

# CLUBS, MACES, AND SLINGS

Dates: To c. 1500 C.E.

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## NATURE AND USE

Clubs, maces, and slings, originally appearing in primitive times, are alike in their antiquity and concussive effect. Clubs are stout sticks, weighted at the striking end and usually made of hardwood, although bone, horn, and stone were also used. Clubs, the oldest weapons, have taken many forms throughout history. As small personal weapons, less than 2 feet in length, they could be thrust into belts and carried anywhere. Larger war clubs—from 2 to 3 feet in length—were wielded with one hand, and very large clubs, from 3 to 6 feet in length, were used with both hands. Shafts could be straight or curved, with cylindrical, ball-shaped, or broad, flat heads. Shaft edges could be sharpened, knobbed, spiked, or fitted with naturally sharp items, such as shark's teeth, rays' tails, or obsidian blades.

Although hand weapons could be used with more accuracy and force than thrown ones, clubs meant for throwing were also used. These “throwing sticks” were usually 2 to 3 feet long and could be curved, such as the Australian boomerang, or could have a ball and handle, such as the African knobkerrie. Users of these weapons hoped either to kill an enemy outright by crushing its skull or to incapacitate it by breaking its bones or stunning it. The club has seen worldwide use among primitive tribal peoples and early civilizations, and simple forms were wielded by early hominids.

Developed from the club, the mace is a heavy weight attached to the end of a handle. Stone maces appeared during the seventh millennium B.C.E. in the Neolithic Near East, and their use spread into Europe, Egypt, and India, where they were employed into the early Bronze Age. A mace was made

by inserting 2- to 3-foot-long handles into holes bored through stones that had been worked into spherical, or at least symmetrical, shapes. Maces with bronze or iron heads became popular during the medieval era (approximately 500-1500 C.E.), and their use spread from Central Asia and the Near East into Europe, the Far East, and North Africa. Although intended to injure people, maces were also designed to damage armor: smashing it with blunt heads, penetrating it with spiked or knobbed heads, or cutting it with flanged or winged heads. Maces could also be thrown, although this was an unusual usage. The military flail, which had mace heads or clubs attached by chains to the handle, also appeared during the medieval period but may have been more of a demolition device for siege warfare than a combat weapon, at least in Western Europe.

The sling was most likely a product of the Neolithic Near East (ninth millennium B.C.E.) but may have had earlier origins. It was probably derived from throwing stones whirled about by attached lashes; the South American *bolas* is an example. The most common sling, the hand sling, consisted of a 3-foot-long strap with a pouch in the center in which a missile, usually a stone, was placed. The user would take both ends of the sling in one hand, whirl the stone around quickly, and then let go of one end of the sling. The released stone would then fly toward its target. Hand slings—made of leather, wool, woven grasses, sinew, or human hair—have been used by many primitive peoples worldwide for hunting, warfare, and protection from predators. They were popular among civilized peoples in the Indus Valley, the Near East, Greece, Sicily, Spain and the Balears, Celtic Europe, Mesoamerica, and the Andes.

posed a threat as long as warriors had the strength to wield them. On the other hand, picks, axes, and war hammers were very short-ranged, seldom extending the warriors' effective battle reach more than twice that of the arm alone. The warrior, in close proximity to his enemy, was in imminent danger.

Combatants using shock weapons had to exploit these advantages while mitigating the disadvantages. Archaeological evidence, anthropological studies of nineteenth and twentieth century primitive societies, and surviving weapons reveal three often-employed tactical uses. Most often, battles opened with an exchange of fire from standoff weapons by the front ranks of opposing groups separated by an empty zone. If one group stopped fighting and fled, the second might pursue to kill or capture the enemy. The pursuers then used shock weapons after closing with the foe. Picks, axes, and war hammers also proved effective for fighting in confined spaces where standoff weapons were impractical: for example, a forest ambush or an assault on a fortified area. The weapons could be used to break apart defensive works and to destroy property as well as to harm people.

Last, shock weapons were occasionally used for close combat. A high degree of discipline is required for troops to meet face-to-face in a battle line, but by the Bronze Age, societies were sophisticated enough to support the requisite level of training, and this basic battle doctrine lasted into the Middle Ages. Engagements almost certainly began with exchanges of arrow or javelin fire, but then the front ranks of warriors advanced on each other until the lines collided, and warriors fought directly with shock weapons. In this hand-to-hand combat, comrades-in-arms had to be close to one another in the line, practically shoulder-to-shoulder, so that their sides were protected while they concentrated their attack on the enemy warriors directly in front of them. Wood shields were developed to protect their fronts, and



Photo via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]

*Maurice, Elector of Saxony wields a war hammer on a posthumous portrait.*

the initial clash involved each opponent striving to shatter the opponent's protection in order to force an opening for a killing blow. The side that succeeded in penetrating the line and dividing its enemy usually won the battle.

During the Iron Age, however, swords and lances increasingly became the main battle weapons. Axes, picks, and war hammers were used more and more as auxiliary weapons.

## DEVELOPMENT

By about 1.5 million years before the present, the first small hand axes were being produced as part of



Photo by PHGCOM, via Wikimedia Commons.

*Western European handgun, 1380*

fire a second time. Compared to longbows, the early harquebus performed poorly in reliability, rate of fire, and accuracy.

The harquebus found its first niche as a siege weapon, where it replaced the crossbow. Firearms were good weapons for urban militias guarding city walls across Europe. A minimal amount of training was required to use the harquebus effectively on walls, and, although the weapon was more expensive than the crossbow, it was still affordable to the artisans and merchants who belonged to the urban militias. The harquebus was probably introduced to the field armies, which doubled as siege forces, in the context of sieges.

The harquebus served for a time as a useful weapon for defending a fortification, but improvements in gunpowder artillery quickly negated the defensive advantage. Because late medieval iron casting produced a poor product, barrels made of cast iron frequently burst, killing gunners and bystanders. Pieces of better quality were made by forging iron bars arranged in a circle and banded by hot metal hoops that tightened down as they cooled. These hooped bombards were the weapons first associated with the name “cannon,” which came from a Latin word for “tube.” Early cannons, with short barrels and large muzzles, used stone balls. Smaller pieces often were equipped with breech pans, which were loaded in advance and were set in the piece in rapid succession for firing. Another solution to the

poor quality of pieces made with cast iron was to use bronze instead. Europeans were familiar with the casting of bronze bells, and that technology was easily transferred to the making of weapons. The use of bronze allowed gunmakers to manufacture long-barreled pieces with smaller muzzles—called culverins, from a French word for serpent—that were capable of using iron or lead balls. The French led in the development of high-quality culverins and of the gun carriage, with high

wheels and long tail, that defined gun carriages until the nineteenth century. With an artillery train of some eighty bronze culverins on mobile carriages, French king Charles VIII (r. 1483-1498) had great success in reducing Italian fortifications during the initial phase of the Italian Wars of 1494-1559. In the Battle of Fornovo (1495) the French artillery also played a significant role as an effective field weapon.

During the wars in Italy after 1494, field armies began to include harquebusiers. At the Battle of Cerignola (1503) in the French-Spanish war over Naples, the Spanish commander Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba (1453-1515) devised a way to make effective use of harquebusiers by digging trenches in front of their lines. This action transformed the battlefield into a fort and imitated a siege, a situation in which the harquebus had long proven itself. Harquebus fire raked the French forces as they approached the Spanish trenches. Over the next twenty years, the Spanish rapidly increased the number of handgunners in their forces and developed the infantry formation called the “Spanish Square,” in which pikemen and harquebusiers provided mutual support for each other. It remained the dominant infantry system until the beginning of the Thirty Years’ War in 1618.

## VIKING, MAGYAR, AND MUSLIM INVASIONS, NINTH CENTURY



married Gisella, the daughter of the duke of Bavaria, and several German knights in her entourage lent their service to the rising Stephen. After Stephen I's death in 1038, the new kingdom underwent a series of wars for the throne. During the course of these wars, the German emperor invaded three separate times in attempts to put his protégé on the

throne. The kingdom withstood the crisis, but German intervention was a continuing threat until 1077, when László I (r. 1077-1095) came to power. A stabilization of the kingdom occurred under László, who fended off an invasion from the east by the nomadic Cumans. László also added Croatia to the crown through conquest in 1091.



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## MILITARY ORGANIZATION

Even as late as the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600 the Japanese system of military organization differed from the regimental models found in Europe. The main operational unit was the individual daimyo's army. Forces were placed in the field according to family or warlord, and orders were given to each unit's individual leader, often without close coordination with the other field units. This lack of organized communication often caused severe logistical problems.

Unit specialization in the Japanese army was not particularly pronounced. Japanese armies generally consisted of foot soldiers and archers. Japanese horses tended to be small, making Japanese mounted attacks less effective than those of the European knights. Samurai often rode to battle but dismounted to fight; organized cavalry units, then, were not especially popular. Artillery units were also unusual. After Japanese daimyo learned that stone castles were necessary to withstand cannon attacks, all wood castles quickly disappeared. Japanese gunsmiths never really designed siege guns to destroy castle walls. Thus, individual artillery units were also rare.

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## DOCTRINE, STRATEGY, AND TACTICS

The famous battles of the Gempei Wars (1180-1185) and the Japanese Civil Wars (1331-1392) established the strategies and tactics of Japanese warfare that would last for more than two hundred years. Typical military formations employed samurai armed with swords or bows and arrows, peasant foot soldiers armed with pikes, and the occasional mounted samurai cavalry charge. It has been said by some military historians that these battles, for the most part, were little more than mass confusion. Although elaborate and colorful formations were often staged before the battle, no strict patterns were followed in fighting. Struggles often degenerated into numerous one-on-one fights pitting individual soldiers against one another, each man simply trying to



Image via Wikimedia Commons.[Public domain.]

*Tokugawa Ieyasu defeated a coalition of generals and warlords at the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600, unifying Japan.*

stay alive and attempting to decapitate the nearest foe.

This form of battle owed much to the samurai ethos of personal bravery and honor. For example, Daidoji Yuzan (1639-1730), in his book *Budo shoshinshu*, translated as *The Code of the Samurai*, recommended that a true warrior “never neglects the offensive spirit” and that he should follow the proverb “When you leave your gate, act as though the enemy was in sight.” According to the way of the samurai, the public demonstration of one's personal individual honor on the battlefield was more important than large-scale military or geographic objectives. In fact, some samurai even discouraged the study of military strategy altogether. In another famous treatise on the samurai way of life, the *Hagakure*, which translates literally as “in the shadows of leaves,” and is often known as *The Way of the Samurai*, Yamamoto Tsunetomo (1659-1719) argues that “Learning such things as military tactics

# WORLD WAR II

## GERMANY AND ITALY

Dates: 1933-1945

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### POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the years between 1918 and 1933, German armed forces assumed a political posture fundamentally hostile to the young Weimar Republic created at the end of World War I, blaming that state for Germany's humiliating defeat in the war, for its enduring political turmoil and economic problems, and for the perceived fraying of its social fabric. For more than a decade after the end of World War I, the German military tried to circumvent the constraints imposed upon it by the Treaty of Versailles (1919). With that treaty, the victorious Allies had abolished German conscription, limited the size of the German army to 100,000 men (including 5,000 officers) obligated to 12-year terms of service, reduced the German navy to 15,000 men without capital ships or submarines, and forbidden Germany to create and maintain a separate air force. Furthermore, Germany was not allowed to maintain any armor, heavy artillery, nor chemical weapons. The Allies, especially France, clearly intended to limit the role of the German army largely to constabulary duties, thereby preventing the reemergence of any substantial military threat.

The Versailles treaty elicited virtually universal disapproval across the political spectrum in Germany; the armed forces themselves took steps to rearm covertly both within and outside the Reich. The General Staff, forbidden by the Allies, emerged in embryonic form in one of the administrative offices of the army. Men who were trained in the numerous flying clubs that emerged in Germany entered the army to form the core of a future air force. During the 1920's officers tested armored warfare

doctrine and practiced chemical warfare in the Soviet Union, another nation that regarded itself as a pariah in the Versailles settlement. "Police units" began to arm and train secretly, forming what was called the "black Reichswehr," or "black defense force."

Any examination of the German military between 1933 and 1945 must address the central role of Adolf Hitler (1889-1945), who combined the function of chief executive of the Nazi state with that of supreme commander of the armed forces. Consequently, the rise to power of the National Socialist German Workers' (Nazi) Party had profound implications for the armed forces. Hitler, appointed chancellor in January, 1933, had repeatedly and explicitly called for the abolition of the Treaty of Versailles and for the rearmament of Germany. The Nazis espoused a worldview predicated on a virulently racist and anti-Semitic social Darwinist conception of struggle among nations and individuals for resources and power. A perceived racial hierarchy of peoples placed the "Aryan" Germans at the top, the Germanic and Latin peoples of Europe in the middle, non-Europeans and Slavs near the bottom, and Jews in the lowest category. Hitler fervently believed the Jewish people to be the source of capitalism, Socialism, and Marxism, and he felt that the sole intention of the Jews was to corrupt and ultimately destroy the so-called Aryan race. Consequently, he believed, the Aryans had to eliminate the Jews and expand Aryan territory into the Soviet Union in order to survive and flourish. Germany would acquire this "living space" in Eastern Europe only through military conquest, which, in turn, hinged on rapid rearmament and expansion.



Photo by Mehdi Bolourian, via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]

*Captured U.S. RQ-170 Sentinel Drone in Iran.*

advanced military organization to the radicals who were discovered using the drone to attack U.S. positions. During the battle to recapture the city of Mosul, Iraq, which had been occupied by Islamic State (ISIS) forces, there were reports that ISIS militants were using drones to attack the Iraqi army, using mortar rounds fused to the drone bodies to conduct long-range, directed bombing attacks. In 2017, the BBC reported that a \$3 million-dollar Patriot missile was used to shoot down a quadcopter drone that could have been purchased from an online retailer for less than \$200. This incident sparked concerns that the cost of defending against drone attacks may be far more expensive than the cost of securing commercial drones that could be modified to be used as weapons.

In addition to conflicts with nonstate actors, there is the potential for state actors to utilize commercial drones in combat, providing the ability to deny responsibility for attacks and/or surveillance opportunities, and taking advantage of a comparatively inexpensive source of potentially impactful weapons. The use of repurposed commercial drones in the Ukrainian effort to repeal the Russian invasion of their country in 2022 resulted in expansive use of both military and commercial drones by UK forces, revealing the degree to which commercial drones and even hobbyist-quality drones can prove effective as weapons systems even for advanced military organizations.

Existing systems for countering drone strikes include technology that can be used to interfere with radio signals that are used to pilot drones. This technology works by producing signals that interfere with the frequency being used to control or transmit through a specific device. Such technology can be used to crash drones or to interfere with directional cues and the U.S. military and even state agencies have utilized “drone guns” and interference systems to prevent drone attacks. There is also the potential for high-tech “hacking” operations to allow for taking control of enemy drones. This can be done by attacking an Internet connection that is being used to transmit signals to a drone.

In 2011, the Iranian military claimed to have successfully hacked a U.S. RQ-170 Sentinel Drone, which does not carry weapons and it’s a surveillance machine. The U.S. military did not confirm that the Iranian military had successfully taken control of the Sentinel drone, but the potential to use hacking technology to control drones mid-flight is an area of active concern for weapons developers. One of the most high-tech potential avenues in the field of anti-drone combat is the use of high-powered lasers to “blind” drones by interfering with optic sensors, or even to cause damage to flying drones that would enable the drone to be brought down without having to utilize expensive anti-aircraft missiles. While anti-drone laser systems are an active field of development, most of the projects in this vein remain highly classified and little is known about how far this technology has advanced among U.S. military contractors, or potentially around the world.

In addition to military use, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection has noted an increasing use of drones in smuggling operations and by cartels in Mexico. The Department of Homeland Security announced in 2022 that there had been at least 8,000 illegal cross-border drone flights since August of 2021, and that Cartels and criminal organizations were actively using drones to surveil U.S. law enforcement positions. Since 2021, there have also





Photo via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]

*More than 100,000 American and British soldiers landed on the Normandy coast of France during the D-day invasion of June, 1944, overcoming the challenges of an amphibious assault.*

within and among regions account for much of this dynamism.

A range of shifting political and even religious foundations for warring societies may also have played a part in military development. In Mesopotamia, Akkadian king Sargon the Great (c. 2334-2279 B.C.E.) melded the independent, feuding city-states into an empire and created the core of a limited imperial army drawn from throughout the region. In their movement from kingship to functional democracies to imperial subjection, the ancient Greeks shifted from an organization of heroic warriors to a phalanx of citizen shock troops, a force of multiethnic mixed arms with a heavy reliance on cavalry. The Greeks' proximity to and contact with their many neighbors, such as the Persians, Egyptians, Romans, Etruscans, and Carthaginians, resulted in trade, competition, and conflict that necessitated unprecedented innovations. Not least among these areas of development were naval technology and strategy. Rarely outside the West was sustained land and naval competition so fierce and so regular.

Religious considerations drove the Hebrew people to conquer and dominate much of the Levant, and the terrific successes of Islam stemmed far

more from aggressive religious fervor than from military innovation or organization. The conflicting desires to create a territorial Hebrew promised land, to spread the Dar al-Islam, and to reconquer the same promised land for Christian purposes from the Dar al-Islam all speak to the geographic expressions and impulses upon which Western religions as well as political entities have relied. The same religious zeal also applied to the Crusaders who were fighting in terrain that was generally unfamiliar, and in far hotter weather than they were used to in Western Europe.

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## GEOGRAPHIC RESOURCES AND WARFARE

Humans have certain needs for food and shelter that nature must supply. Historically humans largely have occupied a zone of the globe in which climate is conducive to food crops and extremes in temperature and weather are minimal. Some communities shifted from hunting and gathering to herding or domesticating animals and cultivating the soil. After settling in one place, people began to create and store food surpluses and to build permanent shelters. People who remained wanderers (nomadic peoples) or who were perhaps displaced from their own settlements preyed upon these centers of primitive wealth, necessitating the construction of defensive walls and the earliest cities.

Although cattle raids among the Irish, described in the Irish epic *Táin bó Cúailnge* (late eleventh or early twelfth century; the driving off of the cows of Cooley) exemplify the precivilized expression of tribal rivalry, struggles over cultivated lands and the cities they sustained typified warfare in the ancient world. Surplus in food led to the creation of other forms of valuables through specialization of labor. In some of these settings, warriors stood apart from cultivators, protecting them and living off their labor. In others, the cultivators themselves served as soldiers, denying a basic class distinction. In either case, the initial impulse was defensive, although in



# ART AND WARFARE

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## OVERVIEW

“War art” is a form of artistic expression with warfare as its subject. Historians of art as well as military historians have traditionally interpreted war art in purely mimetic terms, defining it by what they believed it represented: the timeless essence of war. This understanding of war art led to studies that focused on the continuity of the representation of war throughout the ages rather than on culturally specific differences. More recent studies of war art have begun to acknowledge that both war and art are expressions of specific times and places, and scholars are finally acknowledging the role of cultural change in shaping the understanding of both art and war.

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## SIGNIFICANCE

The cultural turn in the study of war art is important for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that it forces a reconsideration of the complex relationships among art, war, and culture. Furthermore, this change of focus in regard to war art leads to increased reflection on the understanding of change and continuity throughout time. War art has followed a progression over a broad expanse of time, from the ancient world to the present day. The discussion of this progression below is far from comprehensive, but it offers a window into key moments in the evolution of war art.

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## HISTORY OF ART AND WARFARE

### ANCIENT WORLD

Visual representations of war first appeared around 4000 B.C.E. in cave paintings later uncovered in

northern Australia; these paintings show what are believed to be groups of warriors hurling spears at each other. War art did not become prolific, however, until the emergence of the Sumerian culture in Mesopotamia (c. 4000-2340 B.C.E.) and the cultures of ancient Egypt (c. 2920-1070 B.C.E.). The artifact known as the Royal Standard of Ur or the Standard of Ur (c. 2600-2400 B.C.E.) shows the chariots of the Sumerian king’s army returning to him with the spoils of war, including prisoners, while the king stands motionless at the center of the top panel of this three paneled work. The king’s position in the image highlights his absolute power; all things begin and end with him. The ancient Egyptian artifact known as the Palette of King Narmer (c. 3150-3125 B.C.E.) conveys a similar message of imperial power, but here the king is seen taking direct action: He holds his enemy with one hand while preparing to strike with the other.

Later cultural productions from Greece and Rome did not differ greatly in message from these earlier works, but they moved toward a more sophisticated representation of warfare. The north frieze of the Treasury of the Siphnians, located at Delphi in Greece, is known as the Battle of the Gods and Giants (c. 530 B.C.E.). Despite the mythical subject of this work of art, viewers can envision the battle with much greater facility than they can with such earlier representations of war as the Royal Standard of Ur. Men engage in hand-to-hand fighting in this scene, using swords and spears, and an animal is even depicted biting into the side of one of the soldiers. The realistic portrayal of mythical battles was continued by the Romans, but they began to include elements of more recent history in their war art as well. One example of this Roman method of representation can be found in the *Ara Pacis Augustae* (c. 13-9 B.C.E.), a large sculpted marble altar that was commissioned by the Emperor



Photo via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]

John Wayne in *The Longest Day*, 1962.

of Austerlitz and Waterloo. A film adaptation of Leo Tolstoy's *Voyna i mir* (1865-1869; *War and Peace*, 1886) was released in 1956 (an Italian-U.S. coproduction), and in 1963-1966 Soviet director Sergei Bondarchuk adapted the work into a four-part series that stands as the most expensive film ever made. In 2003, Russell Crowe starred in *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World*, a historically detailed adaptation of three Patrick O'Brian novels about Napoleonic maritime warfare.

The Texas War of Independence (1835-1836) has been depicted in many films, including John Wayne's cinematically impressive, historically dubious *The Alamo* (1960) and a 2004 revisionist remake showing the viewpoints of both armies. The Crimean War (1853-1856) inspired Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "The Charge of the Light Brigade" (1854), a poem that has been adapted for two films, a 1936 Warner Bros. adventure starring Errol Flynn and a 1968 British remake. The Indian Rebellion of 1857 provided pro-British colonial warfare for the Hollywood adventure films *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer* (1936) and *Gunga Din* (1939).

The American Civil War was initially represented by Hollywood blockbusters based on pro-Confederate novels. The silent era was revolutionized technically by D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* (1915), featuring political and racial stereotypes solidified decades later by David O. Selznick's nostalgic *Gone with the Wind* (1939), which includes some brief scenes of wartime devastation, such as its towering crane shot showing a sea of

wounded Confederate soldiers on the streets of Atlanta.

John Huston's 1951 adaptation of Stephen Crane's 1895 novel *The Red Badge of Courage* includes some anachronistic weaponry, but its focus on a young soldier (World War II hero Audie Murphy) horrified by the reality of war was one of the first realistic portrayals of the conflict on film. The Civil War has energized countless Westerns, including Sergio Leone's "spaghetti" epic *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* (1966), with Clint Eastwood braving battles while searching for buried Confederate gold. *Glory* (1989), Edward Zwick's powerful, semifactual film about the African American Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, has been praised for providing an antidote to the falsehoods of *Gone with the Wind*.

Western war films often feature (highly stylized) battles between whites and Native Americans. Raoul Walsh's fictionalized film about the life of George A. Custer, *They Died with Their Boots On* (1941), became a heroic vehicle for Errol Flynn, while John Ford depicted several battles in his "cavalry trilogy": *Fort Apache* (1948), *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1949), and *Rio Grande* (1950).

Prior to the U.S. government's establishment of propaganda policy during World War I, feature films created support for the military. *The Brand of Cowardice* (1916) and *The Deserter* (1916) both depicted American men who became like treacherous "foreigners" when they refused to fight. After President Woodrow Wilson declared war in April, 1917, the Committee on Public Information exerted a control over fiction films that was more important than that directed toward the "documentaries" being produced. The most extensive federal involvement in Hollywood films came from the Department of Publicity for the Fourth Liberty Loan Drive. Criticized for his pacifism, actor, writer, and director Charles Chaplin "did his part" by supporting the Third and Fourth Loans, then combined propaganda with comedy in *Shoulder Arms* (1918).

Hollywood's first World War I epic, *The Big Parade* (1925), opens in stereotypical fashion with

Certainly, Caesar and the Romans also understood the need to terrify people who opposed the Romans, and they did this by their triumphal marches through Rome, after which large numbers of captives were murdered in public, while some of their number were allowed to return home to tell people of the horrors they had seen and the mighty power of the Romans. Similar tactics would be followed by countless armies throughout history.

### **MEDIEVAL WORLD**

In Europe during the “Dark Ages” and the later medieval period, there are many examples of wanton cruelty to terrorize people. During the Viking raids on England in the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries, the tactic of desecrating the spread-eagle bodies of the dead served to frighten their opponents; likewise, the Mongols, Saracens, and Crusaders sacked whole cities in the expectation that other cities would quickly surrender.

Since ancient times, people had lived in fortified settlements throughout the world, and this continued into the Middle Ages as a defensive measure against both invasions and civil wars. Castles were built to provide protection, and hence were regarded as comforting symbols of safety, but also to intimidate, and thus could also be seen as signs of oppression. The motte-and-bailey castles in Norman England, and the great castles built by Edward I in Wales were intended to overawe the population and show them who ruled the regions where they were built.

Hatred of people from rival kingdoms was combined with the concept of treason: the support of war against one’s own rulers. In many cases, wars clearly wreaked havoc on the ordinary people, especially those in unprotected villages. Attacks by English raiders traumatized Joan of Arc during her childhood, and the earlier persecution of the Cathars in southern France was conducted with such ferocity that its aim was clearly to create trauma in those who harbored “heretical” or unpopular beliefs, or who supported those who did.

### **MODERN WORLD**

During the Renaissance, there were efforts on the part of theorists and philosophers to rationalize and advocate this use of terror in war. Niccolò Machiavelli wrote about this, and Cesare Borgia practiced it. There were also clear campaigns of hatred against individual groups of people, especially Jews, who were blamed for many conflicts and other troubles during early modern Europe. In other cases the scapegoats were Protestants (as in the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre in 1572) or Catholics (as in the English Civil War of the 1640’s). Oliver Cromwell’s destruction of Drogheda and Wexford also served to traumatize the people in Ireland into submission. Moreover, one should not exclude the actions of the Spanish in the Americas or the many European countries involved in the slave trade.

Throughout western Russia, in Flanders, and in many other parts of the world, fortified homesteads and farms were the norm until the early twentieth century. This sense of being potentially under attack at any time did much to affect the lives and lifestyles of these populations, who spent much of their lives worrying about when the next war might erupt. The French writer Guy de Maupassant’s short story about the elderly lady trapping a Prussian soldier in her cellar reflects the effects such wars had on ordinary people.

If the trauma from war became well known in modern times, so also were modern governments able to harness the will of their own people in wartime by demonizing their opponents. William Randolph Hearst was able to use his newspapers to whip up a frenzy over war between the United States and Spain; and Joseph Goebbels in Nazi Germany ran the propaganda ministry, dedicated to getting people to follow the dictates of a government leading its people into war. Hatred of the enemy—whether blamed on the alleged behavior of the German soldiers in Belgium in 1914 or the anti-Semitism that was to lead to the Holocaust—must be counted among the psychological effects of war.

As to the soldiers themselves, until World War I little was known about what became called “shell



that was both religious and humanitarian, but not specifically tied to any one sectarian group, emerged under the leadership of New England sea captain and former Harvard graduate William Ladd (1778-1841). Perhaps the world's first national peace organization, the American Peace Society coordinated activities among the fifty or so peace groups. In England, the London Peace Society led the way, composed mainly of Quakers. On the European continent, moreover, the ideas for the establishment of permanent arbitration tribunals and a federation of nations advocated by thinkers such as Pierre Dubois (c. 1255-c. 1312) and the Abbé de Saint-Pierre (1658-1743) were widely popularized. The Holy Alliance of Czar Alexander I also seemed to be an indication that such ideas might be workable. In large measure, nineteenth century organized peace movements were products of the United States and Great Britain and would remain so for much of the twentieth century as well.

One of the most important advocates of peace during this period was the “Learned Blacksmith” from Connecticut, Elihu Burritt (1810-1879). During the Oregon Crisis between Britain and the United States in the mid-1840's, Burritt, cooperated with Friends and other peace activists in England in an exchange of “friendly addresses.” This exchange was carried out between British and American cities and involved merchants, ministers, laborers, and women. Burritt himself carried two “friendly addresses”—with impressive lists of signatures—one from Edinburgh, Scotland, and another from women of Exeter, England, to Washington, D.C., where Senator John C. Calhoun and other senators applauded this “popular handshaking” across the Atlantic. In addition, Burritt founded the largest and most uncompromising non-sectarian pacifist organization yet known among Western peace seekers: the League of Universal Brotherhood. By 1850, this “world peace society”



Photo via Wikimedia Commons. [Public domain.]

*A female demonstrator offers a flower to military police on guard at the Pentagon during an anti-Vietnam demonstration. Arlington, Virginia, USA, October 1967.*

had collected seventy thousand British and American signatures for its pledge of complete disavowal of war.

In the aftermath of the American Civil War (1861-1865), European peacemaking efforts had a profound impact on the American quest to eliminate war. Attempts to promote the importance of international law in Europe occurred roughly at the same time that the American Peace Society began widespread propaganda for arbitration. Sir Randal Cremer (1828-1908), a tireless British peace advocate and labor organizer who was instrumental in furthering Anglo-American arbitration negotiations, organized a vast peace congress in Paris in 1878. With spokespersons from thirteen countries, this congress called for a court of arbitration and for an international commission to estimate the armaments of each nation. The congress placed emphasis on the cost of wars to workers and the need for strike action to prevent war, proposing that the