve meant that this would not be immediately possible. University campuses were melancholy places in the early 1920s. The war pervaded all, and the erection of memorials, be they big or small, meant that it became a permanent part of the topography of the institution. To return to normal was to forget what had happened in the interim.

Academic function in the aftermath of war

In wartime, the continuation of peacetime scholarly practices held symbolic importance. Continuity was the watchword for universities, and

scholars who continued their academic work in the trenches like Pierre-Maurice Masson came to symbolize the durability of national intellectual styles – and, by extension, national values – in a cultural war. For scholars like Mauss, the continuation of the work of the Durkheimian sociologists was an act both of remembrance and of defiance; the war could not simply wipe out his school of thought. At the same time, the war had wrought tremendous changes, not only in how knowledge was employed, but also in how it was organized and understood. The tremendous human cost of the war led some who had survived it to question whether the ideas which had been fought for in 1914 were worth persisting with. These ideas were often underpinned by scholarly disciplines, rooted in shared frames of reference, assumptions, and structures; many of these had been shaken by the war in different ways.

Historians felt this crisis deeply. 'The war which has just ended has placed historians in a position of peculiar embarrassment', declared James Shotwell in a lecture at the Sorbonne in May 1919. 'It is doubtful if ever an event has been so definitely appreciated as historical by those who have participated in it, or if ever history has been so much appealed to either to explain or to justify what has been done.' Shotwell, who was in Paris as part of Wilson's team of experts at the Peace Conference, was clearly troubled by issues beyond the settlement. 'The very epochal character of the event which marked it out so distinctly in the popular mind as being unmistakably historical became', he continued, 'a reason for historians not to attempt to deal with it.' Moreover, the scale of the conflict seemed to suggest that the war was almost impossible to historicize by traditional means. To this, Shotwell argued that no history had ever been comprehensive and that the undertaking was, by its very definition, fragmentary and incomplete. 'The past can never be recovered in absolute form; the best that history can do is to recover those elements of the past which are of interest to the present.'[74] Shotwell suggested that histories of this all-encompassing conflict should be 'vast cooperative enterprise[s]', encompassing contributions from fields such as economics, politics, ethics, statistics, geography, and the physical sciences.[75] This seemed a logical conclusion for a man who had been immersed in the great collaborative project that was The Inquiry.

Shotwell addressed a dilemma experienced by historians specifically, but one which had implications for scholars across the humanities more generally. It was the job of historians to put the horrific events of the 1914–18 into historical context. Was it even possible to historicize such an unprecedented event? Historians had engaged with the war from the outset, placing the causes of war in a wider context and condemning

Germany's behaviour within an established historical pattern, all the while justifying that of their own nation.[76] However, the military, geographical, and technological scope of the war was new, and while the causes of the war fit into a pre-existing historical paradigm, its conduct did not. Historicizing the war proved challenging and many historians advocated waiting until the conflict had ended before doing so. James Bryce argued this in his address to the British Academy in June 1915.[77] Some historians still drew parallels between specific instances in the war and their historical precedents. In 1917, the historian of the French Revolution, Albert Mathiez, described the mobilization of scientists during the French Revolutionary Wars and likened it to that of the present conflict.[78] At the same time, attempts to historicize the war following the cessation of hostilities could perpetuate the representations which informed the construction of belligerent war cultures. As Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson noted ruefully in the early 1920s, many of the historians who had engaged in public discourses relating to the war had abandoned the pursuit of truth.[79] However, at the same time, the historical treatment of the war, its outbreak, conduct, and conclusion, could point the way forward to a peaceful future.

Lucien Febvre – a historian who had fought in the war – took up a post as Professor of History at the reconstituted University of Strasbourg in 1919. His inaugural lecture posed questions felt by many. 'Have I the right, historian that I was, to continue today my work as a historian?'[80] Febvre felt – as someone who had served in the war and had seen its destruction at first had – that the individual losses of the war made it difficult to justify a return to the status quo of 1914. Febvre's course at Strasbourg required neither that individuals nor collectives be studied; rather, he proposed analysing processes with the understanding that history was, as J.B. Bury had famously declared in 1902, a science. This allowed for both individual and collective action to make itself felt.[81]

The end of the war allowed scholars to take stock of the progress and direction of their respective disciplines. For historians, the questions tapped into pre-war debates. W.R. Thayer, the president of the American Historical Association, took the opportunity to argue that history should not be treated as a science. This had been proven by German subservience to science and Social Darwinism which he argued had led to war in 1914.[82] In other words, the conduct of the war, combined with a lingering hostility towards German scholars and scholarship, should inform the future practice of history. However, American scholars, especially historians, soon came to reflect negatively upon the war experience and the nature of their involvement in it; the peace

settlement with Germany, crafted with expert advice and lofty notions of self-determination, was botched by one of their own, President Wilson.[83] One of the leading Progressive historians, James Robinson, noted in 1924 that 'history does not seem to stop any more … it is as difficult to tell where to start as where to stop … I have come to think that no such thing as objective history is possible.'[84] In France, The *Revue Historique* struck a conciliatory tone in its first post-war edition, arguing that ties with German scholars could not remain severed but that Germany must be monitored and understood.[85] The *English Historical Review* chose not to address the end of war whatsoever, much as it had remained aloof from the war. Reba Soffer has argued that the Oxford school of historians, who emphasized the grand narrative of history from the fall of Rome until the eighteenth century, remained unchanged by the war.[86] The Oxford historians were influential and both reflected and reinforced the moral and intellectual qualities which underpinned England's governing elites; in the immediate post-war years, change was unthinkable.

The end of the war also revealed whether certain post-war changes would be permanent. Perhaps the most persecuted discipline in wartime was the classics. Scientific reformers took aim at the entrenched position of Greek and Latin at Oxford and Cambridge, the public schools, and in civil service examinations, arguing that these subjects had little utility in the modern world. In the cauldron of total war, this argument was seductive and reached a wide audience; the classics were an easy target. This formed a dramatic break with the nineteenth century world where the cultivation required for good citizenship was seen to emanate from Athens. The war lived on, but should the narrative? The cessation of hostilities afforded the classicists an opportunity to fight back. In his presidential address to the Classical Association in 1921, Walter Leaf argued that at the famous Neglect of Science meeting of 1916 'a good many people who ought to have known better made a good many rather foolish statements of which we hope they are now repenting.' The 'herd instinct' took over in 1916, Leaf argued, and 'at that moment it seemed that nothing could win the war except pure science: no education that did not lead directly to the invention of a new poison gas was worth the attention of rational people.'[87]

Leaf posed a question which troubled even the scientists. Should the application of science to warfare continue in peacetime? A mere two weeks after the conclusion of the Armistice, a group of physicians, including Regius professors from both Oxford and Cambridge, signed a petition in *The Times* calling for the outlawing of poison gas.[88]

Chemical weapons were seen as the greatest misapplication of scholarship in wartime; the limitation of their production would become a major project of the League of Nations, culminating in the 1925 Geneva Protocol. However, there was no consensus on the subject, and some chemists, such as J.B.S. Haldane, argued that future wars could be rendered more humane by the utilization of chemical weapons which temporarily incapacitated, rather than killed.[89] In certain respects, the future of different branches of scholarship was intimately tied up with how contemporaries envisaged future wars. If science were to be applied to warfare by potential enemies in the future, the unsavoury corollary was that states must be prepared.

The war, then, seemed to mark a breach between old intellectual styles and newer ones. The application of learning to warfare had accelerated progress, especially in the sciences, but posed uncomfortable ethical questions. At the same time, the idea that the war was a cultural one coupled with the terrible loss of life meant that the ideas which were being fought for were increasingly questioned in the conflict's aftermath. Much as in the life of university communities, the war became a dividing line between the past and the present. It simultaneously accelerated developments in some disciplines while bringing the value of others into question. The war also impeded international scholarly cooperation, which by extension, arrested progress. The cessation of the war allowed for normal scholarly activity to be taken up again, and this was dramatically demonstrated in 1919 when Arthur Eddington's photographs of the solar eclipse provided the first experimental verification of Albert Einstein's theory of relativity. 'The old world had been eclipsed', 300 years of Newtonian physics were undermined, and long-held certainties became less certain, reinforcing the idea that the war was a caesura and that normality – as it was understood in 1914 – may never again be attained.[90]

Changes in the practice of certain disciplines also emanated directly from war experience; academics who had fought between 1914 and 1918 found that their combat experiences changed how they viewed their work. March Bloch served as an infantry officer during the war. He was intrigued by the development of legends and myths and how these emerged in the aftermath of German atrocity allegations in August and September 1914; the war had demonstrated the power of the irrational. Thus, to him, the relative lack of documentation on this topic necessitated a turn towards 'the psychology of testimony' and personal observation.[91] In his article, *Reflexions d'un historien sur les fausses nouvelles de la guerre*, he emphasized the importance of the *longue*

durée in the formation of such myths and legends. In turn, Bloch utilized this approach in writing his study on the 'royal touch' in 1924.[92] Rather than dismissing the period of the war as an aberration, Bloch integrated his experiences into his scholarly work, identifying historical precedents to the circulation of rumour in the Great War. Rather than seeking to return to normal and escape the war in 1918, Bloch saw it as an opportunity to better his field. Together with his colleague at the University of Strasbourg, Lucien Febvre, in 1929 he founded the journal *Annales*, which grew out of their sense of frustration with the fragmentary nature of the historical profession in France and its emphasis on high political history. *Annales* sought to arrest this fragmentation by encouraging economic, social, and cultural history which rested upon inter-disciplinary approaches.[93]

While Bloch and Febvre used the experience of war to inform their work, their colleague at the University of Strasbourg, Maurice Halbwachs, seemed to do the opposite. In 1925 he produced his seminal work which provided a sociological interpretation of collective memory.[94] However, despite, or perhaps because of Halbwachs' service in the war, the sociologist neglected to give any mention whatsoever to the conflict just passed. The book appeared at exactly the time when collective memories of the war were being formed, making the omission especially striking.[95]

The experiences of Bloch, Febvre, and Halbwachs were important for another reason: they were all younger scholars who had served in the war and who were headhunted to work at the University of Strasbourg. The new university had great symbolic importance for the Third Republic and thus dynamic younger scholars were sought to take up new posts there. Strasbourg became a centre for collaborative studies in the inter-war period. The academic direction taken by the University of Strasbourg owed much to the war. Academics who took posts there felt a sense of patriotic mission.[96] For this reason, and because many of both the relative youth of academics in Strasbourg and their sense of isolation from the life of Alsace-Lorraine itself, there was an unusual amount of solidarity and collaboration within the university. This manifested itself in the *reunions de samedi*, regular but informal meetings where members of different departments would get together and present papers discussing the latest developments in their fields. The 'spirit of synthesis' which pervaded at Strasbourg had no equivalent at other French universities and informed the intellectual development of individuals and disciplines at that university in the inter-war years.[97] Strasbourg, and its dynamic young corps of professors, would lead the

way towards what became known in the 1930s as inter-disciplinary research. In this respect the war and war experience continued to change scholarship long after the cessation of hostilities.

Structural changes

Structural changes in the organization and funding of higher education demonstrated that wartime changes would be permanent, whether individual scholars liked it or not. This was a direct consequence of the wartime mobilization of knowledge by national governments and the simultaneous loss of university income. Both had important consequences. University reform, which was especially prominent in Britain in the post-war period, hinged on contemporaries' understandings of the war's meaning and whether it was desirable – or necessary – to continue wartime contingencies into peacetime.

The war represented a triumph for the French republic which was built upon education. French universities, radically overhauled before the war, were seen to have proven their worth and major changes to their workings were not proposed in the aftermath of war. The situation was different in Britain. In 1919 a Royal Commission was convened to investigate many elements of the government, revenue, and general organization of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. This was seen as a necessary precondition of extending general government grants to these universities under the umbrella of the University Grants Committee. To do this, the universities would have to 'cooperate with the government in a more comprehensive investigation of all sources of the universities' revenues and their administration, including income from estates, investments and college contributions.'[98] The UGC meant that, for the first time, university administration was undertaken on a national basis (with the exception of Scotland).[99] It ensured that wartime contingency became a permanent feature of the British educational system.

The commissioners also recommended that women be given full rights at both Oxford and Cambridge. During the war, otherwise empty lecture halls had been populated by women and colonial students. Women held partial rights at each university; they had their own women-only colleges and could attend lectures, but not take a full degree. However, this was one wartime development which showed the limitation of the war as a catalyst for change. While Oxford allowed women full membership rights in 1920, Cambridge did not do so until 1948. In both cases, constituent colleges would remain hostile to greater

inclusion until much later in the twentieth century. The ancient universities remained conservative, proud of their traditions and resistant to change that was seen as too radical.

The war spurred greater investment in higher education, from both state and private sources. This was especially pronounced in the natural and medical sciences. The closer links which had been forged between scientific research and industry during the war grew in the 1920s. The Chemistry School at Cambridge was given an endowment of £200,000 in 1919 from sources in the petroleum industry.[100] American philanthropic bodies came to the fore almost from the end of the war; they were especially conspicuous in Europe where no equivalent bodies existed and undertook an important function by helping maintain and enhance expertise across a range of internationalist fields.[101] The Rockefeller Foundation was especially interested in funding medical schools and did so, lavishly. In 1920 it gave $5 million to University College London's hospital. It also made sizable grants to medical schools at Edinburgh University, Strasbourg, Paris, and Lyon.[102] The revival in philanthropy can also be seen in the donations to the Universities of Bristol and Leeds and Nottingham University College in the same period.[103] Government investment in scientific research continued in peacetime France. The Directory of Inventions was transformed into a permanent body in 1919, it did not come into full operation until 1922.[104] However, while the existence of this, and other bodies, excited scientists and fostered hopes of large-scale investment, this only came from the governmental side. Private investment in science in the post-war period did not emerge as in the British case.[105]

The American university system was a mixture of universities who relied upon private investment, those who drew from state funds, and those who did both. Before the war, American universities were frequently, and famously, criticized for being in the thrall of business interests.[106] The muckraking journalist Upton Sinclair described Columbia University as 'The University of the House of Morgan.'[107] The war brought about some changes. The NRC began the allocation of federal money to scientific research at university level for the first time.[108] However, what really marked the immediate post-war period was that the 'last vestiges of large-scale philanthropy from great industrial fortunes' were directed into higher education.[109] A donation of $20 million was given to transform Trinity College into Duke University in North Carolina, while Emory University in Atlanta was similarly overhauled.[110] Yale University was the recipient of a donation of $15 million from John W. Sterling, who died in 1918.[111] The Rockefeller and

Carnegie foundations emerged as major investors in higher education. At the same time, American universities were turning to their alumni to enhance their endowments; Harvard showed the way forward with a well organized and successful alumni drive in 1919–20.[112] While universities like Harvard and Yale would successfully adapt to changing conditions, Columbia and Nicholas Murray Butler remained rooted in the methods of the pre-war period, and the university's endowment suffered accordingly.[113] State universities too, such as the University of Michigan, turned to their alumni to bolster their resources.[114] Ultimately, the combination of private philanthropy and alumni drives in the 1920s brought American universities the greatest prosperity they had known to that point.[115]

Conclusion

The end of the war in 1918 did not end war measures. The profundity of changes to scholarly life, intellectual styles, and university organization, as well as the overwhelming sense of grief hanging over campuses in the 1920s, meant that the war remained inescapable. Its remnants were everywhere. While European universities had gone to war in 1914 with the mantra of continuing their work 'as if the war did not exist', the years after the armistice, and the nostalgia for the world before 1914, showed that they had failed in this lofty endeavour. The immediate post-war years demonstrated that even if campuses quickly repopulated themselves, things were different. The war became the ultimate reference point, not only in people's lives but in scholarship and intellectual work more generally. There were few certainties for university populations after the war.

8
Internationalism after the War, 1918–25

On 21 July 1921, the foundation stone for the new university library at Louvain was laid. *The Times* declared that 'today the eyes of the whole scholastic world are turned upon Louvain and its university.'[1] Present at the ceremony were the King and Queen of Belgium, France's wartime president Raymond Poincaré, Marshal Pétain, numerous ambassadors and 'hundreds of scholars of distinction' from French, English, Dutch, and American – but not German – universities. Despite the list of eminent attendees, the foundation stone was laid by America's self-styled 'unofficial ambassador to Europe', Nicholas Murray Butler.[2] In context, this was not surprising; Butler had overseen an America-wide campaign to raise university funds towards the reconstruction of the library, while he had also secured money in his capacity as director of Intercourse and Education at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Following the failure of the United States Senate to ratify the Treaty of Versailles which ensured that America would not join the League of Nations, Butler's continued commitment to Europe made him a figure of significance.

The ceremony of July 1921 was emblematic of a number of connected themes which form the subject of this chapter. First, the destruction of the library at Louvain had been one of the issues on which academics had rallied in support of the war – or at least in opposition to the actions of the German Army – in September and October of 1914, and helped crystallize narratives which ostracized German academics and German scholarship from the international mainstream. It was central to the construction of allied war cultures. Rather than beginning the process of demobilizing wartime mentalities, the reconstruction of the library reactivated the language of 1914, with Poincaré referring to the 'premeditated crimes of the Germans' in his speech.[3] The proposed inscription

for the new library, jointly concocted by the architect, Whitney Warren, and Cardinal Mercier, read 'Furore teutonico diruta, dono Americano restitiuta' (destroyed by the German fury, restored by American gift).[4] This was not the language of détente. The reconstruction of the library at Louvain implicitly brought to mind the language of 1914, of barbarism, *Kultur*, and Prussian militarism, and mirrored the way in which the cultural war continued into the post-war period.

Second, the reconstruction of Louvain university library and the ceremony to lay the cornerstone continued the wartime model of inter-allied ceremonials. It was not simply that Germany was being excluded; the ceremony continued the lineage of wartime in positing that shared educational and national ideals animated the protagonists. Butler hailed the fundraising effort as 'another allied triumph.'[5] The initial plan for the reconstruction called for the national anthems of the allies to ring out from the bell-tower of the new building every hour.[6] It was also a tribute to the benevolence of American universities and colleges, which led the way in donating to the fund. Yale alumni contributed $28,000, Harvard alumni pledged $30,000, and, in total, over 400 schools, colleges and universities across America contributed.[7] The library was rebuilt to resemble its pre-1914 counterpart but new details were added so that when it opened in 1928 the flags of many American universities were hung in the great reading room as a permanent symbol of the new relationship.[8]

A third theme also informed the ceremonial at Louvain in 1921: the importance of American money in post-war Europe. The contribution of American universities and colleges to the fund was primarily symbolic and still left a significant shortfall in funds. This was augmented in October 1921 by a pledge of $100,000 from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, who would also contribute further funds later in the decade to ensure that the project was completed on schedule.[9] This was part of a wider trend of American philanthropic activity in Europe after the war with significant funds being directed towards educational institutions by the Carnegie Endowment and Rockefeller Foundation. As much as either the 'boycott' of German academia or the persistence of inter-allied wartime politics, American money would prove vital to reshaping international exchange and scholarly interaction after the war.

This chapter will focus on these three phenomena in assessing how the international community of scholars reconstituted itself after the war. Traditionally, historians have seen post-war international scholarly organization solely as a question of exclusion of German scholars

and institutions from the new international structures.[10] The 'boycott' paradigm is important but does not capture the complexity of networked interactions in the post-war decade. Little has been written of the persistence of wartime inter-allied ideals, rhetorically constructed as a positive alternative to the demonization of German academia but in reality a means by which allied institutions could extend their international reach. Important in this was the newfound appetite for American students and scholarship in Europe which emerged after the war as a consequence of wartime cultural alliance and was pushed by American institutions. In recent years, new scholarship has appeared on the activities of American philanthropic foundations in Europe which emphasizes not only its importance, but its myriad motivations, be they nationalist, capitalist, scholarly, or personal.[11] This chapter will argue that each of these phenomena must be clearly understood as helping shape post-war internationalism.

After the armistice

The First World War began with a university central to the claims of both sides. Its conclusion saw a university once more take centre stage in an international controversy. After their victory of 1870, Germany had operated the Kaiser-Wilhelms-Universität in Strasbourg, furnishing it with one of the world's largest libraries.[12] As early as 1915 the French Ministry of War and Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been planning to convert the German university into a French institution once the war had ended, a project given added point by the recovery of Alsace-Lorraine, as well as the importance of the university to the identity of the Third Republic. In late 1917 a committee of professors was assembled to plan the structures of this new French University of Strasbourg. At the liberation, a delegation of seventeen French scholars went to Strasbourg to set up the new institution, which opened its doors on 16 January 1919.[13] The new university was intended as an elite institution on the level of the University of Paris which would serve two functions. First, it would be a key agent in assimilating Alsace back into France. Second, it would act as an outpost through which French cultural hegemony could be projected east.[14] The University of Strasbourg was, from a French scholarly perspective, the great spoil of the war.

On 7 December 1918, French troops closed the Kaiser-Wilhelms-Universität. The German scholars were dismissed and the majority expelled back across the Rhine.[15] These events led to the outbreak of a new war of words. On 23 December 1918, the University of Leipzig sent

a letter of protest to universities in formerly neutral Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, and the Netherlands. The letter complained of the 'outrageous action' of the French Army in closing the Kaiser-Wilhelms-Universität. It claimed that German scholars had been given twenty-four hours to leave and had to abandon important research projects. The Leipzig scholars appealed in the name of science, and asked that their counterparts in former neutral countries circulate this information to universities in Britain, France, and America.[16] In New York, Nicholas Murray Butler wrote a rebuke to the Leipzig initiative.

> Anyone who comes into a court of equity seeking relief must come with clean hands. Before the Rector and the Senate of the University of Leipzig can expect the court of public opinion to sympathize with their allegations, the people of France, England, and the United States will certainly wish to know what measure of protest, if any, the Rector and Senate of the University of Leipzig recorded against the cruel and inhuman treatment, in 1914, by the German High Command, of the scholars associated with the University of Louvain and against the wanton and barbarous destruction of the library of that university.[17]

The University of Bordeaux also issued a response to the Leipzig initiative:

> We would urge all universities in neutral countries, particularly that of Uppsala which has such a good reputation in France, to send its members to visit the north of France … For us, the generation which committed these abominations, or who, in the sad manifesto of which you are aware, expressed solidarity with those who committed them, have cut themselves off from humanity. We will talk, if they wish, with the generation that follows.[18]

The Leipzig petition was an attempt to create outrage amongst the international community of science in the same way as the Louvain incident had four years previously, this time in favour of German scholars. However, it demonstrated that end of the battlefield engagements had resolved none of the wartime divisions within international academia, and the attempts of German scholars to draw a line under the war would in fact exacerbate the split. Significantly, it showed that the atrocities committed in August 1914 would live long in the memory.

This was also demonstrated by Paul Ladeuze's inaugural lecture which reopened the University of Louvain in January 1919. Ladeuze recounted the grisly history of the autumn of 1914 in a tone which suggested that reconciliation with Germany was not on the agenda. He repeated the charge made in 1914 (but less frequently heard thereafter) that 'at Louvain, Germany disqualified itself as a nation of thinkers.'[19] However, academics who had critiqued the war effort saw no problem in returning to the pre-war status quo when it came to engaging with scholarship from former enemy nations. Bertrand Russell resumed his correspondence with Ludwig Wittgenstein, his protégé before 1914 who had enlisted in the Austrian Army.[20] John Maynard Keynes received a letter from the Austrian economist Karl Schlesinger in March 1919. Schlesinger sent Keynes a copy of his latest book 'trusting that there are no further obstacles, or at least there will not be such in the near future to taking up again scientific intercourse between British subjects and those of the Central Powers.'[21] Keynes also aided Wittgenstein in his correspondence with Russell, using his contacts at the Peace Conference to ensure that the Austrian's new book could be sent from the Italian prisoner of war camp where he was being held to the Cambridge philosopher.[22] As these figures had not engaged in the belligerent rhetoric of wartime, they saw no problem in reverting to the pre-1914 situation.

However, amongst the wider international community of scholarship, there was already talk of the indefinite exclusion of scholars from the former Central Powers. In this context, neutral nations and institutions could play an important role in facilitating détente between the two sides and the international rehabilitation of German scholars in the eyes of their former colleagues. The director of the Nobel Institute, Svante Arhennius, dreamt of a Nobel Prize ceremony attended by scientists from all sides. In 1918, the Nobel Prize in physics (reserved from 1917) had been awarded to Charles Glover Barkla from Edinburgh University. From an academic point of view it was an unusual award as Barkla was seen to be out of touch; in reality, the committee wished to make a gesture towards British scholarship, as neutral Sweden had been seen as pro-German to that point and the Allies were on the brink of winning the war.[23] Freed from a sense of obligation towards the Allies, the physics committee set about rehabilitating the image of German science, awarding the reserved 1918 prize to Max Planck and the 1919 prize to Johannes Stark. Simultaneously, the chemistry committee decided to give its award for 1919 to the German chemist Fritz Haber for his work in synthesizing ammonia, citing its important agricultural applications but ignoring the fact that Haber and his process had been

deeply involved in the development of chemical weapons in Germany in wartime.[24] At the same time, the Nobel chemistry section issued a petition to academics and scientific journals abroad imploring scientists not to boycott Germany. However, the announcement of November 1919 that three German scientists had been awarded the Nobel Prizes provoked much international criticism and ensured that wartime discourses continued into the post-war period. The decision drew the ire of the international media and, at the awards ceremony of June 1920, no scientists from former allied nations attended, save for Barkla, belatedly receiving his 1918 award.[25] This boycott of German scholarship was institutionalized in the workings of bodies such as the International Research Council, the newly formed international scientific body.

Attitudes to Germany and German scholarship were less clear-cut at individual institutions. At Oxford, the Poet Laureate Robert Bridges organized a manifesto in 1920 which called for an end to 'the embitterment of animosities that under the impulse of loyal patriotism may have passed between [British and German academics].' He asked 120 eminent scholars at the university to sign, but just over half refused.[26] *The Times* commented unfavourably upon the fact that Bridges' petition did not call for a public confession of national guilt by the German academics.[27] The incident demonstrated that amongst British professors, there was a sharp polarization between those who sought reconciliation and those who were set against it.

While academics may have felt uncomfortable in publicly reconciling with Germany in this period, they were less hesitant regarding other forms of contact. Library accessions to Cambridge University Library provide one measure of the abandonment of wartime policy. As early as 1920 books from Germany accounted for thirty-two percent of the total which were purchased or donated from abroad. This compared to the pre-war level of forty per-cent.[28] These figures suggest that the wartime stigmatization of German scholarship, proclaimed in the columns of the daily newspapers and scientific periodicals, was a superficial and transitory phenomenon; the pursuit of knowledge still required the accumulation of scholarship from around the world, irrespective of the political views of the authors.

Hostility to Germany was much more visceral in France. Teaching of German continued at the École Normale Supérieure under the supervision of Charles Andler. At first, the visiting lecturer in German did not come from Germany as had been the case before the war, but instead was taken from Switzerland, Strasbourg, or other German speaking areas.[29] Students were still sent on exchange to Germany, but it was

to the occupied Rhineland (referred to as the *Pays Rhénan* or *Rhénanie* in official documentation) rather than to Germany proper.[30] In 1922 a student called Faure was sent to Germany, but rather than going to a German university, he was attached as an interpreter to General Nollet, on mission in Berlin.[31] Thus, ways around direct engagement with German academia were often sought.

Connections to German academia remained ambiguous at best but former enemy states were not all treated equally. In 1922, the École Normale Supérieure agreed a scheme to exchange students with another former enemy, Hungary. The initiative for this scheme came from the Hungarian Ministry of Education, with the intention being to 'ensure that intellectual relations between France and Hungary lack for nothing, become tighter, and become outright friendly.'[32] Former enemies were not all equal. Germany, the former occupier, the committer of alleged atrocities and historical rival would always be held to a more exacting standard, and the process by which it resumed normal relations with former allied states was long and complex.

In the United States, things were typically diverse, depending on the institution in question. At Columbia, the Deutsches Haus, established in 1911 as a home for the visiting Kaiser Wilhelm Professor and a hub for the dissemination of information about German culture, represented a problem in wartime. When the United States entered the war it was closed to visitors. In 1918 Nicholas Murray Butler and Edward D. Adams (the philanthropist who funded the original Deutsches Haus project) decided that it should be re-worked as a centre for the 'Americanization of all foreigners who make their homes among us or seek liberty on our shores.'[33] At the same time, the university unsuccessfully explored methods of formally undoing the professorial exchanges with Germany.[34] In June of 1918 the Deutsches Haus was renamed Columbia House, intended as a centre where students and non-students could learn about American citizenship.[35] This continued into the 1920s and in this way a remnant of pre-war German influence on the Columbia campus was hidden in plain sight, a testament to lasting bitterness of wartime.

It was a different story at Harvard. There, a Germanic Museum had long been planned before the war. Items for the collections were gathered and temporarily displayed before a major donation from the Busch brewing company in 1910 made the construction of the museum imminent. A cornerstone was laid in 1912 but the outbreak of war slowed its development.[36] Still, once the war had ended, plans to open the museum continued regardless of the divisions of wartime.

However, President Lowell was keen that it should be opened quietly, without public announcement, so that it did not attract the attention of people who 'might enter with a desire to injure something German.'[37] In the event, these fears proved misplaced; the museum opened in February 1921 and between May and November 1921 20,000 people visited its collections without incident. An ambitious and expansionist university like Harvard saw many benefits in its opening, not least, as Ellery Sedgwick, one of the Board of Overseers (and editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*) noted, as it constituted 'a direct claim upon the interests of a large group of citizens in St. Louis and the southwest.'[38] Individual and institutional experiences remained diverse and difficult to generalize.

Inter-allied projects in the 1920s

The inter-allied projects described in previous chapters constituted an attempt to present a positive side to the wartime international schism by positing shared cultural values between allies. The rhetoric may have been superficial, but it facilitated the creation of many new links and exchanges between individuals, institutions, and nations, all of which brought many accompanying benefits. However, as its origins lay in the war, and a specific understanding of the ideas underpinning alliance, these projects constituted a continuation of wartime discourses. Even though it tried to eschew demonization of the enemy in favour of a positive articulation of allied cultural values, the fracturing of the international scholarly community was inherent in the existence of inter-allied projects. It required the end of the war to fully implement a programme of inter-allied exchange but this came at the same time as allied consensus began to break down following the Paris Peace Conference. There was a great irony in the fact that perhaps the greatest legacy of wartime inter-allied politics, the League of Nations, perpetuated wartime divides through the exclusion of Germany, but also conspicuous by its absence was the United States of America. While American money and ideas circulated widely in Europe in the 1920s, the absence of the United States from the official work of the League meant that American engagement in Europe remained ambivalent.[39]

Inter-allied ceremonials continued in peacetime. In December 1919, Gustave Lanson visited Oxford to interview candidates for the Marshal Foch chair in French. Unusually, the terms of the position necessitated that a member of the University of Paris recommend the appointment. However, Lanson discovered that Stephen Pichon, the foreign minister, had already intervened, assessed the candidates, and made his own

recommendations, contravening the agreed guidelines.[40] This bickering demonstrated the importance ascribed to this new and prestigious chair. French scholars also suggested that the Oxford Rhodes scholarships, which before the war had been given to German candidates, should be transferred to French students in the post-war period, but this was not acted upon.[41] In Paris, an Earl Haig chair in English literature was established at the Sorbonne which was, like its counterpart at Oxford, paid for by the arms dealer, Basil Zaharoff.

The bestowing of honorary degrees on military and political figures from allied countries was another measure of the durability of wartime discourses. In July 1919, a group including King Albert of Belgium, and Generals Pershing, Foch, Joffre, and Haig were given honorary doctorates at Cambridge.[42] During Butler's trip to Europe in the summer of 1921 he received a panoply of honours, including an honorary degree at the Sorbonne, a personal audience at the Académie Française, a special lunch given by the Benchers of Gray's Inn, London, and was also personally received by David Lloyd George.[43] Later that year, Columbia gave honorary doctorates to General Foch and Aristide Briand. Foch would also receive honorary degrees from Yale, Harvard, and Chicago universities.[44] All of this demonstrated the central role of the university to the maintenance of the inter-allied project. The continuity of inter-allied activity in the post-war period demonstrated that the values of the war had a strong afterlife.

Conversely, the end of the war destabilized certain inter-allied structures. The American University Union was a case in point. Established following American entry into the war to provide a hub for college-educated American soldiers in Europe, its purpose became less clear once the conflict had ended. It was initially the means through which demobilized American scholars could apply for short terms of study at European universities but its longer-term function remained vague. However, American educationalists soon saw its merits as an umbrella organization which could use its base in Europe as well as the contacts it had accumulated to penetrate pre-existing scholarly networks across the Atlantic.[45]

The American influence was increasingly pronounced in Europe following the conclusion of the war. In late 1918, the French Ministry of Public Instruction established a chair in American Civilization at the Sorbonne.[46] Charles Cestre, who had lectured at Harvard in 1917–18, was the first chair holder. Cestre, who had recently lost his eighteen year old son to influenza, found solace in his new post, describing it as the attainment of all of his wishes and one which 'might not have been

realized, but for the momentous event that wrestled America to herself and to the world.'[47] An American library – paid for by the Carnegie Endowment – was established at the Sorbonne in 1919. The library was composed of 25,000 volumes and was intended to complement the chair in American civilization.[48] The Carnegie Endowment was also responsible for the transfer of smaller quantities of American books to libraries in London, Rome, some South American countries, and to the University of Strasbourg.[49] At the same time, a course in American Literature was established at the University of Lyon, while the first chair in American history at a British University was established at Oxford in 1922.[50]

At the inauguration of the new library at the Sorbonne in 1920, Cestre identified Nicholas Murray Butler as the inspiration behind the chair and library projects. Cestre argued that 'the knowledge of America's historical, moral and literary record will be the best warrant that no misunderstanding creeps in between her and France.'[51] It was significant of the changes of wartime that now American ideas would have a permanent hub in France and Britain from which they could be disseminated to learned audiences for the first time. At the same time they perpetuated wartime alliance, served institutional interests, and would not have been possible without American money.

Inter-allied solidarity was also perpetuated through ideas. In 1923, the first edition of the *Revue anglo-américaine* was published in Paris. It was edited by Charles Cestre and Louis Cazamian. The review proclaimed that 'there exists between France on the one hand, and the United States and England on the other, links which nothing can destroy.'[52] The first article in the first edition was entitled 'William James: Bergsonian', and reflected wartime discourses which sought to find parallels between contemporary French and American scholarship. More generally, the review dealt with themes in the literary and political history of both England and the United States while also reviewing new publications in each nation. The patrons of the publication were men who had been deeply invested in the wartime inter-allied project; Jules Jusserand, French ambassador to the United States; Myron Herrick, the American Ambassador to France; and Lord Crewe, the British Ambassador to France. Henri Bergson, Gustave Lanson, and Gabriel Hanotaux, all prominent in building links with the United States, were also listed. The review ceased publication in 1936. At the same time, the spread of American ideas in Europe re-ignited old debates and antipathies. In France, conservative intellectuals saw it as a challenge to classical notions of 'Frenchness' and critiqued it accordingly.[53]

Institutions sprang up which bore the influence of inter-allied politics. A French Institute was established in London in 1921.[54] In 1923, the University of Paris formally inaugurated its Institute of Slavonic Studies, initially set up in 1919 by Ernest Denis.[55] The International University was founded by the Union of International Associations in September 1920 and quickly earned the support of the League of Nations and the International Confederation of Students. It held annual sessions in Brussels with the intention of enabling 'students to complete their education by initiating them into the international and comparative aspects of all great problems.'[56] During the first session of the International University in 1920, forty-seven professors gave 143 lessons. The lecturers were drawn from ten different countries, all having been allied or neutral during the war, while, initially, the official languages of the university were English and French.[57] The second meeting of the International University, in September 1921, broadened the number of languages to five (English, French, Spanish, the Slavic languages, and Esperanto).[58] There was no place for German or Germany, while the lists of delegates and professors were dominated by Britain, France, and Italy.[59] Far from its goal of uniting students in universal culture aimed at solving international problems, the composition and working methods of the International University only served to perpetuate the divisions of wartime.

The Cité Internationale of the University of Paris was another major post-war inter-allied project masquerading as an international one. The project created a campus for international students in Paris, with a 'national' house being built for students from different countries. The project began as a purely French initiative, with a donation from the businessman, Emile Deutsch de la Meurthe, but was quickly broadened out by the French Ministry of Public Instruction into a larger project to perpetuate intellectual links amongst the international student body.[60] Predictably, given French hostility towards Germany in the immediate post-war period which was exacerbated by the occupation of Ruhr in 1923, the Cité Internationale did not initially include Germany amongst the countries who were to build houses on its site. When it was officially dedicated in 1925, houses were either built or under construction for Danish, Swedish, French, American, Argentinean, Belgian, Canadian, Greek, Armenian, Cuban and Indochinese students.[61] The project garnered much international attention, especially amongst former allies. A 1922 report in *The Times* welcomed its exclusion of former enemy states as a bulwark against détente and the tendency amongst contemporary politicians to 'break the alliance and understanding which the youth of France and the British Empire sealed with their

blood on the battlefield.' The Cité Internationale would bring together 'in peaceful scholastic rivalry successive generations of the youth of the *entente cordiale*.'[62] As with many post-war scholarly initiatives, the Cité Internationale cannot be read through the prism of international politics alone. As with so many similar projects, American money was crucial and in this case financed the construction of the Maison Internationale, the centrepiece building modelled on the castle at Fontainebleu. Rockefeller Foundation money spurred its construction from 1932, one of a series of International Houses built with Rockefeller money (in New York, Chicago, and Berkeley) from the mid 1920s.

One of the wartime goals of allied educationalists was the greater exchange of students between institutions in allied countries. The influx of American students into European universities immediately after the war was improvised but gave impetus to policy makers who sought to create new structures to facilitate greater student exchange. In 1919, the Carnegie Endowment founded the Institute of International Education which worked closely with the AUU and provided fellowships to facilitate (primarily) Franco-American exchanges. A new departure emerged from 1923 with the institution of summer schools for foreign students. This movement was pioneered by Raymond Kirkbride of the University of Delaware who had served in the First World War and had been one of the demobilized American soldiers to take up courses of study in France following the cessation of hostilities. He envisaged undergraduates, not graduate students, spending a year of their four-year degree at a foreign institution, with knowledge of foreign cultures especially valuable in the context of America's increasing international isolationism in the early 1920s.[63] A necessary precursor to this was the summer school, which provided courses in which students learned about the French language and civilization. The first group of these students came from Delaware in the summer of 1923, undertook a summer course in Nancy, before transferring to Paris for the regular academic year. The scheme was a success and was soon imitated by other countries, including Germany. The Junior Year Abroad (JYA) scheme showed the interplay of wartime inter-allied politics at the Sorbonne, where there was a long-held desire to attract more Americans and freeze out Germany, while at the same time demonstrating a new form of American post-war internationalism dubbed 'cooperation without entanglement.'[64] It was estimated that between 400 and 500 Americans enrolled in the Sorbonne's summer course by the mid-1920s.[65] Ultimately, the JYA scheme would become an integral part of the American undergraduate experience, but one that owed its origins to the cultural politics of wartime.

By the mid 1920s, American educational influence was embedded in Europe to a much greater extent than it had been previously. This could be seen in the movement of professors, students, and ideas, and had a number of dynamics driving it. In France, the cultivation of links with the United States was encouraged as a continuation of wartime alliance which was in turn informed by rivalry with German universities. French universities and educationalists hoped to supplant Germany's traditional hegemony in educational networks. British educationalists saw these new links with wartime allies as supplementing, rather than supplanting, those that had existed before the war; its 'empire of scholars' could not be abandoned owing to wartime exigencies.[66] The American intellectual encroachment into Europe had myriad motivations; it was informed by a desire to play an international role given America's absence from the League of Nations, by individual and institutional ambitions and rivalries, and also by a wish to fully take its place within the Eurocentric Republic of Letters. In most cases, it was funded by American money.

While inter-allied connections were generally presented in benign terms, by definition they continued wartime mobilization into peacetime. So, while the actors may only occasionally have spoken the language of 1914, the structures and ideas underpinning them perpetuated the wartime divide. This became increasingly problematic as scholars in many countries began trying to return to the pre-1914 way of things which would necessitate the full integration of former enemy scholars into the international intellectual community.

Integrating the former enemy, 1918–25

The outbreak of the First World War saw the academic world cleft in two. Much international scholarly interaction had ceased by the end of 1914. While the outbreak of war occasioned much bitterness over issues related to the causes of the conflict and the veracity of atrocity stories, international exchange was also rendered difficult owing to problems of communications, the consequence of a global war. The situation at the end of the war was different as many of the logistical impediments were removed. As scholars sought to rebuild the international community from 1918, many pursued an actively exclusionist policy known as the 'boycott.' Unlike the inter-allied project, which sought to continue allied cooperation, the boycott was targeted at scholars from former enemy states who were unwelcome to re-join the international academic community. This was a negatively expressed phenomenon which

leant on the belligerent language of 1914. German and Austrian philosophers were not invited to the International Philosophical Congress in London in 1920, German historians were not invited to the 1923 International Historical Congress, while former enemies were forbidden to enter the newly formed International Research Council.[67]

The question of how and when to reintegrate former enemy academics into the international community of scholars was a vexed and emotive one which quickly demonstrated the fault lines separating former allied nations as well as scholars of the same nationality. In France, which had experienced invasion and where there had been little dissent amongst the professoriate in wartime, a hostile attitude continued into peacetime, albeit with some exceptions. In Britain, where entry into the war had been contested and where a spectrum of positions were expressed during the conflict, scholars ranged from belligerence to a conciliatory attitude towards former enemy scholars. It was similar in the United States. This trend mirrored the wider geopolitical configuration of the early 1920s, with bellicose France detaching itself from its more conciliatory former allies. American absence from the League of Nations further destabilized wartime alliance.

The reintegration of former enemy scholars into the international scholarly community necessitated the renunciation of the language of 1914. In other words, it required the demobilization of wartime mentalities.[68] This phenomenon was not organic; it required agents to push it forward. With their wide network of international contacts and their claims to universalism, academics were well positioned to undertake this task, if they so wished. However, there was no neat process or timeline by which academics demobilized following the war, for, as has been demonstrated, academic engagement in the war itself was varied, disparate, and undertaken for a multitude of reasons. Cultural demobilization, as it has been termed, was neither a smooth nor a uniform process. While it was given succour by the admission of Germany to the League of Nations in 1926, itself a consequence of the Locarno Treaties of 1925, many fissures remained in the international scholarly body into the 1930s and beyond.

Speaking and acting out against the isolation of Germany was often driven by individuals. In 1922, Victor Basch, professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne, held meetings with the German historian Hans Delbrück to discuss the question of war origins.[69] Basch's colleague Henri Lichtenberger also sought to re-establish normal relations with German scholars. A historian and expert in nineteenth century German political and cultural development, Lichtenberger was reluctant, for

obvious reasons, to condemn German scholarship in 1914 and was praised for his great restraint when a visiting professor in Harvard in 1914–15 where he remained on good terms with the German professors there.[70] In 1922, the Carnegie Endowment paid for Lichtenberger to visit Germany and to write a book about political developments there. Lichtenberger used the opportunity to give lectures at a number of Austrian and German universities, the first time that a French academic had done so since the end of the war. The Carnegie Endowment was unusual as a pre-war peace lobby which had survived the war, unlike many of its counterparts. Primarily interested in international law before the war, it changed tack thereafter, pursuing a wide range of activities including the reconstruction of a devastated town in northern France, the reconstitution of the Louvain university library, James Shotwell's *Economic and Social History of the World War* series, and an inquiry into the teaching of the history of the war in former belligerent states.[71] The Endowment's change from the pre- to post-war period mirrored a wider held belief that education could be a force for reconciliation and peace.

Lichtenberger's account of life in Germany appeared in 1923, the year of the Ruhr occupation.[72] Following a number of successful lectures at German and Austrian universities in 1922 and 1923, Lichtenberger agreed to take a position as visiting professor at the University of Vienna in September 1923. However, détente was uneasy, the experiences of war too close in the memory. The Franco-Belgian occupation of the Ruhr which commenced in January 1923 in response to Germany's inability to meet its reparation obligations revived old enmities. Lichtenberger wrote that 'during the year, the attitude of a number of Pan-Germanist professors and students had become such that, because of the Ruhr affair, we decided that it would be wiser to return in more peaceful times.'[73] Such was the fragility of détente in this period.

Lichtenberger understood the problems facing Europe better than most through both his personal experiences and his intellectual vocation. He had observed the attack upon German scholarship, launched by many allied academics from 1914, with some unease, and he recognized that much of the spirit of 1914 had outlived the war, especially in France. Societies may have demobilized militarily, but a process of 'intellectual demobilization' would be required before a lasting peace could be achieved.

> Because of the habits acquired during the war, the very idea of intellectual sincerity has become problematic and vague … it is clear that during the war the combative element of intelligence has been

> functioning almost alone. Intelligences were mobilized as well as armies … the search for objective truth, impartial and complete, was postponed to better days; the censorship, moreover, used all its vigilance to prevent untimely truths from being brought to light, to restrain the outbursts of the undisciplined and to neutralize the effects of the enemy's propaganda … but it is clear that in the present intermediate state between war and peace the demobilization of minds has not been simultaneous with that of the armies and that to this day it is the literature of struggle and propaganda which fills papers, reviews and books.[74]

Lichtenberger's analysis was perceptive. It was true that the on-going division between former allied and Central Power scholars at international congresses was perpetuating wartime hostilities but equally worrying was the fact that people still thought and undertook intellectual work as they had during the war. While Lichtenberger's projects were curtailed by the Ruhr Crisis, the legacy of his work remained in his interpretation of reconciliation. He was exceptional in conceptualizing and writing at length about the problem at hand, but in so doing, he demonstrated that some academics were aware that as long as Germany remained culturally isolated, the war was not over.

The League of Nations, born of Wilson's desire to preserve future world peace, seemed well placed to effect the intellectual demobilization spoken of by Lichtenberger. After all, the League was itself conceptualized and populated by internationalist intellectuals who understood the importance of promoting cooperation across myriad non-diplomatic fields. The League's technical groups would soon set about building new international links in a variety of cultural and humanitarian fields, understanding, like the Carnegie Endowment and Rockefeller Foundation, that peace-making now encompassed much more than formal diplomacy and the study of international law.[75] The irony was that the League was an association of victors in which Germany would not be offered a place until 1926. As such, the League, at the levels of its Council and Assembly at least, perpetuated inter-allied concerns and continued the exclusion of former enemy states. However, the technical groups had more scope to engage non-members and did so, with mixed results.

In 1922 the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) was founded at Geneva. The ICIC recognized that the recently ended war had been a cultural conflict as well as a military one. As such, mutual understanding and cooperation amongst intellectuals, as well as

international cooperation in intellectual and educational endeavours, was an important part of the path to peace. Initially, a twelve-person commission was formed to study intellectual relations which showed the problems of such an endeavour. The commission included representatives of Europe's intellectual elites, such as Henri Bergson, Gilbert Murray, Marie Curie, and academics from Spain, Brazil, India, Norway, Switzerland, and Belgium. The impetus for the ICIC's foundation came from Bergson, who was troubled by the erosion of intellectual life which was concomitant with modern war but who, ironically, had been one of the enablers of this very process in August 1914.[76]

The original committee included a delegate from Germany, Albert Einstein. Superficially, this seemed a conciliatory move, but Einstein's case was unique. He had opposed the war, did not sign the manifesto of the ninety-three intellectuals, and had signed a counter-manifesto organized by the biologist Georg Nicolai. In addition, he had renounced his German nationality in 1896 and had become a Swiss citizen in 1906. However, he had worked at the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physics in Berlin since 1914, and could be presented as an acceptable German academic.[77] Thus, while Einstein was presented as the German delegate, his views were not representative of those of many German academics in the war period. He did not immediately take up the position because of problems establishing links with German scholars and over his growing fears of anti-Semitism following the assassination of the industrialist Walter Rathenau in 1922.[78] His place was given to his friend, the Dutch physicist Hendrik Lorentz. While Murray and Curie begged Einstein to return, knowing that his name and eminence would lend the ICIC more weight, he was reluctant to do so following the French occupation of the Ruhr and the League's support for this policy.[79] However, Einstein reclaimed his position in July 1924.[80] The Einstein situation demonstrated the difficulties of rapprochement in the early 1920s as wartime hostilities were reactivated and accentuated by new crises such as German and Austrian hyperinflation and the Franco-Belgian occupation of the Ruhr.

The ICIC also discussed the topic of admitting German delegates more generally. In August 1922, the Swiss academic, Gonzague de Reynold, proposed co-ordinating the efforts of the International Research Council and the International Union of Academies (the equivalent body to the IRC in the humanities, hereafter IUA). The IRC had continued its work from wartime to peacetime, fully expecting to take its place as the main international scientific body. However, a clause in its founding charter prohibited the participation of academies

from the Central Powers, despite the private desire of many of its members to reintegrate Germany into the international scholarly community.[81] De Reynold's proposal required that the IRC and IUA expand their membership to countries which were not yet members of the League of Nations. This proposal met with a mixed response amongst the committee members. Gilbert Murray opposed the motion, arguing that the committee should not co-operate with bodies which excluded ex-enemy states from membership, like the IRC. Jules Destrée, the Belgian delegate, said that Belgian representatives would be happy to consider ex-enemy entry into the fold once they had been admitted to the League of Nations. George Ellery Hale argued that countries who had been invaded during the war could not be asked to agree to this and that things should be left 'to develop in their own way', especially for representatives of countries who had been invaded in 1914.[82] His colleague, Robert Millikan, agreed. Marie Curie offered no opinion but noted that Einstein had recently lectured at the Collège de France. In the chair, Henri Bergson also offered no opinion, and the issue was left unresolved. However, two years later, Bergson would condemn a second attempt by de Reynold – backed by Murray – to hasten the reintegration of German scholars to international scholarly communities.[83] All of this demonstrated how delegates from different countries saw the situation in various ways and used euphemistic arguments to circumvent the issue. Ultimately, national, institutional, and personal experiences of war dictated how attitudes towards the former enemy developed in the 1920s.

The ICIC did much to standardize intellectual practices internationally and sought to make education an arm of peace, by studying the treatment of war in schoolbooks and advocating reform as well as encouraging the exchange of students and professors. However, for some, such as the American historian Waldo Leland, 'international intellectual co-operation' would remain 'a cumbersome term of fifteen syllables that has become popular since the World War, although it describes activities and processes that have existed from the most remote times.'[84] For his part, Gilbert Murray described meetings of the ICIC as 'devastating and drivelling', adding that the subject 'bores me stiff.'[85] An official League publication from 1935 noted wryly that the ICIC was initially viewed with 'scepticism in many quarters' but that this was because it was working on 'entirely fresh ground.'[86] Understanding that intellect was an element of modern warfare would continue to prove a challenge for the League, and this was exacerbated by its growing lack of clout elsewhere.

The question of readmission of scholars from Germany to the ranks of the international intellectual community emerged in other arenas. The first post-war meeting of the International Commission of Historical Sciences was organized in Brussels in 1923. Henri Pirenne, the Belgian medieval historian who was interned in Germany as a civilian for much of the conflict, took the lead in organizing it. He argued that 'there could be no question … of any conference except (with) allied and neutral countries participating.'[87] A number of British historians organized a protest against this. A.F. Pollard, of University College London, appealed to the organizers 'to render the congress really international, in the fullest sense of the term.'[88] Pirenne resisted, arguing that while a fully international conference could be possible in the natural sciences, this was not the case in history, where 'certain subjects could lead to discussions that would be difficult to keep within the bounds of a strictly scientific debate.'[89] Pirenne, whose internment during the war gave him greater cause for bitterness than most, saw reintegration of German scholars not only as a question of national politics, but one which would be dealt with differently depending on the discipline in question. Indeed, for Pirenne, the scholarly ties that were severed in 1914 remained cut for the remainder of his life.[90]

The four-year period before Locarno was notable for a number of fledgling attempts to revive truly international exchanges amongst the scholarly community. However, this remained the preserve of individuals rather than societies or associations acting in a collective manner. It took the Locarno Treaties and the admission of Germany into the League of Nations in 1926, coupled with the symbolic collaboration of German foreign minister Gustav Stresemann and his French counterpart, Aristide Briand, to bring about a shift in attitudes. Under the terms of Locarno, Germany agreed to abide by its western frontier, as specified in the Treaty of Versailles. This sated French fears of revision of the Treaty and fixed the border once and for all (crucially leaving Germany's eastern borders open to revision). With this, Germany was publicly and officially welcomed back into the international community. Germany's entry into the League of Nations also initiated the phenomenon whereby German academics were reintegrated into learned societies, and academic exchanges between former enemy states also gathered momentum thereafter. In 1925, a delegation of scientists from Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark, the United States, and Britain successfully petitioned the IRC to change the statute prohibiting the participation of academies from former Central Powers. Academies in Germany and Austria were invited to join the IRC in June 1926.[91]

The first truly international post-war congress of historians took place in Geneva in 1926, with German participation; American historians were instrumental in bringing this about. Détente remained governed and dictated by individual and institutional whims, themselves the consequence of war experience, and as a result it did not happen in a uniform manner.

In Britain, the post-Locarno years accentuated the conciliatory process which began shortly after the war's conclusion. In 1925, Wilhelm Wien, a signatory of the manifesto of the ninety-three, gave the Guthrie lecture to the Physical Society of London. Wien and others participated in the annual meeting of the British Association in 1926.[92] In 1929 the trustees of the Rhodes scholarships at Oxford decided to give up to two awards per year to German nationals, a practice which had also ceased in 1914.[93] There was a softening of attitudes in France, too. Academic exchanges with Germany were re-established in the period after 1926. However, despite this reconciliation, the war had changed the general flow of academic exchanges. While eighteen German scholars would visit the Sorbonne in the years before 1939, greater numbers came from Scandinavia, the United States, Belgium, and the Netherlands.[94] In the French case then, the inter-allied emphasis remained strong even while hostile wartime attitudes were being undone. Another demonstration of the tangled set of motivations in inter-war exchange comes from 1927, when a German proposal moved to build a German House at the Cité Internationale. This was encouraged by the French authorities, but failed due to the intransigence of the German Foreign Ministry, who interpreted the placing of a German House under the auspices of a French university as a subjugation of their national culture.[95]

The complexities of détente were again demonstrated in 1928 when the reconstructed library at the University of Louvain was due to reopen. The aforementioned inscription was seen as out of keeping with the post-Locarno spirit of international cooperation embodied by Stresemann and Briand. Many academics at Louvain now saw the inscription as a deterrent to academic exchange, arguing that German scholars would not visit the university as long as the belligerent epithet remained. The architect, Whitney Warren, remained resolute in his desire to retain the proposed inscription, and was backed by Belgian veterans groups. When he came to Louvain in June 1928 with the inscription it was seized by university authorities. The new building was inaugurated under siege conditions with an empty plinth where the inscription should have been placed.[96] However, the incident demonstrated the somewhat contradictory nature of inter-war détente, as the

dedication simultaneously also served as one of the last great expressions of inter-allied solidarity. Taking place on 4 July, a contemporary account reported that 'as the visitor entered Louvain on that gala day, it appeared ablaze with decoration. The emblems of the United States and France were everywhere intermingled with those of Belgium and the University of Louvain. Nearly every house in the medieval city bore at least two or three flags.'[97] University ceremonials remained complex undertakings which could express multiple contradictory messages at the same time.

Across the Atlantic, the wave of détente was also felt. In 1928 the reconstituted Germanistic Society of America proposed re-establishing the Deutsches Haus at Columbia University. A new property was purchased a few doors away from Columbia House.[98] The new institution, which opened in January 1929, was to 'serve as an American centre for the study of German culture, particularly in its academic phases, and as a link in the chain of university institutes established in the interest of international understanding and good will.'[99] The German Ambassador, Friedrich Wilhelm von Prittwitz und Gaffron, officially opened the new institute, and messages of support came from across the American and German academic establishments. The president of Yale University, James Rowland Angell, saw the reopening as 'auspicious evidence of the restoration of normal international courtesy and good feeling between the United States and the German Republic.'[100] Chauncey Brewster, a professor of English literature at Yale, claimed that he could never 'forget my debt to the old Germany. The new Germany I am glad to welcome to America.'[101] The language utilized here was far from the belligerent rhetoric of wartime and returned to the pre-1914 world, which emphasized the shared elements of German and American history, and the debt owed by the latter to the former on account of its intellectual influence. Wartime controversies were simply ignored, as was the inter-allied rhetoric of the immediate post-war period.

Conclusion

The cultural war which began in late 1914 did not end with the agreement of the armistice in November 1918, nor with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in June 1919. Entire societies had been mobilized to wage a modern war and the process of arresting this dynamic, once initiated, proved difficult. For universities the process was especially complex; they were composed of individuals who all had institutional, associational, disciplinary, national, and personal allegiances. In the

aftermath of the war this became especially apparent and contributed to the uneven and staggered process of détente. This, in turn, meant that the restoration of the international scholarly community would be complex and tied to the aforementioned processes of mobilization.

The Great War reoriented international scholarly relations in two related ways. First, ties with enemy states were severed at an official level. Second, links between fellow allies were consolidated. The persistence of both of these dynamics into the post-war period constituted a continuation of wartime cultural mobilization. Henri Lichtenberger was astute in identifying the need for the demobilization of intellect in 1923, but, for most scholars, the question of readmission of Germany to the international intellectual community remained an individual one based on personal experience in wartime, membership of scholarly networks, and the belligerence of wartime rhetoric in their institution and nation. There were many individual initiatives to resume ties with German scholars, especially from British and American sources, in the immediate post-war years. Getting associational and institutional approval for these was more difficult and required Briand and Stresemann's public act of reconciliation.

While many scholars spoke of a return to the pre-war status quo, this would not come to pass. Even once Germany had been formally re-admitted to the international community of scholarship, a fundamental change had taken place: the United States, its educational institutions, and its ideas, had emerged as world powers. American ideas and American money began making themselves felt in Europe in the 1920s and shaping the way in which institutions and disciplines developed thereafter. Whereas before the war American universities were the venue for European rivals France and Germany to play out an educational version of the imperial game, after the war, American higher education had won respect on the world stage. When the next great intellectual schism began in 1933, it was American institutions which stood up as bastions of civilization in the face of the totalitarian threat.

Conclusion

Speaking at an event in Liège to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War on 4 August 2014, German President Joachim Gauck noted grimly that 'the destruction of the world famous library in Leuven became a symbol that spread fear, shock and rage far and wide' and wondered ruefully 'what had become of the community of scholars and artists? What had happened to the civilization called Europe?'[1] The destruction of the university library at Louvain has retained a strong and long-lived resonance in popular memory; it was a line in the sand, a cultural atrocity that encapsulated the transition from the old form of warfare typical of the nineteenth century to the wars of the twentieth century where ideas became combatants and the distinction between soldiers and non-combatants became increasingly blurred. The destruction of a university library, traditionally seen as the home of knowledge that was both non-political and supposedly of universal benefit, still retains shock value. Now, as then, Louvain serves as a visceral example of the excesses of modern warfare, although it would pale in comparison with what followed later in both the war and the twentieth century.

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Détente seemed to have triumphed in international scholarly relations by 1930. Perhaps the most meaningful symbols of reconciliation happened in that year, when the Universities of Paris and Strasbourg both established German Institutes. Given the symbolic role of both universities during the war, this was a significant development. More significant was the fact that Raymond Poincaré was chosen to open the Parisian institute. Poincaré was the president in wartime and had been relentless thereafter in ensuring that Germany fulfilled all of its responsibilities

under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. This was most apparent on the question of reparations, where Poincaré, then prime minister, oversaw the occupation of the Ruhr valley in 1923. Poincaré's belligerence earned him the moniker *Poincaré-la-guerre* and within Germany he was often portrayed as an enemy of the state.[2] Poincaré was unable to attend the Sorbonne ceremony owing to illness, but his address was read out in his absence. The speech was carefully worded and made the argument for Franco-German intellectual engagement not for the benefit of scholarship or the academic world, but to lessen the potential for future conflicts.

> Nothing would be more dangerous and more absurd for Germany and for France than to isolate each one in a closed compartment and to falsely represent the institutions, morals, political and social system of the nation that is their neighbour … The best way to protect a heritage is to know what are the points of difference between it and others.[3]

Poincaré's speech was neither an endorsement of German cultural achievement nor did it warmly welcome Germany back to the fold. Rather, his vision was pragmatic, reflecting both the post-Locarno spirit of détente and the anxieties that followed the Wall Street Crash and growing economic crisis. In this context, European stability could be best maintained through co-operation with former enemies. However, by 1931, France had also established a Maison Académique de France in Berlin, which was to receive ten to twelve French scholars each year who wished to pursue advanced study in Germany. The same number of German students travelled to Paris for a similar purpose each year. All that was missing was the German House at the Cité Internationale in Paris.[4]

The situation was different in the United States. The Deutches Haus at Columbia University was officially re-opened in January 1929 by the German Ambassador. In 1931 the Roosevelt Professorial exchange was re-established. F.J. Woodbridge was the first Roosevelt Professor in this period, and on taking up a position at the University of Berlin, Butler asked him to convey Columbia University's indebtedness 'to the universities of Germany and to the intellectual life of the German people' which was 'literally immense' and which Columbia was 'happy to acknowledge.'[5]

The normalization of international intellectual exchange was short-lived. The rise of totalitarian regimes in the 1930s demonstrated that

intellect would remain an arm of the state, to be mobilized on the whim of national governments or destroyed outright, depending on its content. Germany left the League of Nations in late 1933 and liberal intellectuals and academics began fleeing the country, their views rendering them suspect and putting their livelihoods – as well as their lives – in danger. Jewish academics were menaced on account of their ethnicity.[6] The state-led suppression of liberal academic thought and expression led to a mass-migration of scholars to Western Europe and the United States, and another hiatus in the internationalist project.[7] However, the threats to internationalism and free scholarly work did not only emanate from Nazi Germany. In 1934, Peter Kapitza, a Russian physicist who had been working at Trinity College, Cambridge, for thirteen years and was a fellow of the Royal Society, was detained on a trip home to the Soviet Union. Kapitza was forbidden to leave Russia and ordered to apply his scientific expertise to national development as part of Stalin's second five-year plan. Kapitza's detention caused outrage amongst the international community of scholars who began petitionary activity to have him returned to England. Kapitza's case demonstrated the value of the scholar – and of intellect more generally – to the totalitarian state in its quest for national self-sufficiency as well as its paranoia about the potential activities of its nationals abroad.[8]

Kapitza's situation was an extreme example of a more general consequence of the First World War. As long as war was possible, intellect would remain in a position to be mobilized by the state. In the case of the natural sciences, it needed to be permanently mobilized to ensure that one nation did not fall behind another in its development of weaponry. The chemist Charles Moureu, who held a chair at the Collège de France, argued that if one assumed that the next conflict would be a chemical war, chemists would have to continue their work in developing more advanced chemical weapons in peacetime both to keep France prepared and to act as a deterrent to Germany.[9]

As the threat of war rose again in the 1930s, national governments showed they had learned the lessons of the Great War. Contingency plans placed great importance on the mobilization of academic learning and collaboration with potential allies. In 1936 Maurice Hankey, Secretary of the Cabinet and the Committee for Imperial Defence, sketched a plan for the mobilization of scientists in the event of war. This plan developed into a central register of scientists by 1938, while simultaneously, a committee of vice-chancellors and principals devised a plan for the mobilization of university graduates in the event of war.[10] It was similar in the United States, where scientists were quick

to abandon isolationism in the 1930s and propounded the idea that defence research should be a peacetime, not wartime, endeavour. This led to the establishment of the National Research Defence Committee in 1940.[11] In France too, coordination between scientists, universities and the military was increased in the 1930s as the threat of war grew. The renamed Office of Inventions, the body which had been born in the First World War, continued its work under Jules-Louis Breton until it was amalgamated into a National Centre for Applied Scientific Research.[12] The fall of France in May 1940 initiated close collaboration between British and American scientists, a measure born out of necessity but also perhaps from the haphazard pooling of scientific knowledge in the First World War.[13]

The application of intellect to warfare reached its destructive and terrifying apogee with the development of the atomic bomb. James Bryant Conant, an American chemist and later President of Harvard who had worked on poison gases during the First World War and was associated with the Manhattan Project in the Second World War, argued that the Great War had transformed the scientist. Following the 1914–18 conflict it was no longer enough to apply science to warfare; rather, the scientist became an inventor. 'The scientist was no longer thought of as a man in an ivory tower … but as a miracle worker who … could bring about tremendous transformations of man's relation to his material surroundings.'[14] The First World War began a destructive process whereby academic knowledge was leveraged by states in the prosecution of war. Initially involving the improvised application of ideas, it eventually resulted in an annihilatory inventiveness which simultaneously threatened scholarly paradigms and human existence itself. This was a direct consequence of the changing nature and understanding of warfare which began in 1915.[15]

University communities

The Great War dismembered university communities in literal and figurative ways. Intimate networks were scattered across the many fighting fronts of Europe and beyond; friends were pitted against one another either on account of their attitude to the war or their nationality; while death, indiscriminate in its application, proved the greatest challenge of all.

G.H. Hardy published his account of the Russell affair at Trinity in 1942. He was motivated to write as Britain was once again at war and many of the same difficult questions as had been asked in 1914–18

were being posed again; consequently, many old tensions re-emerged. To counter misinformation, Hardy attempted to write the definitive account of the Russell saga. However, his passions had not been calmed by the passage of time; he claimed that 'I felt bitterly about the matter at the time, and feel strongly about it still.'[16] The divisions of wartime remained omnipresent, liable to be reanimated by contemporary events.

Towns and cities are dotted with memorials to the dead of two world wars, in addition to other conflicts, erected by states, local councils, businesses, schools, sports clubs, and individuals. They are especially widespread at universities, where the sacrifice of men is remembered and related to their membership of different university-based social groups, which could be academic, sporting, professional, or social. These memorials ensured that the memory of war became a permanent part of university geographies; their concentration into a relatively small space, as was the case at collegiate institutions like Oxford and Cambridge, rendered the impact and memory of war tangible.

As with the mobilization of knowledge, the Second World War demonstrated that the devastation of the First World War could not only be replicated, but exceeded, and that the nightmare of the First World War could be played out over again. Once more, memorials were erected to remember the dead. In many cases, it was expedient to add the dates 1939–45 to the pre-existing memorial to the Great War. The lists of names showed that, in many cases, the experience of the First World War spilled over into the Second. In the context of this book, it is obvious that those who survived the carnage of the Great War were fortunate; however, to restrict their experience to that of 1914–18 is to tell only part of their story. For example, many familiar names appear on the *monument aux morts* of the École Normale Supérieure for the Second World War.[17] The deaths of Marc Bloch (at the hands of the Gestapo) and Maurice Halbwachs (in Buchenwald concentration camp), were, on the one hand, specific to the horrors of the Second World War, but in a wider context were part of the terrible slaughter inaugurated in 1914, and were remembered as such by the ENS. The First World War was far from the end of the trauma for intimate scholarly communities and remains a permanent part of university landscapes.

Universities and states

In the spring of 2011 there was a major scandal in British higher education when the government announced plans to prioritize state research funding for projects which examined the 'Big Society', a piece

of political sloganeering which had been utilized by the Conservative Party to win the previous year's election. This was the first challenge in over ninety years to the Haldane principle of 1918, which had given academics the right to determine how research funding should be spent.[18] By March 2011 over 1,600 scholars had signed an online petition in protest against the proposal. The conventions established as a result of the Great War had become axiomatic and the methods of protest popularized during the conflict remained important.

Wartime changes were most pronounced when applied to relationships between the university and the state. This was most apparent in Britain where the war initiated a process through which a national system of universities – funded and thus controlled (to an extent) by the state – came into being for the first time.[19] While the new state funding to Oxford and Cambridge was significant, the contribution of the civic universities to the war effort – particularly through the work of their scientific laboratories – vindicated newer institutions like the universities of Birmingham, London, Bristol, Manchester, Sheffield and Liverpool, and raised their standing in the public consciousness.

While French universities were part of a centralized system of state-run institutions, they were by no means secure in this position. The many attacks on the reformed university which had taken place before the war showed that higher education was being run in a far from popular way amongst many on the political right. While the contribution of French universities to the war did not eradicate these criticisms, it went a long way towards quietening the attacks. It was also significant that while there was an upsurge in the invocation of classical references during the war, the reformed system of education with its emphasis on scientific education in conjunction with – and occasionally over – the classics, managed to survive intact.[20] And given the weighty and visible contribution of university academics to the national defence – be it through invention, propaganda, or active combat – the republican institution stood on more solid ground after the conflict than it had before, bolstered by the accession of the University of Strasbourg to its ranks. However, relying upon government patronage meant that the fortunes of French universities would rise and fall with the state, and the Republic's demise was hastened by tumult of the late 1930s.

American universities emerged from the war in a stronger position, domestically and internationally. There was a revolution in the relationship of American universities and scholarship to the wider world. Before the conflict, many American universities were seen as passive institutions onto which the cultural expression of European national

rivalries could be projected. This was most obvious in the establishment of professorial exchanges and chairs in national civilizations, which were rarely reciprocal arrangements and were more an expression of Franco-German rivalry. The general French attitude towards the United States before 1914 was described as one of 'mild condescension.'[21] The invocation and trumpeting of shared inter-allied political and intellectual traditions suggested reciprocity. If the allies were fighting for shared values, it assumed a degree of cultural and intellectual equality between them. A result of this was the rise of American studies after the war, bolstered by the establishment of chairs in American history and culture at European universities. All of this was underpinned by the great material and intellectual wealth of American universities in the 1920s and 1930s. The First World War set the stage for American emergence as a world power, but this process was uneven and hesitant. Politically, the United States retreated into itself, remaining aloof from the League of Nations. Economically, the United States had emerged from the war as the world's greatest power, a process accelerated, but not initiated, by the war.[22] Culturally, the 1920s saw the beginnings of a preponderance of American influence; a process strengthened and structured by U.S. philanthropy but built on the bedrock of intellectual equality established by the war.

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While Joachim Gauck pointed to Louvain as emblematic of the terrible destructive excesses of 1914–18, he could have mentioned any university if he wished to exemplify the epoch-defining changes of the First World War. The radicalization of warfare of 1914–18 changed whole societies and the way in which national governments operate. Universities exemplified this change neatly; the mobilization of knowledge from 1915 mirrored the wider division of labour in belligerent societies and the realization that warfare was changing, organizationally and materially. The application of specialist knowledge during the war demonstrated the power of university research to the nation, in peace and wartime. However, universities were more than this; these scholarly communities felt the full brunt of a terrible war, suffering losses in a greater proportion to society more generally, with myriad war memorials providing the solemn reminder. The legacy of the war's multifaceted impact on higher education is still palpable.

Notes

Introduction

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