

A General Typology of Transcultural Wars: The Early Middle Ages and Beyond

Introduction

This article attempts to develop a general typology of transcultural wars in as broad and theoretical way as possible. My examples will be drawn primarily from early medieval European warfare (up to c. 1200, and sometimes from beyond Europe in this chronological era), but as the references to other articles in this collection will try to show, I aim at a general typology that transcends this chronological limit.¹

Terms and Concepts

Constructing a typology of transcultural warfare requires first that we have some working notion of what we mean by *culture* and how cultural boundaries can affect the conduct of war. This is of course not an easy first step, given the multiple vectors along which personal identity can be and historically has been constructed, and may be more problematic for the early middle ages, an era long before nationalism in its various guises appeared to dominate the stage of (international) identity formation. If we are strict enough about what counts as a unitary culture, all wars will count as transcultural, which would make a typology of them pointless.

Pragmatically, we can probably make a distinction between *Big Cultures* on the one hand and *Subcultures*, component segments of Big Cultures, on the other. The former consist of broad areas sharing major cultural features ranging from basic ecological and subsistence patterns and material culture to broadly shared aspects of world view—religion, philosophy, perhaps even cultures of war. The latter will share some (perhaps many or most) of these features with other subcultures of the same Big Culture but differ from them in a few respects that (at least in some contexts) appear crucial to the members of the different subcultures.²

Subcultures may themselves be made up of their own subcultures, and the boundaries between subcultures cannot be conceived of as fixed. Rather, subcultures must be seen as malleable socio-cultural constructions whose boundaries shift constantly in response to political, ecological,

¹ I would like to thank Hans-Henning Kortüm and the other organizers of the “Transcultural Wars from the Middle Ages to the 21st Century” conference at the University of Regensburg in March–April 2004 for inviting me to participate, and to thank them and the other participants at the conference for stimulating discussions that have informed revisions of my article.

² This rough-and-ready definition of culture and cultural boundaries may be supplemented with the definitions and references cited by Bernhard Kroener in this volume, below [p. 000] and [n. xxx].

and other circumstances, sometimes through slow processes of identity formation across large parts of the local population, but sometimes in response to active construction of local cultural identities by community leaders or would-be leaders. Big Cultures were undoubtedly less subject to conscious manipulation due to their scope; still, they too should be seen not as "natural" entities but as the sum across time and space of local culture formations interacting in ways that tended towards convergent acculturation.

Transcultural is therefore a term that refers to processes that cross these constructed cultural boundaries, whether between Big Cultures or between sub-cultures; transcultural processes may thus be contrasted with *intracultural* processes that do not cross such boundaries. Given the multiplicity and shifting nature of such boundaries, transcultural processes can occur in many ways at many levels of cultural difference. One of those ways, of course, was war. But defining *transcultural war* as war that crossed cultural boundaries may be too simple. Our definition of transcultural warfare should account not just for war crossing cultural boundaries, but to the perception of such crossings by the participants themselves and the effect of these perceptions on warfare. Let me thus suggest a definition of ***transcultural war as war in which perceptions of cultural difference influenced the conduct of war, altering it significantly from the patterns of intra-cultural war.*** This definition depends crucially on the notions of cultural identity expressed by the participants, whether in actions or words. It also implies that not all cultural differences will matter in generating transcultural warfare. Two societies might have different cultures in many respects, including language, ethnicity, and so forth, but if they share a common diplomatic and military culture, warfare between them will likely not be transcultural.

A Typology of Wars and Cultures

Combining this definition with our discussion of cultures suggests that there are two types of transcultural wars, in addition to the "base" category of intra-cultural wars. First, what I will call *intercultural wars*: wars between Big Cultures. Second, what I will call *subcultural wars*: wars between sub-cultures of the same Big Culture (or indeed between subcultures of the same larger subculture). I will discuss both of these types, as well as intracultural warfare as a baseline of comparison, in terms of four sets of characteristics: the relationship between opposing forces in each type; the geopolitical settings within which each type tended to occur; the conventions of conflict (or lack thereof) that appear in each; and the diachronic trend in terms of cultural interaction that each type of warfare leads to.

Intracultural warfare. In 1119, King Henry I of England, with 500 *milites*, fought King Louis VI of France, with 400 *milites*, at Brémule. Henry won, securing the Norman frontier and capturing many French knights in the process. Only three soldiers died in the battle, for as Orderic Vitalis explains, the strength of their helmets protected them (indeed, Henry took a blow to the head that his helmet deflected) and “they spared each other on both sides out of fear of God and fellowship in arms”.³ Not to mention that it was more profitable to ransom captured foes than to kill them.

Here we have a fine example of intracultural warfare. It is characterized by mutual comprehension, however hostile relations might be in the course of the war. Henry and Louis understood each other, understood what each was after by going to war, and understood that the other also understood. Though they could be considered as coming from different subcultures of northwest European culture—Normans, especially Anglo-Normans, were happy to distinguish themselves as a *gens* separate from the French when it suited their purposes⁴—in military terms they shared a culture. In other words, sub-cultures might engage in intra-cultural warfare if the cultural characteristics distinguishing them did not affect their conduct of war with each other.

Brémule also serves to illustrate one of the sorts of setting in which intracultural warfare took place: systems of polities that inhabited a common diplomatic and military cultural space. Warfare within closed cultural systems, even without separate polities, and elite-driven civil warfare within a closed polity whose ultimate legitimacy is accepted by the factions involved also generate intracultural warfare.⁵

Such warfare, as at Brémule, is marked by accepted conventions of conflict, conventions that can generate greater or lesser degrees of ritual associated with or as part of combat.⁶ Tactics, too, are conventional, with weapons and soldier types closely associated with, indeed symbolic of, the military culture the combatants share.⁷ Accepted conventions extend to constructions of bravery

³ Orderic Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History*, ed. and trans. Marjorie Chibnall (Oxford, 1978), 6 vols., 6: 234-42, quote at p. 241.

⁴ See, e.g., Emily Albu, *The Normans in their Histories: Propaganda, Myth and Subversion* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001); G.A. Loud, “Gens Normannorum: myth or reality”, *Anglo-Norman Studies* 4 (1981), 104-16.

⁵ I discuss such conditions and their impact on strategy in Stephen Morillo, “Battle Seeking: The Contexts and Limits of Vegetian Strategy”, *Journal of Medieval Military History* 1 (2002), 21-41.

⁶ David Bachrach, *Religion and the Conduct of War c.300-1215* (Woodbridge, 2003), esp. Ch. 3, analyzes some of these rites and rituals.

⁷ The sword as the symbol of knightly prowess (sometimes named, as in “Excalibur”) is an obvious example of this phenomenon in Europe; in Japan, the *bushi* way of life was known as “The Way of the Bow and Arrow” until the cult of the sword

and cowardice, shaping the behavior of combatants before, during and after battle.⁸ The conventions also cover the treatment of prisoners and non-combatants, as with the ransoming that motivated knights to capture rather than kill their opponents at Brémule. Conventional treatment does not necessarily mean good treatment, of course: the conventional treatment of peasants by elite warriors was everywhere brutal,⁹ and the convention among twelfth century Japanese elite warriors was not capture and ransom of each other but slaughter of prisoners (or suicide before capture, a practice virtually unknown in medieval Europe) followed by the hunting down and killing of all surviving family members.¹⁰ The latter included women, and treatment of female non-combatants is also both subject to conventional constructions and limitations, but, like the treatment of peasants, often brutal even in intracultural warfare.¹¹

Finally, intracultural warfare is marked by outcomes mediated as much or more by diplomacy as by the results of campaigns and combat. Or, as when elite civil war produced a decisive winner, the victory still has to be legitimized in some way by the larger culture within which the war had taken place. The diachronic trend of intracultural warfare, therefore, especially in the absence of "shocks" to the system from outside, is to enact and so reinforce the cultural norms governing warfare and the broader culture. A second possible outcome of prolonged intracultural war, however, especially in cases of indecisive civil war or polarization of a previously multi-polar cultural-political system, is the heightening of conflict to subcultural levels, as defined below; the

came to dominate in the Tokugawa period: G. Cameron Hurst III, *Armed Martial Arts of Japan: Swordsmanship and Archery*, (New Haven, 1998), p. 103.

⁸ I analyze constructions of cowardice in medieval combat in Stephen Morillo, "Expecting Cowardice: Medieval Battle Tactics Reconsidered", *Journal of Medieval Military History* 4 (forthcoming).

⁹ See Matthew Strickland in this volume (below, [p. 000]). This "conventional" treatment of peasants (and, indeed, merchants) in medieval Europe and in other societies dominated by warrior elites from another perspective reflects the cultural divide separating elites from subject populations in traditional societies, making "conflict" (often very one-sided) between these two groups a form of subcultural warfare (see below). The modern corollary of this might be the divide between the professional soldiers of modern industrial states and their civilian populations; as Hew Strachan points out in this volume (below, [p. 000]) modern armies (perhaps from as early as the late 18th century) shared a culture of war that gave their formal wars an intracultural character even when the broader cultures were different (Sepoy armies in late 18th century India were part of this culture, for example), but that made subcultural wars out of conflicts between soldiers and civilians, as in the Iberian resistance to Napoleon.

¹⁰ Stephen Morillo, "Cultures of Death: Warrior Suicide in Europe and Japan", *The Medieval History Journal* 4, 2 (2001), 241-257.

¹¹ Gender, like class, constituted another potential cultural divide that could split what might casually look like a unitary culture, while gender roles and expectations of women also often marked divisions between Big Cultures. The treatment of women as non-combatants can therefore be another marker of the character of different wars: see the contributions to this volume by Corinne Saunders and Birgit Beck below, [p. 000 and 000], and more generally Joshua Goldstein, *War and Gender* (Cambridge, 2001).

drawing of subcultural boundaries that accompany such shifts often seems, from a perspective outside the cultural system, arbitrary or overblown.¹²

Intracultural warfare can thus transform over time into one variant of transcultural warfare. Both types of transcultural warfare differ from intracultural warfare and from each other in each of the four characteristics already noted: relationship of the opponents, geo-political and cultural setting, conventions of conflict and treatment of non-combatants, and the diachronic cultural-political trend such warfare tended to produce.

Intercultural warfare. In 1241, Mongol armies approached the gates of Venice and Vienna, having already conquered Russia and defeated armies of Poles and Hungarians. Western European leaders were in a panic, not knowing what to make of this new and unexpected menace.¹³ Though western Europe was spared from further warfare with the Mongols by the death of the Great Khan, it had glimpsed the unsettling experience of intercultural war, or war across the boundaries separating Big Cultures. The pastoralist nomads of central Asia differed from western Europeans in their basic mode of subsistence, their social organization, and in nearly every aspect of their cultural practices and world view, including their styles and ethos of war.¹⁴ The result typified intercultural warfare in being characterized by mutual incomprehension (or at least semi-mutual incomprehension, for the Mongols were masters of intelligence and knew more about sedentary civilizations in general and western Europe in particular than their victims knew of them). In other words, one or both sides fundamentally misunderstand each other in basic ways, failing to comprehend the goals, motivations and methods of their enemy. The opponents in intercultural warfare therefore often think themselves engaged in warfare with non-humans, variously conceived of as savage sub-human barbarians or beings capable of superhuman feats—indeed sometimes both at the same time.¹⁵

¹² Examples of this could include the breakdown of the classical Greek conventions of limited phalanx warfare in the run-up to the Peloponnesian War (on which see Victor Davis Hanson, *The Western Way of War* [New York, 1989]), or the mutual demonization through propaganda of the opponents in World War I, who arguably entered the war expecting a short, intracultural conflict, but found themselves in a life or death struggle requiring the mobilization of emotional resources in the population available only against subcultural enemies.

¹³ J.J. Saunders, *The Mongol Conquests* (Philadelphia, 2001) offers a good narrative of this episode.

¹⁴ See, among others, Rene Grousset, *Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia* (Rutgers, NJ, 1997), David Morgan, *The Mongols* (Cambridge, 1990). See also the comments by Andrew Ayton in this volume, below, [p. 000].

¹⁵ Typical of this reaction is Ammianus Marcellinus’ description of the Huns: “They all have compact, strong limbs and thick necks, and are so monstrously ugly and misshapen, that one might take them for two-legged beasts or for the stumps, rough-hewn into images, that are used in putting sides to bridges. But although they have the form of men, however ugly, they are so hardy in their mode of life that they have no need of fire nor of savory food, but eat the roots of wild plants and the half-raw flesh of any

Intercultural warfare thus lacks any mutually accepted conventions of conflict or ritual element. When the Mongols invaded Japan in 1274, the Kamakura *bushi* opened their attack on the Mongol landing force with their usual ritual name announcing and the firing of a single whistling arrow. The display merely sent the disciplined Mongol troopers into gales of laughter.¹⁶ Instead, intercultural warfare usually witnessed the clash of very different tactical systems and strategic expectations. One Mongol advantage in Russia was their ability, unexpected and in violation of all Russian expectation, to campaign in winter, which actually increased their mobility by allowing them to cross frozen rivers.

Sometimes such systemic disparities produce a disproportionate advantage for one side, as for the Mongols in Russia, or as with the German advantage on their own eastern frontier against the Slavs in the tenth and eleventh centuries, an advantage that resulted as much from more complex political organization as from strictly military asymmetries.¹⁷ But often such disparities simply produce problems for both sides. The First Crusade saw Turks and Franks alike, the former like the Mongols a version of central Asian nomadic horse archers, struggle to adapt their own styles of warfare to their foes' strengths and weaknesses.¹⁸

Lack of convention and comprehension play havoc with expectations of bravery and cowardice in intercultural warfare. In the First Crusade, for example, Frankish conventions of bravery, especially their eagerness for face-to-face combat, appeared rash, foolhardy, but at times unbelievably intimidating to Turks and Byzantines alike—Anna Comnena remarks on the charge of their heavy cavalry that “a mounted Kelt is irresistible; he would bore his way through the walls of Babylon.”¹⁹ Conversely, both Byzantine strategic craftiness and the Turkish use of feigned retreats struck the Franks as cowardly, though it was the very expectation of Turkish cowardice by the

kind of animal whatever, which they put between their thighs and the backs of their horses, and thus warm it a little...” Ammianus Marcellinus, *Res Gestae* 31.2 (available at <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/ammianus/31.shtml>); translation by Michael Pavkovic and Stephen Morillo.

¹⁶ Stephen Turnbull, *The Samurai: A Military History* (New York, 1977), p. 83; Morris Rossabi, *Khubilai Khan* (Berkeley, 1988), p. 102, also stresses the unfamiliarity of Mongol tactics to the Japanese.

¹⁷ Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe* (Princeton, NJ, 1993), has a good analysis of the processes shaping this frontier, though see the remarks on the military aspect of Bartlett's general thesis by Michael Prestwich in this volume, below, [p. 000].

¹⁸ R.C. Smail, *Crusading Warfare, 1097-1193* (Cambridge, 1956); John France, *Victory in the East: A Military History of the First Crusade* (Cambridge, 1994).

¹⁹ Anna Comnena, *The Alexiad*, trans E.R.A. Sewter (New York, 1969), p. 416; on Frankish rashness see pp. 308, 313, and *passim*.

Franks that made Turkish feigned retreats effective.²⁰ In general, intercultural warfare seems to produce heightened fears of enemy bravery, balanced by heightened contempt and expectations of cowardice if the fears proved unfounded; more generally, it produces uncertainty concerning the incomprehensible Other that leads to wider variations of battlefield behavior both brave and cowardly than in intracultural war.

Uncertainty and incomprehension also undermine conventions for the treatment of prisoners and non-combatants in intercultural war. Sometimes, the stresses of battlefield uncertainty found an outlet in excessive brutality towards non-combatants: the bloody sack of Jerusalem by the Crusaders in 1098 comes to mind in this context.²¹ Similarly brutal but far more calculated was the use of terror tactics—the slaughtering of entire urban populations or villages to discourage future resistance—a technique abundantly attested for the Mongols, but also deployed occasionally by western Europeans on their pagan frontiers. But such brutality is not the rule; rather, expedience and pragmatism produce a wide range of policies towards non-combatants and prisoners. The Mongols, again, were happy to employ members of conquered populations with special skills, whether Chinese military engineers in Persia or Persian bureaucrats in China, as suited their purposes.

One reason for this pragmatism is that the diachronic trend of intercultural warfare is to produce mutual acculturation, thus transforming regular intercultural warfare into either intra- or subcultural warfare (and perhaps replacing war with less violent forms of cultural interaction). Crusading warfare became steadily less intercultural over time: witness the emergence of a Frankish image of Saladin as a chivalrous warrior, an imposition of values that speaks to growing, if not completely accurate, mutual comprehension. Or note the transformation of pagan north-men into Normans²² and the transformation of originally nomadic Magyars into Hungarians—an example

²⁰ See e.g. Fulcher of Chartres' description of the siege and battle of Nicaea in E. Peters, ed., *The First Crusade*, 2nd edn. (Philadelphia, 1998), pp. 63-67; Morillo, "Expecting Cowardice".

²¹ Peters, *First Crusade*, p. 91. See also the extended comments on treatment of non-combatants in the Crusades by Strickland below, [p. 000] and the analysis of images of the enemy in the Crusades by Hannes Möhring in this volume, below, [p. 000].

²² See sources in note 2, as well as D. Bates, *Normandy before 1066* (London, 1982) and E. Searle, *Predatory Kinship and the Creation of Norman Power* (Berkeley, 1988). Note also Alfred the Great's conversion-based diplomacy with the Vikings: Richard Abels, "Peace Making with Vikings: the Anglo-Saxon Experience", in Philip DeSouza and John France, eds., *War and Peace in Ancient and Medieval History* (Cambridge, forthcoming) and more generally *Alfred the Great. War, Kingship and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* (London, 1998).

pregnant with irony for the Hungarian loss to the Mongols in 1240.²³ Such acculturation was often the result of conscious efforts, including religious conversion, marriage alliances, and the broader spectrum of economic and intellectual exchanges that developed along many frontiers.²⁴ On the other hand, conscious efforts at acculturating a defeated intercultural foe can produce conscious resistance, with the defeated constructing a subcultural identity (sometimes through warfare) against the conquerors’ imposition of intracultural unity. The history of Norman conquests in Wales and Ireland may be read in this light.²⁵

Subcultural warfare. This brings us to my second type of transcultural warfare, war between subcultures of a larger subculture or Big Culture. This type of warfare features neither mutual comprehension nor incomprehension, but mutual anti-comprehension: that is, the willful construction of an understood foe as an incarnation of evil, or more practically as maliciously motivated underminers of order, whether socio-political, cosmic, or both. Thus, unlike intercultural foes who are seen as non-humans, subcultural foes are seen as worse: they are devils or fallen humans in league with devils. Note the difference in attitude medieval defenders of orthodox Catholicism displayed towards heathens versus heretics. The hope was to convert the former, defeating them first in battle if necessary, but not in order to exterminate them, only to convince them of the error of their ways. The latter, having rejected a Truth already known to them, were the greater threat, and the hope was to exterminate them.²⁶

The setting for this type of warfare is thus conflict that crosses intra-cultural fault lines. Not all such fault lines and the political, social or cultural disputes and conflicts that crossed them produce subcultural warfare. Rather, the fault lines crossed have to be fairly fundamental ones to the self-identity of the larger culture, particularly to its elite constructors—class, religion, and ethnicity being the most common—such that protecting the dominant construction of the culture

²³ Discussed further by Ayton, below, [p. 000].

²⁴ Compare Anglo-Welsh relations along the Welsh border, as detailed in F.C. Suppe, *Military Institutions on the Welsh Marches: Shropshire, A.D. 1066-1300*, Studies in Celtic History, Vol. 14 (Woodbridge, 1994) with Chinese relations with their various steppe-nomadic neighbors: T. Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China* (Oxford, 1992).

²⁵ J. Gillingham and R.A. Griffiths, *Medieval Britain: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2002); Strickland, below, [p. 000]. Much of the history of colonialism generally, especially the deployment of nationalism by colonized peoples against its European inventors in the 20th century, also illustrates this process; see Strachan (below, [p. 000]), who notes that “the two world wars of the twentieth century broke down the distinction between Europe and the rest of the world.”

²⁶ Another way of seeing the distinction between intercultural and subcultural wars, contra Kroener (below, [p. 000]), who emphasizes a one-sided view of inclusion in a legal system as a marker of all transcultural wars, is that if an enemy breaks rules that he should know, he’s a subcultural enemy; if he breaks rules he has no way of knowing, he’s an intercultural enemy.

against alternate visions becomes a military necessity. In effect, a challenge from within a culture to established order has to rise to a level of threat worthy of an armed response to produce subcultural warfare.²⁷ This also assumes that the purveyors of the alternate construction are capable of armed defense of their position. Societies such as those of medieval Europe, in which the state possesses nothing even approaching a monopoly on the legitimate use of force, are probably more likely to see outbreaks of true warfare of the subcultural variety than are societies in which the state monopolizes the means of violence. In state dominated societies, subcultural conflicts are more likely to be either suppressed²⁸ or channeled into more legalistic and peaceful methods of dispute resolution.²⁹ This highlights the fact that much subcultural war occurs in the context of politically divided but culturally unified geo-political systems in which there is no mechanism for dispute resolution backed by a central authority capable of imposing its decisions by force, leaving warfare as the disputants' only option.³⁰

Rather than obviating conventions of conflict as intercultural warfare does, subcultural warfare tends to heighten them, as both sides compete in symbolic terms for the legitimacy and cosmic reinforcement such conventions convey. This was especially true when internecine religious divides provoked conflict. Thus, for example, the presence of papal representatives and the increased resort to pre-battle prayers and masses by Simon de Montfort's forces during the

²⁷ Ayton (below, [p. 000]) presents a nuanced analysis of the fluidity of cultural boundaries and their impact on the conduct of warfare in the Balkans. His fascinating application of network theory to the structure of medieval societies and the primary groups of the armies they raised illuminates some of the possible mechanisms by which questions of individual and small group cultural identity were transmitted to larger structures, military, social and political. I would suggest that "primary groups", the basic units of armies in all ages, may be either "natural" (arising organically from the social connections of the society raising armed force) or "artificial" (created within the specialized culture of a professional armed force), and that analysis of the differences between these types could yield fruitful insights into cultures of war and the multivalent connection between intracultural, intercultural and subcultural warfare; I will be making a first pass at such an analysis in an article forthcoming in a festschrift for Bernard Bachrach.

²⁸ As they tended to be for example in Imperial China, except during periods of Imperial breakdown, or in the USSR and the Warsaw Pact countries before 1989; the removal of the restraining power of a dominant state in the latter case allowed the re-emergence in the Balkans of subcultural conflicts dating back to Ottoman times and before (as per Ayton).

²⁹ Modern democracy is the prevalent example of such a mechanism, and democratic processes are most challenged when intense cultural disputes that might once have been settled by (or at least disputed via) warfare seem unsatisfactorily resolvable at the ballot box to one side or both. The bombing of abortion clinics in the United States in the last 15 years would have been, in a decentralized and militarized society, the opening shots of a real, as opposed to a metaphoric, Culture War.

³⁰ I would argue that almost all warfare since 1989 has tended towards the subcultural type. No culture capable of waging war effectively is so strange as to pose an intercultural challenge (except perhaps for terrorist organizations, on which see further below), and most intracultural disputes, even international ones over trade and so forth, are channeled into non-violent mechanisms of dispute resolution. This is necessary because of the overwhelming cost of modern warfare, and possible because of a globally shared culture of legitimate political interaction mediated by organizations such as the United Nations, the World Court, GATT, and so forth. Cultural differences of course remain at other levels of interaction, but are not expressible through warfare, again with the possible exception of terrorism.

Albigensian Crusade.³¹ At other times, however, conflict across classes could throw into hard relief the hidden limitations, often class-based, of intracultural conventions of conflict. The Battle of Bouvines in 1214 resembles in many of its parts a larger version of Brémule a century earlier, for example: knights fought each other seriously, but with room for surrenders, captures, and an eye to later ransoms. But in the later stages of the battle, when the French chivalry surrounded the allied mercenary infantry, mostly of common (non-knightly), non-French and urban origin, no quarter was given or asked and the slaughter was extensive.³² Certainly practicality influenced this outcome a bit, as such soldiers could not be profitably ransomed. But class (as well as ethnic) hostility played a larger role, as is shown nearly a century later still at Courtrai in 1302, where this time it was the Flemish urban infantry unexpectedly slaughtering very ransomable French noble cavalry and keeping their golden spurs as trophies, giving the battle its alternate name. The spurs themselves represent a conspicuous display of nobility in the face of a revolt consisting largely of non-knightly elements.³³

Similarly, the symbolically heightened rituals of subcultural warfare heighten conventional expectations of bravery and cowardice and tend to dichotomize them more than in intracultural warfare: one's own side is expected to fight more bravely, both because of the greater stakes involved in terms of cosmic order and because the costs of defeat are likely to be more dangerous personally, and aspersions were more likely to be cast upon the bravery of the enemy. The minor battle of Ystrad Antarron in 1116 between a Welsh raiding party and the garrison of an Anglo-Norman held castle illustrates both of these tendencies. In the event, the Anglo-Norman commander, Razo the Steward, successfully used Welsh expectations of "French" cowardice to pull off a rare feigned retreat by infantry.³⁴

Prisoners and non-combatants are likely to suffer more in subcultural warfare than in either intra- or intercultural warfare. Slaughter usually replaces the taking of prisoners, those taken prisoner face likely execution, and non-combatants face consistent and planned brutality because

³¹ D. Bachrach, *Religion and the Conduct of War*, pp. 144-48.

³² Georges Duby, *The Legend of Bouvines: War, Religion, and Culture in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1990), pp. 44, 48-9. See also the discussion of late medieval warfare across class lines in Prestwich, below, [p. 000].

³³ Kim DeVids, "The 1302 Battle of the Golden Spurs", unpublished seminar paper, Hawaii Pacific University, 2003, who stresses the deliberate construction of a non-class-based Flemish cultural identity by the leaders of the revolt in opposition to the pan-aristocratic connections between French and Flemish nobility. See also R.C. van Caenegem, "Guldensporenslag 1302" in P. Trio et al., *Omtrent 1302* (Leuven, 2002).

³⁴ Morillo, "Expecting Cowardice".

opponents tend to construct such warfare as aimed not just against enemy military forces but against the social foundations of resistance and disorder.³⁵

The demonization of the enemy characteristic of subcultural wars means that the long term trend of particular subcultural wars is attempts to exterminate the enemy. Extermination is almost always at least a goal, and at times becomes reality, as in the Albigensian Crusade for all practical purposes. The reason for this is clear: negotiation with the devil is difficult, while mutual acculturation is not possible across a single, centrally contested subcultural boundary as it is across the amorphous, multivalent cultural frontiers of intercultural conflict.³⁶ Where extermination proves impossible, whether socio-economically, because of an even balance of military force, or because of outside intervention limiting conflict or imposing a settlement, two outcomes dominate: either long-term, low-level, but seemingly irresolvable conflict, as for centuries in English-controlled Ireland, or, where the costs of continued conflict prove too high for both sides to sustain, eventual accommodation—essentially a tacit agreement to downgrade the importance of the cultural boundary at stake, allowing the reemergence of negotiated settlements and intracultural warfare. The end of the Wars of Religion in the 17th century is an excellent example of this sort of outcome.³⁷

The previous discussion developing a general typology of transcultural warfare can be summarized in a short table, as follows.

³⁵ The Albigensian Crusade again provides a good example. The American Civil War, discussed in terms of prisoners of war by Martin van Creveld in this volume (below, [p. 000]), conforms (sort of) to the conventions of intracultural war in this regard only if one ignores, as van Creveld does, the race factor—a fairly crucial factor to ignore in this conflict, it seems to me. Perhaps research more recent than Hesseltine’s article (published in 1930, hardly the high point of racial awareness in mainstream American scholarship) would have highlighted this factor more for van Creveld. See Beck, below [p. 000 and n. xxx], on the treatment of black and Indian women during the Civil War, and Michael Hochgeschwender’s analysis of images of the enemy in the Civil War in this volume (below, [p. 000]).

³⁶ Frederick II Hohenstaufen’s crusade in 1227-29 illustrates some of these things nicely: having grown up in Sicily, he saw war with Arabs in intracultural terms and concluded his crusade with the resumption of Christian control of Jerusalem through diplomatic agreements. The Papacy virtually disavowed this apparent triumph because of its view of Muslims and more especially the excommunicated Frederick as subcultural demons, the former of whom were thus disqualified from being negotiated with, the latter disqualified as a competent Christian negotiator: Edward Peters, ed., *Christian Society and the Crusades 1198-1229* (Philadelphia, 1971), pp. 146-171.

³⁷ Kroener, below [p. 000], discusses the wars of Religion and the state formation that accompanied them as examples of subcultural wars and their resolution in a wider acceptance of common legal culture, that is in the emergence of intracultural norms. But he attempts to place subcultural wars in both the intracultural and transcultural categories. I believe this represents a misunderstanding of my model (the intracultural nature of subcultural wars is implicit in the definition of a subculture) and a resulting loss of clarity. He furthermore tends to assume that *intracultural* and *transcultural* are static categories and to view cultural divides from only one side (usually the European one). But in fact the emphasis here is on the dynamic, constructed and mutual nature of cultural boundaries, and therefore of the fluidity and malleability of the types of warfare outlined in this model.

	Relationship of opponents	Setting	Conventions of conflict, ritual	Cultural trend
Intracultural warfare	Mutual comprehension	Warfare within a culture	Normally present; agreed or assumed limitations on conflict and treatment of non-combatants	Stability, or reinforcement of cultural identity; sometimes escalating to subcultural war
Intercultural warfare	(Semi)mutual incomprehension	Warfare between Big Cultures	None; pragmatic limitations on conflict and treatment of non-combatants	Mutual acculturation; towards intra- or subcultural conflict
Subcultural warfare	Mutual anti-comprehension (demonization)	Warfare between sub-cultures of a Big Culture or larger sub-culture	Heightened ritual; few limitations on conflict and treatment of non-combatants	Attempted mutual annihilation; if not possible, low level permanent conflict, or towards accommodation and intracultural relations

The thesis of this article is that all wars, not just early medieval European ones, can be fit into this schema,³⁸ especially given that the boundaries between types were of course not hard and fast but were constantly undergoing a process of contested construction, and that diachronic trends connected each type of warfare to the others. Supporting this thesis in more detail is beyond the scope of this article, but the other articles in this collection explore at least some of the implications of this model further and provide evidence and case studies by against which to measure its accuracy.

Conclusions

Having outlined two types of transcultural warfare, intercultural and subcultural, I will conclude with several further remarks based on this typology. The first has to do with a larger diachronic trend in medieval European warfare. It seems to me that one of the boundary markers between the early and the later middle ages was a shift in terms of European transcultural warfare from a greater preponderance of intercultural warfare carried on around the frontiers of western

³⁸ Cf. the schema proposed by Daniel Hohnrath in this volume (below, [p. 000]): his first two categories would generally fall under my intercultural rubric (though see Ayton on the complexities of the Ottoman frontier), while his second two categories are examples of subcultural conflict; his fifth category is so broad as to encompass wars that fit into all three types in my model.

Europe to a greater preponderance of subcultural warfare carried on within the boundaries of Christian Europe.³⁹ I think some fairly clear reasons could be adduced for this shift, but I will avoid enumerating them by putting the topic outside the bounds of this article.

The second is that if this typology has any merit, in particular if the characteristics associated with different types of transcultural warfare reflect reality with at least some accuracy, then this model provides historians a potential route backwards from the observable patterns of war to the underlying dynamics of cultural formation that conventional sources do not often address. That is, we may be able to see the emergence of new cultural boundaries or the transformation of old ones by their effects on patterns of warfare, for the interconnections between war and culture, in early medieval Europe and elsewhere, are always close.

Finally, it is again a central tenet of this analysis that the cultural boundaries that define transcultural conflict are under a constant process of contested construction. One implication of this is that the transitions from one sort of warfare to the next are not deterministic, but leave options open to policy makers. Given that the various types of warfare outlined here tend towards different levels of restraint and negotiability, with subcultural warfare occupying the most brutal and irresolvable position, intracultural warfare the least brutal and most resolvable, and intercultural warfare somewhere in between (some intercultural wars can be just as brutal as subcultural wars, but tend to be less intractably and institutionally so, as my analysis above points out), policies that encourage the mutual comprehension of intracultural conflict would seem to be preferable to those that foster the mutual anti-comprehension of subcultural conflict. The obvious example is the so-called War on Terror. The 9/11 attack was, from the perspective of most of the world, intercultural: it was certainly incomprehensible, and did not respect the conventions of war as the international community generally conceive of them. It was, however, probably sub-cultural from the perspective of the terrorists: they thought they understood the US, at least in some ways, and hated what they knew, conceiving of their attack as a blow for an Islamic, as opposed to a secular western, version of modernism. The tragedy of the Bush administration response has been to respond in subcultural kind: demonizing the enemy, emphasizing cultural divides, and so on, while widening the war. Predictions are hazardous for historians, whose stock in trade is the past, not the future. But if this

³⁹ Wars against heresy and conflicts that crossed class lines, as at Courtrai, formed the bulk of these subcultural conflicts. A background of constant intracultural warfare is assumed.

model encapsulates any lessons of history, the chances for a more extended, more intractable conflict have probably been increased by this policy.

Stephen Morillo

Wabash College