

Global Heritage and Memory Studies in the Present

COMMEMORATING DEFEAT



Viral Monuments and the
International Cult of the
Lost Cause, 1864–1914

Nicholas Parkinson

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Commemorating Defeat

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*Viral Monuments and the International Cult
of the Lost Cause, 1864–1914*

Nicholas Parkinson



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In memory of Rune Frederiksen
1971–2023

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Introduction

Abstract: This book reframes Antonin Mercié's *Gloria Victis* (1875) not simply as a sculpture, but as a viral commemorative phenomenon that circulated internationally in the decades before the First World War. It argues, first, that *Gloria Victis* became a shared visual convention for memorializing national defeat across Europe, the Americas, and southern Africa. Second, it introduces the concept of the international cult of the Lost Cause to describe how monuments to defeat functioned as civil religion, transforming loss into moral victory and sacrifice into national unity. Finally, the chapter shows how the transnational spread of *Gloria Victis* signaled political aspirations and ideological affinities beyond formal diplomacy.

Keywords: civil religion, nationalism, virality, war, monuments, Donald Trump

On the coffee table of Trump's New York City apartment stands a nineteenth-century French statuette by little-remembered artist Antonin Mercié titled *Gloria Victis*—Latin for “glory to the defeated” (fig. 0.1). The sculpture depicts a lifeless French soldier, his limp body and outstretched arms rendered in a manner reminiscent of Renaissance depictions of Christ's descent from the cross. In the soldier's right hand, he holds a broken sword, symbolizing his defeat, but his left arm raises to the air signaling that he is nonetheless the victor, a theme reiterated by the laurel branch lying near his feet. A winged allegorical female clad in armor, Glory, raises the soldier's body upwards, symbolizing that he, like Christ, has transcended death and been granted heavenly immortality for his sacrifice. The dead soldier is therefore presented in the image of a secular savior or a martyr—one who has sacrificed his life not for his faith, but for France. *Gloria Victis*, which today resides in the Petit Palais of Paris, was created by Mercié in the immediate aftermath of France's defeat during the Franco-Prussian War, which resulted in the

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Fig. 0.1. Antonin Mercié, *Gloria Victis*, after 1878. Bronze reduction by Barbedienne. Trump Tower, New York City. Photo by Sam Horine, 2012.

annexation of the French regions of Alsace and Moselle into the German Empire. Purchased from the artist by the Préfecture de la Seine at the end of German occupation in 1873, the sculpture was given a fitting home inside the newly reconstructed Paris Hôtel de Ville, or City Hall (fig. 0.2), which had been burned to the ground during the events of the Paris Commune. For over four decades, until the return of Alsace and Moselle to France, *Gloria Victis* stood in the central courtyard, where it served as the visual and symbolic backdrop for the reception of dignitaries. For the foreign ministers, kings, queens, and diplomats who entered the Hôtel de Ville and were seated at the sculpture's base, *Gloria Victis* silently expressed a key tenet of the Third Republican civil religion—that history would vindicate France, that Alsace and Moselle would be reintegrated, and that, like Christ's Second Coming, France would one day return to bring righteous retribution against those who had wronged it in 1871.

Undoubtedly, the *Gloria Victis* photographed on Trump's coffee table was not meant to evoke the political meaning described above but rather functions as an accoutrement to his apartment's Old World palatial opulence. Hundreds, if not thousands, of these statuettes were sold on the international art market at the turn of the twentieth century and still regularly circulate through auction houses today. Like Trump's copy, these sculptural reductions of the Hôtel de Ville's *Gloria Victis* frequently decorated the homes of



Fig. 0.2. "Hôtel de Ville—le *Gloria Victis* d'Antonin Mercié," *Album de la Ville de Paris* (Paris: Henri Manuel), ca. 1900.

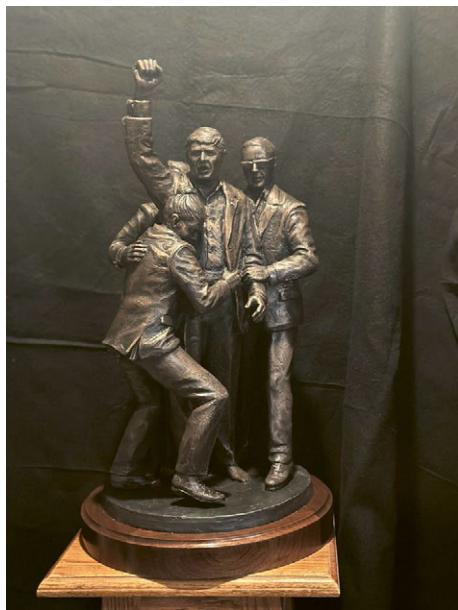


Fig. 0.3. Stan Watts, "Fight! Fight! Fight!" ca. 2024. Bronze. 18 in (45.7 cm). Photo courtesy of the artist.

bourgeois elites, where they functioned not only as expressions of cultural refinement but as everyday expressions of political nationalism.

However distant the worlds of early Third Republican nationalism and Trump's right-wing populism may seem, the presence of *Gloria Victis* in his home reveals striking parallels in the political uses of defeat. Since Trump's first term in the Oval Office, several historians and journalists have drawn comparisons between the present-day political rhetoric of Trump and the enduring ideology of the Confederate Lost Cause, which arose in the aftermath of the American Civil War (1861–1865).¹ Much like the antebellum romanticism that obscured the repression of Black Americans in the post-Reconstruction South, "Make America Great Again" invokes a return to a golden age of American prosperity, casting a nostalgic glow

1 David W. Blight, "Trump's 'Lost Cause,' a Kind of Gangster Cult, Won't Go Away," *Los Angeles Times*, January 14, 2024, <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2024-01-14/lost-cause-platform-donald-trump-revision-history-confederacy>; Karen Finney, "Opinion: The Civil War Mythology That's Become a Talking Point of the 2024 Campaign," *CNN.com*, January 18, 2024, <https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/18/opinions/civil-war-lost-cause-2024-haley-trump-finney>; David A. Graham, "The New Lost Cause," *The Atlantic*, October 18, 2021, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/10/donald-trumps-new-lost-cause-centers-january-6/620407/>; Caroline E. Janney, "The Next Lost Cause?" *The Washington Post*, July 31, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/07/31/lost-cause-donald-trump/>; Zack Stanton, "How Trumpism Is Becoming America's New 'Lost Cause,'" *Politico*, January 21, 2021, <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2021/01/21/trump-civil-war-reconstruction-biden-lost-cause-461161>.

over Trump's anti-immigrant and authoritarian politics. In both cases, political violence is justified through a rhetoric of rightful indignation at having been defrauded and humiliated by outsiders. Unlike the Confederate Lost Cause, however, "Make America Great Again" remained vague, and perhaps deliberately so, as to what injustice it was supposed to counter. But this changed during his defeat to Joe Biden—a defeat he denied—during the 2020 election. The claim that deep state actors had stolen the election supplied the mythic core around which Trump's own Lost Cause cohered. It culminated in the January 6, 2021, assault on the U.S. Capitol and became foundational to his subsequent reelection.

A pivotal event that further cemented Trump's political mythology of victimization and led him to a second presidential victory was the failed assassination attempt in Butler, Pennsylvania, on July 13, 2024. The iconic image of Trump raising his fist in the air seconds after the sniper's bullet grazed his ear became the subject of several patriotic paintings and sculptures. In May 2025, a statuette by sculptor Stan Watts depicting the scene appeared on a table beside the Resolute Desk in the White House Oval Office (fig. 0.3). The sculpture, titled *Fight! Fight! Fight!* in reference to Trump's defiant shout as he was rushed from the stage, depicts three Secret Service agents encircling him as he stands, monumental and immobile, his fist raised in the air. The compositional parallels with *Gloria Victis* are striking: a supporting female figure with hair pulled back, her leg suspended mid-stride and arm wrapped around the wounded hero's waist, and the hero's arm raised in defiant victory. Beyond these visual echoes, *Fight! Fight! Fight!* operates within a strikingly similar ideological and theological logic for Trump's supporters as *Gloria Victis* did for French patriots of the Third Republic. According to Watts, his sculpture is not a heroic portrait of a highly popular US president—it is the recognition of divine intervention.² In Third Republican France, the postwar South, and the present-day United States alike, narratives of providential survival in the wake of defeat have often functioned as compelling instruments of political legitimation.

It is worth noting at this point the seemingly counterintuitive nature of commemorating national tragedies and acts of political violence through public sculpture. Among the dozens, if not hundreds, of monuments to Abraham Lincoln in the United States, none represent him in the moments before or after being assassinated by John Wilkes Booth. It is similarly difficult to imagine a sculpture of President Ronald Reagan being shot

2 "INDIEGOGO TRUMP FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT FOR AMERICA CAMPAIGN," directed by Mark Shurtleff, YouTube, May 13, 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqKocgfQJkc>.

by John Hinckley Jr. While plaques and memorial gardens commemorate tragedy, monumental sculpture has traditionally been reserved for patriotic, celebratory themes such as military victories. Defeat, however, becomes a visual instrument when it serves as a narrative promoting moral victory, political legitimacy, or collective duty to the state. As Anthony D. Smith argues, myths of national self-sacrifice have served as powerful tools for instilling in the public prophetic messages of resurrection and regeneration. Nationalist movements have frequently centered on narratives of martyrdom and collective sacrifice, a pattern visible in the proliferation of patriotic death scenes during the evolution of modern France. During the French Revolution, this logic took form in images of secular martyrdom such as Jacques-Louis David's *The Death of Marat*. At the start of the Third Republic, Joan of Arc was transformed from a religious martyr into a symbol of national identity.³

The proliferation of public monuments representing Joan of Arc in the same decades that *Gloria Victis* gained widespread popularity is indicative of the Third Republic's fixation on martyrdom. In fact, Mercié merged the two themes with his sculpture *Jeanne d'Arc relevant l'épée de la France vaincue* (Joan of Arc raising the sword of defeated France), a monument erected in 1902 at the site of Joan of Arc's birthplace, explicitly paralleling the heroine's capture and execution during the Hundred Years' War to France's defeat in 1871. Not just artists, but political theorists of this era understood that the collective memory of defeat served as a powerful mechanism through which nations could convert vulnerabilities—whether real or merely suggested—into power and authority. Ernest Renan made this clear in his 1882 speech on nationalism, “Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?”, in which he argues that the commemoration of shared suffering was more useful than the recollection of triumph since the former evokes a stronger sense of collective duty to one another.⁴

During the twentieth century, collective memories of defeat were effectively harnessed by authoritarian governments. As John Hutchinson argues, nationalist movements have often gained power in moments of crisis and instability, including in the wake of military loss. The destabilizing experience of defeat frequently helps abet the spread of right-wing ideologies, as in Germany in the 1920s and in Greece following the Nazi occupation. In both instances, nationalist political groups transformed past defeats into

3 Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 219, 226, 230.

4 Ernest Renan, “Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?” (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1882), 27.

national narratives of injustice, survival, and the promise of resurrection.⁵ Once framed as providential survival, the language of resurrection does not merely console. Rather, it furnishes leaders with a moral mandate to pursue renewal through authoritarian measures presented as necessary to achieve national restoration—whether in the form of intensified militarism, expanded government authority, or rhetoric casting the nation as imperiled by external and internal “others” whose removal or exclusion becomes synonymous with collective rebirth.

To trace the origins of this modern political mythos, this book looks back to the years immediately preceding the First World War, when a trend swept across the globe for commemorating defeats, including the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871), the Second Schleswig War (1864), the War of the Pacific (1879–1883), the United States Civil War (1861–1865), the South African War (1899–1902), and the Battle of Kosovo (1389). The main model for these monuments, as I will show throughout this book, was *Gloria Victis*. Although originally intended to commemorate the Franco-Prussian War, the sculpture's immense popularity within and beyond France led it to become the main visual point of reference for artists trying to convey their own country's memory of defeat, and for governments to prophesy the country's resurrection to power. The image of a dying soldier in the arms of a winged female allegorical figure inspired sculptors to commemorate their own national mythologies, and in many instances, “*Gloria Victis*” was retained as the title or as an inscription. Most importantly, the repetition of *Gloria Victis* was always accompanied by iconographic or architectural adaptations which connected the sculpture to the historical events, symbols, and mythologies that the government or institution that ordered its creation wanted to convey to the societies they led.

There have been no recent book-length scholarly publications pertaining to the commemoration of defeat as an international phenomenon in public sculpture, nor have there been any books on Mercié and his transnational influence. Nonetheless, a small but important body of literature treating defeat from a comparative perspective has appeared over the past three decades. Some notable examples include Steven J. Mock's *Symbols of Defeat in the Construction of National Identity*, Wolfgang Schivelbusch's *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery*, and the multiauthor volumes, *Vaincus!: histoires de défaites: Europe, XIXe-XXe siècles* and *Penser*

5 John Hutchinson, *Nations as Zones of Conflict* (London: Sage Publications, 2005), 34, 36, 39, 82.

la défaite.⁶ These studies, along with country-specific scholarship on the sculptural commemoration of defeat examined in each chapter, provide an important basis for the novel work this book proposes to undertake. One question that remains largely unexplored up until now, however, is how visual forms circulated transnationally to shape shared commemorative vocabularies and civic rituals across diverse political regimes. This book aims to contribute to this methodically diverse and growing field of research through a transdisciplinary analysis of how the memory of military defeat was visualized, performed, and mobilized across borders through the viral iconography of *Gloria Victis* and its many afterlives.

The International Cult of the Lost Cause: A Key Tenet of Modern Nationalism

By exploring the history of *Gloria Victis*, this book tries to answer the question, “in what ways has the memory of defeat become a source of power in modern politics?” As demonstrated above, *Gloria Victis* was popular internationally at the turn of the twentieth century, and a large part of this book has to do with tracing the histories of these monuments to defeat to document how they arrived where they did. But the sculpture’s documented influence on mass culture does not completely explain why the theme of defeat resonated so deeply within international commemorative politics at the turn of the twentieth century. To help explain this relationship between power and the memory of defeat during this era, and to explain why *Gloria Victis* became national defeat’s most recognizable symbol, my book proposes three main arguments:

1. *Gloria Victis* was more than a sculpture by Mercié, it was a viral global phenomenon that became an established commemorative convention in the years preceding the First World War.

In his book, *The Age of Globalization: Anarchists and the Anticolonial Imagination*, Benedict Anderson declared that the turn of the twentieth century was the

6 Steven J. Mock, *Symbols of Defeat in the Construction of National Identity* (Cambridge University Press, 2012); Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery*, trans. Jefferson S. Chase (London: Picador, 2004); *Vaincus!: histoires de défaites: Europe, XIXe-XXe siècles*, eds. Corine Defrance, Catherine Horel, and François-Xavier Nérard (Paris: Nouveau Monde éditions, 2016); *Penser la défaite*, eds. P. Cabanel et P. Laborie (Toulouse: Privat, 2002).

era of “early globalization.”⁷ Writers and revolutionaries in colonized countries, once isolated by geographical distance, engaged in reciprocal exchange vis-à-vis the development of political ideologies which challenged the imperial systems to which they were mutually subjected.⁸ Halftone printing allowed for the first time the reproduction and mass transmission of photos in illustrated presses. Communication was propelled forward through expanding telegraph networks and emerging wireless technologies. The expansion of railroad infrastructure and the establishment of the Universal Postal Union made travel and communication faster. These changes, along with a wide array of new machinery and industrial practices that made commercial goods cheaper and more widely available, led to a new era of globalized mass culture predicated on the circumstance that many people had more immediate contact with events, fashions, and ideologies arising well beyond their own local communities.

It is perhaps little surprise that, in this era of industrial production and global communication, the French sociologist Gabriel Tarde published his 1894 book, *The Law of Imitation*, in which he describes the ways in which technological change both widened and accelerated the transmission of visual trends on an international level: “in our era of widespread and penetrating fashions, artistic works and virtuous acts are about the same everywhere, upon two continents at least, whereas, from decade to decade, not to say from year to year, the styles and schools of painters, musicians, and poets are transformed along with the public taste.”⁹ In contrast to the hagiographic tendencies in art history that celebrate the novelty of the individual genius and eschew popular trends, Tarde saw imitation as the basis of human invention.¹⁰ “Society is imitation,” theorized Tarde, “and imitation is a kind of somnambulism.”¹¹ By this, Tony D. Sampson argues, Tarde is neither advancing a theory of social determinism nor a misanthropic philosophy of herd mentality. Rather, Tarde believes that unconscious imitation is the basis for society itself, as an “affective atmosphere composed of sub-representative currents flowing between a porous self and other relations.”¹² Writing at a moment of

7 Benedict Anderson, *The Age of Globalization: Anarchists and the Anticolonial Imagination* (Brooklyn and London: Verso, 2013), 10.

8 Anderson, *The Age of Globalization*, 10.

9 Gabriel Tarde, *The Laws of Imitation*, trans. Elsie Clews Parsons (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1903), *The Laws of Imitation*, 346.

10 Tarde, *The Laws of Imitation*, 99.

11 Tarde, *The Laws of Imitation*, 87.

12 Tony D. Sampson, *Virality: Contagion Theory in the Age of Networks* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 13.

expanding transnational communication, Tarde saw the subsequent widening circulation of artistic styles as proof of imitation's foundational role in society.

Tarde's writings can be read as anticipating what we now describe as globalization and virality in an era of rapid technological change. My interpretations of Tarde, along with my use of the term "viral," are greatly influenced by Tony D. Sampson's *Virality: Contagion Theory in the Age of Networks*. In his book, Sampson describes virality as a social event driven by the primacy of affect, imitation, and mechanisms of social power.¹³ It is within a similar lens of contagion—or virality, to use the term preferred by Sampson—that I propose to interpret *Gloria Victis*'s global spread.

Gloria Victis's distinctive morphology and widespread popularity makes it feasible to map the pathways of its viral transmission at the turn of the twentieth century. Both Daniel Imbert and Guillaume Peigné agree that Mercié's *Gloria Victis*, consisting of a female allegorical figure, frequently winged, holding the dead body of a young soldier, was a novel visual composition that had a profound effect on public monument design during the Third Republic.¹⁴ Throughout the earlier decades of the nineteenth century, military conflicts were commonly commemorated via lone allegorical female figures, visible in examples like Théophile Bra's *Colonne commémorative du siège de 1792* (Lille, 1845) or Auguste Dumont's *Colonne de Juillet* (Paris, 1840). Sculptural representations of combatants were almost always reserved for high-ranking military officers, while images of common soldiers were exceedingly rare, visible only on the facades of massive architectural monuments such as the Carrousel and Étoile victory arches. By placing the individual combatant who presents his dead body to the public in the arms of the traditional female allegorical figure commonly seen in early war monuments, Mercié placed a newfound emphasis on the common soldier as a central motif of public sculpture, and, moreover, on the sacred role of death in collective commemoration. Mercié's highly successful design had a tremendous impact on sculptural commemoration at the turn of the twentieth century, such that statues of heroic winged women embracing the lifeless, Christlike body of a martyred soldier became a common motif.

After receiving widespread acclaim within French journals, and several awards and recognitions from France's beaux-arts institutions, *Gloria*

13 Sampson, *Virality*, 14–15.

14 Daniel Imbert, "Le monument de la Défense de Paris," *Quand Paris dansait avec Marianne* (Paris: Éditions Paris-Musées, 1989), 89; Guillaume Peigné, "Le guerrier sculpté en France de 1871 à 1914 ou le triomphe de l'héroïsme anonyme," *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* 83 (2011): 208, <https://doi.org/10.4000/cdlm.6016>.



Fig. 0.4. Photograph of Sarah Bernhardt in her home with a *Gloria Victis* statuette visible in the top left corner, partially obscured. Dornac & Cie, *Nos contemporains chez eux*, 1896. Photograph. (Artwork in the public domain; image provided by the Bibliothèque nationale de France).

Victis became omnipresent in French visual culture—or, in the words of Michael Dorsch, “an undisputed part of the shared cultural language of the French people.”¹⁵ While the original bronze remained at the Hôtel de Ville, copies were erected as war monuments in the streets and city squares of Niort, Bordeaux, Châlons-en-Champagne, and Cholet. Commercially produced statuettes, produced en masse with exacting precision thanks to new techniques utilized by industrial foundries and the spread of mail-order catalogues, appeared in front of store windows, on the desks of government bureaucrats, and on the mantelpieces of celebrities, including scientist Louis Pasteur, President Félix Faure, and actress Sarah Bernhardt (fig. 0.4).

Yet, it should also be added, I argue, that *Gloria Victis* became part of a shared international language as well, and that this phenomenon was in large part due to the globalization of mass culture recognized by both Tarde and Anderson. At the turn of the twentieth century, *Gloria Victis* was everywhere, visible not only as statuettes decorating French interiors,

15 Michael Dorsch, *French Sculpture Following the Franco-Prussian War, 1870–80: Realist Allegories and the Commemoration of Defeat* (Farnham: Routledge, 2010), 85.

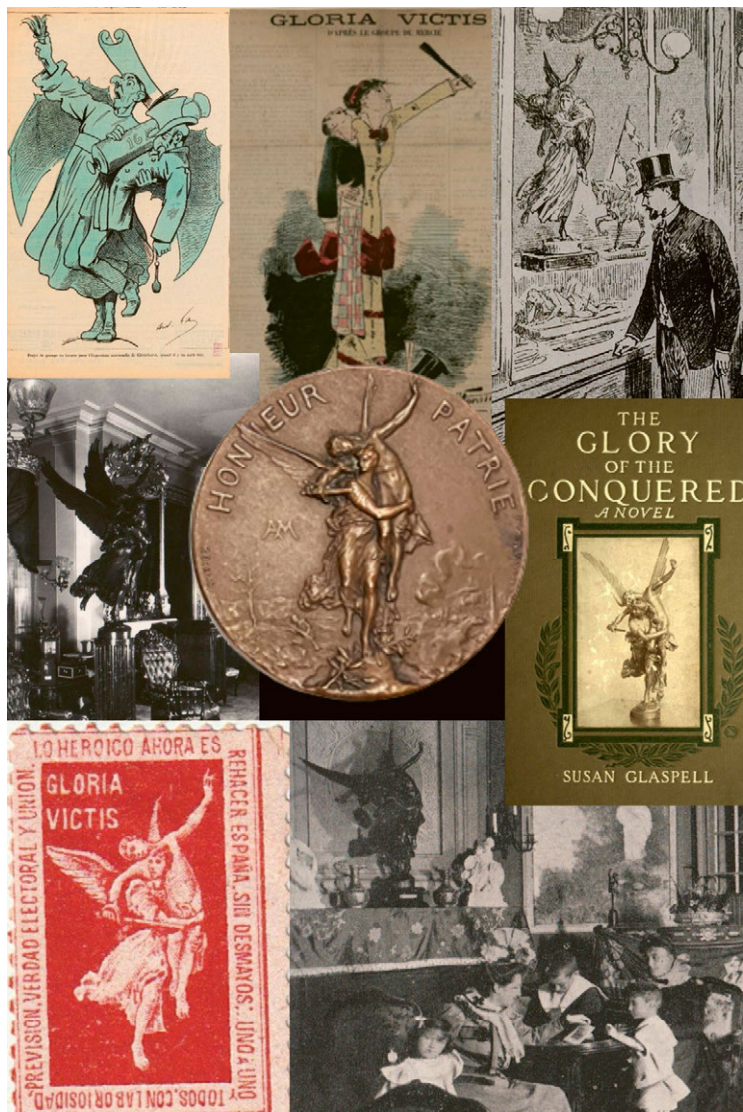


Fig. 0.5. Clockwise, from top right: Gill, "Gloria Victis (d'après Mercié)," *La Lune Rousse* 2:78 (June 2, 1878). Musée Carnavalet, CC0 Paris Musées; Jean-Louis Forain, "Gloria Victis: d'après le groupe de Mercié," *Dessinateurs et humoristes. Tome 2, Jean-Louis Forain, 1900–1920*. Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Estampes et photographie, PET FOL-TF-744; Émile Mas, "Je m'arrête volontiers devant les statues et les bronzes de Barbedienne," from "Histoire d'un Vaurien," *Le petit français illustré*, 2nd year, no. 91, November 22, 1890: 560. (Artwork in the public domain; image provided by the Bibliothèque nationale de France); Susan Glaspell, *The Glory of the Conquered: The Story of a Great Love* (New York: A. L. Burt Company, 1909), front cover. Paul Boyer (photographer), *Le Panorama: Le Président de la République Française*, no. 6, le Havre-Rambouillet (Paris: Ludovic Baschet, ca. 1898); Gloria Victis stamp, Spain, early twentieth century. (Author's photo); Unknown photographer, front parlor room of the Campbell House, showing a Barbedienne bronze reduction of *Gloria Victis*, ca. 1930. Photograph. (Artwork in the public domain; image courtesy of the Campbell House Museum, St. Louis). Center: Henri Alfred Auguste Dubois, medal for l'Union des Sociétés de Tir de France, ca. 1900. (Image provided by the author).

but also in the homes of Midwestern businessmen, on the front of postage stamps, on sporting competition medals, in newspaper comics, on book covers, in young adult novels, and many other forms of media both in and beyond Europe (fig. 0.5). The statue's hyper-saturation in French society and its status as mass phenomenon was enough for one journalist to write in exasperation, "The number of *Gloria Victis* [statues] ... is considerable; the least one can say is that they are not always in perfect taste Never has a people erected so many monuments to celebrate its victories as France has erected to commemorate its defeats!"¹⁶ Like any popular phenomenon, the mass saturation of *Gloria Victis* in visual culture evoked both imitation as well as irritation.

As Tarde recognized, imitation is not merely replication, but also the core of invention. The adaptation of *Gloria Victis* to different social and private venues as well as its mass consumption via different forms of media transformed not only the image's meaning, but also the image itself. This latter point is key to understanding the viral quality of *Gloria Victis* illustrated by the international case studies presented in this book. The influence of *Gloria Victis* on contemporary sculpture is visible in monuments like Frederick Wellington Ruckstuhl's Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument in Baltimore, Maryland. Having trained with Mercié at the Académie Julian in the 1880s, Ruckstuhl originally titled the monument *Gloria Victis* in homage to his teacher's famed sculpture. The monument's composition of a winged woman presenting a dead soldier to the audience, created to commemorate not the defeat of France in 1871 but the military defeat of the Confederate States of America in 1865, is a clear example of an artist creating a new sculpture by imitating a popular model. Yet, as Tarde noticed, the process of invention via imitation frequently does not label its source of inspiration clearly or consciously. By the end of World War I, public monuments featuring winged women crowning fallen heroes became a common motif for commemorating all sorts of national tragedies and could be found in diverse geographies including Cuba, Canada, and Northern Ireland (fig. 0.6). None of these examples bear a titular or textual reference to *Gloria Victis*, yet their iconography reveals their ultimate source of inspiration. At the same moment that *Gloria Victis* was being widely imitated visually, textual borrowings were occurring as well. The words "Gloria Victis" frequently

16 "Le nombre des *Gloria Victis* et des *Quand Même* est considérable; le moins qu'on puisse dire, c'est qu'ils ne sont pas toujours d'un goût parfait Jamais peuple n'a élevé autant des monuments pour célébrer ses victoires que la France n'en a dressé pour rappeler ses défaites!" Étienne Charles, "Les Excès de la Statuomanie," *Le Mois Littéraire et Pittoresque*, July 1, 1907, 674.



Fig. 0.6. Left to right: Coeur de Lion McCarthy, Canadian Pacific Railway Employees Memorial, 1921. Winnipeg, Canada. Postcard, Winnipeg Public Library; Thomas Brock and F. Arnold Wright, World War I Memorial, 1924. Queen's University of Belfast, Northern Ireland. Photo: Ross, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic; Agustín Querol, Monumento a los Bomberos (The firefighter's monument), 1897. Cementerio de Colón, Havana, Cuba. *La Ilustración Artística* 18, no. 641 (April 9, 1894).

appeared as a title for diverse forms of non-sculptural media, including concerts,¹⁷ poems,¹⁸ plays,¹⁹ and novels.²⁰

This fragmented way *Gloria Victis* spread throughout different cultures at the turn of the twentieth century illustrates what Tarde described as the somnambulistic quality of imitation, but it also raises important questions concerning authorship and influence. Even while asserting that Mercié invented *Gloria Victis* in the early 1870s, that he was an internationally recognized artist at the turn of the twentieth century, and that he undoubtedly had a personal influence on many artists, especially those who trained at the Académie Julian where Mercié taught, it would be dubious to claim that Mercié directly inspired all the objects cited above. The numerous different representations and adaptations where we can pinpoint *Gloria Victis*'s influence are only apparent thanks to the broad view of historical study.

17 Alexis and Eugène Rostand, *Gloria Victis! Grande balade pour soli, chœurs, et orchestre* (Paris: Simon Richaut, 1874).

18 Auguste Fourès, "Gloria Victis," *La Muse républicaine* (Paris: A. Chérié, 1875), 37; Jasper Barnett Cowdin, *Gloria Victis: An Ode on the Death of Gen. Ulysses S. Grant* (Brooklyn, NY: D.S. Holmes, 1885).

19 Morilla M. Norton, *Gloria Victis* (Warner, NH: E. CA. Cole, 1900).

20 John A. Mitchell, *Gloria Victis* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897); Ossip Schubin, *Gloria Victis*, trans. Mary Maxwell (New York: William S. Gottsberger, 1886).

Instead of relying on traditional art historical methodology of analyzing the linear transmission of images from author to imitator, it is important to also understand *Gloria Victis*'s spread through the lens of viral transmission. To quote Tarde once more, "likeness between artistic products is no proof at all of consanguinity, it points only to a contagion of imitation."²¹ In other words, visual resemblance does not reveal direct influence, like is commonly seen in the transmission of style from master to student. Understanding *Gloria Victis* as a viral phenomenon means decentering the role of both the author and the original in the image's spread. The more an artwork is replicated across cultures, social classes, and forms of media, the more likely it is that the artist's identity will undoubtedly be lost in the processes of transmission and adaptation. Thus, while Mercié's popular reputation in both France and abroad helped initiate *Gloria Victis* to become a viral phenomenon, in the flow of imitations across geography and time, his name has faded from consciousness.

This is by no means a revolutionary argument as it has been long understood that imitation and convention play a strong role in the development of modern commemorative sculpture. *The Spirit of the American Doughboy* by E. M. Viquesney led to a profusion of monuments depicting a lone American infantryman holding his rifle in the United States following the First World War. Sixty years later, Maya Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, established a paradigm for designing commemorative spaces whose resistance to symbolic representation still resonates strongly in contemporary memorial landscapes.²² Conventions help audiences read and understand a monument by drawing from a well of visual references that are already well ingrained within the culture. *Gloria Victis* established a conventional visual language for representing defeat between approximately the 1870s and the 1920s in large part due to the commercial success of Mercié's original sculpture, but also due to ease by which the sculpture's iconographic elements were adapted to diverse commemorative contexts. Frequently, as will be illustrated throughout this book, artists revised *Gloria Victis* by replacing the soldier's classical nudity with a national costume, referencing well-known myths, works of literature, or symbols to bolster the audience's connection with the sculpture's main figure and political themes. In other words, *Gloria Victis*

21 Tarde, *The Laws of Imitation*, 99.

22 Jennifer Wingate, *Sculpting Doughboys: Memory, Gender, and Taste in America's World War I Memorials* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013); Sabrina Deturk, "Memory of Absence: Contemporary Countermonuments," *Art and the Public Sphere* 6, nos. 1 and 2 (2017): 83.

was not only a famous sculpture by Mercié, it was also a highly imitated archetype of representation which found widespread popularity in the decades preceding the First World War.

Therefore, in contrast to many studies devoted to nineteenth-century art, this book is not really about Mercié. Little is known about Mercié's personal life and for the purpose of this book, biographical details are of only minor importance. Rather, what is essential for this current study is attempting to reconstruct the networks that led to *Gloria Victis*'s transmission and mutation within key sites of memory. Similarly, I will by no means attempt to create a *catalogue raisonné* of every global incarnation of *Gloria Victis*. Instead, what I present here is a series of case studies that illustrate *Gloria Victis*'s significance within another social phenomenon of the era—the commemoration of national defeat.

2. The commemoration of defeat is an expression of civil religion in late nineteenth-century societies—a practice which I refer to as the international cult of the Lost Cause.

The purpose of this book is to examine a set of international case studies where various institutions have erected a copy or adaptation of *Gloria Victis* to commemorate local narratives of national defeat and, subsequently, how the development and manipulation of collective memory has been wielded as a source of power. Throughout this book, I use the term Lost Cause to describe the remembrance of a particular military defeat and its broader impact on that culture. The fixation on defeat and the way in which it is woven into a society's language, customs, and politics has had different names. In France following the Franco-Prussian War, *revanchisme*—the desire for revenge or a rematch to regain what has been lost—was originally used to describe French sentiments towards taking revenge on Germany by retaking the lost territories of Alsace and Moselle. Similarly, *revanchismo* was oftentimes used in Peru to describe public sentiment towards Chile after the War of the Pacific. In Denmark, *hævnlyst* (the desire for revenge) and *kamplyst* (the desire to fight) were utilized to describe public sentiments after the Second Schleswig War. In the United States, the term Lost Cause was used to describe the postwar culture of defeat that arose in the South after the failed secession of the Confederate States of America. The term originates from an early work of postbellum revisionism, *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (1866) by Edward A. Pollard, in which the author attempts to reinterpret the Confederacy's secession attempt as a principled

and liberal resistance to a tyrannical national government. A century later, the historian Rollin G. Osterweis coined the term “cult of the Lost Cause” in his book *Romanticism and Nationalism in the Old South* to argue that the development of nationalist sentiment in the South played an important motivating role in the region’s continued resistance to reintegration and modernization.²³

My adaptation of the term “cult of the Lost Cause” for this book is largely indebted to Charles Reagan Wilson, who defined it in terms of a civil religion. Wilson argued that white Southern politicians and religious leaders reimagined defeat as a religious sacrifice by God’s chosen people—Southern whites—and who celebrated their Confederate identity through rituals, myths, and symbols.²⁴ The term civil religion can be traced back to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who saw nationalism as a kind of political religion which would replace traditional religion. In Smith’s definition, however, civil religion borrows from, but does not simply supplant, traditional religion. While nationalism does not offer its adherents salvation from the material world, as many religions promise, it mimics religion’s “ritual and symbolic practices” to create “a form of communion that binds its members.”²⁵ The rituals of civil religion, which give a transcendent and sacred status to the nation, thus become an integral part of the operation of the modern nation state, including military service.²⁶ With the rise of popular government rose peoples’ armies and the codification of universal conscription, where the sacrifice of one’s life for the nation became a legal requirement of adult male citizens, and where all citizens were encouraged to take part in sustaining the war effort. The eighteenth-century model of cabinet warfare, where professional standing armies fought each other for limited military aims, was replaced by the modern phenomenon of total warfare—such as the American Civil War—where entire populations were mobilized and targeted as part of the war effort, and where the goal of the war oftentimes equated to the survival of the nation.²⁷

The standardization of the process of conscription under nationalism prompted important changes in the iconography of war monuments at

23 Rollin G. Osterweis, *Romanticism and Nationalism in the Old South* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949), 215.

24 Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865–1920* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 13.

25 Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, 18.

26 Jean-Pierre Albert, “Pourquoi les héros nationaux sont-ils souvent des vaincus?” *Penser la défaite*, eds. P. Cabanel et P. Laborie (Toulouse: Privat, 2002), 25.

27 Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat*, 10–12.

the turn of the century. First, the common soldier became the new focus of commemorative sculpture. Before this era, war monuments frequently represented heads of state and military, such as the bust of a commanding general. Furthermore, these commanding officers did not necessarily have to be dead for their actions to receive public homage in the form of a bronze effigy. With the rise of the citizen armies operating under the nation-state, the common soldier became a common symbol of the nation and its military force.²⁸ While such depictions of common soldiers have a funerary dimension to them, they are also a reminder to the rest of society of their sacred oath to defend the nation at all costs. This leads to a second change in the iconography of war monuments—the sanctification of the common soldier. One of *Gloria Victis*'s key rhetorical devices is to connect ecclesiastical imagery to nationalist ideals. The dead soldier, who has given his life for the nation, takes the role of a Christ figure. His outstretched arms, svelte nude body, and drooping head visually reference Renaissance depictions of Christ's body being taken down from the cross.

Given the strong value that nationalist ideology has tended to place on the participation and bodily sacrifice of ordinary citizens in military campaigns, the international trend for erecting monuments to defeat at the turn of the twentieth century can be explained as a means of negating military defeat by underlining the immortality of the nation. By borrowing the term Lost Cause from American Civil War scholarship, my intention is to highlight the transcendent factor of commemorating defeat—that is, not only its sacred nature of ritual, but also the paradoxical means of overcoming or denying defeat which is key to *Gloria Victis*. The sculpture was an important tool for postwar governments to unify the fractured societies they attempted to govern, bring legitimacy to their power, and demand obedience—and even mortal sacrifice—for the sake of the larger collective. It is unsurprising that each of the regions or countries studied in this book—France, Denmark, Peru, Serbia, the Boer republics, and the US South—in addition to having suffered major military defeats, had populaces with strong ties to Christianity. *Gloria Victis* could be easily read and understood by persons familiar with Christian iconography. During the sculpture's inaugural exhibition at the Paris Salon of 1874, the critic Jules Antoine Castagnary—today remembered for coining the term “impressionism” at the First Impressionist Exhibition that same year—described *Gloria Victis* using a mixture of deeply religious

28 Annette Becker, “War Memorials: A Legacy of Total War?” in *On the Road to Total War*, eds. Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler (Washington, DC and Cambridge: The German Historical Institute and Cambridge University Press, 2002), 661, 663, 673.

and nationalist language: “Justice has risen, glorious and vengeful. Radiant with contempt and trembling with indignation, she hastens from the depths of history, gathers up the body of the ‘beloved wounded,’ and, raising him above her head in a sublime gesture, displays him to the generations as both a memory and a reproach. ‘France, do not forget! And you, old Europe, repent. This is the inexpressible wound. So long as this sacred blood flows, something will remain darkened in the world, and no conscience will sleep in peace.’”²⁹ In the words of Castagnary, the defeat of France is no longer a historical fact, but a prophetic myth. The incessantly flowing sacred blood of the soldier, which recalls the Catholic idea of the saving blood of Christ, becomes the source of a religious obligation—revenge. *Gloria Victis* was much more than a monument for remembering that past and for mourning the dead. It was, by contrast, a living icon which reminded citizens of their sacred oath to shed their own blood for the survival of the nation.

The notion of readying future generations for the need to sacrifice themselves for the nation has been an integral part of *Gloria Victis*'s history both in France and abroad. In 1908, a marble copy of Mercié's sculpture was erected at la Cripta de los Héroes (the Crypt of the Heroes) in Lima to commemorate Peru's defeat by Chile during the War of the Pacific (1879–1883). Mirroring France's own experiences during the Franco-Prussian War, Peru lost substantial geographic territories and descended into a period of civil war, after which eventually emerged a prosperous Republican government that turned the history of the conflict into a patriotic Lost Cause mythology. At the inauguration of la Cripta de los Héroes, the journal *Variedades* wrote about the value that defeat had brought Peru:

All savage or civilized nations, all superior or inferior races, honor with delirious zeal and with religious reverence these beloved dead who—oh sublime irony of things!—affirmed their countrymen in death. It is the death of these redeemers that has in some measure regenerated our collective identity and that strengthens our confidence and our faith in the future. The disastrous war that Peru endured from 1879 to 1883 has been rich in valuable lessons, in good and noble examples of strength, in

29 “La Justice s’est dressée glorieuse et vengeresse. Belle de mépris et frémissante d’indignation, elle accourt du plus profond de l’histoire, ramasse le corps du ‘cher blessé’ et d’un geste sublime l’élevant au-dessus de sa tête, elle le montre aux générations comme un souvenir à la fois et comme un remords. France, n’oublie pas! et toi, vieille Europe, reviens à résipiscence. C’est là la blessure inexpressible. Tant que ce sang sacré coulera, il y aura quelque chose d’obscurci dans le monde et aucune conscience ne dormira tranquille.” Jules-Antoine Castagnary, “Salon de 1874,” *Salons*, vol. 2, 1872–1879 (Paris: Charpentier, 1892), 129.

beautiful examples of love for the nation; and many lessons of sacrifice and self-denial have been received by those who, born afterwards into the anguish and misery that followed defeat, believed that the past had to be destroyed because it was a source of shame and dishonor.³⁰

The didactic quality of commemorating defeat is one of the key tropes that connects the interpretations of the copies of *Gloria Victis* in both France and Peru. In the case of the former, the memory of defeat equates military service to a kind of blood feud obligation, where the sons of the slain are called to vengeance. In the second, the memory of defeat promotes civic-minded virtues such as selflessness, self-sacrifice, and patriotism. In both cases, furthermore, the histories of defeat are promoted as cross-generational, even timeless, as sacred narratives that bind the nation together in unity.

As illustrated by the above examples, what I have termed the international cult of the Lost Cause functioned as a rhetorical device which reinforced key tenets of civil religion such as the permanence of the nation and the duty to give up one's life for the nation via the memory of the defeat. This helps explain the widespread appeal of *Gloria Victis* as a tool for nationalist governments in places where the negative effects of military defeat still resonated. Public sculpture was a valuable medium for communicating nationalist ideals given both its expression of monumentality as well as its reference to classical Greece and Rome—and therefore the idea of enduring culture—for societies and governments which sought to identify themselves with European civilization.

Yet, as seen in the previous section, *Gloria Victis* equally spread through non-monumental media as well, including statuettes and all sorts of ephemera produced through commercial spheres and used in domestic spheres. Are these objects, then, merely the stale runoff of top-down nationalist propaganda? In short, the answer is “no,” if we interpret them under the umbrella of what Hutchinson, borrowing from Michael Billig, calls “banal” nationalism. Banal nationalism reinforces the creative, didactic messaging

30 “Todas las naciones salvajes o civilizadas, todas las razas superiores ó inferiores, honran con afán delirante, con respeto religioso á estos queridos muertos que ¡oh sublime ironía de las cosas! afirmaban su raza muriendo. Es la muerte de esos redentores la que de alguna manera ha regenerado nuestra individualidad y la que estimula nuestra confianza y nuestra fé en el porvenir. La guerra desastrosa que sostuvo el Perú desde 1879 a 1883 ha sido fecunda en enseñanzas provechosas en buenos y nobles maestros de energía, en hermosos ejemplos de amor á la patria, y muchas lecciones de sacrificio y abnegación han recibido los que venidos después á la vida en las angustias y miserias consiguientes á la derrota creyeron que había que destruir el pasado por ser coeficiente de baldón y de vergüenza.” “Gloria Victis,” *Variedades*, September 11, 1908, 10.

of “hot” nationalism by incorporating the sacred nation into everyday life through objects and acts like postcards, home decorations, cartoons, or singing at sporting events. Crucially, this widespread and unselfconscious social process of commodification does not equal a loss or trivialization of meaning. As Hutchinson argues, “if popular use of iconic images, artistic styles, legends and heroes was imitative and even comic, this does not necessarily mean that the identifications were not deeply felt. They created a repertoire through which the world was imagined and experienced as national.”³¹ To tie Hutchinson’s theory with the language of Tarde, it might be said that the widespread and seemingly trivial imitation of national imagery in society does not signal nationalism’s ineffectiveness but rather demonstrates nationalism’s presence in society’s affective atmosphere.

This point about the potential sociopolitical efficacy of banal objects ties together in a significant manner to Anderson’s understanding of the turn of the century as an era of globalization. The proliferation of the symbols of civil religion was materially enabled by industrial capitalism, which made their production, distribution, and replication widely accessible. Eric Hobsbawm illustrates this as well in his analysis of the French Third Republic’s promotion of mass culture of commemoration: “While the construction of Republican monuments was evidently encouraged, the initiative, and the costs of, such enterprises were undertaken at a local level. The entrepreneurs catering for this market provided choices suitable for the purses of every Republican commune from the poorest upwards, ranging from modest busts of Marianne, in various sizes, through full-figure statues of varying dimensions, to the plinths and allegorical or heroic accessories with which more ambitious citizenry could surround her feet.”³² The dependence of the symbols of civil religion on industrial capitalism has been documented in other national contexts—such as the post-Civil War United States, where statues of standing soldiers were available for purchase in diverse materials like bronze, zinc, or granite through a simple catalogue order—but also in distinctly transnational contexts. In the case of the *Gloria Victis* mounted on the facade of Lima’s la Cripta de los Héroes, the sculpture is not an original artwork made by Mercié, but rather an industrial copy carved in Carrara at a time when the international trade of Italian sculpture came to its zenith.³³

31 Hutchinson, *Nations as Zones of Conflict*, 151.

32 Eric Hobsbawm, “Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe 1870–1914,” in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 272.

33 Alfonso Castrillón-Vizcarra, *Escultura en el Perú* (Lima: Banco de Crédito del Perú, 1991), 378; Luca Bochicchio, “Transported Art: Nineteenth-Century Italian Sculptures across Continents and Cultures,” *Material Culture Review* 74 (2012): 70–71, 79.

The mass replication of *Gloria Victis*'s image through print media played an equally important role in its global transmission. As argued above, *Gloria Victis* was widely reproduced at the turn of the twentieth century through postcards, newspaper illustrations, catalogues, and other forms of readily distributable paper ephemera. Chapter 2 of this book, for example, demonstrates that the inspiration for the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek's copy of *Gloria Victis* originally derived from a Barbedienne catalogue advertising affordable commercial reproduction of popular sculpture, which had arrived in the mailbox of the museum director, Carl Jacobsen. Anderson's theory of print-capitalism,³⁴ Hobsbawm's description of the mass-production of traditions, the standardization of global postal communications, and the Tardian social impulse of imitation all came together to make *Gloria Victis* into a viral phenomenon. What was transmitted in this process, however, was undoubtedly more than just a visual form. As a contagion, *Gloria Victis* carried with it not only a recognizable aesthetic but also a powerful emotional logic: defeat, when sanctified through sacrifice and framed within classical and monumental visual language, could be reimagined as a national experience. Through its replication in both official and banal forms, *Gloria Victis* helped naturalize the myth of the Lost Cause across borders, becoming a carrier of ideological affect that allowed disparate societies to align themselves with a shared international script of collective victimization, national regeneration, sacred duty, and the vilification of outside groups.

3. The international transmission of *Gloria Victis* monuments reveals political and aspirational ties between the countries when formal political agreements did not exist.

The international contagion of the cult of the Lost Cause, however, did not remain isolated within the nation-building projects of the individual host countries. Instead, *Gloria Victis*'s image was evoked through inaugurations, homages, and rituals in the efforts to create transnational bonds as well. In the decade prior to the First World War, at a moment of military alliance making and at the height of *Gloria Victis*'s global saturation, the monument had transcended its origin as a symbol of the French nation to become a shared cultural language across several societies. Therefore, *Gloria Victis* operated as a symbolic bridge between nations with the potential to foster a sense of transnational solidarity among societies that saw their own losses reflected in its imagery.

34 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1983), 37-46.

The international—and not merely national—dimensions of *Gloria Victis* are evident within its ceremonial function at the Paris Hôtel de Ville. Echoing the visual and spatial logic of religious ritual, *Gloria Victis* functioned as a secular altar in the civic cult of the nation, mediating symbolic performances of unity, sacrifice, and transnational alliance. The central courtyard, in the middle of which *Gloria Victis* stood, was the main venue where foreign dignitaries—from Russian and Italian royalty to American and British heads of state—visiting Paris were received. The Paris Municipal Council's accounts of these visits illustrate the rituals that were performed when guests entered. The courtyard was transformed into a winter garden filled with plants and patriotic banners and with a canopy erected to create a temporary roof. Standing beneath *Gloria Victis*, city representatives and the president of the Republic received their visitors who were then seated at the sculpture's base in a place of honor.

These rituals suggest that *Gloria Victis*, as an expression of the memory of the Franco-Prussian War's important place in construction of Third Republican identity, was directed not only to forge communal bonds between the French people, but with foreign governments as well. In the case of visits from foreign dignitaries from countries, such as Denmark and the Boer republics which had also recently suffered military defeat, the toasts and speeches offered frequently evoked the mutual memory of defeat as a source of transnational kinship and an impetus for future collaboration. The international cult of the Lost Cause functioned as a language across governments and *Gloria Victis* was one of its most recognized symbols.

The main case studies presented in each chapter, where *Gloria Victis* was adapted by countries outside of France as a tool of “hot” nationalism, provide further evidence of the international cult of the Lost Cause's spread and use as a form of political language. The groups responsible for erecting these copies abroad sought to promote their own nation-building agendas by mimicking the French Republic's narrative of noble defeat and unjust victimization. In certain instances, local actors sought to use *Gloria Victis* as a more-or-less direct line of political communication with France. In the case of the *Gloria Victis* bronze erected at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Jacobsen explicitly expressed his intention for the sculpture to evoke Franco-Danish fraternity, writing to Mercié that the sculpture would evoke “the glory of two vanquished peoples.”³⁵ In the case of the *Gloria Victis* erected at la Cripta de los Héroes in Lima, the monument's

35 “La gloire des deux peuples vaincus.” Carl Jacobsen to Antonin Mercié, February 23, 1893, Copybook 4, Carl Jacobsen's Outgoing Letters, 921–922, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen.

inauguration directly reflects the development of military relations between the two countries over the prior decade, when the Peruvian government had called upon the Third Republic to send officers to rebuild its military, which remained in shambles ever since its defeat by Chile during the War of the Pacific.

Neither Peru nor Denmark, however, entered into a military agreement with France. Of all the case studies presented in this book, it is only in the case of Serbia that the country eventually entered a direct alliance with France at the start of the First World War. Instead, what *Gloria Victis*'s spread across these countries signifies are the unofficial, unspoken, or unrealized diplomatic ambitions that tied these nations together. While military treaties and victories tell us of the tangible events of world politics, the transmission of cultural symbols across borders has the power to reveal the ephemeral realities that remain hidden beneath official historical discourse—the forgotten histories of failures, defeats, and unwritten agreements that entangled groups of people in the past, and which continue to haunt our spaces of memory today.

As a tool in the language of diplomacy, however, *Gloria Victis*'s spread also points to coercive forms of international relations. For example, while the French military mission directly worked into the Peruvian government's broader efforts of building civic unity by rebuilding the country's military and placing the War of the Pacific at the center of a new civic religion, from the French standpoint the mission was explicitly intended to create Peruvian dependence on French arms and services and create a buffer against growing German influence in South America. In this case, *Gloria Victis* represents the establishment of mutual relations between countries but also the expansion of informal empire.

While the exportation of culture was never a formal program of advancing French interests during the decades covered in this book, it was consistently employed by the Third Republican government as a part of the *mission civilisatrice*, or civilizing mission, of French imperial domination. This is most explicitly demonstrated in the employment of cultural imperialism in tandem with violence in the colonization of North Africa. A seemingly benign institution such as the Alliance Française, for example, which is one of the main sources of French language education beyond France today, originated in 1883, just two years after the colonization of Tunisia, as a means spreading French language and influence within the French Maghreb. The organization's roots as the cultural arm of French state imperialism, as Janet Horne notes, is made apparent by its original title—"Alliance Française for the Propagation of the French Language in

the Colonies and Abroad.”³⁶ The early leaders of the Alliance Française believed that cultural diplomacy was an effective inroad into political and economic influence abroad. Francophones would consume French products, enroll in French universities, and feel loyalty towards the French state.³⁷

The strategy of masking French imperial expansion through cultural efforts has been documented in other examples as well. While the cultural-colonial policy in Algeria and Tunisia focused on the assimilation of locals to French culture, later missions, including to Morocco, Tonkin (which today constitutes part of Vietnam), and Madagascar employed the revised strategy of so-called association which focused on the preservation and respect of local cultures in fusion with French practices. This strategy, coined the Gallieni-Lyautey method by Michael P. M. Finch in reference to the military commanders Joseph Gallieni (1849–1916) and Hubert Lyautey (1854–1934), was part of a larger colonial strategy of progressive, “peaceful” penetration.³⁸ The employment of the Gallieni-Lyautey method in the sphere of culture is illustrated in the book *Art in the Service of Colonialism: French Art Education in Morocco 1912–1956* by Hamid Irbouh. Irbouh focuses on how French colonial authorities used art education as a tool of cultural domination in the French protectorate of Morocco through a method of preserving, codifying, and controlling local art industries. While vocational schools were introduced as a means of preserving “authentic” Moroccan crafts such as leatherwork, carpet weaving, pottery, and tile making, they were ultimately part of the colonial project to permanently ingrain French power and authority into Moroccan society while simultaneously masking this political agenda.³⁹

What Gallieni and Lyautey called *action lente* or “slow action” has important parallels with what Joseph S. Nye has termed “soft power.”⁴⁰ According to Nye, soft power is a means of influence that operates via attraction rather than coercion, operating through fields ranging from medical relief to popular culture. Moreover, soft power oftentimes tends to

36 Janet Horne, “‘To Spread the French Language Is to Extend the Patrie’: The Colonial Mission of the Alliance Française,” *French Historical Studies* 40, no. 1 (February 2017): 96.

37 Horne, “To Spread the French Language,” 111, 114, 121.

38 Michael P. M. Finch, *A Progressive Occupation: The Gallieni-Lyautey Method and Colonial Pacification in Tonkin and Madagascar, 1885–1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 23, 55, 61.

39 Hamid Irbouh, *Art in the Service of Colonialism: French Art Education in Morocco, 1912–1956* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2013), 1, 78.

40 Finch, *A Progressive Occupation*, 61.

be employed through indirect diffusion rather than top-down government action, depending on a spectrum of local and unofficial actors including artists, museum officials, art critics, school directors, and cultural workers. While the Third Republican colonial mission used soft power in combination with “hard power” (i.e., coercion via physical violence or economic incentive) to exert control over the peoples it subjugated, France oftentimes exerted influence internationally through “soft” cultural means. Just as the global exportation of American movies, sports, music, language, and fashion bolstered US influence abroad in the twentieth century by associating freedom, prosperity, and ingenuity with US culture, French sculpture, architecture, painting, and literature were exported well beyond its colonies to promote France as the paragon of art, intellect, and cosmopolitanism.⁴¹

I have sought to demonstrate in a previous publication that the promotion of impressionism as an international phenomenon by French academics, writers, and museum officials at the turn of the twentieth century was intended to combat the cultural influence of the German Düsseldorf School as the only other major center of naturalist painting in Europe. Likewise, in walking around public squares of many major cities in Europe and the Americas today, it is evident that French sculpture was widely disseminated at the same period as well. J. P. Daughton provides an illustrative case study of the use of sculpture as a form of soft power in South America in his article “When Argentina Was ‘French’: Rethinking Cultural Politics and European Imperialism in Belle-Époque Buenos Aires.” Daughton describes the internal efforts of France’s plenipotentiary minister in Buenos Aires, Eugène Thiébaud, to ensure that a French sculptor was chosen to create the Argentinian government’s plan to erect a monument at the Plaza del Mayo for the centenary celebration of the country’s independence in 1910. Although Thiébaud’s plans failed—in large part due to the Argentine government’s inability to secure financial resources—Daughton’s illustration of the minister’s consistent efforts to sway parties involved in the monument’s planning through meetings and dinner parties, along with his consistent dialogue with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris, demonstrates the importance that sculpture had in promoting foreign perception of French high culture. Crucially, Daughton argues that this case and similar case studies highlight the importance of noncolonial efforts in the Third Republic’s foreign agenda,

41 Joseph S. Nye, Jr. *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 44–55.

where local actors like Thiébaud were at the forefront of advancing French soft power.⁴²

This leads us back to underlining the importance of *Gloria Victis*'s viral transmission and its attractiveness to diverse international audiences. As a popular object which rapidly spread through the era's expanding networks of globalized mass culture, *Gloria Victis* had very clear potential to transmit a positive image of postwar France as noble, refined, and ultimately undefeated to receptive audiences. In each example analyzed in this book of *Gloria Victis* being copied or exported abroad as a commemoration of a national defeat, the question is posed "what local or international political connections does this monument serve to aid?" In several of the conflicts covered in this book, the defeated parties had received some form of military support from France through the form of volunteer fighters, naval support, or arms. In other instances, however, the imitation of *Gloria Victis* did not signify concrete diplomatic communication between two countries but rather served as a means of local institutions to communicate both their political legitimacy and moral authority via analogy to France. In the latter contexts, while *Gloria Victis* served local power, the monument also reflects local institutions' reliance on foreign cultural models to reveal legitimacy, revealing how claims to sovereignty were often contradicted by an underlying dependency on French cultural authority.

Methodology

This book is organized along six country and regional case studies, including France, Denmark, Peru, the US South, South Africa, and Serbia, where public commemorations of military defeat were erected at the turn of the twentieth century. Although involving geographically disparate parts of the world, each of these case studies centers on monuments which are either copies of Mercié's *Gloria Victis* or directly borrow crucial symbols from it. These monuments, many of which remain poorly documented in scholarly literature, are analyzed using art-historical methodology. Sources including government archives, newspaper reports, and personal correspondence are used to retrace these sculptures' origins, financing, inauguration, and reception in the public sphere, as well as to place them in the context of

42 J. P. Daughton, "When Argentina Was 'French': Rethinking Cultural Politics and European Imperialism in Belle-Époque Buenos Aires," *The Journal of Modern History* 80, no. 4 (December 2008): 831–832, 851, 857–858, 860–862.

the commemorative trends visible in that country or region. At the same time, this book strongly relies on sociological methodologies to situate these monuments within the societies in which they were erected, focusing above all on networks through which *Gloria Victis*'s transmission occurred, the sculpture's function within public and diplomatic rituals of commemoration, and the broader influence of the memory of defeat on cultural production.

It should be noted that the process of locating primary source documents for reconstructing the interpersonal, art-institutional, and political networks that fueled the transmission of *Gloria Victis* has included archival research in each of the country case studies as well as language training for reading these documents. It should also be noted, however, that strong differences in historical conservation and institutional organization that distinguish each country, the sometimes polemical nature of these monuments and the institutions that erected them, along with the irreparable damage that violence and warfare has caused in certain places, has necessitated methodological adaptations. Thus, my research in Denmark has focused primarily on interpersonal correspondence located in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek's private records given the founder's almost obsessive tendency to copy and catalogue every incoming and outgoing letter along with the current administration's efforts, in tandem with the Ny Carlsberg Foundation, to preserve these letters. In France, given that no archive for *Mercié* exists and most of the artworks were government commissions, research has focused on administrative records in Paris and other cities where *Gloria Victis* was located. In Peru, where at present it seems as though much of the government's records surrounding the construction of la Cripta de los Héroes have been lost, research has centered on published congressional acts, newspapers at the National Library of Peru, and diplomatic and military records located in France. Likewise, given that the Boer republics existed as tenuous governments in exile after 1900, that French military involvement in the South African War was conducted by unlawful combatants, and that a major strategy of the government-in-exile was to wage a media campaign to sway public opinion in France, much of my archival research focused on French documents in tandem with postwar South African journal publications. Research in Serbia centered on newspaper and journal articles, given the National Library's excellent collection of these documents, many of which have never been digitized or translated. In the United States, given that Confederate monuments and the private organizations that founded them have come under intense political pressures as a result of the Civil Rights movements over the past fifteen years, much of my research has depended on the generosity of the cities' urban planning departments along

with ephemera found in local research centers. Lastly, in the desire that this book should inspire future research and debate, I would like to note potential shortcomings or inequalities that may have arisen through my unequal mastery of each language, knowledge of local historical institutions, and amount of time spent in each country.

Outline of Chapters

Chapter 1 focuses on *Gloria Victis*'s origins in France, including the consequences of the Franco-Prussian War on French society and commemoration, and how *Gloria Victis* transformed into a prevalent symbol of early Third Republican ideals. Along with providing historical context for both the war and the sculpture, one of my principal goals in this chapter is to demonstrate how *Gloria Victis* became, as Michael Dorsch has argued, a "shared cultural language of the French people." I focus on *Gloria Victis*'s transmission and repurposing within French society, including as an official political sculpture in Paris City Hall, a war monument used for local commemoration in regional French cities, and more broadly as a commonly identifiable symbol in French society. I further analyze *Gloria Victis*'s immense influence on French visual culture, citing the sculpture's widespread reproduction in different scales, its influence on contemporary sculptural trends and its frequent citation in French society, from cartoons to popular literature. Finally, I demonstrate that the mass dissemination of *Gloria Victis* went beyond France's borders, but into other countries and continents as well, thereby setting up the subsequent chapters in this book.

The second chapter of this book examines *Gloria Victis* in Denmark as a means of understanding the subtle ways in which cultural exchange reveals unofficial or unspoken political relations between countries. Like France, Denmark had suffered a major military defeat and territorial loss to Prussia during the Second Schleswig War of 1864. I argue that although Denmark and France never entered a military alliance due to the knowledge that this would provoke a war with the German Empire, the mirroring social experiences of defeat stimulated an intercultural exchange between the two countries as well as secret military negotiations. This silent alliance is clearly illustrated by Denmark's copy of *Gloria Victis* which was erected in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in 1906 as well as Hans Peder Pedersen-Dan's *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser* (The foot soldier with the little bugler), Denmark's only official public monument to the Second Schleswig War, erected on the outskirts of Copenhagen City Hall in 1899. By comparing these two

monuments and the contexts in which they were created and received, including their employment of both French and Danish cultural references, this chapter focuses on highlighting important similarities and differences between French and Danish means of commemorating defeat. Above all, I emphasize that the ability for groups to publicly commemorate defeat is an indicator of political and military power. The historically iconophobic stance of Denmark towards the Second Schleswig War, rather than pointing to a lack of public memory, is the product of the realities of small state politics, where the act of commemoration has potentially disastrous international responses.

While Copenhagen possesses the only official bronze of *Gloria Victis* outside of France, an unsanctioned monumental marble copy exists in Lima, Peru, which is the focus of chapter 3. Erected two years after the Danish copy was revealed in Copenhagen, Peru's *Gloria Victis* came into existence via mirroring political circumstances on the other side of the Atlantic. Peru, along with their Bolivian allies, were defeated in 1883 by Chile during the War of the Pacific—a war fought largely over control of the nitrate-rich borderlands of Tacna and Arica—leading to a large reduction in territory and a decades-lasting culture of defeat. The marble *Gloria Victis* was created to decorate the facade of la Cripta de los Héroes, where the remains of the War of the Pacific's martyrs were placed in 1908. I argue that *Gloria Victis* expresses the political ambitions of the Peruvian Civilista republican government who came to power in 1895. On the domestic front, la Cripta de los Héroes, which was designed by French architects and sculptors, fashioned the new government as a European-style liberal republic despite being in reality an oligarchy of *criollo* elites. On the international front, the decision to create a monument to the War of the Pacific using symbols borrowed from commemorations of the Franco-Prussian War illustrate Peru's reliance on French military aid at the turn of the century, which was in large part used as a counter to Germany's increasing military presence in Chile.

Chapter 4 focuses on *Gloria Victis*'s history in post-Civil War US culture, focusing on North Carolina, a former member of the short-lived Confederate States of America, as well as Maryland, a Union state on the border with the South whose population had divided sympathies for both the Union and Confederate causes. Even though the Confederacy was defeated, a powerful minority of white secessionist sympathizers exerted their ideals onto predominantly Black Southern society, leading to—in contrast to the situation of postwar Denmark treated in chapter 2—a substantial visual culture of celebrating the Confederacy's legacy. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, French memory of the war of 1870 had a strong influence

on Confederate monuments, which is notably illustrated by the example of the General Lee Monument, formerly in Richmond, VA, which was created by Mercié and inaugurated in 1890. Little more than a decade later, Frederick Wellington Ruckstuhl, a former student of Mercié's born in Alsace, created twin statues inspired by Mercié's *Gloria Victis* to commemorate Confederate soldiers in Maryland and North Carolina. These sculptures, now known as The Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument and *Fame*, were erected in Baltimore, MD, in 1903 and Salisbury, NC, in 1909, respectively, by local chapters of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. At their inauguration, however, both sculptures were known by a different name—*Gloria Victis*. I argue that the United Daughters of the Confederacy reinterpreted Mercié's *Gloria Victis* to fit within their organization's white supremacist, class elitist, and Christian-centric vision of Southern society while also following an established tradition of tying the South's right to secession to European rhetoric of national liberalism and self-determination.

Chapter 5 concerns the war between two colonialist powers in present-day South Africa, the Boer republics (the South African Republic and the Orange Free State) and the United Kingdom. The South African War (1899–1902) sealed British hegemony over South Africa and led the Boer governing politicians into exile. In contrast to the baroque emotionalism of *Gloria Victis*, monuments to the memory of Boer defeat were frequently very simple. Nonetheless, the appearance of the *Gloria Victis* monument in Potchefstroom in 1906 in the form of a simple white funeral stele demonstrates how *Gloria Victis* was adapted, sometimes dramatically, to meet local needs. In contrast to the other case studies in this book, which principally focus on the commemoration of national defeat within each state's territorial bounds, this chapter places great emphasis on the peculiar commemoration of Boer republican defeat outside of South Africa, in France. In France, where the press championed the South African War as a conflict between peaceful local inhabitants and an unscrupulous imperialist occupier, frequently making comparisons between France's conflict with the German Empire, artists created allegorical sculptures and monuments celebrating the Boer cause. In 1902, the French city of Nantes erected a sculpture of Colonel Villebois-Mareuil, a veteran of the Franco-Prussian War who, along with hundreds of other French troops, volunteered as a foreign national to fight for the Boer army, dying during the Battle of Boshof in 1900. This chapter therefore demonstrates *Gloria Victis*'s expression of a symbiotic relationship between Boer republican government-in-exile, who, despite their history as colonizers, wanted to tie the memory of their war to anti-imperialism, and France, who wanted to project an image as the defender of liberalism.

The final chapter of this book takes the reader to Eastern Europe during the early decades of the Kingdom of Serbia, whose independence from the Ottoman Empire was internationally recognized in 1878. By looking at the commemorative tendencies of a country which had only recently won its independence, this chapter argues that cultures of defeat do not necessarily emerge via the social need to memorialize in the immediate aftermath of military loss. Instead, I argue that the commemoration of defeat was ritualized by the newly formed monarchy to legitimize the governing powers. The main case study used in this chapter is *Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima* (Monument to Kosovo heroes) in Kruševac, Serbia, by French-trained artist Đorđe Jovanović. Erected on June 28, 1904, this monument celebrates a medieval defeat that strongly resonated with Serbian cultural memory—the 1389 Battle of Kosovo, which marks the beginning of Serbia's subjugation under the Ottoman Empire. By creating a history of nearly 500 years of occupation and failed revolutions, Jovanović's monument demonstrates the foundational power of the memory of defeat for the creation national origin myths as well as a tool for organizing nationalist violence. Exactly one decade after *Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima* was inaugurated, on June 28, 1914, on the national holiday of Vidovdan, Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated by Serbian pan-Slavic nationalist Gavrilo Princip, leading to the outbreak of the First World War.

These case studies of *Gloria Victis*'s influence on commemorative trends serve to underline the political power of the memory of defeat in nationalist politics. At the same time, the circulation of *Gloria Victis* across borders suggests that the sculpture had an influence on international politics, serving as a symbol of not only national group identity, but collaboration between countries as well. While this book largely focuses on France as the principal nation to which these countries expressed their affinity, I also suggest that looking at the broader network of shared memories expressed through *Gloria Victis* can help reimagine international politics at the turn of the twentieth century, exploring relationships not only through shared borders or commerce, but also through the transmission of symbols, ideals, and memories.

1. France and the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871)

Abstract: Chapter 1 situates Antonin Mercié's *Gloria Victis* within the political, cultural, and aesthetic framework of the early French Third Republic. Rather than treating the sculpture as a spontaneous response to the Franco-Prussian War, it argues that *Gloria Victis* articulated a foundational visual language of Republican civil religion. This chapter traces the sculpture's movement from elite civic sites such as the Paris Hôtel de Ville to its widespread monumental and commercial reproduction across France. By examining its use in diplomatic ceremonies, public rituals, and mass culture, this chapter demonstrates how *Gloria Victis* established a model for representing defeat as civic duty and sacrifice.

Keywords: French Third Republic, international diplomacy, civil religion, mass culture

The French sculptor Antonin Mercié (1845–1916) was one of the late nineteenth century's most prolific and celebrated artists. Today, few people other than specialists of nineteenth-century art history know his name. Between the 1870s and the start of the First World War, however, Mercié had a highly successful career as an academic artist, receiving numerous accolades for his art and obtaining prestigious teaching positions in France. Mercié, however, was much more than an artistic erudite. His sculptures bridged the gap between academic and popular art, being both serious in subject matter and yet highly sought after, and widely available in the commercial market. His sculptures, reproduced and sold en masse as statuettes, became a common marker of nineteenth-century bourgeois culture. His popularity in France made his sculptures, including both his monumental bronzes as well as his coffee-table sized reproductions highly sought after abroad. During his lifetime, his artworks were purchased and distributed across Europe, to Africa, North America, and South.

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Mercié based his successful career on the representation of defeat. He started his career in the immediate aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War, when the memory of defeat weighed heavily in France. Through his sculpture *Gloria Victis*, or “glory to the defeated,” which was an overwhelming success at the Salon of 1874 and continued to be popular throughout his lifetime, Mercié transformed the widespread feelings of humiliation and anger into a symbol of honor and pride. From that point forward, Mercié’s career became defined by a single theme. In France, he created sculptures like *Jeanne d’Arc relevant l’épée de la France vaincue* (Joan of Arc raising the sword of defeated France) in 1902 and *Waterloo* in 1907, a statuette produced by the commercial foundry Siot-Decauville representing Emperor Napoléon I at his final battle. In the postwar US South, Mercié was commissioned by Confederate sympathizers to create a monument to General Robert E. Lee in Richmond, Virginia (1890) (see chapter 4), while in Peru, as part of the postwar reconstruction initiatives of the Aristocratic Republic, the national government purchased a marble copy of *Gloria Victis* to decorate the facade of la Cripta de los Héroes (1908, the crypt of the heroes), which holds the remains of soldiers killed during Peru’s capitulation during the War of the Pacific (1879–1884) (see chapter 3). A fitting bookend to an artist’s career centered on honoring the memory of defeat—but also, crucially, the hope of revenge—Mercié’s final work was *Gloria Victoribus* (glory to the victorious, 1916), a revision of *Gloria Victis* made in the second half of the First World War, when the promise of French victory over the German Empire and the hope of regaining Alsace and Moselle loomed on the horizon.

Not only did *Gloria Victis* set the theme for Mercié’s future productions as an artist, but it also remained his most famous artwork. For nearly half a century, until the end of World War I, *Gloria Victis* continued to be present in French life as a public monument, through statuettes displayed in store windows and sold in magazines, through prints and advertisements borrowing the sculpture’s image, and through countless books, plays, poems, and musical productions incorporating the neologism “*Gloria Victis*” in their texts and titles. The sculpture’s success was rooted in the strong prevalence of the memory of defeat which played a strong role in Third Republican life, influencing not only French cultural productions but also both national and international policies. As a result of the sculpture’s pervasiveness, as Michael Dorsch has remarked, *Gloria Victis* became “an undisputed part of the shared cultural language of the French people.”¹ Like the representation

1 Michael Dorsch, *French Sculpture following the Franco-Prussian War, 1870–80: Realist Allegories and the Commemoration of Defeat* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2010), 85.

of a saint in Christian religious practice, *Gloria Victis* became an icon in the French cult of the Lost Cause. As a signifier, *Gloria Victis* was immediately recognizable. It evoked widespread civic ideals such as the sacrality of military institutions, participation in society through obligatory military service and other forms of self-sacrifice, and the identification of the imaginary collective—the French nation—with the shared memory of defeat during the Franco-Prussian War.

Gloria Victis also transcended the traditional importance of authorship afforded to fine artworks. Even though *Gloria Victis* brought Mercié immense international fame during his career, as its image became increasingly pervasive, reproduced via various media and displayed in different contexts, and adapted into the language of other visual artists, Mercié's importance as the form's original author gradually lost some of its value. This present chapter demonstrates *Gloria Victis*'s origins as a Salon sculpture and its transformation into a cultural symbol. The sculpture's transmission in France is traced through the diverse way it was replicated, including as an architectural decoration, as a public monument, as a commercial statue, and as a two-dimensional image. Replication, which allowed a greater number of diverse groups across France, both private and official, to participate in and dictate the means in which *Gloria Victis* was ritualized, is key for understanding the subsequent chapters, which examine how *Gloria Victis* went from a local symbol used in the commemoration of French defeat in 1871 to a globalized symbol which both informed and perpetuated the international cult of the Lost Cause.

Building the Cult of the Lost Cause in France

On September 2, 1870, at the Battle of Sedan, the French Emperor Napoleon III surrendered to the Prussian army less than two months after France had declared war on Prussia. The rapid capitulation of the imperial army, and with it the collapse of the Second Empire, however, did not result in a quick end to the Franco-Prussian War. France resumed the war against Prussia under the provisional Government of National Defense the same month and the Prussian army laid siege to Paris. Both military battles and the Siege of Paris dragged on until the beginning of 1871.

The consequences of war continued for months, years, and decades. When France finally stopped battling Prussia, its citizens turned against one another. The Paris Commune, led by former members of the National Guard, declared a radical new socialist government separate from the

recently formed Third Republic. The Commune ended in May 1871 after the French national army invaded Paris, culminating in the *Semaine sanglante* (Bloody week) during which the army captured and executed the rebels en masse. Moreover, German troops did not immediately leave France after the war's end. As part of the eventual truce between the two opposing countries, France was forced to pay an indemnity of five billion francs. Only in 1873, when the total had been paid, did Germany troops finally leave France—except, of course, for Alsace and Moselle. For thousands of French citizens, the war continued in the form of a German military occupation. At the end of the Franco-Prussian War, the former confederation of German states unified under Prussia to form the German Empire. As part of its process of national unification, the German Empire also annexed the historically Germanophone French territories of Alsace and Moselle, which it held onto until the Empire's own collapse after World War I.

The Franco-Prussian War was much more than just a war. It was a series of political ruptures and humanitarian disasters that continued to shape and influence French society for an entire generation. While these events were undoubtedly remembered with a tangible amount of anger and regret in French society, one of the dominant cultural narratives to arise out of the upheaval was to remember defeat as a sacred event. The mythologization of recent history as both a trial and moment of rebirth for the French nation was propagated by the Third Republican government and its supporters, as well as rivals such as Paul Déroulède espousing more radical visions of republicanism. The sacral quality afforded to defeat, the rituals that surrounded its commemoration, and the role that this ideology played in the function of Third Republican society are what define the cult of the Lost Cause in France. Frequently, the cultural impact of defeat is equated with *revanche*, the communal desire for retribution against Germany and the reincorporation of Alsace and Moselle. Yet as Bertrand Joly has argued, most citizens and political groups professed little desire for a direct military conflict with Germany.² In reality, *revanche*, like the return of Christ in Christian narratives, was more akin to a divine prophecy than a concrete political goal. The major social arena in which the mythology of defeat played an important role was in the integration of the military in civilian life, which included mandatory conscription and education, as well as public commemoration.

Societal views of the military had wavered since the French Revolution, alternatively seen as the embodiment of the people in the 1790s when the

2 Bertrand Joly, "La France et la Revanche (1871–1914)," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* 46, no. 2 (April–June 1999): 325–347.



Fig. 1.1. Albert Bettannier, *La Tache Noire*, 1887, Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin. Photo from Léonce Rousset, *Histoire générale de la guerre franco-allemande (1870–1871) II: Les armées de province* (Paris: J. Tallandier, 1912). (Artwork in the public domain; image provided by the Bibliothèque nationale de France.)

levée en masse (mass conscription) was introduced to expel foreign invaders, to being the peoples' oppressor during the Revolution of 1848, when government forces fired upon protesting civilians. The Third Republic shaped the military into a sacred institution beginning with the establishment of compulsory military service in 1872. Through a series of reforms which made conscription universal for French males, the military became a core part of civic life.³ Military officers were a common presence in public spaces and were given preference in public ceremonies including la Fête de la République, celebrated on July 14 since its initiation as a national holiday in 1880. The Third Republic not only promoted military service as a necessary collective good but elevated the military as an incarnation of the nation itself.⁴

As an embodiment of France, the military became a sacred institution, and its history a sacred text. The mythology of defeat and the sacrality of the military were perpetuated in the classroom. Like military service, education became mandatory in the Third Republic, and, moreover, another means of promoting the role of the military in civic society. Civic instruction replaced Catholic instruction in the 1880s and was meant to prepare young children, particularly boys, for their role as both citizens and soldiers.⁵ The promotion of militarism in civic education is visible in Albert Bettannier's *La Tache Noire* (1887) (fig. 1.1). The painting represents a group of school children being presented a map of France with Alsace and Moselle appearing as black marks. As part of the educational reforms, the Ministry of Education began distributing maps like this which presented Alsace and Moselle as lost or

3 Robert Lynn Fuller, *The Origins of the French National Movement, 1886–1914* (Jefferson, North Carolina, and London: McFarland and Company), 9–10.

4 Jean Boulègue, "L'officier dans la société française: l'héritage de la Troisième République," *Revue française de sociologie* 44, no. 4 (2003): 695–698.

5 Laurence Loeffel, "Instruction civique et éducation morale: entre discipline et 'métadiscipline,'" *L'École républicaine et la question des savoirs*, eds. Daniel Denis and Pierre Khan (CNRS Histoire: 2003), OpenEdition Books, 10.4000/books.editions-cnrs.3043.

displaced territories rather than part of the German Empire. In *La Tâche Noire* a student approaches the picture while dressed in the uniform of a *bataillon scolaire*, a practice of military instruction for young children which occurred in French public schools in the 1880s.⁶ As the teacher points to the black stain on the map and the class listens solemnly, the uniformed student, who stands between boyhood and adulthood, understands his future duty. As one critic at the 1887 Salon remarked, even though the children in the picture are too young to have experienced the war first hand, “*ils se souviennent*” (they remember) nonetheless via the stories that have been passed down to them.⁷ Even though Bettannier’s painting is melodrama, the pastiche of *La Tâche Noire* nonetheless captures the sacred ideal that the cult of the Lost Cause played in public life along with the symbolic objects, such as maps and uniforms, which were utilized in its performance.

Public sculpture, which had an increasingly visible presence in the French urban environment during the Third Republic, also played a role in the cult of the Lost Cause. In the early years of the Republic, funerary monuments were the main source of remembering the fallen of 1870–1871. Such early monuments served the needs of local communities mourning their dead, and were funded by churches, veterans’ groups, and municipal governments. They were erected to grieve individual soldiers or battalions in the cemeteries of the soldiers’ place of origin and were often religious in nature.⁸ Near the end of the 1870s, however, monuments took on a more distinctly national agenda. These monuments replaced Christian iconography with that of the nation, oftentimes in the form neoclassical allegories and obelisks. Rather than an act of local mourning, commemoration became an act of patriotism. Correspondingly, monuments were no longer relegated to local cemeteries and churches, but to national battlefields or in city parks and squares far removed from the sites of the conflict, oftentimes years or decades after the war ended.⁹

One of the images that became prominent early in the cult of the Lost Cause was Joan of Arc. One of the earliest commissioned monuments erected

6 Richard Thomson, *The Troubled Republic: Visual Culture and Social Debate in France, 1889–1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 198.

7 L. N. “Les Peintres Militaires au Salon de 1887,” *Le Spectateur Militaire* 4, no. 37 (April, May and June 1887): 349.

8 Rémi Dalisson, “Mémoire de guerre et nouvelles pratiques culturelles sous la IIIe République: l'exemple du monument aux morts de 1870 à Marseille,” *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 86 (2013), 384–385, <https://doi.org/10.4000/cdlm.6891>.

9 Annette Becker, “War Memorials: A Legacy of Total War?” in *On the Road to Total War*, eds. Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler (Washington, DC, and Cambridge: The German Historical Institute and Cambridge University Press, 2002), 659, 663, 667.

in postwar Paris was Emmanuel Fremiet's *Jeanne d'Arc*, inaugurated at the Place de Rivoli (now the Place des Pyramides) in 1874. The image of the medieval French heroine evoked parallels between the conflict with the English monarchy during the Hundred Years' War and the recent Franco-Prussian War. The image of Joan d'Arc continued to appear as a means of commemoration over the next decades of the Third Republic. A copy of Fremiet's monument was erected in Nancy in 1889, while other artists also erected their own monuments of the same theme, including Paul Dubois (1896, Reims Cathedral), Mathurin Moreau (1899, Montebourg), and Mercié (1902, Domrémy-la-Pucelle). Despite Joan of Arc's widespread popularity and recognition amongst the French public, however, the tendency for her image to be appropriated by anti-republican French legitimists as a symbol of Catholicism and monarchy placed it at odds with the construction of the Third Republic's civic values.¹⁰ Mercié's *Gloria Victis* was another popular image seen in the cult of the Lost Cause, but arguably of greater importance and prevalence in terms of government imagery. The sculpture's secular imagery, which was nonetheless evocative of Christian allegory, made it a more popular choice for Republican commemorations and ceremonies evoking the memory of the Franco-Prussian War. Up until the First World War, *Gloria Victis* became one of the most, if not the most, popular Republican images evoking the memory of defeat.

The Origins of *Gloria Victis*

Antonin Mercié began his training at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts under fellow Toulousain artists Alexandre Falguière and François Jouffroy. Even at his earliest stages of artistic development, Mercié found success through sculptural representations of victory and defeat. In 1868, he won the prestigious Prix de Rome through his submission, *Thésée vainqueur du Minotaure* (Theseus conquering the Minotaur, location unknown), which granted the young artist three years of pension at the French Academy's Villa Medici starting in 1869. There, he created a life-size plaster, *David Vainqueur* (David the conqueror). The sculpture, derived from the biblical narrative of David defeating Goliath, depicts the young Israelite king triumphantly standing

10 Sergiusz Michalski, *Public Monuments: Art in Political Bondage, 1870–1997* (London: Reaktion Books, 1998), 14–16; Guillaume Peigné, "Le guerrier sculpté en France de 1871 à 1914 d ou le triomphe de l'héroïsme anonyme," *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 83 (2011), 211–212, <https://doi.org/10.4000/cdlm.6016>.

on the severed head of his enemy. *David Vainqueur*'s composition is directly inspired by Donatello's *David*, drawing from the Florentine sculptor's svelte and sinuous interpretation of the male nude figure, but dons the character with Orientalist flourishes fashionable during Mercié's time, including a turban and scimitar. When Mercié submitted his plaster to the Paris Salon in 1872, he experienced a major breakout success. *David Vainqueur* brought him not only a first-class medal, but also the title of Knight in the Legion of Honor—an exceptional rarity for an artist still in training.¹¹

In recognition of the artist's remarkable achievement with *David Vainqueur*, the French Academy of Rome awarded him a fourth year of financing, from which *Gloria Victis* was born. The sculptural group depicts two principal figures, one male and one female. The nude male wears a bandage on his head and holds a broken sword in his right hand, identifying him as a vanquished soldier. Although the soldier's body is limp and lifeless, as if by miracle his left hand stretches upward to signal victory. His calm face and youthful, almost feminine, idealized body draw directly from *David Vainqueur*. The female figure is derived from the French sculptural tradition of a *génie*, or personification, who in the case of *Gloria Victis* is oftentimes identified as Victory. Dressed in a chest plate with articulated shoulders, Victory's corkscrewing body leaps off the pedestal, the billowing folds of the robe beneath her armor illustrating her momentum. Adjacent to her left toes, the only part of her body still touching the ground, lay a laurel branch and an owl, reinforcing the theme of victory, as the defeated soldier's body is carried upwards towards the heavens.

Gloria Victis undoubtedly takes cues from Amédée Donatien Doublemard's *Monument to Maréchal de Moncey* (1869, Paris) commemorating the 1814 Battle of Paris—the circumstances of which were echoed during the Siege of Paris—and which was erected shortly before the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War. Mercié borrows a secondary figure from the reverse side of Doublemard's monument, depicting a mortally wounded soldier clutching his chest, and makes him the principal figure, placing death and defeat in the foreground of commemoration. Another likely contemporary source of influence, albeit one of ancient origins, is *Victory at Samothrace*, which had been excavated in 1863 and became popular through its display at the

11 *David vainqueur, Explication des ouvrages de peinture et dessins, sculpture, architecture et gravure, des artistes vivants exposés au palais des Champs-Élysées le 1^{er} mai 1872* (Paris: Imprimerie National, 1872), cat. no. 1786; Musée des Augustins, Toulouse, France, inv. no. 2004 1 136; Christiane Vogt, "Un artiste oublié: Antonin Mercié," in *La sculpture du XIX^e siècle, une mémoire retrouvée: Les fonds de sculpture; Rencontres de l'École du Louvre* (Paris: La Documentation française, 1986), 237.

Louvre in 1867.¹² *Gloria Victis* borrows the voluminous swirling cloth on the reverse side of the Hellenistic sculpture, visible near her feet, to similarly suggest dramatic forward motion. Finally, Mercié borrows from well-known Christian iconography to complete his allegory of national martyrdom, placing the dead soldier in the arms of Victory to evoke Christ in Peter Paul Rubens's (1577–1640) famous *Descent from the Cross* (1612–1614; Cathedral of Our Lady, Antwerp).¹³

Mercié's inspiration for creating *Gloria Victis* has been the subject of two likely untrue stories. The first and undoubtedly apocryphal story claims that Mercié, anticipating the success of the French army, had created a statue of winged Victory at the start of the Franco-Prussian War. Anguished by the news of defeat, Mercié was on the verge of destroying his statue when Adolphe Thiers, who was visiting Rome, stopped him. Thiers suggested that Mercié place a dying soldier in Victory's arms, transforming the sculpture into an allegory of the heroism of defeat.¹⁴ Another often-repeated story which came from Mercié himself, but which nonetheless ought to be treated with a degree of suspicion, is that the artist made *Gloria Victis* as an homage to fellow artist Henri Regnault (1843–1871) who had died in combat towards the end of the war.¹⁵ Mercié first told this story in 1913, four decades after he made *Gloria Victis*, during a ceremony in honor of Regnault in front of his monument at Buzenval. Even if there is a grain of truth to Mercié's recollection, *Gloria Victis*'s almost complete lack of connection to Regnault in either its symbolism or in how it was used to commemorate suggests that is very likely that Mercié inflated the influence of Regnault's death for the sake honoring the deceased artist's legacy.

It is more likely, however, that Mercié was inspired by the defiant popular discourse surrounding the news of France's defeat in the wake of the war. In the immediate wake of the war, the motto "*væ victoribus*" (woe to the victor) had circulated in the German and Austrian liberal press before being adopted by the French press.¹⁶ The warning of prudence to the German victors played on the old Latin decree "*væ victis*" (woe to the defeated) attributed to the Gallic chieftain Brennus, who himself led several military victories against the Roman Republic before himself being defeated. "*Gloria victis*," however,

12 Dorsch, *French Sculpture following the Franco-Prussian War, 1870–80*, 81.

13 Nick Parkinson, "Work of Art, Museum Trophy, Memorial Monument: The Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek's *Gloria Victis* by Antonin Mercié," *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 21, no. 3 (Autumn 2022).

14 "The Story of a Statue," *Meriden Daily Republican* LXVII, no. 143 (June 19, 1895): 3.

15 "A la mémoire de Henri Regnault," *Le Petit Journal* 51, no. 18294 (January 27, 913): 1.

16 Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery* (London: Granta, 2004), 28–29, 141–143.

did not appear in postwar dialogue until the success of Mercié's sculpture at the Salon, and it is likely that the artist meant it to parallel the popular "*væ victoribus*." However, even if Mercié brought the phrase "*Gloria victis*" to popularity, it is possible that it was not his own invention. A leather panel containing the inscription "*Gloria Victis, Væ Nemini*" (glory to the defeated, woe to no one) can also be found in the Hauteville House in Guernsey, where Victor Hugo lived during his exile from 1855 to 1870. Hugo had originally created the panel in 1857, and it is possible that Mercié could have stumbled across Hugo's inscription through publications on the author-in-exile during the 1860s and subsequently borrowed it for the title of his sculpture.¹⁷

Salons and Ceremonies: *Gloria Victis* in Paris Public Life

After beginning work on *Gloria Victis* in 1872, Mercié first exhibited his sculpture at the Villa Medici's annual exhibition in 1873. An image of the original plaster version (presumed destroyed) in its installation at the Villa Medici in Rome appeared in the French periodical *L'Illustration*. It is shown standing prominently at the entryway of the Villa Medici between two ascending staircases, welcoming a royal envoy from Russia into the loggia. It was the first time that *Gloria Victis* was presented to the public for interpretation, and the political symbolism was unmistakable: "The subject needs no explanation," one anonymous journalist for *La France politique, scientifique, et littéraire* wrote, "it is clear that the war of 1870 inspired it." Explaining in greater detail, he claimed: "The head of Victory possesses a refinement, a charm that defies expression, and yet it expresses a kind of painful disdain, a hope for revanche whose realization she sees in the future."¹⁸ The critic predicted that the artist would receive the Medal of Honor at the upcoming Salon for his sculpture which so clearly resonated with the culture of postwar France.¹⁹ *Gloria Victis* brought Mercié the Medal

17 Diary of Victor Hugo, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, III Carnets, NAF 13448, October 1, 1857–March 12, 1859, 6; *Chez Victor Hugo par un Passant* (Paris: Cadart et Luquet, 1864), 62.

18 "On n'a pas besoin d'en expliquer le sujet ... on devine que la guerre de 1870 l'inspira ... La tête de la Victoire est d'une distinction, d'un charme qu'on ne saurait exprimer, et pourtant elle exprime une sorte de dédain douloureux, un espoir de revanche dont elle voit la réalisation dans l'avenir." D. de N., "Exposition annuelle de la Villa Médicis," *La France politique, scientifique, et littéraire*, June 24, 1873, 3.

19 D. de N., "Exposition annuelle de la Villa Médicis," 3; and see Anne Pigeot, "The Paris Salons of the 1870s: Entries for Exhibited Works," in *Rodin Rediscovered*, ed. Albert E. Elsen (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1981), 302.

of Honor not only at the Salon of 1874, but again at the Salon of 1875, when it was exhibited in bronze form.²⁰

The striking embodiment of patriotic sentiments which the journalist from *L'Illustration* first remarked upon in Rome similarly struck a chord with Parisian officials, who made plans to erect *Gloria Victis* at a public sculpture. After its debut at the Villa Medici in 1873, Mercié's plaster had been sent to Paris for an exhibition at the École des Beaux-Arts later in the year. There, the sculpture caught the attention of the Paris prefecture—then known as the Préfecture de la Seine—which recommended acquiring the sculpture and creating a bronze version to stand in a public square in Paris. In the fledgling years of the Third Republic, *Gloria Victis* was one of the first sculptures to be purchased by the city of Paris.²¹ The city subsequently placed the foundry Thiébaut Frères in charge of casting the bronze, which was completed in 1875.²²

After several propositions concerning where the bronze should be placed, including at the Paris Panthéon, the commission decided to have *Gloria Victis* placed inside the Paris Hôtel de Ville, which had been destroyed during the Paris Commune uprising. Since the Hôtel de Ville's reconstruction had only recently begun, however, the commission agreed to situate the bronze in a provisional location, namely, the Square Montholon in the Ninth Arrondissement of Paris, where it was installed in 1876.²³ Created in 1862 alongside the elongation of the rue Lafayette, the Square Montholon was one of the many parks and green spaces established in Baron Haussmann's renovation of Paris during the Second Empire.²⁴ Under the Third Republic, these public places became key locations for the inauguration of sculptures and for the political education of the Parisian populace. After the sculptural group's subsequent installation in the Square Montholon, it was temporarily removed for one final exhibition at the 1878 Paris Exposition Universelle.²⁵

20 T. Lamathière, *Panthéon de la Légion d'Honneur* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1890), 366.

21 Daniel Imbert, "Aux origines du fonds de sculpture du dépôt d'Ivry: La politique de commande de la Ville de Paris dans les débats de la Troisième République," in *La sculpture du XIXe siècle, une mémoire retrouvée, les fonds de sculpture*, Rencontres de l'École du Louvre (Paris: La Documentation française, 1986), 97.

22 Pigeot, "The Paris Salons of the 1870s," 302.

23 Imbert, "Aux origines du fonds de sculpture du dépôt d'Ivry," 97.

24 Géraldine Texier-Rideau, "Le square haussmannien," in *Les Parcs et Jardins dans l'Urbanisme Parisien XIXe-XXe siècles*, eds. Béatrice de Andia and Simon Texier (Paris: Action artistique de la ville de Paris, 2001), 70.

25 According to French newspapers, *Gloria Victis* was removed from Square Montholon in spring 1878 and then put back in 1879. "Au jour le jour," *Le Bien publique*, May 17, 1878, 3; and "Faits Paris—avis utiles," *Le Figaro*, February 22, 1879, 3.

In 1884, eleven years after its debut in Rome, *Gloria Victis* was installed in Paris' Hôtel de Ville (City Hall). The reconstructed Hôtel de Ville, which reopened in 1882 after its destruction in 1871, accorded to the general theme of "la Glorification de Paris" (the glorification of Paris).²⁶ Sculpture played a major role in this decorative schema, and the city employed many prominent French sculptors to participate in the creation. While the outside of the building is decorated with notable historical figures, the inside of the building is decorated with allegorical sculptures illustrating the duties of the city government. For example, one of the most elaborate staircases in the building, *l'escalier d'honneur*, included a series of allegorical sculptures: *Instruction* by Pierre Alexandre Schoenewerk, *Commerce* by Eugène Delaplanche, *Public Assistance* by Mathurin Moreau, *Art* by Mercié, *Letters* by Schoenewerk, and *Science* by Moreau. *Gloria Victis* was given a prominent position in the building's central courtyard, also called the *cour d'honneur* or the *cour Louis XIV*. Standing alone in the center of the courtyard, the sculpture symbolized one of the core themes embodied in the Hôtel de Ville's reconstruction under the fledgling Third Republican government, "the resurrection of *la Patrie* after its disasters."²⁷

Gloria Victis, however, was much more than an inert decoration. Like a cult statue in a church, the sculpture played an important role in government ceremonies occurring in the Hôtel de Ville. The central courtyard where the sculpture stood was frequently used as a room for receiving and entertaining foreign dignitaries. *Gloria Victis*, occupying a central position in the courtyard and elevated high on a classical pedestal, featured prominently in these diplomatic occasions. The sculpture stands out visibly in photographs and illustrations of events such as the Fêtes Franco-Russes of 1893 celebrating military cooperation between France and Russia (fig. 1.2), in which the central courtyard was turned into a ballroom, the visit of the king and queen of Italy in 1903, the visit of Sir Walter Morgan, mayor of London, in 1906, and the visit of US President Woodrow Wilson and his wife in 1918, following the end of World War I.

Rather than as a war memorial per se, *Gloria Victis* therefore functioned as a ceremonial sculpture within the context of the Hôtel de Ville, playing a role in the performative ritual of receiving foreign guests. Several written

26 Marius Vachon, *Le Nouvel Hôtel de Ville de Paris* (Paris: Édition du Conseil Municipal, 1900), iii.

27 "La résurrection de la Patrie au lendemain de ses désastres." Vachon, *Le Nouvel Hôtel de Ville de Paris*, iv.



Fig. 1.2. Fédor Hoffbauer, *Bal dans la cour intérieure de l'Hôtel de Ville, 4ème arrondissement: Fêtes Franco-Russes à Paris, le 19 octobre 1893*, 1893, watercolor, 10 1/8 x 14 3/8 in. (25.7 x 36.5 cm). Musée Carnavalet, Paris. (Artwork in the public domain; image provided by Paris Musées.)

and photographic accounts document the common practice of receiving and seating dignitaries at the foot of the sculpture upon their arrival at the Hôtel de Ville. One account details at length the reception of the king and queen of Great Britain and Ireland in 1915 and the presence of *Gloria Victis* during the event:

At the foot of Antonin Mercié's *Gloria Victis*, four carved and gilded wooden armchairs in the Louis XIV style, upholstered in Aubusson tapestry bearing the arms of Paris, had been placed for the Sovereigns, the President of the Republic, and Mrs. Poincaré ... The Sovereigns pass through the Hall of the Provosts between ranks of cavalymen of the Republican Guard, while the English national anthem, God save the King, and the Marseillaise resound, played by the band of the 102nd Infantry Regiment. In the Louis XIV courtyard, they receive the homage of the members of the Municipal Council of Paris, who have assembled in a circle around *Gloria Victis* and all the dignitaries present. The King and Queen, the President of the Republic, and Mrs. Poincaré stop at the foot of the statue. Opposite them stand Mr. Chassaigne Goyon, President of the Municipal Council; Mr. Delaunay, Prefect of the Seine; and Mr. Hennion, Prefect of Police.

What stands out in this description is the consistent function of *Gloria Victis* as a mediary for the performance of bonds amongst individuals—first as a point of assembly for the conseil municipal; second as a meeting point between the groups representing the city of Paris and the visiting heads of state; and third, as designating a space of honor for the king and queen of England, French President Poincaré, and Madame Poincaré. In the context of its location in the Hôtel de Ville, *Gloria Victis* indicates the presence of the sacred, similar to how an altar in a church, accompanied by symbolic sculptures such as a crucifix, demarcates for the receiver of communion the threshold of divine space, and namely the presence of Christ. The accompanying processions, music, and seats of honor all contribute to a reading of *Gloria Victis*'s symbolic function through the lens of Catholic ritual transformed through secular Republicanism, where the cult of the nation replaces the traditional worship of a deity. The dying nude, whose pose clearly mimics Renaissance depictions of Christ's descent from the cross, incarnates the Christian sacrifice albeit through the secular lens of the cult of the nation, in which the bloodletting occurs for the benefit of France's citizens. Just as important to the Christian narrative of Christ's sacrifice, however, is not only the savior's death, but his miraculous resurrection. *Gloria Victis* not only mythologizes the Franco-Prussian War as a holy sacrifice but also elicits the prophecy of future triumph.

The Spread of *Gloria Victis* as a War Monument

In 1881, the French city of Niort (today situated in Nouvelle-Aquitaine) prompted a major shift in *Gloria Victis*'s life as a public symbol by requesting permission from the Paris municipal council to reproduce Mercié's sculpture in bronze. The city planned to use the sculpture as a local memorial, commemorating those from the department of Deux-Sèvres who had died during the Franco-Prussian War. The request was led by the city's mayor, Antonin Proust, an omnipresent figure in Third Republican cultural politics who, in addition to holding the role of deputy of the department of Deux-Sèvres in 1881, was also the Republic's first minister of arts. The municipal council not only approved Proust's request for Niort to erect *Gloria Victis* as a war monument but formally decreed that all cities in France and its overseas colonies had the right to obtain a reproduction of the sculpture as well if they were willing to pay for its creation. The reason for their decision to renounce their exclusive ownership rights for this artwork, the municipal council argued, was that *Gloria Victis* was "more than a work of art, ... it is

a work of national significance capable of awakening and developing the patriotic feelings of the French people.”²⁸

The council's declaration that *Gloria Victis* held national significance and that bronzes would be available to all municipal governments was important for two main reasons. First, the decision allowed for the multiplication of so-called original sculptures made by Mercié himself across France. Second, the duplication and public exhibition of *Gloria Victis* bronzes in towns across France had the effect of transforming the sculpture's commemorative function. The Paris municipal council's 1881 ruling transformed Mercié's sculpture into an officially sanctioned memorial for commemorations of the Franco-Prussian War dead. By bringing *Gloria Victis* out of the Hôtel de Ville and into France's city squares, the Paris municipal council recognized the sculpture's utility as a means of propaganda, helping *Gloria Victis* become one of the prominent symbols of Third Republican militarist principals.

Less than four months after the approval, the second *Gloria Victis* bronze and the first official *Gloria Victis* monument were inaugurated at the Place de Strasbourg in Niort on October 8, 1881, bearing the inscription “Aux enfants des Deux-Sèvres—morts pour la défense du pays 1870–1871” (To the children of Deux-Sèvres—dead for the defense of the country 1870–1871). The inauguration ceremony, which was depicted in the newspaper *L'Illustration*, was a large public celebration of the values of militarism and republicanism (fig. 1.3). Ten years had passed since the end of the Franco-Prussian War, but only two years since the republicans consolidated power over the rival monarchists with the election of President Jules Grevy in 1879. In his speech at the inauguration, Proust attempted to align the politics of republicanism with the cult of the army through the *Gloria Victis* monument. Proust described the sculpture as neither a symbol of mourning nor of revanche, but rather “as a lesson, as an example for our national army, for this army which is our guarantee, our safeguard, our hope: for this army which, at this very moment, offers guarantees of its devotion to France, of its attachment to the Republic.”²⁹ Proust's words were met with cries of “Vive la République” from the attendees, further underlining the political intentions of the event.

28 “Plus qu'une œuvre d'art ... c'est une œuvre nationale pouvant éveiller et développer les sentiments patriotiques du peuple français.” Préfecture du Département de la Seine, Extrait du Registre des Procès-verbaux des séances du Conseil Municipal de la Ville de Paris, Séance du 16 juin 1881, 10624/72/1, folder 129, Archives de la Seine.

29 “Comme un enseignement, comme un exemple pour notre armée nationale, pour cette armée qui est notre garantie, notre sauvegarde, notre espérance: pour cette armée qui, à l'heure où je parle, donne des gages de dévouement à la France, de son attachement à la République.” “Les Fêtes de Niort,” *La Petite Gironde* 10, no. 3790 (October 11, 1881): 1.



Fig. 1.3. Defendi Semeghini (engraver) after Charles Lallemand (illustrator), inauguration of *Gloria Victis* in Niort as a monument commemorating soldiers from the Department of Deux-Sèvres who died during the Franco-Prussian War, (1870–1871), in *L'illustration* 2017, no. 269 (October 21, 1881). (Artwork in the public domain; image provided by the Bibliothèque nationale de France.)

In his speech, Proust not only subordinates the memorial purpose of the *Gloria Victis* monument for its patriotic function, but specifically aligns the Republic with the military, ordaining the latter to be its protector.

The idea that the military should have a close relationship with the civic government was by no means a universally held belief amongst French republicans. Many republicans before the Third Republic have traditionally espoused skepticism towards having a strong army, believing the institution to be a tool used by dictators to protect their power. The idea of disbanding the standing army and the creation of a citizen's militia continued to be a popular idea amongst leftists during the nineteenth century.³⁰ Once Jules Ferry and the Republican Opportunists rose to power in 1879, however, the politics of the ruling party swung towards promoting militarism, even while promoting liberal ideals such as secularism, freedom of the press, and universal education. General Gaston de Galliffet, whose speech preceded that of Proust's during the inauguration, used the opportunity to advance the role that the military had taken in Third Republican life. He encouraged the audience to take up their obligatory military service with pride and warned them against the propaganda of antimilitary leftists, saying "do not be fooled by those who promise you the abolition of standing armies, of carefully disciplined armies."³¹ At the time of the Niort *Gloria Victis* inauguration, the military had started its campaign of colonization in Tunisia. This imperial exploit was not only part of the Republican government's long-term effort to assert control over Africa, but also to demonstrate to the rest of Europe that France was once again, ten years after its defeat, a powerful international player.

30 Paul B. Miller, *From Revolutionaries to Citizens: Antimilitarism in France, 1870–1914* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002) 23–24; Fuller, *The Origins of the French National Movement*, 14–15.

31 "Ne vous laissez pas duper par ceux qui vous promettent la suppression des armées permanentes, des armées soigneusement disciplinées." "Les Fêtes de Niort," 1.

After Niort erected its bronze of *Gloria Victis* in 1881, several more cities inaugurated their own monuments, including Bordeaux in 1886, Châlons-sur-Marne in 1891, and Cholet in 1902.³² Like the Niort bronze, each of these sculptures was executed by Mercié in tandem with Thiébaut Frères, placed in a prominent public space, and elevated on a column or square plinth, onto which a dedication to the men of the town or commune who had died during the Franco-Prussian War was placed. Again, like with the Niort bronze, the act of commemoration via erecting a copy of *Gloria Victis* to commemorate the fallen men of 1870–1871 was more patriotic than elegiac. Oftentimes, rituals celebrating nationalism and military sacrifice accompanied the inauguration. When the Cholet bronze was erected thirty years after the end of the war, the lyrics of one of the songs played during the inauguration captured the prevailing sentiments: “The ‘Fatherland’ is the great saint / Who knows how to suffer without a complaint / In days of hardship and mourning / Then, when the foreigner believes her dead / She suddenly rises stronger, / More vibrant with a noble pride!”³³ Mixing nationalist and religious allusions, the song embodies key aspects of how the cult of the Lost Cause was celebrated during the Third Republic. Military service and self-sacrifice on behalf of the nation is sanctified. Mourning is supplanted by pride. Individual death is glossed over to celebrate the continuation of the nation.

The Paris municipal council’s 1881 declaration of *Gloria Victis* as a sculpture of national importance, by which the city of Paris granted all French cities the right to obtain a copy of the sculpture, had an important impact on reinforcing its symbolic function. From Paris to Cholet, the five *Gloria Victis* bronzes erected in France during the first three decades of the Third Republic all shared the common function of presenting a mythologized interpretation of the Franco-Prussian War. In presenting the transcendence of the French nation beyond defeat, the sculpture was a source of legitimation for the Third Republican government. As has been demonstrated through the past examples, however, *Gloria Victis* performed this function through more than one means. In the Paris Hôtel de Ville, the sculpture was used in diplomatic ceremonies, including the formal receptions of foreign delegates and celebrations of international cooperation, as a symbol of the power

32 Letters to the municipal council, Paris, from the mayor of Bordeaux, November 23, 1883; from the Bibliothèque et Musée de Châlons-sur-Marne, August 26, 1890; and from Établissements Thiébaut Frères, L. Gasne Successeur, Paris, July 10, 1901, 10624/72/1, folder 129, Archives de la Seine.

33 “La ‘Patrie’ est la grande sainte / Qui sait souffrir sans une plainte / Aux jours de détresse et de deuil / Puis, quand l’étranger la croit morte / Qui soudain se dresse plus forte / Plus vibrante d’un noble orgueil!” Henri Augereau, *Cantate à la Mémoire des Enfants de Cholet, Morts pour la Patrie* (1901).

of the Third Republic. Outside of Paris, where *Gloria Victis* was erected as a war monument, the sculpture reinforced the Republic's militarist agenda, including the reinstatement of mass conscription, by presenting military service as a sacred duty. The ideals of republicanism, militarism, and nationalism, established by the different Third Republican bodies that erected *Gloria Victis*, continued to be the core values associated with the sculpture even as it spread beyond government use and entered the hands of private citizens.

Barbedienne, Banal Nationalism, and Viral Acceleration

Although the Paris prefecture maintained authority over the production of full-scale bronzes, the contract with Barbedienne permitted the creation of "half-size" (*demi-nature*) copies, commonly known as reductions.³⁴ In 1877, Mercié signed a contract with the Maison Barbedienne, one of France's leading bronze foundries, for the right to reproduce bronze reductions of *Gloria Victis*.³⁵ These reductions, unlike the full-size originals, were commercial sculptures, and therefore available to anyone for purchase at Barbedienne's shop in Paris on 30, boulevard Poissonnière, through mail-order catalogues, as well as via the foundry's broader distribution network of dealers in cities in both Europe and the United States.³⁶ By the end of the nineteenth century, *Gloria Victis* was a common sight within bourgeois French society, visible in store windows (see fig. 0.5) and the homes of French celebrities like Sarah Bernhardt (see fig. 0.4) and Louis Pasteur.

The entry of *Gloria Victis* into the sphere of private consumption had a profound impact on its transmission throughout not only France, but also the globe. Within its diminutive, commercialized form, *Gloria Victis* did not lose its significance as an important symbol evoking the memory of defeat. Instead, the commercialization of *Gloria Victis* is an apt illustration of John Hutchinson's concept of banal nationalism, in which otherwise seemingly trivial acts and objects derived from national symbols play an important role in reinforcing the kind of nationalist education found in French classrooms from the 1880s onward.³⁷ Yet the transportation of

34 "Reproduction en bronze du groupe de M. Mercié, Gloria Victis, de MM. Mercié et Barbedienne," undated [ca. 1878], 10624/72/1, folder 129, Archives de la Seine.

35 Florence Rionnet, *Les bronzes de Barbedienne: l'oeuvre d'une dynastie de fondeurs (1834–1954)* (Paris: Arthema, 2016), 372–373, cat. no. 1075.

36 Rionnet, *Les bronzes de Barbedienne*, 98–114.

37 John Hutchinson, *Nations as Zones of Conflict* (London: Sage Publications, 2005), 151.

Gloria Victis into private space did much more than affirm tenets of Third Republic civil religion—it also transformed these practices and accelerated their transmission throughout society. To refer back to Eric Hobsbawm's notion of invented tradition, the increasing effects of industrial capitalism in nineteenth-century European societies played an important role in supplying governments with the large amount of ritual objects needed for the enactment of mass nationalism.³⁸ Thanks to the greater economic accessibility as well as transportability of Barbedienne's bronze reductions, *Gloria Victis*'s visibility in the public sphere was expanded beyond the confines of the parks, squares, and courtyards where the full-size bronzes were located. From the 1880s onwards, the sculpture became a common site of Third Republican life, visible in government offices, patriotic celebrations, and even beyond France, at diplomatic rituals and international exhibitions. *Gloria Victis*'s increased accessibility meant that its social function was expanded and transformed as well. As a symbolic object, it accompanied events and rituals celebrating the ideals of patriotism, militarism, and republicanism, oftentimes in the context of a trophy or a ceremonial gift, while other times continuing to function as a commemorative sculpture in the same manner that the full-size bronzes did. The commercialization of *Gloria Victis* was therefore essential to linking the sculpture to the cult of the Lost Cause as it manifested itself not only in France, but also abroad.

Founded in 1838 through the collaboration between Ferdinand Barbedienne and Achille Collas, the Maison Barbedienne specialized in creating precise but affordable mechanical reductions of sculptures in a variety of sizes through Collas's pantograph lathe. As in painting, the tradition of making reductions of popular sculptures, and thus allowing the artist to make multiple sales, was an established tradition in nineteenth-century France. What distinguished the Maison Barbedienne from its competitors, however, was not only the foundry's technological innovativeness, but its business ingenuity as well. Barbedienne helped transform the art market by making sculptures more affordable and increasing their availability. While many other foundries focused on creating limited artisanal reductions, Barbedienne focused on mass production, employing hundreds of skilled workers in their workshops. As part of their philosophy of mass appeal, the foundry focused on reproducing works by France's most popular contemporary sculptors, signing contracts with artists like Antoine-Louis Barye, Henri Chapu, and Jules Dalous. Barbedienne therefore paved the

38 Eric Hobsbawm, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe 1870–1914," in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 272.

way for making sculpture more accessible to the public and for its wider dissemination in society.³⁹

Mercié's *Gloria Victis* was one of Maison Barbedienne's most popular products. For over three decades, Barbedienne produced reductions of *Gloria Victis* ranging in size from 6 feet 2 3/4 inches (1.9 meters, three-fifths the size of the original sculpture) to 1 foot 6 1/2 inches (0.47 meters, one-seventh the size of the original), which were some of the foundry's best-selling sculptures.⁴⁰ When *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* ran an article in 1886 on Maison Barbedienne's process for making bronze reductions, *Gloria Victis* was used as the example to illustrate the production process (fig. 1.4). As described in the article, once a plaster reduction of *Gloria Victis* was produced using Collas's pantograph lathe, the mold was divided into ten pieces for individual bronze casts. Whereas the original *Gloria Victis* bronze was produced by foundry Thiébaud Frères with the lost-wax casting process, Maison Barbedienne used the more economical sand-casting process. Each of the bronze segments was then cleaned and chiseled before being pieced together with pins and screws to yield a complete sculpture, after which the surface was treated to create a patina. According to the 1900 Maison Barbedienne sales catalog, bronze reductions of *Gloria Victis* sold for between 750 and 6,000 francs, depending on their size.⁴¹

Mass availability broadened the number of citizens who could interact with *Gloria Victis* well beyond the cities where it was erected, and in many cases private ownership expanded its use as a public symbol. There are several notable examples in which private civic groups purchased the sculpture for use in their own commemorative and patriotic rituals. In 1883, evidently inspired by the Niort monument, a group of former students at the College et Lycée d'Agen (today known as the Lycée Bernard Palissy) erected a Barbedienne reduction of *Gloria Victis* as a memorial to several classmates that had died during the Franco-Prussian War (fig. 1.5). The group had purchased the largest Barbedienne bronze available, a considerably large statue standing 1.7 meters high. Although a little over half the size of the Paris and Niort bronzes, which stood at 3.11 meters, the Agen reduction clearly functioned just as well as the other monuments. One of the local orators focused on patriotic duty in commemorating their fellow classmates who died during the war, lamenting their deaths while also describing

39 Catherine Chevillot, "Les stands industriels d'édition de sculptures à l'Exposition universelle de 1889: l'exemple de Barbedienne," *Revue de l'Art* 95 (1992): 61–62.

40 Rionnet, *Les bronzes de Barbedienne*, 372–373, cat. no. 1075.

41 Ferdinand Barbedienne, *Bronzes d'art F. Barbedienne* (Paris: 1900), 5.

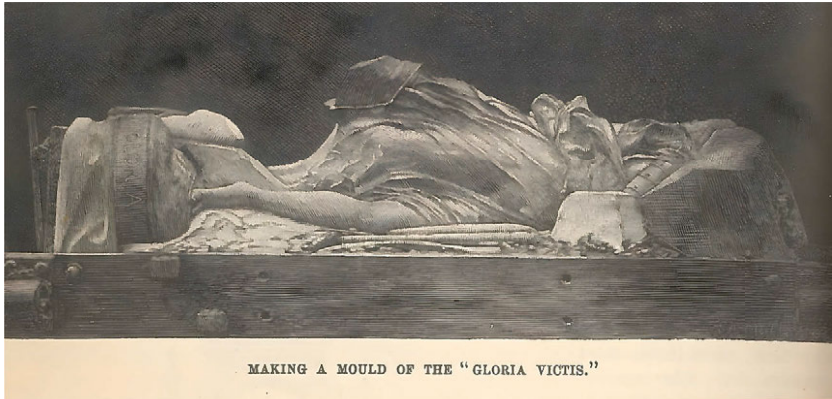


Fig. 1.4. Illustration describing the manufacturing process for a reduction of *Gloria Victis* in the Maison Barbedienne, showing the creation of a sand cast of one fragment of the reduction, which will later be reassembled with other fragments and finished. From *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* vol. 73, September 1886, 496. (Artwork in the public domain; image provided by the author.)

military service as “the holiest of duties.”⁴² The orator continued his speech by praising the monument being erected as bestowing an important lesson of wisdom and patriotism for future generations, ending his discourse with the cry “*Gloria Victis!*” For those present at the Agen inauguration, there was no difference between an original *Gloria Victis* bronze and a Barbedienne reduction. Barbedienne bronzes, however, had the benefit of being both less expensive as well as obtainable by nongovernment individuals and organizations.

In addition to larger Barbedienne copies of *Gloria Victis* being used as monuments, there are numerous examples of smaller statuettes of *Gloria Victis* being offered as trophies and tributes to individuals during public ceremonies. Notable examples include a copy given to French Admiral Raymond-Emile Gervais during the French naval mission to Russia in 1891 at the beginning stages of the Franco-Russian alliance. The bronze was gifted to him by Léon Dru, a fellow French citizen who was simultaneously in Russia to organize an exhibition of French art, in an evident symbolic gesture celebrating the *rayonnement français* abroad through two the Third Republic's favorite means: fine-arts and military.⁴³ The ceremonial use of *Gloria Victis* reductions in the celebration of French militarism is similarly seen in the case of l'Union nationale des sociétés de tir de France (National Union of Shooting Societies of France), which awarded first-prize winners at

42 “Le plus saint des devoirs.” “Chronique locale: discours de M. Larroche, président de l'Association,” *Revue de l'Agenais et des anciennes provinces du Sud-Ouest* 10 (1883): 388

43 “A l'Étranger: Russes et Français,” *La Dépêche Algérienne*, August 9, 1891, 1.



Fig. 1.5. *Gloria Victis*, Collège et Lycée d'Agen (today Lycée Bernard Palissy), Agen, France. Barbedienne reduction. Erected 1883. Stolen 2008. Postcard ca. 1900. (Artwork in the public domain; image provided by the author.)

its competitions with a Barbedienne bronze. Shooting societies were strongly associated with the rise of nationalist leagues, such as the Ligue des Patriotes (the league of patriots), in the 1880s and 1890s as a means of celebrating the history of *les Francs-tireurs*, irregular combatants during the Franco-Prussian War, and as a means of promoting militarism amongst the civilian population. As a testament to the close connection between *Gloria Victis* and militarist ideology, the National Union of Shooting Societies of France adopted the sculpture's image within much of its visual propaganda, which was featured on the front page of the society's newsletter and emblazoned on bronze and silver medals (see fig. 0.5).⁴⁴

44 "Médaille de l'Union," *Le Tir national: Organe officiel de l'Union nationale des Sociétés de tir de France* 5, no. 14 (May 30, 1891): 107, <http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb32877096>; 'Armée Nationale (fusil lebel): Concours public; Catégorie 14,' *Le Tir national: Organe officiel de l'Union nationale des Sociétés de tir de France* 6, no. 20 (July 11, 1891): 169, <http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb32877096>; Rémi Dalisson, "Les racines d'une commémoration: les fêtes de la Revanche et les inaugurations de monuments aux morts de 1870 en France (1871–1914)," *Revue historique des armées* 274 (2014): 1–4; Ariane Chebel d'Appollonia, *L'extrême-droite en France* (Brussels: Éditions Complexe, 1988): 131.

As the above examples suggest, *Gloria Victis* reductions were frequently, although not exclusively, tied to the rise of French conservative ideology at the end of the nineteenth century. In a similar gesture of French nationalism, a group of republican supporters of André Lebon, France's Minister of Colonies (1896–1898), gave him a bronze statuette of *Gloria Victis* following his defeat in the legislative elections of May 8, 1898, inscribed with a dedication at the base. Lebon had gained intense local notoriety during the Dreyfus Affair as the figure responsible for ordering Alfred Dreyfus, already imprisoned on Devil's Island off French Guyana, to be chained to his bed at night, an act which according to contemporary critics amounted to torture. Although politically allied with secular republicanism, a feature that made him distinct from other anti-Dreyfusards, his condemnation by the French press for his involvement in the Dreyfus Affair cost him the election.⁴⁵ As a symbol closely associated with the sacrality of the French army—a central ideology of anti-Dreyfusardism (see chapter 5)—*Gloria Victis* was a seemingly appropriate gift, casting Lebon as a martyr for the French republic and its institutions. Lebon's statuette, today held at the musée Georges Turpin de Parthenay, was later photographed being paraded to the Place du Château in the city of Parthenay during that year's July 14 celebrations, a national holiday commonly known as Bastille Day, which since 1880 had been dedicated to celebrating the French Republic.

What is clear is that, in many cases, *Gloria Victis* reductions were frequently associated with the expression of patriotic, military, and republican values, and the greater accessibility offered through Barbedienne copies allowed for the sculpture to inhabit public life in a much broader manner. Outside of the private sphere, Barbedienne reductions of *Gloria Victis* were also utilized by the French government and had a strong presence in municipal buildings and ceremonies. Examples of these statuettes have been traced to the château de Rambouillet which was used by Félix Faure as a summer home during his presidency (1895–1899), in the Hôtel de Ville of Saint-Denis, and in the former office of the prefect of the Seine of the Hôtel de Ville of Paris (fig. 1.6).⁴⁶

In the latter example, the presence of the *Gloria Victis* reduction visibly played a prominent role in a greater decorative scheme commemorating the Franco-Prussian War. The former prefect's office, which today functions as

45 Bertrand Joly, *Histoire Politique de l'Affaire Dreyfus* (Paris: Fayard, 2014), 215; Paul Desachy, *Répertoire de l'Affaire Dreyfus, 1894–1899* (1905): 173.

46 Direction des Affaires Départementales, *Saint-Denis: Notice historique et renseignements administratifs* (Paris: Montévrain, 1902), 80.



Fig. 1.6. "Hôtel de Ville—Cabinet du Préfet de la Seine," *Album de la Ville de Paris* (Paris: Henri Manuel), ca. 1900.

the mayor's office, was decorated with six large panels by Mr. Adolphe Binet, representing various episodes of the Siege of Paris in 1870–1871. The constant evocation of the memory of defeat in Third Republican life, including not only through public squares and courtyards but through and indoor civic spaces as well, illustrates the prominent role that commercial statuettes of *Gloria Victis* had in perpetuating the cult of the Lost Cause in France. Rather than reifying it into a simple decorative commodity, reproduction in many ways intensified *Gloria Victis*'s cult status by amplifying its social presence. Even though the copyright to *Gloria Victis* was open to all French municipal governments, full-size bronze sculptures were exceedingly costly, unsuitable for interior use, and could take years to produce. Barbedienne bronzes, on the other hand, could be purchased immediately from a store or ordered from a catalogue at a much lower price, making them useful objects for government officials.

The mobility afforded to *Gloria Victis* through its serial reproduction by Maison Barbedienne also expanded the prominent symbolic function it held at the Hôtel de Ville as a symbolic object used within French diplomatic rituals. At the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, a Barbedienne reduction adorned the entrance to the French pavilion. During the national holiday, it was surrounded by the French and American flags to show the fraternity between the two countries (fig. 1.7). In a manner similar to how the original bronze in the Hôtel de Ville was used in the reception of foreign dignitaries, the Barbedienne bronze at the Chicago World's Fair was displayed as a symbol of



Fig. 1.7. The French Pavilion during the Fête Nationale of July 14 at the World's Columbian Exhibition in Chicago, Illinois, USA, 1893, in *Scientific American Supplement* 36, no. 925 (September 23, 1893). (Artwork in the public domain; image provided by the Bibliothèque nationale de France.)

the French Republic for foreign audiences, further deepening the connection between the French nation and the memory of the Franco-Prussian War.

While the original *Gloria Victis*'s functional abilities were limited to the space it was erected in, bronze reductions had the added benefit of being transportable to countries beyond France. This aspect of mobility was not only beneficial for French cultural ceremonies, as illustrated in the examples concerning Moscow and Chicago above, but also essential for *Gloria Victis*'s global transmission. Barbedienne catalogues were read by international collectors and deeply amplified *Gloria Victis*'s recognition and transmission.

This point is clearly illustrated in the case study presented in chapter 2 which documents how the Danish collector Carl Jacobsen was originally inspired to bring a copy of *Gloria Victis* to Denmark through a Barbedienne catalogue he received in the mail in 1880, and that a Barbedienne reduction was exhibited in Copenhagen during Den Franske Kunstudstilling (the French Art Exhibition) in 1888. cursory research reveals that Barbedienne reductions of *Gloria Victis* can be currently found in collections in Chile, the United States, Denmark, England, and Germany, although copies are likely to be held in many other countries given that many of these bronzes continue to be actively sold in the secondary market.

Although Barbedienne was one of the most important companies in the global proliferation of *Gloria Victis*, they were but just one means of reproduction that promoted its transmission. The rapid progress of communications and transportation technologies, along with the rising taste for and means of producing industrial arts in Europe, made the turn of the twentieth century the age of “early globalization,” as Benedict Anderson has argued.⁴⁷ Many technologies which are taken for granted today, including the rapid dispatch of postcards by the international postal services, the reproduction of photographs in newspapers via dot matrix printing, and the accessibility of cheap posters and art prints through photolithography and other printing methods, came to their heyday during this era and undoubtedly played an important role in the global recognition of *Gloria Victis*.⁴⁸ In at least one instance, as illustrated in chapter 3’s case study of la Cripta de los Héroes in Peru, *Gloria Victis* was copied in marble by industrial carvers in Carrara, Italy, and sent to Lima. Even seemingly old-fashioned and exclusive forms of visual media, such as carved marble statues, came under the influence of industrialization in this era.

Bogino’s Adaption: The Transmission and Transformation of *Gloria Victis* in French Commemorative Sculpture

The influence of *Gloria Victis* on French commemoration of the Franco-Prussian War was immediately tangible following its exhibition debut in Paris. Art critics had judged the sculpture to be an important symbol of national sentiments

47 Benedict Anderson, *The Age of Globalization: Anarchists and the Anticolonial Imagination* (Brooklyn and London: Verso, 2013), 10.

48 Agnès Penot, “La maison Goupil et la globalisation du marché de l’art au xixe siècle,” in *La forme des réseaux: France et Europe, Xe-XXe siècle*, ed. Jacques Verger (Éditions du Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques: 2017), 7–51.



Fig. 1.8. Auguste Rodin, *La Défense de Paris*, 1880. *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne* (June 1, 1920). (Artwork in the public domain; image provided by the Bibliothèque nationale de France.)

in the wake of defeat by Prussia and the loss of Alsace and Moselle. Almost immediately, Mercié's novel visual theme of a dying soldier hoisted into the arms of a female allegorical figure in a gesture of exaltation rather than mourning was imitated by other artists. Imitators were widespread, and included renowned artists like Auguste Rodin, whose submission for the Defense of Paris monument competition clearly imitated *Gloria Victis*'s depiction of valiant defeat through its winged allegory, dying soldier, and heroic nudity (fig. 1.8).

Mercié's undeniably profound impact on French commemorative culture, however, simultaneously calls into question traditional assumptions about authorship and artistic influence. Just as the commercial dissemination of Barbedienne bronze reductions wrested control from municipal governments of how *Gloria Victis* was utilized, giving birth to new meanings and rituals, the sculpture's widespread citation by contemporary artists oftentimes diluted and muddled clear lines of connection back to Mercié and his original sculpture. *Gloria Victis* became part of Third Republican visual culture and an icon in the postwar cult of the Lost Cause. As an icon, it symbolized greater ideas about patriotism, military pride, and the immortality of the nation which were part of the French cultural memory of defeat. Within public sculpture, *Gloria Victis* was transformed into a general sculptural type in which the expression of defeat was foregrounded by the image of a dying soldier supported by an allegorical figure. Numerous variations of this type occurred, as individual artists adapted the monument's iconography

to the desires of local audiences and public officials, changing the figures' clothing and identities, removing or transforming symbols and attributes, and merging outside artistic influences as well.

The first example of *Gloria Victis*'s influence on commemorative sculpture can be seen in Frédéric Bogino's *La France soutenant un soldat blessé*, inaugurated on November 2, 1875, in Mars-la-Tour. The monument represents a French soldier clutching his chest, pressing his right hand over an unseen mortal wound as the rifle in his left hand slips from his grasp. Falling backwards as if knocked over by the force of a bullet, the soldier is caught in the left hand of a female allegorical figure who in the same motion crowns him with a wreath of laurels with her right hand, exalting him as the victor at the moment of his death and defeat. Like Mercié's *Gloria Victis*, the powerful physique and stoic resolve of the female figure—who, rather than looking down at the soldier with pity, looks into the distance with an air of determination—in Bogino's sculpture contrasts with the baroque emotionalism of the soldier's contorted, lifeless body and docile expression.

Unlike *Gloria Victis*, however, *La France soutenant un soldat blessé* was designed by its artist with the task of public commemoration in mind. The residents of Mars-la-Tour, situated less than a kilometer away from the new border with the German Empire, had already in 1873 started a public subscription with the aim of erecting a monument to those who had died at the bloody nearby battles of Bezonville, Gravelotte, Saint-Privat, and Mars-la-Tour from August 14 through 18, 1870. In 1874, Bogino, who was largely known for his religious sculpture, offered to aid the local residents in their commemorative plans and proposed a design, completing his monument the same year.⁴⁹ Drawing from the artist's ecclesiastical sensibilities and the monument's intended commemorative function, *La France soutenant un soldat blessé* presents a visual schema which is more conventional and therefore easier to read. In contrast to *Gloria Victis*, which relies heavily on academic symbolism such as the male figure's heroic nudity and broken sword, *La France soutenant un soldat blessé* relies on realism to represent the fallen combatants it commemorates. Bogino goes back to one of Mercié's main sources of inspiration, the dying soldier on the reverse side of Doublemard's *Monument to Maréchal de Moncey*. Like Doublemard, and in contrast to Mercié, Bogino ensures that the figure can be readily identified as a French soldier by all members of the public, regardless of their historical

49 Benoît Vaillot, "Un monument sur la frontière: commémorer la guerre de 1870 à Mars-la-Tour (1871–1914)," *In Situ* 38 (2019): 9; Osvald Leroy, *Mars-la-Tour, 16–18 août 1870* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1888), 7; "Un Monument funéraire à Mars-la-Tour," *Le Français*, September 21, 1874, 3.

knowledge, by dressing him in a contemporary uniform. Furthermore, while Mercié's bronze revels in baroque illusionism as the female figure holding the dead soldier seems to leap off the pedestal, defying its materiality, Bogino's wingless allegory of France stands firmly behind the defeated soldier, erect, immobile, and eternal, like a funerary stele.

Despite these differences, however, *La France soutenant un soldat blessé* clearly took its visual cues from *Gloria Victis*, an observation which was recognized by contemporary journalists. When Bogino's monument was exhibited at the Salon in 1876, where it was displayed in the place of honor in the middle of the exhibition garden, the critic Henry Havard remarked with amusement that *Gloria Victis* had been exhibited in the same manner at the prior year's Salon.⁵⁰ Yet *La France soutenant un soldat blessé* had its own crucial role in not only popularizing the imitation of *Gloria Victis*'s principal motif amongst French sculptors, but in transforming it as well. Bogino's adaptation of *Gloria Victis*, which rendered the defeated soldier in a readily identifiable uniform and simplified the sculpture's design, defines the common formula by which artists throughout France and the rest of the world adapted *Gloria Victis* for their own local commemorative sculptures. Variations of the theme of a dead or dying soldier dressed in uniform, upheld by a female allegorical figure, oftentimes winged à la Mercié's or holding laurel crowns, were utilized in the design for Franco-Prussian War monuments by artists including Eucher Girardin (Roanne, 1893), Aristide Croisy (Sedan, 1897), Edme Antony Paul Noël (Chaumont, 1898), Emmanuel Hannaux (Noiseville, 1908), and Jean-Georges Achard (Bordeaux, 1913). Even Mercié was influenced by the broader transformations of *Gloria Victis* within French commemorative culture. When he created *Quand Même!* (1882), destined to be inaugurated in Belfort to commemorate the city's siege by Prussian troops, he maintained the same visual theme he initiated with *Gloria Victis*. However, Mercié rendered the dying soldier in contemporary uniform, removed the wings from the female allegory, and adorned her with traditional Alsatian garments, abandoning his neo-Florentine roots for contemporary ethno-realism.

Conclusion: *Rayonnement*

In the years following the Franco-Prussian War, when France's influence in the realm of European politics had been greatly diminished, the idea that

50 Henry Havard, "Le Salon II: Coup d'œil général," *Le Bien public*, May 2, 1876, 3.

France could regain its international reputation through the promotion of its influence abroad became an important part of the Third Republic's agenda. Colonial policy was codified and accelerated during the Third Republic, and the imposition of French rule over foreign subjects was frequently justified through the idea of spreading civilization. French language and culture were forced upon the colonized inhabitants of the Maghreb and Southeast Asia. At the same time, the government also used the spread of education and culture as a tool for soft power in countries beyond their colonial control as a means for breeding both cultural admiration for, but also economic dependency on, France (see chapter 3).

While the Ministry of Foreign Affairs appears to have had no formal policy for promoting French art abroad, there is little reason to doubt that it was considered a potential tool for promoting French foreign policy. Cultural imperialism was a significant part of the Third Republic's colonial policy. For example, the Alliance Française was founded in 1883, just two years after the conquest of Tunisia, and functioned as a means of spreading French language and influence within the French Maghreb. The organization's roots as the cultural arm of French state imperialism, as Janet Horne notes, is made apparent by its original title, "Alliance Française for the Propagation of the French Language in the Colonies and Abroad."⁵¹ As Horne argues, the early leaders of the Alliance Française believed that cultural diplomacy was an effective inroad to political and economic influence abroad. Francophones would consume French products, enroll in French universities, and feel loyalty toward the French state.⁵² The same strategy of using culture as a means of soft power seems to also be evident in France's diplomatic relations. As J. P. Daughton demonstrates in his study of French participation in monument competitions in Argentina at the end of the nineteenth century, the impetus to promote France as the paragon of culture became so strong during the Third Republic that it was employed in locations where France had few political stakes.⁵³ As *Gloria Victis* spread abroad to countries like Peru, Serbia, Denmark, South Africa, and the United States, to what degree did political considerations, whether French or local, play into its adoption?

The rest of this book stems from this question as well as the information that has been discussed in this present chapter. *Gloria Victis* appeared in

51 Janet Horne, "To Spread the French Language Is to Extend the Patrie': The Colonial Mission of the Alliance Française," *French Historical Studies* 40, no. 1 (February 2017): 96.

52 Horne, "To Spread the French Language," 111, 114, 121.

53 J. P. Daughton, "When Argentina Was 'French': Rethinking Cultural Politics and European Imperialism in Belle-Époque Buenos Aires," *Journal of Modern History* 80, no. 4 (2008): 851, 861–862.

France in the wake of defeat. The sculpture quickly became adopted into the civil religion being promoted by the new republican government, and several bronzes were produced for commemorative purposes and spread throughout several French cities. Although the sculpture continued to be associated with the ideals of Third Republican civil religion, including, most importantly, the sacrality of the military, mass consumption also allowed for its meaning to undergo changes. It is undoubtable that French officials saw the subsequent influence of *Gloria Victis* abroad as evidence of France's growing global influence. Moreover, the adoption or emulation of *Gloria Victis* within public monuments abroad frequently belied in the very least a local reverence for France, but also occasionally a desire to deepen diplomatic ties between the countries. The spread of *Gloria Victis* to becoming not just a "shared cultural language of the French people,"⁵⁴ but an internationally recognized symbol incorporated into the cultural language of several vastly different societies, demonstrates the sculpture's unique history in the realm of public art. Most importantly, in each of the case studies in this book, the sculpture's adoption abroad was symptomatic of a growing cult of the Lost Cause particular to that country's relationship with the memory of defeat and their political aspirations for the future.

54 Dorsch, *French Sculpture following the Franco-Prussian War, 1870–80*, 85.

2. Denmark and the Second Schleswig War (1864)

Abstract: Chapter 2 examines the reception of *Gloria Victis* in Denmark, focusing on its acquisition by Carl Jacobsen for Copenhagen's Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in 1906. It argues that this placement symbolically aligned Denmark with France by linking the Danish defeat in the Second Schleswig War (1864) to France's loss in the Franco-Prussian War. This chapter reveals a little-remembered moment when segments of the Danish elite imagined cultural and strategic alignment with France despite Germany's regional dominance. It also analyzes *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser* (1899) as a localized adaptation of *Gloria Victis*'s visual grammar. Together, these examples show how Denmark blended foreign commemorative models with domestic mythmaking while expressing informal political aspirations.

Keywords: France, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Carl Jacobsen, museums, monuments

Between the 1870s and the start of the twentieth century, *Gloria Victis* morphed from Salon allegory to municipal propaganda piece to collective symbol of loss following the Franco-Prussian War. The original bronze cast remained in the central courtyard of Paris' Hôtel de Ville, where it served as a backdrop for parties, ceremonies, and the reception of foreign dignitaries. Following the city of Paris's decision to lend copyright to the sculpture to all cities in France and its overseas territories, Mercié was commissioned to create four more casts for the cities of Niort (requested 1881), Bordeaux (requested 1883), Châlons-sur-Marne (today, Châlons-en-Champagne; requested 1890), and Cholet (requested 1901), where the sculpture was erected as a local monument commemorating the town's fallen soldiers. In 1905, Mercié created a sixth and final cast of *Gloria Victis* albeit not for a

Parkinson, Nicholas. *Commemorating Defeat: Viral Monuments and the International Cult of the Lost Cause, 1864–1914*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press/Central European University Press, 2026.

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Fig. 2.1. Antonin Mercié, *Gloria Victis*, inaugurated 1906. Bronze. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen. (Artwork in the public domain; image courtesy of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.)

French town, but for a museum in Copenhagen, Denmark—the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek (henceforth, the Glyptotek) (fig. 2.1).

Inaugurated in 1906, *Gloria Victis* stands in the Winter Garden of the Glyptotek's Winter Garden. The Winter Garden was designed to connect the Glyptotek's collection of French and Danish art, created by architect Hans Dahlerup in 1897, with a new building by Hack Kampmann in 1906 to display antiquities from ancient Rome, Greece, and Egypt. Beyond functioning as a bridge between two of the collections, the Winter Garden was designed to function to a manner similar to a public park where visitors could relax on benches between their visits to the museum's galleries, enjoying the sunlight offered by the glass cupola and the tropical plants which fill the space regardless of the weather. That the Winter Garden is designed to so closely mimic an outdoor space is unsurprising since the Glyptotek's founder and director, Carl Jacobsen, began his philanthropic career a quarter of a century earlier by populating Copenhagen's public parks and squares with copies of contemporary and antique statues. Following Jacobsen's passion for public sculpture, the Winter Garden was decorated with several sculptures when it was inaugurated, including notably Auguste Rodin's *The Thinker* and *The Age of Bronze*. Amongst these sculptures, *Gloria Victis* takes central focus, raised up on a classical pedestal above a fountain and standing in front of the double staircase which leads to the Kampmann building entrance.

The Winter Garden, however, is designed to do more than give visitors the impression of standing in front of a sun-drenched Mediterranean villa while taking refuge from Copenhagen's frequent rain. The space is also intended to reference the central courtyard of the Paris Hôtel de Ville, which was often transformed into a winter garden during diplomatic ceremonies and where the original *Gloria Victis* bronze was still standing. Although Jacobsen came from a wealthy family of brewers known for their principal brand, Carlsberg, Jacobsen was more interested in art and politics than in beer. A lifelong Francophile, he believed that Danish society could be elevated through exposure to French culture, using his wealth and personal

connections to strengthen the countries' relationship. *Gloria Victis* embodied this Franco-Danish connection not only in terms of culture, but in politics as well. In 1893, Jacobsen wrote to Mercié in 1893 about acquiring *Gloria Victis* for his museum, arguing that the sculpture had not only equal symbolic value for the Danes as it did for the French, but that it expressed the camaraderie between two peoples who had equally suffered defeat at the hands of Prussia: "Alas, the famed group would have a double meaning here. We have been vanquished by the Prussians but thank God not without glory! And your group would remind us not only of your distinguished art, but also the glory of two vanquished peoples. It is at once for the Danes as for the French a truly consolatory artwork."¹ Six years before the Franco-Prussian War, Denmark had suffered defeat by Prussia and its allies during the Second Schleswig War (1864)—a war which reduced Denmark's territory by one third through the loss of the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. Just as the loss of Alsace and Moselle had become the cornerstone of French revanchism, Schleswig was at the heart of Denmark's own Lost Cause mythology following 1864, accompanied by profoundly anti-German sentiments that lasted through the First World War. In the country's post-1864 discussions concerning Danish internal politics and its relationship to the rest of Europe, Denmark's cultural networks and institutions noticeably shifted their orientation towards France and away from Germany. As a symbol of Denmark's pro-French movement, *Gloria Victis* was more than an expression of cultural admiration, it was the incarnation of the countries' entangled histories and intertwined political ambitions.

The political lesson offered by *Gloria Victis* is important for understanding the international affairs of Denmark, which were largely expressed through cultural and economic exchanges in lieu of formal alliances. Strictly neutral and frequently isolationist in the wake of defeat, Denmark never entered into an official military pact with France after 1864, in large part due to fears that a crushing second conflict with the Germany Empire would lead to the demise of the Kingdom of Denmark as a sovereign nation-state. As a country coerced into political neutrality via its military defeat by Prussia, cultural diplomacy offered Denmark a route for developing closer relations with France and creating distance with the German Empire.

1 "Ce groupe illustre aurait une double valeur ici, hélas. Nous avons été vaincus par les Prussiens mais Dieu merci non sans gloire! Et votre groupe nous rappellerait non seulement votre art élevé, mais aussi la gloire des deux peuples vaincus. C'est en même temps pour les Danois que pour les Français une vraie œuvre consolatrice." Carl Jacobsen to Antonin Mercié, February 23, 1893, Copybook 4, Carl Jacobsen's Outgoing Letters, 921–22, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen.



Fig. 2.2. Hans Peder Pedersen-Dan, *Den Lille Hornblæser*, 1899. Copenhagen, Denmark. Photo: Fritz Theodor Benzen, ca. 1900. (Photo in the public domain.)

This chapter explores two sculptures erected in Denmark that illustrate this point. The first example analyzed in this chapter is Hans Peder Pedersen-Dan's *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser* (The foot soldier with the little bugler) (fig. 2.2), Denmark's only official monument commemorating the Second Schleswig War. The monument was financed by a veteran's association and erected in 1899 on the outskirts of Rådhuspladsen, Copenhagen's city hall. Pedersen-Dan's use of *Gloria Victis* as a template for *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser* is unmistakable, visible in the baroque composition of the group, the bugler's outstretched arm and arching body mirroring those of Mercié's nude soldier, the forward stride of both the infantryman and Glory, and of course, perhaps most importantly, the evocation of the transcendence of defeat through both narratives told through the sculptural groups as well as the wars they commemorate.

Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser, however, adds greater realist stylings, substituting winged Glory with a Danish infantryman and the dying Renaissance nude with an injured young bugler. *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser* illustrates *Gloria Victis*'s impact on the visual culture of the commemoration of defeat, giving rise to a new type of monumental sculptural group consisting of heroic figures carrying falling soldiers. This topic has already been illustrated in the previous chapter, which looked at *Gloria Victis*'s widespread influence on the commemoration of the Franco-Prussian War in France.

The second example, already introduced above, is the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek's cast of *Gloria Victis*. This sculpture, I argue, was intended by Jacobsen to commemorate Denmark's and France's military losses. In 1880, long before opening the Glyptotek, Jacobsen planned to erect a copy of *Gloria Victis* in a public square in Copenhagen through his sculpture fund, the Albertina Foundation. He had seen the sculpture in a Barbedienne catalogue that arrived in the mail and decided to make it his Foundation's first project. Although the project of erecting *Gloria Victis* as a public monument in Copenhagen was never realized due to internal opposition, Jacobsen

continued to pursue the acquisition of the sculpture throughout the decades to come. When Jacobsen finally succeeded in acquiring an original bronze for the Glyptotek in 1906, he chose to place it in the central Winter Garden. Like the Hôtel de Ville's central courtyard, it functioned in the staging of public celebrations and the reception of guests—including foreign dignitaries, like French President Armand Fallières, who visited the Glyptotek in 1908.

In both examples treated in this chapter, *Gloria Victis*'s transmission and adaptation outside of France are key to understanding the sculpture's impact on commemorative culture and the representation of defeat at the turn of the twentieth century. As a result of its immense popularity both in France and abroad, in large part due to its mass communication via commercialized bronze reductions and print imagery, as well as the loosening of copyright restrictions by the City of Paris, the sculpture became accessible to many groups and individuals. With each acquisition, the sculpture inhabited new spatial and mnemonic milieus, creating new meanings well beyond what the original creator, Mercié, ever intended. The assignment of unforeseen meanings to *Gloria Victis* frequently occurred along morphological transformations. *Gloria Victis* therefore became a template onto which groups outside could imbue their own particular histories, identities, and mythologies of defeat; and yet, in tandem with the specific national symbols each group imbued their sculpture, the reference back to Mercié's famed original sculpture was also important both as a means of clarifying the sculpture's meaning as well as a means of relating the nation's narrative of suffering to that of other nations.

The First and Second Schleswig Wars

The origins of the Schleswig Wars date back to 1848, when a wave of revolutions swept across Europe. In France, the country's last king, Louis Philippe I, was toppled, giving rise to the short-lived Second Republic. In the German Confederation, a series of revolutions swept across the states, seeking, though ultimately failing, to create a unified German nation state. A common thread amongst these revolutions was that they were largely spearheaded by a liberal-nationalist philosophy, demanding popular representation and the formation of unified nation-states. In both its successes and its failures, 1848 was therefore a watershed moment that had a profound effect on European politics for decades to come, setting the groundwork for creating liberal democratic governments, as well as the spark that ignited decades of bloody conflicts rooted in the desire to establish nation-states, defined by the self-rule of a unified people with clear ethno-linguistic connections and a distinct national border.

National identities and borders, however, are rarely clearcut, which is illustrated in the history of Denmark. On the one hand, a much more peaceful revolt led by the country's National Liberals occurred against the newly coronated King Frederick VII which resulted in the end of absolutism and the beginning of a constitutional monarchy in 1849. At this time, the Danish king was the head of a binational monarchy that included the Kingdom of Denmark as well the duchies of Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg. These latter border states, situated between Denmark and Germany consisted of a non-homogenous, multilingual population who held strong relationships with both countries. Along with questions of ethnic identity, the question of rule was also less than clear. Both Holstein and Lauenburg being largely Germanophone were simultaneously in a personal union with the Danish king while also existing as part of the German Confederation. Schleswig, however, was ethnically split between a southern Germanophone population and a northern Danophone population, making the duchy a flashpoint for future violence.

With the overflowing of national sentiments in 1848, the ideals of nationhood envisioned by different National Liberal parties came to conflict. Denmark's National Liberals wanted to bring the duchy of Schleswig into a closer federative arrangement with the Kingdom of Denmark. This move was fiercely resisted by many National Liberals in Holstein, Lauenburg, and Schleswig, amongst whom were included pro-German nationalists who supported the idea of creating a greater German state. After the death of King Christian VIII and the appointment of his childless adult son, Frederick VII, to the throne, hopes of cutting ties with the Danish monarchy rose, and a provisional Schleswig-Holstein government was formed. The result was the First Schleswig War, lasting from 1848 through 1851, between the Danish military on the one hand and the Schleswig-Holstein rebels, who received military support from Prussia, on the other. The war came to its summit in 1850 during the Battle of Isted in Schleswig, which resulted in a Danish victory and, a year later, the dissolution of the pro-cession Schleswig-Holstein provisional government.²

While Denmark was ultimately able to halt the rebellion, at least temporarily, none of the National Liberal contingents on any side of the conflict experienced decisive victory. The 1852 Treaty of London led by Russia affirmed that the duchies would remain in a personal union with the

2 Marie Louise Stig Sørensen and Inge Adriansen, "The Isted Lion: From Memorial of War to Monument of Friendship," in *Memorials in the Aftermath of Armed Conflict: From History to Heritage*, eds. Marie Louise Stig Sørensen, Dacia Viejo-Rose, and Paola Filippucci (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 280–281.



Fig. 2.3. Herman Wilhelm Bissen, *Den tapre landsoldat*, 1858. Fredericia, Denmark. (Copyright-free image.)

King of Denmark, but the question of royal succession further compounded disagreement between the different parties. Given that the Danish King Frederick VII was childless, his second cousin, Prince Christian of Glücksburg—later King Christian IX, a Holstein native—was named his successor as part of the treaty. Although this arrangement was made as a compromise, none of the parties involved were satisfied.³

In the wake of the Treaty of London, Denmark witnessed the blossoming of profound and oftentimes provocative cultural expressions of nationalism. During this decade, two major monuments were erected to celebrate Danish victory: *Den tapre landsoldat* (The valiant soldier, 1858) (fig. 2.3) and *Istedløven* (The Isted Lion, 1862). Both monuments were created by a pro-Danish Schleswig native, Herman Wilhelm Bissen, and erected in Schleswig rather than in Copenhagen, drawing criticism to the Danish government for sending a message of conquest rather than reconciliation. *Den tapre landsoldat*, located in the city of Fredericia, commemorates the victorious Battle of Fredericia on July 6, 1849, when Danish soldiers successfully resisted a much larger army of Schleswig-Holstein rebel troops who had besieged

3 Rasmus Glenthøj and Morten Nordhagen Ottosen, *Scandinavia and Bismarck: The Zenith of Scandinavianism* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2024), 31–32.

the city. Less than a year after the battle, a committee was established to erect a monument to commemorate Danish victory via a public donation campaign, urging every Dane to contribute just a small amount of money.⁴ It was the first time that a monument was funded through an appeal to the Danish public as a unified people without restriction to class or group, reflective of the democratization of Danish politics following the March Revolution of 1848 as well growing nationalist sentiments, spearheaded by the National Liberal Party, which galvanized the country's war efforts.

The burgeoning spirit of modern Danish nationalism is also clear in the monument's iconography. Jens Adolf Jerichau, one of the country's most popular sculptors, had originally proposed a sculpture fusing classical allegory and Danish mythology, representing the Norse god Thor, sporting the physique and posture of Michelangelo's *David*, in a battle against the Giants. Instead, however, the monument committee chose a design by Bissen depicting a common Danish soldier. The sculpture depicts a standing Danish foot soldier in uniform—which, as Rasmus Kjerboe points out, had only recently been modernized, replacing cumbersome Napoleonic-era regalia with a simple kepi and blue jacket to create a standardized national uniform—holding a rifle and resting his left foot on a cannon.⁵ He raises his right hand in a sign of victory, holding a common Danish beech tree branch in place of a classical palm.

The other major monument Denmark erected in Schleswig after the First Schleswig War was *Istedløven*, which commemorates the decisive Battle of Isted on July 25, 1850. Like *Den tapre landsoldat*, the production of *Istedløven* was financed by popular subscription, featuring the inscription "Det danske Folk reiste dette Minde" (The Danish people set this memorial) on the base. The pedestal also included a patriotic inscription written by Danish poet Carl Ploug, praising the soldiers' defense of the Danish fatherland: "Faithful warriors in the hour of peril / have manfully defended our ancestral land / Fidelity shall stand guard at the grave, / Manhood shall protect inheritance and honor."⁶ The towering monument, which represents a bronze lion nearly four meters in height, immediately caused controversy. While those who erected the monument argued that it was made to commemorate the soldiers who had fallen during the battle, for many *Istedløven* was a proclamation of Danish

4 Rasmus Kjerboe, "A Factious Monument: The Brave Militia Man after the Victory and the Commemoration of a Danish Civil War," in *Culture and Conflict: Nation-Building in Denmark and Scandinavia, 1800–1930*, eds. Sine Krogh, Thor J. Mednick, and Karina Lykke Grand (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press), 253.

5 Kjerboe, "A Factious Monument," 253.

6 "Trofaste Kæmper i Farens Stund / mandigt har værget vor Odelsgrund / Troskab skal Vagt ved Graven være, / Manddom skal skærme Arv og Ære."

victory over the Schleswig-Holstein rebels. The base also included reliefs of four Danish generals. While two of these generals had died during the Battle of Isted, the other two were still living, contradicting the purported funerary purpose of the monument. Furthermore, the main lion figure was itself seen as communicating the national liberal agenda of incorporating Schleswig into Denmark. The lion is a symbol of Denmark derived from the Danish coat of arms. The image of the lion is repeated on the pedestal, where Denmark's and Schleswig's coats of arms are represented. However, the monument noticeably excluded the coat of arms of Holstein, which the Danish National Liberals had no agenda to bring under their control. Most provocative of all, however, was the location of *Istedløven*. Instead of being erected at the site of the battle, the monument was erected in the city of Flensburg, the only major town in Schleswig that supported Denmark. To make things worse, when *Istedløven* was erected in the cemetery, the mass graves of fallen Schleswig-Holstein soldiers had to be exhumed to make room for the monument. Situated in a Danish loyalist stronghold situated far away from the site of battle, *Istedløven* appeared to be a symbol of Danish nationalism rather than a site of mourning.⁷

Just one year after *Istedløven* was erected, the conflict renewed when King Frederick VII drafted a new constitution, the so-called November Constitution, that brought Schleswig into a federative agreement with Denmark. According to pro-independence and pro-German camps in the duchies, the November Constitution was a violation of the 1852 Treaty of London. The political crisis worsened when King Frederick VII died shortly after. Many states in the German confederation refused to recognize Denmark's new ruler, King Christian IX, as the rightful ruler of the duchies, instead throwing support behind a local leader, the Duke of Augustenburg, Friedrich VIII of Schleswig-Holstein.⁸ With war brewing on the horizon against a formidable league of German states lead by Prussia, Denmark's leaders mistakenly believed that the international community, namely Sweden or France, would intervene on behalf of Denmark. Instead, after Prussia and Austria declared war in 1864, Denmark found itself without international support, leading to a quick and total victory for the German allies who seized control of Schleswig and Holstein. The Danish binational monarchy collapsed, making the Danish Realm a vastly smaller territory, losing approximately a third of its population and nearly 40% of its territory, and, moreover, finding itself isolated in the European community, much as France would after 1870.

7 Sørensen and Adriansen, "The Isted Lion," 282–284.

8 Glenthøj and Ottosen, *Scandinavia and Bismarck*, 242.

To Remember or to Forget? Early Danish Responses to the Defeat of 1864

In cultural memory, the war of 1864 was marked by what Rasmus Glenthøj calls a “flagellant interpretation” of history, characterized by a mixture of self-chastisement and inward-focused idealization of the Danish nation.⁹ Defeat was remembered not simply in terms of victimization at the hands of Prussia, but also as caused by the arrogance of Denmark’s own politicians, particularly the National Liberals with their romantic nationalist ideals. Elements of this critique, according to Glenthøj, were adopted not only by the *Højre* (Conservative) political party, which gained dominance after 1864, but also by the *Venstre* (Agrarian Liberal) party as well, therefore helping shape a dominant postwar narrative which downplayed Danish victimization at the hands of Prussia and emphasized internal culpability.¹⁰

The year 1864, therefore, was not glorified in Denmark via a wave of sculpture-mania the way the war of 1870–1871 was in France. The monuments that had been earlier erected in the wake of Denmark’s victory during the First Schleswig War did not fare well in Danish collective memory. *Istedløven*, for example, had been transformed into a symbol of German victory. At first attacked and vandalized by German nationalists, the sculpture was subsequently taken as a victory trophy to Berlin. There, a second copy was erected in a public park featuring a portrait of Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia in lieu of those of the Danish generals. In Denmark, *Istedløven* became for many a symbol of the country’s foolish arrogance and subsequent defeat.

Outside of cemetery and battlefield memorials honoring the war’s casualties, there are so few publicly visible commemorations of the Second Schleswig War that Inge Adriansen argues that there are no monuments to the war at all—a claim that I later dispute.¹¹ Along with the flagellant tendencies of Danish memory, another reason for Denmark’s sculptural iconophobia towards 1864 has in large part to do with Denmark’s precarious political situation. Despite the three-year military occupation and its territorial losses

9 Rasmus Glenthøj, “The History of a Defeat. 1864 and the Flagellant Tradition of Danish Historiography,” in *Schleswig Holstein—Contested Region(s) through History* (Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark, 2016), 283, 294, 302.

10 Rasmus Glenthøj, “The National Past as a Zone of Conflict in Danish History: Conflicting Histories of the Danish Defeat in 1864,” in *Culture and Conflict: Nation-Building in Denmark and Scandinavia, 1800–1930*, eds. Sine Krogh, Karina Lykke Grand, and Thor J. Mednick (Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2022), 178–179, 190.

11 Inge Adriansen, *Erindringssteder I Danmark* (Museum Tusculanums Forlag: Københavns Universitet, 2010), 99.

to the German Empire, France was never at threat of losing its autonomy as a nation. This was not the case for Denmark, for whom there was a real threat of being swallowed up whole by the German Empire. Not only was Denmark geographically small enough to be easily annexed, but given Denmark's close cultural ties to Germany—including being ruled by an ethnically German king, Christian IX, of the House of Glücksburg—there was fear that Germany would extend the principle of nationality to argue for the annexation of Denmark in its entirety. For Lilliputian Denmark, nonaggression towards Germany was frequently treated as an existential necessity.

For a society to celebrate defeat, such as seen in the proliferation of *Gloria Victis* and other public sculptures relating to the loss of the Franco-Prussian War in France, there generally needs to exist a widespread belief in not only victimization at the hands of the enemy, but also that the defeat experienced is not definite. As explored in chapter 1, the commemoration of defeat is in fact a denial of defeat's permanence and a collective expression of the belief in its reversal in the future either through a military or cultural victory of its enemy. This idea is illustrated by the situation in Denmark between 1864 and 1870, when, in the immediate wake of defeat, there existed a widespread but unspoken belief that victory could be retaken from Prussia and at least part of Schleswig returned. The Treaty of Prague of 1866, which now brought all three duchies under Prussian control, offered Denmark a small glimmer of hope for regaining some of its geographical losses. Approximately 200,000 ethnic Danes in Northern Schleswig now lived under German rule. France's Napoleon III therefore pushed Prussia to add an additional clause to the treaty, known as Article V, which stipulated the right of the population of Northern Schleswig to hold on a vote on the future possibility to become incorporated into Denmark.

Article V meant that a kind of Danish victory could be obtained via diplomatic means, and sober realism squashed nationalist romanticism in terms of foreign policy. Through the lead of the now-ruling Conservatives, emphasis was placed on appeasing Prussia abroad and building a strong defense at home, including through the fortification of Copenhagen.¹² Nonetheless, glimmers of revanchist idealism showed through the cracks of Denmark's official façade of pragmatism. Competition between France and Prussia, Europe's main superpowers, was growing, leading to widespread speculation across Europe of potential war. In the very plausible case of a French victory, what potential could Denmark have to regain Northern Schleswig on its own terms? Through the Army Act of 1867, Denmark had

12 Glenthøj, "The National Past as a Zone of Conflict in Danish History," 183.

reorganized its military to function as an auxiliary force alongside a larger allied army in the case of a future attack. Clearly, allying with France to wage a war against Prussia and regain Northern Schleswig by force remained enough of a plausible scenario for the Danish military to reorganize itself for this purpose, even if, for diplomatic reasons, this could never be admitted publicly.¹³

During this period between 1864 and 1870 when Denmark's postwar future remained uncertain, patriotic representations of the Second Schleswig War were visible, albeit in the more discrete venues of bookstores and exhibition galleries rather than public squares. At the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1867, Danish painters did not shy away from representing the war, showcasing a mixture of competing memories of defeat. While Elisabeth Jerichau-Baumann's *En såret dansk kriger* (A wounded Danish soldier) (1865) represented the war in a sentimental and nonmilitarist fashion through the depiction of a bedridden soldier, Carl Dahl's *Søtræfningen ved Helgoland* (The naval battle of Heligoland) (1864) by contrast had a more optimistic if not celebratory view of the war, depicting the destruction of the Austrian ship *Schwarzenberg* by three Danish ships.¹⁴ The hope that Denmark would rise again and that Northern Schleswig would be regained—and perhaps even that Prussia would receive its just dues—is equally visible in the allegorical interpretation of nonmilitary paintings like Carl Bloch's *Prometheus Unbound*. While prior artists like Rembrandt had tended to represent Prometheus chained to a rock and condemned to agony, Bloch chose to represent the Greek hero during the moment of his emancipation, the chains breaking in his escape. Although, as Glenthøj notes, the artist undoubtedly did not intend to paint an allegory of the Second Schleswig War, the painting's appearance immediately after the war led critics to read it as an illustration of Denmark's agonies, but also its hopes.¹⁵

As an expression of the widespread hope for a Danish victory via diplomatic or military means in the immediate aftermath of defeat, the first attempt to erect a monument to the Second Schleswig War occurred in 1866. That year, the newspaper *Illustreret Tidende* (The illustrated times) announced that the Danish sculptor Andreas Kolberg was planning to construct

13 Knud J. V. Jespersen, "Recovery from Disaster: The Reconstruction of the Danish Army after the Dano-Prussian War of 1864," *Militärhistorisk Tidskrift* (1982): 22–23; Milan Vego, *Military Strategy and Sea Control: Theory and Practice* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 175.

14 Thomas Lyngby and Mette Skougaard, 1864: *Krigen der Ændrede Danmark* (Hillerød: Det Nationalhistoriske Museum), cat. 70.

15 Glenthøj, "The National Past as a Zone of Conflict in Danish History," 188.

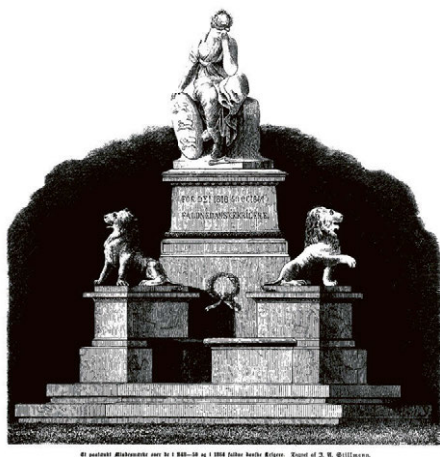


Fig. 2.4. Johan Andreas Stillmann (illustrator and architect), Andreas Kolberg's plaster model for a monument commemorating the First and Second Schleswig War. "Et Minde over de i Krigene 1848–50 og 1864," *Illustreret Tidende* 7, no. 343 (April 22, 1867): 247.

a monument commemorating the fallen soldiers of both wars. Kolberg proposed to place the monument in central Copenhagen on the corner of Store Strandstræde and Garnisonsplads (today in the approximate location of Sankt Annæ Plads). The article was accompanied by an illustration of the proposed monument (fig. 2.4). The central figure is a personification of Denmark in the form of a seated grieving female figure, evidently inspired by ancient Greek funerary stelae, guarded by four Danish lions. In her right hand, she rests herself upon the Danish coat of arms featuring three lions, while a broken sword lays at her feet, symbolizing defeat.¹⁶

Illustreret Tidende further mentioned that the monument had garnered support from Selskabet de danske Vaabenbrødre (The Society of Danish Brothers in Arms) and that plans for raising funds for the monument through a national subscription were being arranged.¹⁷ A year later, however, no progress had been made on the monument's construction. In 1869, Kolberg passed away, leaving the project without a leader, and, after collapse, the monument to defeat was left without a hope for victory.¹⁸ At the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War, France tried to convince Denmark to declare war on Prussia by promising to send troops to northern Germany to aid a Danish invasion. However, it was already evident to Denmark that the French army was outmatched by Prussia, resulting in the Danish decision to remain neutral rather than risk an undoubtedly even more disastrous

16 "Et Minde over de i Krigene 1848–50 og 1864," *Illustreret Tidende* 7, no. 343 (April 22, 1867): 247.

17 "Et Minde over de i Krigene 1848–50 og 1864," 247.

18 "Mindesmærke for faldne Soldater," *Sorø Amtstidende* 4, no. 101 (July 4, 1867): 2.

altercation with Prussia.¹⁹ With Napoleon III's defeat at the Battle of Sedan in 1870 came the end of Denmark's hope of a military alliance with France.

Despite the hopes of the Danish public once again being burst by Prussia's victory and the rise of the German Empire—which included Schleswig and Holstein within its national borders—France's defeat also set the ground for the kindling of an important cultural relationship between France and Denmark. Napoleon III's diplomatic efforts to aid Denmark during the Treaty of Prague made France widely popular in Denmark, with the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870 further fueling pro-French and anti-German sentiments. Therefore, Danish nationalism was not completely erased with the anti-National Liberal backlash after 1864 which had led to the development of an otherwise flagellant, iconoclastic memory of defeat. Alongside culturally conservative expressions of nationalism, embodied in a traditional reverence for the past and expressed visually through images of noble soldiers, a chimeric cosmopolitan nationalism also emerged in the arts which attached itself to the idealization of French culture but also of France's military defeat.

The Blossoming of Franco-Danish Relations

For the rest of the century following Napoleon III's fall, Danish foreign policy was guided by the philosophies of neutrality, pragmatism, and the avoidance of becoming entangled in large-state politics. Neutrality meant refusing to ally with either France or Germany, but the existential threat that Germany continued to play for the country meant that Danish foreign policy sought above all to not anger Germany. There was good reason for Denmark to fear German aggression. In 1905, it had been revealed that Germany was prepared to preemptively attack Denmark if the country's neutrality came into question.²⁰ In terms of official international politics, therefore, Denmark was forced into a state of silence. Nonetheless, popular public opinion was anything but neutral, largely both anti-German and pro-French. During President Fallières's visit to Copenhagen in 1908,²¹ a French newspaper quoted an anonymous Danish politician who summarized Denmark's international

19 Jespersen, "Recovery from Disaster," 22–23; Vego, *Military Strategy and Sea Control*, 175.

20 Caleb R. Woodhouse, "The Defense Question and Danish Politics, 1864–1914," *Scandinavian Studies* 46, no. 3 (1974): 221.

21 The reception of Fallières's visit in both French and Danish media was meticulously recorded by members of the president's diplomatic mission. These reports can be seen at the Diplomatic Archives in Nantes, under "Voyage de M. le Président de la République au Danemark, Juillet 1908," Copenhagen/Légation/1880–1940/170PO/163, Carton 12.

relations with France and Germany: “[Denmark] will never be close to Germany; there have been courtesy visits exchanged, of course; but our deepest sentiments, believe me, do not and will not cease to be with you, France.”²²

The expression of pro-French sentiments in Denmark, including those of the unnamed politician, were followed closely by France’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of War. The “*cause des vaincus*,” as one French military attaché stationed in Copenhagen in 1898 remarked, remained active in Denmark, even if prudence required these sentiments to remain unspoken.²³ Despite clear parallels between the events surrounding the losses of Schleswig and Alsace-Moselle—a comparison uncommonly evoked within French *revanchard* circles, including those who argued for the establishment of a formal alliance between Denmark and France—it remained clear to the French authorities that Denmark would never enter into a military alliance given its precariously weak position vis-à-vis Germany.²⁴ Instead, French diplomacy with Denmark focused on safeguarding the country’s strict neutrality to ensure neither its terrestrial or maritime territories could be hijacked by Germany for military purposes.

In the wake of shared experiences of defeat, therefore, cultural exchanges rather than military alliances became an important means of expressing common political sentiments—namely, hostility towards Germany—held by members of both the French and Danish public. German cities were central hubs of artistic training and exhibition amongst Danish artists throughout the nineteenth century, but already in the 1830s and 40s the rise of nationalism led thinkers like Nils Laurits Høyen to decry so-called foreign influence on Danish art. As would be expected, the loss of Schleswig and Holstein in 1864 therefore greatly exacerbated anti-German sentiments amongst Danish artists; but in a more remarkable turn of events, the German Empire’s annexation of Alsace and Moselle not only brought condemnation from the Danish public but also helped establish France as a new center for training and network making amongst Danish artists. While France had already been a destination of secondary importance for

22 “C’est pourquoi jamais nous ne serons de cœur avec l’Allemagne; il y a eu des visites de courtoisie échangées, c’est entendu; mais notre sentiment de fond, vous pouvez m’en croire, il ne cesse pas, il ne cessera pas d’être avec vous, la France.” Maurice Sarraut, “Nos dépêches: Par fil spécial; Le voyage de M. Fallières en Scandinavie; Notes de voyage,” *La Dépêche*, July 21, 1908, 1.

23 Commander de La Villestreux to the Minister of War, Copenhagen, April 28, 1898. GR7N, Archives Militaires, Vincennes, France.

24 Alexandre-Charles Germain, *L’Alliance Franco-Danoise au Moyen Âge* (Montpellier: Jean Martel Aîné, Imprimeur de la Société Archéologique, 1871); *Les Alliés naturels de la France, La Triple Alliance de demain, la neutralité suisse*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Albert Savine, 1890).



Fig. 2.5. Unknown photographer, installation view of Den Franske Kunstudstilling (The French Art Exhibition) of 1888 showing a bronze reduction of *Gloria Victis* at left, middle ground. Photograph. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen. (Artwork in the public domain; image courtesy of the photography archives of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.)

Danish artists in the 1850s and 1860s, Denmark possessed relatively little in terms of French art, making the broader rise of Danish Francophilia all the more remarkable. While Danish nationalists continued to denounce any foreign influence in the arts, whether German or French, a younger generation of artists critical of nationalism began to assert domination already in the 1870s.²⁵ In 1876, Vilhelm Groth argued that was it necessary for Denmark to establish a collection of contemporary French paintings and sculpture for the education of both artists and the broader public.²⁶ In 1888, the first major exhibition of nineteenth-century French art, *Den Franske Kunstudstilling*, was organized by Jacobsen in Copenhagen. The exhibition showcased artworks including Édouard Manet's *Printemps*, Auguste Rodin's *The Thinker*, Eugène Delacroix's *Death of Sardanapalus*, but also, notably, a Barbedienne reduction of Mercié's *Gloria Victis* (fig. 2.5).

25 Glenthøj, "The National Past as a Zone of Conflict in Danish History," 188–190.

26 Vilhelm Groth, *I Forhold til Udlandets* (Copenhagen: Rudolph Klein, 1876), 35–36; Villumsen, "Why Do You Dance to the Tune of the French?" 2.

The inclusion of the Barbedienne reduction of *Gloria Victis* in *Den Franske Kunstudstilling* was not accidental. Not only did the statuette's inclusion in the exhibition hint at the crossover of French and Danish war iconography, but it was also one step in the eventual installation of an original cast of *Gloria Victis* in the soon-to-be created Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen. While the Glyptotek *Gloria Victis* is remarkable for being the only full-sized bronze existing outside of France, the sculpture's trace is evident elsewhere in Denmark as well. Seven years earlier, *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser* was erected in central Copenhagen, less than a kilometer away from where the Glyptotek would stand, to commemorate both Schleswig Wars. Created by sculptor Hans Peder Pedersen-Dan, who had trained in Paris in 1890, the monument demonstrates clear influences from *Gloria Victis* not only in the clearly French Academic qualities of its composition, but also in its thematic approach to commemorating defeat. *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser* demonstrates that not only did monumental commemorations of 1864 exist, but also that the otherwise contradictory philosophies of nationalism and cosmopolitanism found common ground in Danish interest in France's defeat in 1871.

***Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser*: Denmark's First Monument to 1864**

The importance of coming to terms with the Schleswig Wars was particularly prominent on the fiftieth anniversary of the start of the war in 1898, a year which simultaneously corresponded with the king's eightieth birthday. Amongst these patriotic celebrations, it would have been difficult to not reflect on how the events of 1864 had shaped Danish society or what role it should play in the future. Therefore, a means of acknowledging the still-prevalent sentiments towards 1864 within these patriotic festivities was an important means of collectively coming to terms with defeat, which is precisely the role that the monument *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser* was intended to play.

The organization behind the monument's creation was Selskabet de danske Vaabenbrødre, the same organization which had supported in the 1860s Kolberg's unrealized monument to the First and Second Schleswig War. The society formed Komiteen for Opførelsen af Nationalmonumentet for de to slesvigske Krige (The committee for the construction of the national monument to the two Schleswig wars) to take charge of the monument's creation, and which was led by Danish general Jesper Bahnson. As the

former minister of war under the conservative Prime Minister J. B. S. Estrup, Bahnson played a pivotal role in the enormously expensive construction of modern defensive fortifications around Copenhagen in 1886, causing considerable backlash from parliamentary members of the liberal Venstre Party, who were beginning to gain dominance over the pro-military Højre Party at this time.²⁷

Rather than staging a public competition, the association chose an already well-known sculpture by Hans Dan Pedersen-Dan, *Avancér* (Forward), which the artist had exhibited the year prior during the Royal Danish Academy's spring exhibition at Kunsthal Charlottenborg. Pedersen-Dan had been born in Holstein in 1859, fleeing to Aarhus with his family at the outbreak of the Second Schleswig War. In an apparent ode to their identification as ethnic Danes, the family later changed their surname from Pedersen to Pedersen-Dan. As a young man in the 1880s, Pedersen-Dan had travelled to Rome to study at the industrial arts school of the Museo Artistico Industriale and the Accademia nazionale di San Luca to study sculpture. Returning to Denmark in 1887, his artistic merits were recognized by the Royal Danish Academy, who granted him a scholarship to study in Paris for a year and a half, returning again to Denmark in the 1890s, where he gained further recognition for his mixture of national and cosmopolitan styles.²⁸

The committee placed heavy emphasis on framing the monument's creation not as being the initiative of the Danish Veterans' Organization, but as a nationwide collective effort supported by the Danish people. A national subscription to finance the monument was launched, with the committee urging "every Danish man and woman to make a contribution, large or small."²⁹ According to the committee, 15,000 Danish citizens financially contributed to the monument's creation.³⁰ The names of contributors and their contribution amounts, many of which amounted to only one or two kroner, were published in lengthy inserts in newspapers including *Nationaltidende*, *Aftenposten*, *Dagbladet*, and *Dagens Nyheder*. Although the First Schleswig War was gradually fading from living memory, the committee's advertisements appealed to the society's collective nostalgia for a time when

27 Robert Nisbet Bain, *Scandinavia: A Political History of Denmark, Norway and Sweden from 1513 to 1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1905), 430.

28 Per E. Hansen, *Pedersen-Dan: En Dansk Billedhugger* (Hvidovre: Hvidovre Kommunes Lokalhistoriske Arkiv, 1999), 8–10.

29 "Opfordrer vi enhver dansk Mand og Kvinde til at yde et Bidrag, stort eller lille." "National-Monument," *Tidens Krav* 585 (April 1898). Rigsarkivet, Privat-Institutioner, Selskabet de Danske Våbenbrødre, arkiv no. 10018. Copenhagen, Denmark.

30 Pax, "Den Lille Hornblæser afsløret," *København*, September 13, 1899, 1.

the Danish people banded together in the spirit of “sacrifice and unity” in the face of “treacherous rebellion and foreign conquest.”³¹ Both the committee’s message and its means of financing the monument appealed to popular collectivist ideals which had grown in Denmark since the mid-nineteenth century, including the establishment of a democratic constitution in 1849. Inspired by ecclesiastical leaders such as N. F. S. Grundtvig, egalitarianism, popular education, and individual freedom, as well as popular military service, had become woven into Danish national identity.

Grundtvigian social ideals and a romantic attraction towards Denmark’s so-called golden age of the first half of the nineteenth century are expressed in *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser*’s principal figures. The sculpture was inspired by the popular 1887 play, “Landsoldaten,” a patriotic account of the First Schleswig War written by Pedersen-Dan’s father-in-law and military veteran Georg Emil Betzonich. “Landsoldaten” itself was inspired by H. P. Holst’s poem 1849, *Den Lille Hornblæser*, which itself had already become an integral part of Danish postwar culture. The sculpture represents a Danish infantryman hoisting upwards a young trumpeter who has been wounded in battle during the First Schleswig War. The soldier, whose stance and figure are clearly intended to reference Bissen’s famous *Landsoldaten*, strives forward, clutching both his rifle and the trumpeter, as the latter continues to blow his trumpet, signaling the command “forward” to the rest of the Danish frontline.³² *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser* is an allegory of the collectivist ideals that had become an integral part of Danish civil society in the nineteenth century as both the soldier and the trumpeter work together for the advancement of the group. The central thematic importance of collectivism and self-sacrifice in contemporary interpretations of the Schleswig Wars also led *Den Lille Hornblæser* to become an icon its own right, visible in its reference by Eduard Schnedler-Sørensen’s eponymous 1909 silent film adaptation of Holst’s poem.

As already suggested by Bahnson’s key involvement in the monument’s creation, the ideological aims of erecting a monument to the Schleswig Wars aligned with the tenants of a national-conservative civil religion founded on military service. Within the romantic rhetoric of remembering a heroic past, *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser* was intended to remind Danish citizens of the possibility of defending Denmark against future foreign conquest. The

31 “Offerberedvillighed og Sammenhold.” “Svige fuldt Oprør og Fremmed Erobring.” “National-Monument.” *Tidens Krav* 585 (April 1898). Rigsarkivet, Privat-Institutioner, Selskabet de Danske Våbenbrødre, arkiv no. 10018. Copenhagen, Denmark.

32 Hansen, *Pedersen-Dan*, 16–17.

committee promoted the monument's creation as an important pedagogical tool for fostering patriotic duty amongst future citizens, arguing that its lessons of the past will "strengthen the descendants' love for the fatherland, which will also be their duty to defend should it again be exposed to a similar attack."³³ In the minds of average Danes, such a conflict would almost undoubtedly play out against Germany. These unspoken but readily understood civic lessons are equally expressed in the monument's iconography which on face value is purely Danish, but which also makes a clear visual reference to *Gloria Victis*. *Gloria Victis*'s influence is visible in the baroque composition of the group, the bugler's outstretched arm and arching body mirroring those of Mercié's nude soldier, the forward stride of both the infantryman and Glory. In line with contemporary Danish tastes, Pedersen-Dan injects his sculpture with greater realist stylings, substituting winged Glory with a Danish infantryman and the dying Renaissance nude with an injured young bugler.

Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser was inaugurated on September 12, 1899. Given a central location in Copenhagen, the monument was erected across the street from the Dagmar Theater (now destroyed) and facing the new city hall which opened in 1905. Presided over by Bahnson and the committee's secretary, Captain N. A. Schjørring, the speakers gave no mention of Denmark's defeat in 1864 at the inauguration. Instead, one of the central themes of the ceremony was celebrating the Danish royal family, who were present for the ceremony, and whose commemoration was included in the monument through bronze reliefs of the reigning kings, Christian IX and Frederik VII, during the First and Second Schleswig War. When Schjørring spoke about the memory of the Schleswig wars, they were discussed in equally uncontroversial terms, with the speaker emphasizing the monument's importance as a symbol of Danish national unity, expressive of both the collective action taken during the First Schleswig War as well as for contributing funds for the monument's creation.³⁴

Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser's clear but indirect visual reference to *Gloria Victis* reflects the unique manner in which a cult of the Lost Cause manifested itself in Danish society. The loss of Schleswig and Holstein was omnipresent in collective memory yet rarely articulated in either verbal or visual symbols. While this silence stems from both the tendencies towards the

33 "Styrke Efterkommernes Kærlighed til det Fædreland, som det ogsaa vil være deres Pligt at forsvare, hvis det atter skulde blive udsat for lignende Angreb." "National-Monument." *Tidens Krav* 585 (April 1898). Rigsarkivet, Privat-Institutioner, Selskabet de Danske Våbenbrødre, arkiv no. 10018. Copenhagen, Denmark.

34 Pax, "Den Lille Hornblæser afsløret," 1.

political policy of German appeasement and the historiographic propensity of self-flagellation, the reorientation of Danish society towards France, including through both unofficial military alliances and the blossoming of cultural exchanges with France, reveal the real effects that the memory of defeat had on national and international politics. The clearest manifestation of the persistence of a cult of the Lost Cause in Danish society is visible in the story behind the production and installation of Mercié's *Gloria Victis* at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. Inaugurated seven years later and standing just a few hundred meters from *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser*, the Glyptotek's *Gloria Victis* is an attempt by a powerful nongovernment actor, Carl Jacobsen, to create an unofficial monument to Franco-Danish fraternity through the evocation of the mutual experience of defeat at the hands of Prussia in 1864 and 1871.

The Long Journey of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek's *Gloria Victis*

Like the original *Gloria Victis* situated in the Hotel de Ville's central courtyard, the bronze standing in the Glyptotek's Winter Garden functions as an architectural symbol meant to evoke a national narrative to all those who visit. As quoted above, Jacobsen wanted *Gloria Victis* to evoke "the glory of two vanquished peoples," the Danes and the French, and therefore deepen the exchanges between the two countries.³⁵ Strictly speaking, while the Glyptotek's *Gloria Victis* is neither a memorial nor a monument, it is nonetheless intended to have a mnemonic function, as is further suggested by its placement within the museum's Winter Garden. Jacobsen's intentions to imbue *Gloria Victis* with a commemorative purpose, despite having no dedications, is more clearly understood when exploring the long history behind the sculpture's acquisition, including Jacobsen's original intention to have it installed as a public sculpture in Copenhagen, as well as his larger sociopolitical ambitions within Danish society.

The Jacobsen family's impact on Danish society at the end of the nineteenth century is comparable to the that of other big family names across the Atlantic like Morgan, Rockefeller, and Carnegie. In the words of his contemporary biographer, Kristof Glamann, in terms of Danish art and

35 "Ce groupe illustre aurait une double valeur ici, hélas. Nous avons été vaincus par les Prussiens mais Dieu merci non sans gloire! Et votre groupe nous rappellerait non seulement votre art élevé, mais aussi la gloire des deux peuples vaincus. C'est en même temps pour les Danois que pour les Français une vraie œuvre consolatrice." Carl Jacobsen to Antonin Mercié, February 23, 1893, Copybook 4, Carl Jacobsen's Outgoing Letters, 921–922, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen.

culture, Jacobsen was a man who “had his finger in every pie.”³⁶ Like other industrialists of his era, Jacobsen believed that as a businessperson he also bore the duty of being a civic leader. In her analysis of Jacobsen’s influence on Danish cultural heritage, Ida Lunde Jørgensen highlights two of his primary goals: first, “to bring European cultural heritage to the common man and wider Danish public” and, second, for “his collection to attain the status of a national gallery.”³⁷ While the latter goal was not accomplished until late within his career via the establishment of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, the construction of which was paid for by the city of Copenhagen, the former goal of bringing European heritage to the common Dane was at the forefront of his philanthropic career since its debut.

One of the most consistent themes in Jacobsen’s career is his belief in the social power and importance of public sculpture—a tendency visible in both the design of the Glyptotek as a sculpture gallery accessible to all Danes as well as his earliest ventures. More than a quarter century before the sculpture’s installation in the Glyptotek’s Winter Garden, Jacobsen attempted to have *Gloria Victis* installed in one of Copenhagen’s parks or city squares. In 1879, Jacobsen had founded the Albertina Foundation, named after Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen (whose baptismal name was Albert Bertel [1768–1844]), a public art fund used to erect dozens of sculptures around Copenhagen until its dissolution in 2002. Although the foundation’s mission was to purchase artworks of long-lasting artistic value regardless of when or where they were produced, Jacobsen vocally favored the acquisition of French sculptures.³⁸ In January 1880, two months after the Albertina’s inception, Jacobsen announced his selection for the foundation’s first acquisition: *Gloria Victis*. His inspiration came from having just received a copy of a Barbedienne catalog, where Mercié’s sculpture appeared for the first time. Clearly, Jacobsen had political intentions, and not just aesthetic reasons for choosing this sculpture. As he explained to the architect Ferdinand Meldahl (1827–1908), who sat on the Albertina Foundation’s board, he had chosen *Gloria Victis* as the foundation’s first acquisition “not only as one of the sculptural masterpieces of our time, but also because

36 Kristof Glamann, *Beer and Marble: Carl Jacobsen of New Carlsberg* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1996), 150.

37 Ida Lunde Jørgensen, “Creating Cultural Heritage: Three Vignettes on Carl Jacobsen, His Museum and Foundation,” *Management and Organizational History* 13, no. 3 (2018), 291.

38 Carl Jacobsen, *Fundats for Legatet “Albertina,”* November 19, 1879, § 2, Carl Jacobsens Brevarkiv, <http://brevarkivet.ny-carlsbergfondet.dk/d/SXw3>.

of its great symbolic significance for us as well as for the French.”³⁹ Using typically polite indirect speech when referring to politics, Jacobsen clearly refers to *Gloria Victis*’s symbolic evocation of national destruction and rebirth in the context of France’s defeat by Prussia, suggesting to the other board members that this meaning would be equally understood by the Danish public. The Second Dano-Prussian War was again on everyone’s mind in 1880, when Jacobsen proposed the installation of *Gloria Victis* in Copenhagen. In 1878, Article V of the Treaty of Prague, which maintained the right of the largely Danish-speaking population of North Schleswig to hold a plebiscite on its future reintegration into Denmark, was annulled. North Schleswig was now officially part of the German Empire.⁴⁰ Following 1864, 1878 was therefore a second and total defeat for Denmark, and one which would have made the installation of a reproduction of *Gloria Victis* in Copenhagen an especially poignant gesture yet understated enough to not arouse political backlash either internally or externally. Mirroring the sculpture’s eventual installation in the Glyptotek’s Winter Garden, *Gloria Victis* was intended to be erected in a highly public venue without inscription, allowing its visual symbolism to speak for itself. Jacobsen intended the sculpture to function as a silent means of evoking communal memory, reflective of both the cultural tendencies of commemorating the war as well as the political anxieties towards the risk of future conflict with Germany which pervaded the contemporary atmosphere.

Jacobsen’s plan to install *Gloria Victis* in a public urban space were soon dashed when his proposal was rejected by the foundation’s selection committee, who preferred to beautify Copenhagen with copies of antique sculptures, which were less divisive than contemporary French art.⁴¹ Although written records from the Albertina Foundation give little further insight into why the other committee members rejected Jacobsen’s decision to have *Gloria Victis* erected in Copenhagen, it can be understood that their opposition was based on political rather than

39 “Ikke blot som et af Hovedværkerne af vor Tids Plastik, men tillige som paa Grund af den for os ligesaavel som for Franskændene store symbolske Betydning.” Carl Jacobsen to Ferdinand Meldahl, January 12, 1880, Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen, Denmark; and Carl Jacobsens Brevarkiv, <http://brevarkivet.ny-carlsbergfondet.dk/d/QTv8>.

40 Holger Andersen, “Frankrig og Danmark 1870–1914,” *Danske i Paris Gennem Tiderne: 1870–1935*, ed. Franz von Jessen (Copenhagen: CA. A. Reitzels Forlag, 1938), 342, 348–451; and Peter Thaler, *Of Mind and Matter: The Duality of National Identity in the German-Danish Borderlands* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2009), 73.

41 Jacobsen to Meldahl, April 19, 1880, and Jacobsen to Ferdinand Barbedienne, April 15, 1880, Albertinas kopibog; and Carl Jacobsens Brevarkiv, <http://brevarkivet.ny-carlsbergfondet.dk/d/zRVM>.

aesthetic or monetary concerns. Although the first sculptures erected in 1880 were indeed classical sculptures—*The Dying Gaul* and *Silenus with the Infant Bacchus*, erected in Ørsted Park—just two years later a copy of Henri Chapu's *Joan of Arc at Domrémy* was erected in the same park. Almost all of the sculptures of this era came through Barbedienne, who provided a practical and affordable means for international institutions to order sculptures for public places. Instead, it is presumable that the committee did not want to risk causing a polemic with their very first public sculpture installation. The temptation of Denmark unifying with France against Germany was a well-founded even if unlikely possibility, as had been illustrated by the reorganization of the Danish military under the Army Act of 1867. With the failure of diplomatic efforts to reincorporate northern Schleswig into the Danish Kingdom in 1878, the committee would not have wanted to give the impression to either the Danish or German governments that they were advocating—using public land, moreover—for a military solution instead by erecting a copy of France's most famous symbol of the Franco-Prussian War.

Jacobsen, however, had not given up on bringing *Gloria Victis* to Copenhagen and presenting it in a public capacity as an allegory of international kinship in the wake of defeat. The same year that he established the Albertina Foundation, and at a moment when Danish artists were lobbying for the establishment of a French art collection in Copenhagen, Jacobsen offered 20,000 Danish kroner to the Royal Sculpture Collection at Christiansborg Palace for the purchase of plaster casts of contemporary French sculpture.⁴² Amongst the selection of plaster casts he proposed to acquire, Jacobsen listed *Gloria Victis*. Not only did he believe the sculpture had a strong pedagogical value for contemporary Danish artists, but he also hoped that acquisition of a plaster cast would help sway his colleagues at the Albertina Foundation to change their minds.

In a letter to Mercié regarding a cast of *Gloria Victis*, Jacobsen explained his plan for acquiring both a plaster copy and a bronze reduction of the sculpture, using more colorfully revanchist language than he had ever used with his Albertina colleagues: "We are especially interested in *Gloria Victis*, in which you have expressed the feelings of all of us who were defeated by that despicable enemy and who are still thinking of revenge! ... There was talk of raising your *Gloria Victis* in a public square in the

42 Jacobsen to Rosenørn-Lehn, October 22, 1879, in Den kgl. Malerisamlings arkiv, Statens Museum for Kunst, and Carl Jacobsens Brevarkiv, Ny Carlsbergfondet, <https://brevarkivet.ny-carlsbergfondet.dk/d/1qz9>.

heart of our capital, but because of so many good projects, the thought has not been immediately realized. But it is possible that if we had the cast in front of us, the enthusiasm aroused would lead to the realization of this earlier idea."⁴³ No response from Mercié is recorded, but clearly Jacobsen's second attempt to acquire *Gloria Victis* never materialized. His ambition to create a gallery of plaster casts of contemporary French sculptures quickly fizzled out as it proved difficult to obtain them; by 1883, only seven casts had been acquired, six of which were after sculptures by Dubois. The last mention of *Gloria Victis* in the context of the cast collection was in March 1883, when it was listed as one of many sculptures yet to be procured.⁴⁴ In May 1882, Jacobsen wrote to Barbedienne that he had been unable to persuade his colleagues to acquire a cast of Mercié's sculpture.⁴⁵

While Jacobsen continued to influence public sculpture in Copenhagen via the Albertina Foundation, by the end of the 1880s his focus shifted to opening a museum to showcase his sculpture. Already in 1882, Jacobsen opened his private collection located at his residence in the city of Valby to the public. Two years later, following a fire that destroyed Christiansborg Palace where the Danish national collection was held, Jacobsen saw an opportunity to position himself as a state actor and present his art collection as the foundation for a national gallery. Therefore, in 1888 he donated his collection to the public on the condition that the city of Copenhagen build him a suitable museum. The city agreed, leading to the creation of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen in 1897, and bringing further credibility to his museum via the support of the Danish government.⁴⁶

Over the next decades, Jacobsen attempted at least two more times to acquire the sculpture in various formats—and not just monumental bronzes—for display in his future museum, including the original plaster

43 "On pense surtout à *Gloria Victis*, où vous avez prononcé le ressentiment de nous tous qui avons été vaincus par cet ennemi ignoble, et qui songeons toujours à la vengeance! ... Il a été question de dresser votre *Gloria Victis* sur une place publique dans le cœur de notre capitale, mais à cause de tant de bons projets, la pensée n'a pas été réalisée tout de suite. Mais il est possible que si l'on avait le plâtre devant soi, l'enthousiasme une fois éveillé aboutirait à la réalisation de cette idée." Jacobsen to Mercié, January 18, 1881, Copybook 2, Carl Jacobsen's Outgoing Letters, 66–69.

44 Emil Bloch to Rosenørn-Lehn, March 14, 1883, Den kgl. Malerisamlings arkiv; and Carl Jacobsens Brevarkiv, <http://brevarkivet.ny-carlsbergfondet.dk/d/qKBP>.

45 Jacobsen to Barbedienne, May 13, 1882, Albertinas kopibog; and Carl Jacobsens Brevarkiv, <http://brevarkivet.ny-carlsbergfondet.dk/d/j5Kr>.

46 Jørgensen, "Creating Cultural Heritage," 290, 297.

maquette in 1890 and a life-size plaster copy in 1893.⁴⁷ While these attempts, like his earlier ones, failed, Jacobsen finally found success after the opening of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in 1897. The Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek was dedicated to promoting the kinship between contemporary French and Danish artists, a message which is clearly visible on the museum's facade as visitors enter the museum. To the left of the entrance is a sculpture of Jens Adolf Jerichau (1816–1883), former director of Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts and one of Denmark's most celebrated sculptors of the nineteenth century. To the left of Jerichau are the busts of several preeminent eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Danish sculptors, Herman Wilhelm Bissen (1798–1868), Hermann Ernst Freund (1786–1840), Johannes Wiedewelt (1731–1802), and Theobald Stein (1829–1902). Mirroring Jerichau, to the entrance's right, is a sculpture of Paul Dubois (1829–1905), one-time director of the École des Beaux-Arts of Paris. Dubois's sculpture is flanked by the busts of revered French (and Belgian) sculptors, Constantin Meunier (1831–1905), Auguste Rodin (1840–1917), Alexandre Falguière (1831–1900), and Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (1827–1875). Originally, Jacobsen intended to have Mercié's bust amongst this artistic pantheon, but for unknown reasons, Mercié never responded to his request.⁴⁸

The beginnings of Jacobsen's successful acquisition of *Gloria Victis* occurred in 1902. On February 16, Jacobsen wrote once again to Mercié to inquire about acquiring an authorized signed cast of *Gloria Victis*: "The Directorate of the Glyptotek has given me its consent to allocate another 10,000 francs to acquire your *Gloria Victis* in bronze if you can provide it to us in the original size (Montholon Square) at this price. Please tell me if you can do it, but please make sure that it is not a reproduction of any sort, but a second example [*un second exemplaire*] which can bear your signature with the same rights as the first."⁴⁹ As Jacobsen would have known, the problem with obtaining

47 Jacobsen to Mercié, October 17, 1890, Copybook 4, Carl Jacobsen's Outgoing Letters, 123–124; Mercié to Jacobsen, December 19, 1890, Antonin Mercié, 1845–1916, Franske Billedhuggere, Frankrig 19–20. Århundrede, Carl Jacobsens Brevarkiv. Mercié to Jacobsen, December 12, 1890, Antonin Mercié, 1845–1916, Franske Billedhuggere, Frankrig 19–20. Århundrede, Carl Jacobsens Brevarkiv; and Jacobsen to Mercié, February 23, 1893, Copybook 4, Carl Jacobsen's Outgoing Letters, 921–922.

48 Carl Jacobsen, *Ny Carlsberg Glyptotekets Tilblivelse* (Copenhagen: Ny Carlsberg, 1906), 63; and Jacobsen to Mercié, December 18, 1901, in Copybook 15, Carl Jacobsen's Outgoing Letters, 158–159.

49 "La Direction de la Glyptotek m'a donné son consentement de disposer encore de 10,000 fr. pour acquérir votre *Gloria Victis* en bronze si vous pouvez nous la donner en grandeur de l'original (square Montholon) à ce prix. Veuillez me dire si vous pouvez le faire, mais je vous prie de remarquer qu'il ne s'agit pas d'une reproduction tant bien que mal, mais d'un second

an authorized and signed cast of *Gloria Victis* was that the Paris prefecture held the copyright for the original plaster. Although the Paris prefecture had granted permission for bronzes to be cast for French cities and territories, it might not extend the same to a Danish museum. *Gloria Victis*, as the Paris Municipal Council declared in 1881, was an *œuvre nationale* (national artwork) that spoke directly to the patriotism of the French people. The sculpture's relevance to Denmark might not have been so obvious.

Responding to Jacobsen's request in 1902, Mercié, through his son, Fernand, advised him to write to the Paris prefecture directly.⁵⁰ Jacobsen sent his letter to Paris on March 19, touting not only the importance of the Glyptotek's French collection but also the patriotic purposes of the acquisition, as a means of commemorating France's and Denmark's shared histories of defeat: "The Directorate of the Glyptotek is eager to acquire a bronze repetition [*répétition*] of the group *Gloria Victis*, which, through its touching symbolism, appeals just as much to the Danes as to the French. The Glyptotek was established to showcase the finest achievements of French sculpture ... and the city of Paris and the French government have always graciously given permission to reproduce artworks that belong to them. The Directorate of the Glyptotek therefore takes the liberty of asking you, Monsieur, to grant it permission to create a repetition [*répétition*] of monsieur Mercié's group."⁵¹ In November 1902, the Paris Municipal Council deliberated Jacobsen's request and agreed to authorize the creation of a full-size bronze for the Glyptotek. Jacobsen had succeeded, through a combination of a carefully worded letter and years of persistent work, in promoting French art in Denmark. In the report published in the *Bulletin municipal officiel de la Ville de Paris* (Official bulletin of the city of Paris), the Paris Municipal Council justified its decision by citing the patriotic purposes of Jacobsen's request, noting the council's desire to "to acknowledge the Danish nation's

exemplaire qui puisse porter votre signature avec le même droit que le premier." Jacobsen to Mercié, February 26, 1902, Copybook 15, Carl Jacobsen's Outgoing Letters, 192–193.

50 F. A. (Fernand Antonin) Mercié to Jacobsen, March 12, 1902, Antonin Mercié, 1845–1916, Franske Billedhuggere, Frankrig 19–20. Århundrede, Carl Jacobsens Brevarkiv.

51 "La direction de la Glyptothèque Ny Carlsberg désire vivement acquérir une répétition en bronze du groupe *Gloria Victis* qui par sa symbolique touchante s'adresse aussi bien aux Danois qu'aux Français. La Glyptothèque a été instituée pour donner une représentation choisie de la sculpture de la France ... et la ville de Paris et le gouvernement français ont toujours gracieusement donné la permission de reproduire des œuvres qui leur appartiennent. La direction de la Glyptothèque prend donc la liberté de vous prier, Monsieur, de lui accorder la permission de faire une répétition du groupe de Monsieur Mercié." Copy of letter from Jacobsen to le Préfet de la Seine, March 19, 1902, 10624/72/1, folder 129, Archives de Paris. Another copy can be found in Copybook 15, Carl Jacobsen's Outgoing Letters, 207–208.



Fig. 2.6. Unknown photographer, inauguration ceremony of the Winter Garden, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, 1906, showing *Gloria Victis* in the far-left background. Photograph. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen. (Artwork in the public domain; image courtesy of the photography archives of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.)

strong expressions of sympathy for French artists.”⁵² In order to realize this exceptional request, however, the Paris Municipal Council required that the plinth on which the Glyptotek’s *Gloria Victis* stood be shorter than the one in Paris and that the sculpture itself should contain the inscription, “the original belongs to the City of Paris.”⁵³

Given his original intentions in 1880 to have *Gloria Victis* installed as an outdoor monument, Jacobsen originally considered placing *Gloria Victis* in front of the Glyptotek.⁵⁴ For unknown reasons, perhaps due to the limitations of elevation stipulated by the Paris Municipal Counsel, Jacobsen decided to install the sculpture in the Winter Garden. This space not only mediated between outdoor and indoor space but also mirrored the sculpture’s placement

52 “Reconnaître les preuves de vive sympathie données aux artistes français par la nation danoise.” Quentin-Bauchart, “Autorisation à M. le docteur Jacobsen de reproduire en bronze le Groupe ‘Gloria victis’ de M. A. Mercié,” *Bulletin municipal officiel de la Ville de Paris*, November 28, 1902, 3654. Antonin Mercié, 1845–1916, Franske Billedhuggere, Frankrig 19–20. Århundrede, Carl Jacobsens Brevarkiv.

53 “D’une hauteur légèrement inférieure à celle de l’original”; “l’original appartient à la ville de Paris.” Quentin-Bauchart, “Autorisation à M. le docteur Jacobsen,” 3654.

54 Letter from Carl Jacobsen to Thiébaud Frères, August 19, 1903, Carl Jacobsen’s Outgoing Letters, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.

in the Hôtel de Ville. The newly expanded Glyptotek was inaugurated on the morning of June 26, 1906, with a ceremony held in the Winter Garden. *Gloria Victis*, visible on the left-hand side of a photograph documenting the inauguration, was the centerpiece of the Winter Garden, rising above a low fountain between two staircases leading up to the collection of ancient art housed in a newly constructed building designed by the architect Hack Kampmann (1856–1920) (fig. 2.6). The visual parallels between the installations of *Gloria Victis* at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek and the Hôtel de Ville are striking. Both spaces functioned as ceremonial venues for speeches, the reception of foreign dignitaries, and other forms of public spectacle but they were also informal gathering spaces, filled with light, air, greenery, and sculptures.

Despite Jacobsen's intentions for *Gloria Victis* to commemorate the bond of the French and the Danish people, forged through parallel histories of defeat, it is not known to what degree the sculpture ever functioned in this manner for the broader public. Danish newspapers gave surprisingly few words to *Gloria Victis* in their reviews of the reopening of the Glyptotek in 1906, with only *Berlingske Politiske og Avertissementstidenden* (Berling's political and advertisement times) giving brief mention the sculpture's relation to the Franco-Prussian War.⁵⁵ No papers, it seems, made any connection concerning the symbolism of *Gloria Victis* being erected on Danish soil and the shared histories of defeat connecting 1864 and 1871.

Was the press's silence concerning, according to Jacobsen, *Gloria Victis*'s supposed resonance with the Danish people a sign of the sculpture's failure to evoke symbolic interpretation? Or was it merely an expression of Danish society to avoid direct evocation of political sentiments vis-à-vis the German Empire and the defeat of 1864, as seen in prior attempts to commemorate the Second Schleswig War? Despite *Gloria Victis*'s ambivalent commemorative function, a clearer evocation of the mnemonic entanglement of the French and Danish Lost Causes occurred during an event surrounding another one of Mercié's sculptures, *Quand Même!*

In 1908, Jacobsen received French president Armand Fallières (1841–1931; president of France, 1906–1913) at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. Fallières was visiting Denmark as part of a diplomatic tour of Scandinavia and Russia. Officially, the diplomatic visit was to improve economic ties, but one of the larger purposes was to sway Scandinavian foreign policy towards France in the case of conflict with Germany. With the First World War on the horizon, Europe was already dividing itself into rival camps. France and Russia had

55 "Byens Vinterhave Under Glyptotekets Kuppel," *Berlingske Politiske og Avertissementstidende*, March 8, 1906, 1.

already formed an alliance in 1894 and had more recently forged agreements with England, forming the Triple Entente to counterpose the German-led Triple Alliance with Austria and Italy.⁵⁶ The political undertones of the French diplomatic visit to Denmark were clearly brought to the foreground during Fallières's visit with Jacobsen. At the Glyptotek, Jacobsen led Fallières to a plaster copy of Mercié's sculpture, *Quand même!*, which Jacobsen had purchased in 1886. At the base of the sculpture, Jacobsen had placed a laurel crown braided with a tricolor ribbon reading, "Que Dieu protège la France!" (May God protect France!). In a speech explaining the significance of the words to Fallières and his entourage, he said: "When I acquired this statue and placed it here, I wanted to engrave on the pedestal 'Vive la France!' [long live France]. But I was told, 'Do not do that, it would be too political.' Then, I decided to engrave the words 'Que Dieu protège la France!' But, again, I was told, 'Do not do that, it would also be too political!'"⁵⁷ Jacobsen ended his speech by defiantly yelling out the phrase that he had been warned would place him in the middle of the political conflict between France and Germany—"Que Dieu protège la France!"

Jacobsen's words were well understood by his French audience. Fallières's exchange with Jacobsen was about more than just French art but touched upon the still-vivid memories of war that lingered in both French and Danish collective consciences. A journalist for *Le Rappel* wrote, "The Copenhagen Glyptotek incident is one of the most gripping I have ever encountered The dispossessed of 1864 paying homage to the plundered of 1870! The victims of brute force meeting those defeated despite being in the right! M. Fallières and his entourage must have been led to bitter reflections. It was impossible for them to put those thoughts into words, for in such moments words catch fire."⁵⁸ The Danish press had less to say about event, once

56 Fiona Tomaszewski, "Pomp, Circumstance, and Realpolitik: The Evolution of the Triple Entente of Russia, Great Britain, and France," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, n.s., 47, no. 3 (1999): 363–368, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41050402>.

57 "Lorsque j'ai acquis cette statue et que je l'ai mise ici, je voulais faire graver sur le socle 'Vive la France!' Mais on me disait ici: 'Ne faites pas cela, ce serait vouloir faire de la politique.' Alors, je décidai de faire graver ces mots: 'Que Dieu protège la France!' Mais, de nouveau, on m'a dit: 'Ne faites pas cela, ce serait aussi faire de la politique!'" Jules Hedeman, "Déclarations du Président du conseil danois à l'envoyé spécial du 'Matin,'" *Le Matin*, July 22, 1908, 1.

58 "L'incident de la Glyptothèque de Copenhague est un des plus empoignants que je connaisse Les dépouillés de 1864 rendant hommage aux rançonnés de 1870! Les victimes de la force se rencontrant avec les vaincus du droit! M. Fallières et son entourage ont dû faire d'amères réflexions. Il leur a été impossible de les traduire par un mot, car dans ces occurrences, les mots prennent feu." J. C., "1864," *Le Rappel*, July 26, 1908, 1, Scrapbook, vol. 3, March 1908–June 1910, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.

again revealing a divergence in postwar memories of defeat: in France, public commemoration was inflammatory, while in Denmark it remained comparatively cautious and muted.

Conclusion

The placement of *Gloria Victis* in the Glyptotek was more than an aesthetic decision—it was an assertion of cultural and political alignment between Denmark and France in the wake of national defeat. Denmark's own loss to Prussia in 1864 left the country with deep scars, both territorial and psychological, that continued to shape its relationship with its powerful German neighbor. Through *Gloria Victis*, Denmark positioned itself within a broader European network of nations that had suffered defeat but maintained a vision of ultimate redemption. Much like in France, where the Franco-Prussian War led to a sustained political and cultural movement centered on the recovery of Alsace and Moselle, Denmark's own national memory of loss was embedded in a mythology of resilience, survival, and cultural distinction. While this cultural and political alignment between France and Denmark never solidified into an alliance, Jacobsen's attempt to incorporate *Gloria Victis* into Denmark's commemorative landscape demonstrates the desire amongst certain individuals for Denmark and France's postwar relationship to be solidified into cultural memory.

What *Gloria Victis* offered Denmark was not merely a visual expression of solidarity with France but a means of defining its own position within an evolving European order. The sculpture's inclusion in the Glyptotek's Winter Garden, a space designed to bridge the museum's collections of Danish and French art, served as a reminder of Denmark's cultural affinity with France and its political distance from Germany. It was a sculptural argument that underscored how national identity could be shaped through the careful selection and display of shared symbols of loss.

The virality of *Gloria Victis*—its ability to be replicated, reinterpreted, and integrated into different cultural contexts—was central to its impact in Denmark. The sculpture's adaptation was not a passive act of reception but an active engagement with a transnational language of commemoration that emerged in the late nineteenth century. This influence is particularly evident in Hans Peder Pedersen-Dan's *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser*, which clearly draws from *Gloria Victis* in both composition and allegorical meaning. By adopting the visual rhetoric of noble defeat, *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser* reinforced Denmark's identification with a broader

commemorative tradition that saw loss as an opportunity for national reflection and renewal. As this book argues throughout, *Gloria Victis* was not merely a French monument—it was a globalized icon that transcended its origins, allowing nations like Denmark to embed their own narratives of loss within a broader framework of noble defeat. At the same time, however, it is clear from both resistance to Jacobsen's plans to erect *Gloria Victis* as a public sculpture in Denmark as well as the silence with which the Danish media met the installation of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek's bronze illustrates the potential limits of transposing one society's symbol of the memory of defeat onto another's. Despite being an international phenomenon which thrived on transnational exchanges and comparisons, the cult of the Lost Cause still demanded nation-specific iconographies in order to signify, paradoxically, the uniqueness of victimhood. It is more common, therefore, to find more adaptations of *Gloria Victis* than exact copies in other countries, as illustrated by Pedersen-Dan's iconographic intermingling of Danish cultural references in *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser*, or, in the case of Peru's marble copy of *Gloria Victis*, seen in the following chapter, architectural adornments.

3. Peru and the War of the Pacific (1879–1883)

Abstract: Chapter 3 explores the role of *Gloria Victis* in postwar Peru during the Aristocratic Republic (1895–1919), when the oligarchic elite pursued cultural nation-building after defeat in the War of the Pacific. It argues that Peru's adoption of *Gloria Victis*—a marble replica installed on Lima's Cripta de los Héroes in 1908—reflected a deliberate effort to emulate the French Third Republic's model of commemorative regeneration. Shaped by the French military mission and expanding French cultural influence, the monument functioned as an aspirational symbol of republican modernity. Rather than a passive import, *Gloria Victis* masked Peru's structural dependency while reinforcing France's symbolic authority, revealing how commemorative culture operated as an instrument of soft imperialism amid Franco-German rivalry.

Keywords: France, Aristocratic Republic, public sculpture, imperialism, civil religion, Latin America

La Cripta de los Héroes (fig. 3.1) was created in 1908 in el Cementerio Presbítero Matías Maestro, Lima's oldest civil cemetery. The building features an octagonal central plan, a large dome towering forty meters high, and four stained glass windows, and is used to rehouse the remains of combatants who had died during Peru's disastrous war against Chile, the War of the Pacific (1879–1883). The war had been fought over control of the Atacama Desert, where Peruvian, Chilean, and Bolivian businesses were engaged in the lucrative business of extracting nitrate-rich mineral deposits used in the production of fertilizers and explosives. Chile won the war, annexing Peru's valuable territories of Tacna, Arica, and Tarapacá, and leaving both Peru and Bolivia in decades of economic turmoil. More than twenty years after the war, the Peruvian government created la Cripta de los Héroes to

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Fig. 3.1. Emile Robert (architect), la Cripta de los Héroes, 1908. Lima. (Author's photo.)

rehouse the remains of combatants, which had been deposited in various mausoleums and ossuaries throughout the cemetery, in a single location to venerate their sacrifices during the War of the Pacific. The idea of la Cripta de los Héroes was to create an idea of national heroes out of a war.

The inauguration ceremony for la Cripta de los Héroes occurred on September 8, 1908, and attracted an estimated 50,000 persons to the cemetery.¹ Local and foreign dignitaries, including President José Pardo, representatives from the Peruvian army and the navy, composer José María Valle Riestra, the French diplomatic mission to Peru, as well as Chile's Minister Plenipotentiary to Peru, José Miguel Echeñique, were present at the ceremony.² Both the ceremony and the monument would have been unimaginable in the immediate postwar years, when Peru's intelligentsia had treated the War of the Pacific as a source of shame and contempt towards the Peruvian state. As part of a broader project to create greater social cohesion during the Aristocratic Republic (1895–1919),³ however, the ruling Civilista Party attempted to

1 "Gloria Victis," *Variedades*, número extraordinario (11 de septiembre de 1908): VIII.

2 Pierre Merlou, French Minister of Peru to Stephen Pichon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, September 15, 1908, 173. 190CPCOM, Correspondance politique et commerciale, Nouvelle série, Pérou, Volume 4, Politique Étrangère: Dossier général. Centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, France.

3 *La República Aristocrática* is a name historians have retroactively applied to the period of 1895 to 1919 when *el Partido Civil*, also known as los veinticuatro amigos (the twenty-four friends) and their political allies exercised near complete control over government affairs. *Civilistas*

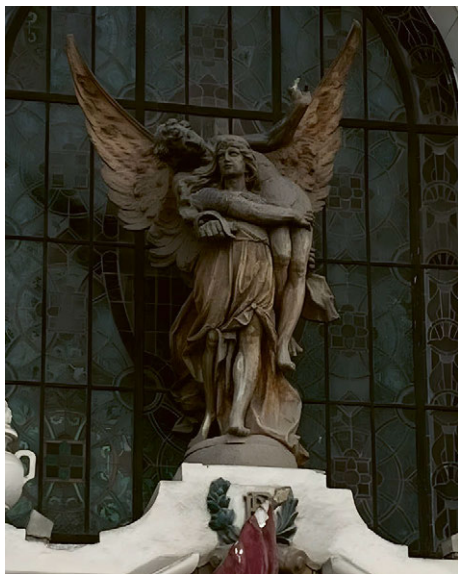


Fig. 3.2. Antonin Mercié, *Gloria Victis*, (1872; 1908). Marble. La Cripta de los Héroes, Lima. (Author's photo.)

reinterpret Peru's defeat into a patriotic act of collective sacrifice which is most clearly expressed in the architecture of la Cripta de los Héroes. The building, which was designed by French architect Émile Robert, prominently features a text on the front of the crypt reads "La Nación a sus defensores en la Guerra de 1879" (The nation to its defenders in the war of 1879), underneath which stands a marble copy of *Gloria Victis* (fig. 3.2). While the French and Danish *Gloria Victis* are bronze, the Lima copy is the only known marble, made by Italian stonemasons from the city of Carrara at a time when the international trade of Italian sculpture came to its zenith.⁴

Although local journals reporting on the inauguration of la Cripta de los Héroes wrote glowingly about Mercié and his contribution to the Peruvian nation, it is unclear what role Mercié played in the monument's creation.⁵ Stylistically, the Peruvian marble, which has an enlarged height of 3.55 meters, features several noticeable deviations from the original bronze. The female figure rests both feet on the ground instead of delicately balancing the toes of her left foot, while the wings, rather than suggesting flight, lay flat against

came from Peru's bourgeois elite, contrasting themselves with the *caudillos*, or military rulers, who had maintained control over the government for much of the Republic's existence.

4 Alfonso Castrillón-Vizcarra, *Escultura en el Perú* (Lima: Banco de Crédito del Perú, 1991), 378; Luca Bochicchio, "Transported Art: Nineteenth-Century Italian Sculptures across Continents and Cultures," *Material Culture Review* 74–75 (Spring 2012): 70–71, 79.

5 Federico Larrañaga, "Antonin Mercié, autor del Gloria Victis," *Variedades* (11 de setiembre de 1908): XVI.

the façade of the building. Moreover, while the hair of the same figure is tightly knotted into a bun, the marble in Peru features flowing hair held down by a bandana. Although many of these alterations can be attributed to the material constraints of marble, the uncertain legal parameters in which this reproduction was created add further mystery. While every other reproduction of *Gloria Victis* received written authorization through the city of Paris, regardless of medium, size, or location, the Paris Archives contain no mention that this existed. Nonetheless, Mercié had clear connections to Peru at this time, which link him to the sculpture. The same year that la Cripta de los Héroes was inaugurated, Mercié was also commissioned by the Peruvian Ministry in France to execute a monument to former president Manuel Candamo Iriarte (1903–1904), who had died in office shortly after coming to power.⁶ Mercié's monument to Candamo, which was inaugurated in 1912 in the Parque Colón in Lima, was also made of marble.⁷

What is clear is *Gloria Victis*'s intended function as an icon of civil religion under the Aristocratic Republic's attempts to reform Peruvian society in the image of Europe, and most notably the French Third Republic. Reforming the nation's tattered military institutions was one of the changes brought about under the Peruvian government during this era, and this was executed through the direct aid of French military personnel invited to Peru. The French military mission to Peru, which lasted from 1896 to 1939, helped bring substantial reforms that included the construction of new military schools, and the implementation of a new system of civilian conscription that required all Peruvian citizens, regardless of race, to participate in the defense of the nation. As in France, not only was military service considered an important means of national defense, but the pledge of self-sacrifice was considered an important step in creating good citizens. President Pardo's speech at the inauguration of la Cripta de los Héroes emphasized that the sacrifices made by the soldiers during the War of the Pacific was meant to be a lesson of patriotic duty for all citizens, remarking:

Future generations of Peru will come to this temple of patriotism to render homage born of their admiration to the heroes, with the same patriotic intensity with which the present generation has fulfilled the duty of gratitude, bringing together in a dignified burial the venerated remains of their unforgettable defenders. Time will pass; but under this dome, patriotism will always resonate with the same emotion, so long as there remains territory and national honor to defend. May the glorious example of the

6 *El Peruano: Diario Oficial* 68, no. 19 (August 17, 1908), 220.

7 J. L. M., "El Monumento á Manuel Candamo," *Ilustración Peruana*, September 11, 1912, 184.

martyrs remind Peruvians at all times of their duties and thus the generous sacrifice of their selfless children will be ever more fruitful for the country!⁸

The theme of the inauguration echoes similar changes to commemorative culture in France, where the transformation of commemorating dead soldiers from a funerary rite to a patriotic ritual, as evidenced by the proliferation of *Gloria Victis* monuments, was one aspect of the promotion of civil religion by the Third Republican government. Thus, despite the material and visual distinctions of Peru's *Gloria Victis*, it was intended to function in a nearly identical manner to those in France.

I argue that analyzing *Gloria Victis*'s history in Peru, in tandem with its commemorative function in French society as analyzed in chapter 1, reveals the Aristocratic Republic's underlying nationalist and internationalist agenda within the construction of la Cripta de los Héroes and the commemoration of the War of the Pacific. As in the previous chapters, I argue that *Gloria Victis* functions as a symbol of civil religion. Like the original bronze erected in the central courtyard of the Hôtel de Ville in the 1880s, where it served in the ceremonial reception of local and foreign dignitaries, the function of the marble copy in Lima is fundamentally political. As with most symbols of civil religion, *Gloria Victis* functions to legitimize an emergent ruling class by linking them with the authority of a transcendent, sacred, and eternal entity—the Nation. Furthermore, as I've argued about other version of *Gloria Victis*, the Lima *Gloria Victis* served to develop not only national bonds, but international relations as well. Mirroring the actions of postwar Denmark examined in the previous chapter, after the country's defeat by Chile the greatly weakened Peruvian state sought to develop military relations with France beginning in 1895.

While *Gloria Victis*'s function within the development of civil religion under the French and Peruvian republics are similar, developing a mythology around past defeats in order to promote military service as a sacred commitment, the transference of *Gloria Victis* to Peru also underlines the failures of nation building under the Aristocratic Republic's Francophilia tendencies. The production of the marble *Gloria Victis* illustrates what Natalia Majluf has called “the process of elite ‘whitening’” of Peruvian society during the nineteenth

8 “Las generaciones futuras del Perú vendrán á este templo del patriotismo á rendir á los héroes el homenaje de su admiración, con la misma intensidad patriótica con que la generación actual ha cumplido el deber de gratitud, reuniendo en decorosa sepultura, los restos venerados de sus inolvidables defensores. Transcurrirá el tiempo; pero bajo de esta cúpula, el patriotismo siempre vibrará con la misma emoción, mientras haya territorio y honor nacional que defender. ¡Que el ejemplo glorioso de los mártires recuerde á los peruanos en todo tiempo sus deberes y así será para la patria más y más fecundo el generoso sacrificio de sus abnegados hijos!” “*Gloria Victis*,” XII.

century.⁹ To be clear, I am not arguing that the choice of white marble to commemorate the deceased persons from a largely brown-skinned population constitutes an act of white supremacy. Rather, I argue that it is the material histories that underly and surround the monument's construction, including the importation of Italian marble from Carrara, the employment of French artists and architects, and a focus on the martyrdom of criollo military leaders during the war that illustrate a broader tendency in Peru's Republican history to not only perpetuate, but transform and expand colonialist racial hierarchies.

The republican elite's perpetual reliance on European financial investment, military support, and skilled labor in the nation-building projects, which included a shift towards modern European, largely French, styles of public commemoration, demonstrates a consistent agenda to identify the young Republic with white European civilization, progress, and power. As the French military mission to Peru illustrates, however, the Aristocratic Republic's emulation and reliance on France set the conditions for foreign predation. Internal dialogue from both the Ministries of War and Foreign Relations in France demonstrate that one of France's main interests in developing Peru's defense forces was to counteract the German Empire's growing influence in South America, especially Chile. These internal notes and letter from the French government, moreover, explicitly outline a new philosophy of soft imperialism as a means of French expansion, helping small states including Peru develop their institutions, such as their military, to create a system of dependency on France.

An Age of Disillusionment: A Brief History of the War of the Pacific and its Aftermath

The commercial excavation and exportation of guano began in the 1840s when the Peruvian government made the decision to nationalize all guano-rich territories, which largely consisted of uninhabited coastal islands where seabirds flocked to mate. Centuries of this annual migration created massive mounds of nitrate-rich guano which was easily excavatable through manual labor. Fertilizers like guano were highly sought after in Europe where the industrialization of farming practices was gaining momentum. Gregory Cushman argues that the exploitation of guano in the mid-nineteenth century is rooted in the "consumption-oriented regime of the industrial age," especially

9 Natalia Majluf, *Inventing Indigenism: Francisco Laso's Image of Modern Peru* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2021), 8.

in England, which endlessly sought to increase agrarian output through “input-intensive agricultural practices” including fertilizers, coal, and animal power.¹⁰ During the “guano age,” which spanned until the War of the Pacific, Peru excavated more than ten metric tons of guano, making the young country, then just a few decades old, one of the wealthiest in South America.¹¹

Much of Peru's development of the guano industry occurred under the rule of Ramón Castilla, who held power for most of the period between 1844 and 1862. Although Castilla was a caudillo, or military dictator, much of his rule was associated with broad social stability as well as important changes. The economic boom from the guano trade led to substantial development of Peru's urban environments and transportation infrastructure. Economic development moved from cities like Cusco, one of the main seats of Incan power and one of the cultural centers of the Viceroyalty of Peru in the mountainous interior, to the coastal city Lima. The construction of modern hospitals, public markets, prisons, Haussmann-inspired boulevards, and a railway system to unify a country which was fragmented by mountain ranges and difficult terrains, were all signs of Peru's growth as a secular, independent republic self-fashioned in the image of European nations.¹²

The guano trade led to important social reforms as well. In 1854, Black slavery officially ended in Peru when the government bought out its country's slaveholders using the finances earned from the guano trade. The same year, the government also ended its head tax on Indigenous persons. Another important step in Castilla's rule was to expand voting rights to include all literate persons, regardless of language, which included Peru's Indigenous population. Not only did Castilla's democratic reforms bring Peru's white, black, and brown populations into a greater state of legal equality, but it also later gave birth to the country's first political party, the Partido Civil (Civilista Party), popularly known as the Civilistas, in the 1870s.¹³ As Gregory Cushman has argued, behind the façade of social change came further injustices, however. The desire for profits demanded cheap labor, and with the end of slavery, a new form of abuse came through the importation of more than 92,000 laborers hoping to escape economic drought in China, along with thousands of laborers taken by force

10 Gregory T. Cushman, *Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World: A Global Ecological History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 55; Christine Hunefeldt, *A Brief History of Peru* (New York: Lexington Associates, 2004), 112.

11 Hunefeldt, *A Brief History of Peru*, 122.

12 Natalia Majluf and Luis Eduardo Wuffarden, “El Siglo XIX: Entre Tradición y Modernidad,” *Arte Republicano* (Lima: Museo de Arte de Lima, 2015), 43.

13 Cushman, *Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World*, 55, 82, 91; Hunefeldt, *A Brief History of Peru* (New York: Lexington Associates, 2004), 27, 120.

from Easter Island. Another source of labor came from workers lured from Spain, through whom the Peruvian government hoped to “Europeanize” its mestizo population. Progress, therefore, masked a dark underbelly.¹⁴

Worse yet, Peru’s continued reliance on European financial investments made the country highly susceptible to economic imperialism by French and British financiers. Peru had been in debt to European banks since independence, having taken out loans from London in 1822 and 1824, which the early Peruvian governments had been unable to pay back, and which by the 1860s had accrued substantial interest. The guano boom appeared to be Peru’s ticket out of debt, but the industry would only lead the country into further financial crisis. In 1869, Peruvian finance minister and future president, Nicolás de Piérola, signed an exclusive contract with French businessman Auguste Dreyfus for the sale of guano. The Peruvian government, still in debt, then obtained a substantial loan based on projected guano sales through Dreyfus’s financial backer, the French bank *la Société Générale*. Believing that guano would continue to provide the state with ample money, the Peruvian leaders then used this loan to pay off its previous foreign debts and to finance its numerous public works projects, including the construction of port facilities at Callao.¹⁵

One poignant illustration of the problem of continued foreign dependence in the wake of political independence is *el Monumento al Combate del 2 de Mayo* (The monument to the Battle of May 2). The monument commemorates the Spanish navy’s bombardment of the city of Callao, Lima’s main port on May 2, 1866, during the Chincha Islands Wars, when Spain tried to reassert control over Latin America by occupying Peru’s main guano harvesting sites. A multinational military alliance composed of Chile, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru waged a successful war against Spain, who had underestimated the countries’ advancements in the wake of independence. In 1872, the Peruvian government held an international competition for the design of the victory monument in Paris. A jury chaired by the French painter Charles Gleyre selected the design submitted by the French architect Edmond Guillaume and the sculptor Léon Cugnot.¹⁶ Furthermore, the monument was

14 Cushman, *Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World*, 55; Christine Hunefeldt, *A Brief History of Peru*, 130.

15 Pascal Riviale, *Una historia de la presencia francesa en el Perú, del Siglo de las Luces a los Años Locos* (Lima: Institut Français d’Études Andines, 2008), 94; Fabián Novak Talavera, *Las relaciones entre el Perú y Francia, 1827–2004* (Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, 2005), 94; Mark Thurner, *History’s Peru: The Poetics of Colonial and Postcolonial Historiography* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011), 207; Cushman, *Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World*, 67.

16 Alfonso Castrillón-Vizcarra, *Escultura en el Perú* (Lima: Banco de Crédito del Perú, 1991), 338, 340.

constructed in Europe using bronze and marble which were again sourced from Europe. *El Monumento al Combate del 2 de Mayo* was a testament to Peru's political independence from Spain; yet Peru remained under the yoke of European power by relying on Europeans to construct its urban spaces and industries. As Pascal Riviale has argued, the government's discrimination against Peruvian engineers in favor of European engineers, believing the latter to be inherently better, led to complaints amongst the domestic engineers in the 1860s about the inability to secure government contracts.¹⁷ The same tendency applies to Peruvian artists. Amongst the major public sculptures erected in Lima during the guano boom, all were created by Italian sculptors and manufactured in European workshops.

El Monumento al Combate del 2 de Mayo was symptomatic of substantial errors being made by the Peruvian government. To finance the monument's construction, a further loan had to be obtained from Dreyfus.¹⁸ Growing further in debt, the Peruvian government based these loans on the belief of guano's limitless exploitability. Of course, this was not the case. The discovery of synthetic fertilizers, and the 1873 economic depression in Europe and the United States, led the Peruvian economy, which had been almost completely dependent on guano, to go into decline. The government turned its attention to nitrate deposits—an important component in the manufacturing of fertilizers—in the southern region of Tarapacá in the Atacama Desert. The neighboring states of Peru, Bolivia, and Chile, as well as private British companies, all profited from the nitrate mines in this borderland desert region. A dispute over taxes and national borders within the resource-rich Atacama Desert led to the War of the Pacific, which pitted Peru and its ally, Bolivia, against Chile. The Bolivian and Peruvian armies quickly fell apart, as did both national governments. As the Chilean army neared Lima, Peru's president Mariano Ignacio Prado of the Civilista Party fled to Europe on the false pretext of gaining support, with Nicolás de Piérola assuming his place as president. In January 1881, the Chilean army defeated the Peruvian armies defending Lima during the disastrous battles of San Juan and Miraflores—two battles that would later become mythologized in Peruvian postwar memory—and descended upon Lima. Fortunately for the residents of the city, several French, English, and Italian warships were stationed at the port of Callao to protect their countries' economic interests and subsequently prevented Lima's destruction. Admiral Abel Bergasse Du

17 Pascal Riviale, *Una historia de la presencia francesa en el Perú, del Siglo de las Luces a los Años Locos* (Lima: Institut Français d'Études Andines, 2008), 95.

18 Talavera, *Las relaciones entre el Perú y Francia, 1827–2004*, 130–132; Hunefeldt, *A Brief History of Peru*, 117.

Petit-Thouars, captain of the French warship *La Victorieuse*, led negotiations with the Chilean army, warning that if Chilean troops destroyed Lima, the French navy would turn its guns on the Chilean fleet.¹⁹

Foreign intervention had saved Lima but left the country beholden to foreign creditors for decades to come. Peru left the war with a £51,000,000 debt and an annual budget of £1,000,000. As part of the Treaty of Ancón with Chile (1883), Peru had agreed to permanently cede the nitrate-rich territory of Tarapacá to Chile, while the territories of Tacna and Arica were temporarily handed over to Chile for a period of ten years, with the guarantee of a future plebiscite. Disputes over the Treaty of Ancón led to further bloodshed in Peru. A civil war broke out (1884–1885) between factions loyal to two competing leaders, Andrés Bello Cáceres and Miguel Iglesias, and the country fell back into caudillismo, or military rule. At the same time, the Peruvian government reinstated the head tax on Indigenous communities, abolished thirty years earlier. As a result, Indigenous leader Pedro Pablo Atusparia launched the Huaraz Rebellion against the government, who responded by killing thousands of Indigenous persons.²⁰

Despite all the economic, democratic, and racial progress made during the guano years, Peruvian society seemed to be backtracking. The pessimism in postwar Peru was so great that the country's intellectual leaders openly wondered if the Peruvian nation, barely sixty years in existence, had failed.²¹ Contemporary historians including Cushman have been equally critical of the horrendous humanitarian and ecological consequences that the guano trade had, despite the hope for progress and prosperity its early advocates expressed: "The guano age truly deserves its reputation as an 'age of shit.' Rather than improving the world's food supply during an era of profound environmental instability, Peruvian guano mainly served northern consumers of meat and sugar. Rather than inaugurating an epoch of peace and prosperity, guano and nitrates inspired wars and fueled the growth of inequalities between classes and nations."²² The speculative guano market had proven to be an illusion, as insatiable foreign markets quickly depleted high-grade guano deposits and the destruction of bird nesting grounds made any substantial resource renewal an impossibility. Moreover, internal corruption had prevented the economic gains made during the height of the

19 Talavera, *Las relaciones entre el Perú y Francia, 1827–2004*, 130–132; Hunefeldt, *A Brief History of Peru*, 146.

20 Hunefeldt, *A Brief History of Peru*, 151–152.

21 Thurner, *History's Peru*, 185.

22 Cushman, *Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World*, 74.

guano trade from having an impact on other economic sectors in Peru. The only people who truly profited from guano were the country's newfound capitalist class, who would make their return at the end of the century.²³

Building Civic Consciousness through Military Reform: The French Military Mission to Peru

The Aristocratic Republic (1895–1919), defined as a period of the Civilista Party's hegemonic power in Peruvian society, began the downfall of caudillo Andrés Avelino Cáceres through a coup d'état lead by Nicolás de Piérola. Although Piérola was not a formal member of the Civilistas, he held an alliance with their party, appointing several members to his government. Both the Civilistas and Piérola, who had signed the infamous Dreyfus contract, were those who had gained wealth from the guano boom and were able to escape the war with their lives and finances largely intact. Regaining power at the end nineteenth century, this new generation of bourgeois elites sought to rebuild Peruvian society through a mixture of both progressive social reform as well as an elitist ideology which, once again, looked to Europe as a model for Peru.

At the start of his presidency, Piérola formally invited French officers to help redesign the country's military according to their own national model. Although France had previously led a military mission to Guatemala (1886–1891), many larger Latin American countries including Chile had sought aid from the German Empire, Europe's leading military power following the allied German defeat of France in 1871, to modernize their armed forces.²⁴ While the reason that Peru looked to France, the loser of the Franco-Prussian War, has been an issue of debate, given the Civilista Party's broader agenda of nation building, France was arguably a better foreign model for fostering civil education. France was a republic while Germany was a country of landed aristocrats. For the Civilista Party, who hoped to reshape Peru into a modern liberal state, France, which many viewed as the birthplace of modern republican ideals, was clearly a more attractive international partner. Likewise, the Peruvian government tended to see a relationship with France as a potential counterweight to the United States' growing influence in Latin America. Writing to Pichon in the wake of the 1908 elections in Peru, Merlou reported on President Augusto

23 Cushman, *Guano and the Opening of the Pacific World*, 55, 82, 91.

24 Thomas Schoonover, "France in Central America 1820s–1929: An Overview," *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer* 79, no. 295 (2e trimestre 1992): 183–184.

Leguía's weariness of "Yankee" interference, stating that the new president preferred cooperation with the "Latin races," including France.²⁵

In the postwar years, public faith in the Peruvian military was poor. The reason for this was not only because of its recent defeat against Chile, but because of its longstanding history of corruption. According to Peruvian politician Carlos Ferrero writing for *El Tiempo*, under the military rule or caudillismo that followed the War of the Pacific, Peruvian soldiers frequently acted with impunity, and their abuse of power caused further discord within the country.²⁶ Under the country's longer history of caudillo rule, the military had largely relied on a system of forced conscription which almost exclusively preyed upon rural Black and Indigenous communities. The country's criollo elite, by contrast, were seldomly expected to serve. According to Manuel González Prada, a one-time Civilista turned anarchist, one of the reasons for Peru's defeat pointed to by postwar writers was a lack of national unity amongst Peru's diverse populations. Prada argued that Peru's antiquated and inequalitarian social system equaled an inability to unify against the foreign Chilean invaders during the War of the Pacific: "With the free, if undisciplined, crowds of the Revolution, France marched to victory; with disciplined but unfree Indian armies, Peru will always march to defeat. If we made the Indian a servant, what nation will he defend? Like the serf of the Middle Ages, he will only fight for the feudal lord."²⁷ Like other Peruvian thinkers of the late nineteenth century, Prada looked to France as the model for creating a genuine republic. The key to creating a free and prosperous Peruvian people, including amongst the elite mestizo class to which Prada belonged, was to liberate the rural Indigenous population, who constituted the heart of the nation, similar to the French Third Estate.²⁸

The French military mission, led by Colonel Paul Clément, helped bring much needed development to Peru's army and navy, which had been decimated during the war. The invited military officials restructured Peru's military organization and education system according to that used in France,

25 Pierre Merlou, French Minister in Peru to Stephen Pichon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, February 13, 1908. 190CPCOM, Correspondance politique et commerciale, Nouvelle série, Pérou, Volume 1, Politique Intérieure. Centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, France.

26 Quoted in "La France au Pérou," *La France Militaire*, 22, no. 5127, (30 mars 1901): 1.

27 "Con las muchedumbres libres aunque indisciplinadas de la Revolución, Francia marchó a la victoria; con los ejércitos de indios disciplinados y sin libertad, el Perú irá siempre a la derrota. Si del indio hicimos un siervo ¿qué patria defenderá? Como el siervo de la edad media, sólo combatirá por el señor feudal." Manuel González Prada, "Discurso en el politeama," *Pajinas libres* (Paris: Paul Dupont, 1894), 70.

28 Thurner, *History's Peru*, 198–199.

replacing the prior model based on the Spanish military. Inviting a foreign military team was furthermore seen as a means for putting a halt to the tradition of caudillismo which had divided and corrupted the military and made it unreliable in the eyes of the public.²⁹ One of the most important reforms, however, was not rebuilding Peru's standing army but creating an effective system for universal military service. Between 1898 and 1905, Peru passed a series of laws which attempted to implement a system of conscription which was lottery based and therefore, in theory, egalitarian. The French military advisors in Peru put these reforms to the test, but there were substantial fears that the country's longstanding racial divisions and mistrust of the government would be too great of an obstacle to overcome.

In 1908, Pierre Merlou, French minister in Peru, wrote to Stephen Pichon, minister of foreign affairs in Paris, to describe the great difficulty of creating a unified military corps given Peru's deep racial and class divides, frequently pointing his finger at the country's aristocratic elite. Merlou made no effort to hide his disdain for the urban criollos called to service, whom he described as lazy, incapable of work, and carrying themselves with an air of arrogance which they mistook for refinement. Merlou openly wondered whether these young aristocrats, habituated to their entitlements, would be willing to submit to the rule of law and march side by side with the Black and Indigenous recruits for whom they openly expressed disdain. The results were positive, albeit not perfect. Merlou stated in his report that a newly fostered sense of national pride under the Peruvian government had coerced these young men to push their longstanding prejudices aside to serve with the head of the military mission. In reality, preferential treatment according to race appears to have continued as a *de facto* practice. Merlou states in the same report that the French military leaders lured Lima's criollos into recruitment by giving them the option of joining a special battalion through which they could obtain a noncommissioned officer's certificate.

Nonetheless, when Captain Paul Clément ordered a test mobilization in Lima, the number civilians who reported in was greater than anticipated. Although race continued to be a determining factor in how Peru operated, for the leaders of the military mission, the common duty of all citizens to lay down their life for the nation was the foundation for building a functional republic. "The obligation of military service, which was dormant in the law, will no longer be an empty phrase," Merlou declared, going on to say that, "the example given by the sons of respectable families and university students, who may have treated their eagerness at the conscription tables as merely a

29 Talavera, *Las relaciones entre el Perú y Francia, 1827–2004*, 156.

display of elegant snobbery, has opened a breach in the citadel of privileges that nothing can close: no one can henceforth escape the egalitarian tax of blood.”³⁰

While Merlou conceded that the largely successful efforts to assemble a conscripted army did not amount to a social revolution, it was nonetheless at the very least, “the germ of civic solidarity, the revelation of national consciousness; it is the dawn of a new era which will guarantee internal peace and border security.”³¹ Insofar as the goal of the French military mission was to develop “national consciousness” and “civic consciousness” amongst Peruvian citizens, military reform had much wider implications for Peruvian society. To ask all citizens to participate in military conscription and potentially die for the country not only assumed an equality of individuals, but also required basic educational competencies, such as reading and writing, to participate.³² In this context, military reform was one of several projects to increase social unity undertaken in the Civilista government at the turn of the twentieth century through education and rights. Amongst these reforms included the development of a centralized public schooling system in 1905 which specifically targeted those who had little access to education before, above all rural Indigenous communities.³³

Building *Civilismo* through Popular Imagery

The use of art as a didactic tool played into the broader social aims of universal conscription. “The egalitarian tax of blood,” as Merlou stated, not only functioned to secure the nation against foreign aggression, but was seen as an important tool for building *civilismo*, or civic consciousness, within a society divided by race, class, and geography. To demonstrate the transcendent value of military service, the Civilistas began a campaign

30 “L’obligation du service militaire, qui sommeillait dans la loi, ne sera plus un vain mot: l’exemple donné par les fils de famille et les étudiants des universités, qui n’ont peut-être vu dans leur empressement autour des tables de conscription qu’une parade d’un élégant snobisme, a ouvert dans la citadelle des privilèges une brèche que rien ne pourra combler: personne ne saurait désormais se soustraire à l’impôt égalitaire du sang.” Vol II. Armée Marine. Pierre Merlou, French Minister in Peru to Stephen Pichon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, January 10, 1908, 46.

31 “C’est le germe de la solidarité civique, la révélation de la conscience nationale; c’est l’aurore d’une ère nouvelle qui garantira la paix intérieure et la sécurité de la frontière.” Pierre Merlou, French Minister in Peru to Stephen Pichon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, January 10, 1908, 47.

32 Eduardo Toche Medrano, *Guerra y Democracia: los militares peruanos y la construcción nacional* (Lima: Centro de Estudios y Promoción del Desarrollo, 2008), 62–64.

33 Jorge Alberto Ccahuana Córdova, “The Educational Reform of 1905: State, Indigenous and Racialized Politics in the Aristocratic Republic,” *Apuntes* 86, First Semester (2020): 10–12.



Fig. 3.3. Ramón Muñiz, *El repase* (The final blow), 1888. Oil on canvas. Museo Histórico Militar del Perú, Callao. (Picture in the public domain.)

of commemorating the War of the Pacific nearly twenty years after its closure. The government ordered presses to print nationalist literature concerning the war and began erecting national monuments glorifying fallen officers. Their strategy was to create a national mythology out of the war demonstrating that the noble sacrifice of its heroes transcended the war's outcome. Indigenous persons were, for one of the first times, included within the framework of the nation as popular literature sought to demonstrate to the criollo class that their valiant contribution to the war meant that they would play a valuable role in the future of Peru. The paternalistic attitude of the Aristocratic Republic towards Indigenous Peruvians, however, did not equate to the development of true egalitarianism. Peru was still very much divided by race where criollos held much of the power, a social condition illustrated in the construction of the pantheon of the nation's cult of heroes, which was populated almost uniquely by criollos, the commemoration of whom followed European visual devices, including *Gloria Victis*.

Heroic portrayals of defeat and the celebration of Peru's Indigenous populace began to appear in the 1880s.³⁴ In 1888, Ramón Muñiz painted *El repase* (The final blow), also known as *Un episodio de la Batalla de Huamachuco* (An episode from the Battle of Huamachuco) (fig. 3.3). The scene depicts one of the last instances of Peruvian resistance against the occupying Chilean forces in the town of Huamachuco on July 10, 1883. In the painting, an Indigenous woman heroically throwing herself in between the body of her fallen husband and an advancing Chilean soldier's bayonet.³⁵

34 Rodolfo Monteverde Sotil, "Memoria y duelo de los testigos de la Guerra del Pacífico y sus propuestas escultóricas para conmemorar a los héroes muertos. Perú 1883-1897," *Iberoamericana* 23, no. 84 (2023): 227-231.

35 Natalia Majluf and Luis Eduardo Wuffarden, "El Siglo XIX: Entre Tradición y Modernidad," *Arte Republicano* (Lima: Museo de Arte de Lima, 2015), 47-48.

The battlefield is littered with the dead and dying, including men, women, and children, representing the inhumanity of the Chilean soldiers. Peru's defeat, on the other hand, symbolized through the depiction of the heroic actions of the Indigenous woman, is represented as an act of martyrdom, the courageous self-sacrifice of a mixed-race and noble people faced with a victorious but ultimately dishonorable enemy.

Images like this found a newfound popularity under the Aristocratic Republic and were reproduced in patriotic literature. An example of such literature is the book *Nuestros Héroes: Episodios Nacionales de la Guerra del Pacífico* (Our heroes: National episodes from the War of the Pacific), where an illustration of *El repase* was used to in a story about the stoic bravery of Indigenous soldiers in the face of death. The story focuses on an Indigenous soldier named Lindo serving under a guerilla battalion under then-colonel Cáceres who is captured and sentenced to execution. Lindo defiantly shouts to the firing squad moments before his death, "Go ahead, kill me! Luckily there are still many more like me in Peru."³⁶ Such undoubtedly apocryphal stories served the purpose of creating an image of Indigenous persons as, rather than outsiders, proud patriots of the Peruvian nation; but the story of Lindo, along with other representations of Indigenous people presented during the period, also illustrate the racist Eurocentrism of the Aristocratic Republican national ideals. *Nuestros Héroes* consistently represents Indigenous Peruvians according to the common trope of the noble savage, as ignorant but obedient, able to spend days without any sustenance other than coca leaves, and as pure of heart, yet merciless when exacting revenge on his enemy. Although the author of the book admits that Indigenous Peruvians have been unfairly deprived from a place in society throughout colonial and postcolonial rule, through education, the author reminds the readers, they will play a useful role in the "nation's progress."³⁷

In practice, the progressivism of the Aristocratic Republic in its inclusion of Indigenous persons was another form of colonial subjugation. As Jorge Alberto Cahuana Córdova has demonstrated in his study of the Aristocratic Republic's educational reforms, Indigenous Peruvians were systematically given fewer years and less elevated forms of education based on a racialized presumption of their inferior intellectual aptitude to Europeans.³⁸

36 "¡Pronto, mátenme! ¡Felizmente aún quedan muchos como yo en el Perú!" Ernesto A. Rivas, *Nuestros Héroes: Episodios Nacionales de la Guerra del Pacífico*, vol. 2, 3rd edition, editor J. Boix Ferrer (Lima and Arequipa: Joya Literaria, 1903), 12.

37 "El progreso de la nación." Rivas, *Nuestros Héroes*, 6.

38 Córdova, "The Educational Reform of 1905c," 9.

Indigenous people were included to play a role in the “progress of the nation,” but that role was predetermined to be one of servitude to the criollo and mestizo bourgeoisie. The racist progressivism of *civilismo* is reflective of contemporaneous colonialist ideologies including that expressed in Rudyard Kipling’s “The White Man’s Burden” (1899), which supported US colonization of the Philippines under the pretext that it was the white race’s destiny to end famine, poverty, and sickness throughout the world via the civilizing force of education, but also necessarily through subjugation and violence.³⁹

Although Indigenous persons were intentionally included in the memory work of Aristocratic Republican cultural production, the Eurocentric hierarchism of the myth of Peru’s noble defeat during the War of the Pacific is equally visible in its iconography. The majority of Peru’s soldiers during the War of the Pacific came from its Quechua-speaking Indigenous communities, yet one rarely sees their image reflected in official commemoration.⁴⁰ Instead, one of the principal figures in postwar national mythology is Francisco Bolognesi, a Peruvian army colonel of Italian ancestry whose death, like Lindo’s, became a parable of patriotic self-sacrifice. Bolognesi died at the Battle of Arica on June 7, 1880. At this point in the war, Peru’s ally, Bolivia, had exited the war, leaving the Peruvian army to fend for itself. The Chilean army, knowing well that they greatly outnumbered Bolognesi’s forces, sent a messenger to the general asking him to surrender, to which Bolognesi purportedly replied, “I have sacred duties to fulfill, and I will fulfill them to the last bullet.”⁴¹ The story of Bolognesi’s sacrifice inspired images such as Juan Lepiani’s *El último cartucho* (The last bullet). Lepiani’s painting depicts the general in the final moments of the battle, after the Chilean forces had taken over the Peruvian army’s position atop the Morro de Arica. The general, mortally wounded, pulls out his officer’s revolver, firing into the crowd of surrounding Chilean forces, thus fulfilling in image his legendary promise to fight “until the last bullet.”

The history paintings of Lepiani and other artists of this period had a profound effect on shaping the collective memory of the Peruvian public and their understanding of the War of the Pacific. Through their repetition in popular history books, journals, and other forms of publicly available media

39 Rudyard Kipling, “The White Man’s Burden: The United States and the Philippine Islands,” *McClure’s Magazine* 12 (Feb. 1899).

40 Hunefeldt, *A Brief History of Peru*, 144.

41 “Tengo deberes sagrados que cumplir y los cumpliré hasta quemar el último cartucho.” López Mendoza, *La Epopeya del Morro de Arica, 7 de junio 1880* (Lima: Ministerio de Guerra, 1980), 84.



Fig. 3.4. Agustín Querol, *Monumento a Francisco Bolognesi* (Francisco Bolognesi Monument), 1905, bronze figure removed 1954, Lima. Postcard, undated. Author's collection.

such as sculpture, these images became part of the established iconography of the War of the Pacific and were fueled by the memory politics of the Aristocratic Republic.⁴² The image of Bolognesi as a national martyr, bravely fighting until the last bullet, continued to be represented in the Aristocratic Republic's official iconography of the War of the Pacific, including, most importantly, in the public monument to Bolognesi, erected in Lima in 1905 (fig. 3.4). The initiative to erect a monument to Bolognesi began in 1899, spearheaded by the *Asamblea Patriótica Bolognesi* (the Bolognesi Patriotic Assembly), the president of Peru, Eduardo López de Romaña, and the municipality of Lima. The Bolognesi monument was the first major monument erected in Lima since *el Monumento al Combate del 2 de Mayo* thirty-one years earlier.

Once again, the Peruvian organizers looked to Europe for the monument's creation. Exploring the non-European history of Peru through archeological research into Inca and other non-European Peruvian civilizations did

42 Nanda Leonardini, "Identidad, ideología e iconografía republicana en el Perú," *Arbor* 185, no. 740 (2009), 1263; Virgilio Freddy Cabanillas Delgadillo, "Arte y nación. Escultura pública en Lima," *Investigaciones sociales* 21, no. 38 (2017): 129.



Fig. 3.5. Agustín Querol, *Monumento a los Mártires de la Religión y la Patria* (Monument to the martyrs of religion and the homeland), 1906. Zaragoza, Spain. Photo: Léon Thévenin, "Augustin Quérol," *L'Art et les Artistes* (April–September 1906): 209.

in fact play a role in the Aristocratic Republic's nation-building project. In 1906, for example, Pardo inaugurated el Museo de Historia Nacional, the country's first national history museum, which included a section devoted to archeology.⁴³ Non-European civilization was therefore made visible to the public and played a role in the contemporary nation-building project. However, the Civilista government consistently expressed their desire to associate Peru with European rather than Indigenous history through commissioning European artists and architects to create monuments in the beaux-arts style. In the case of the monument to Bolognesi, the international competition was entirely European, led by a committee composed of representatives from Belgium, Spain, the United States, France, and Italy. The commission was granted to Spanish artist Agustín Querol. Like Lepiani's *El último cartucho*, Bolognesi is represented at the moment of being mortally wounded. Querol represents Bolognesi in the moment of death and martyrdom, as if he has been just struck by a bullet. In the midst of falling, the colonel's knees buckle. By his feet lies a broken sword, symbolizing the soldier's defeat. A revolver in his right hand illustrates the mythological narrative of Bolognesi as a noble hero, unafraid of death, who

43 Henry Tantaleán, *Peruvian Archaeology: A Critical History*, trans. Charles Stanish (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2014), 39–40.

fought until the very end. In his left hand, he clutches onto a flag, a symbol of his martyrdom for the nation.⁴⁴

Visually less apparent, however, is that Querol's monument also borrows from France's commemorative iconography relating to the loss of the Franco-Prussian War, namely by repurposing elements of Mercié's *Gloria Victis*. Although at first glance it appears as though Querol has erased the figure of winged Glory in the Bolognesi monument, Querol has instead positioned her behind Bolognesi, rising from below with a crown of laurels in her outstretched hand. Evidence that Querol had already been highly influenced by *Gloria Victis* is visible in his earlier *Monumento a los Bomberos* (The firefighters' monument) erected in 1897 in Havana, Cuba's Necrópolis de Colón (see fig. 0.6). As is typical of international adaptations of Mercié's sculpture during this era, the main composition—a winged female allegory supporting the body of the fallen hero—remains the same, but the costumes, accoutrements, and gestures of the figures are adapted to fit local cultural and narrative contexts. In Querol's monument, Mercié's fallen soldier is transformed into a fireman, identifiable through his uniform, and the winged female figure is transformed into an allegory of faith, blindfolded, and pointing upwards towards the heavens. Furthermore, given the funerary function of the monument, Querol's monument is carved out of white marble rather than cast from bronze. Seven years later, Querol readapted *Monumento a los Bomberos* for *Monumento a los Mártires de la Religión y de la Patria* (Monument to the martyrs of religion and the nation) at the Plaza de España in Zaragoza, Spain (fig. 3.5). The latter monument commemorates the siege of Zaragoza (1808–1809) by Napoleon's army during the Peninsular War (1807–1814).

From a contemporary perspective, there is a certain level of irony in Querol using a French sculptural archetype to commemorate the death of his fellow citizens by the Imperial French army. On the contrary, however, Querol's adaptation of *Gloria Victis* via the intermediary of his own earlier sculpture *Monumento a los Bomberos* merely demonstrates the fluidity of *Gloria Victis*'s symbolism in its viral and global transmission. In addition to changing the position of the fallen hero and removing the blindfold, once again, Querol overlays cultural and historical references to the original sculptural formula of *Gloria Victis*. The martyr is identifiable as an Aragonese man while the cross behind the sculptural group represents

44 Rodolfo Monteverde Sotil, "Política internacional de la posguerra del Pacífico, remodelación urbana y proyectos escultóricos de Lima: El monumento a Francisco Bolognesi y los Caídos en la Batalla de Arica (1905)," *Historia* 50, no. 2 (2017): 678.

the Cruz del Coso (the Cross of the Cuso), a fifteenth-century monument to the Christian martyrs persecuted under Emperor Diocletian that had been destroyed during the French bombardment of the city.⁴⁵ As Cabanillas notes, Querol's Bolognesi draws from his earlier sculptural depictions of martyrs in Havana and Zaragoza for his depiction of Bolognesi, particularly visible in the buckling legs of the principal figures in both the Zaragoza and the Bolognesi monuments.⁴⁶ The image of martyrdom presented in the Bolognesi monument therefore illustrates a clear yet mediated and likely unconscious viral transmission of iconographic tropes which stem from *Gloria Victis* as an international phenomenon.

The establishment of an iconography surrounding the War of the Pacific at the beginning of the Aristocratic Republic through popular literature and public monuments, all of which served to mythologize the war's events and canonize its heroes, was intended to psychologically reinforce the practice of *civilismo* which the Civilista government sought to establish through reforming Peru's institutions. The patriarchal attitude towards Peru's large Indigenous population is reflected in the nature of the government's social reforms, which simultaneously sought to include Indigenous Peruvians in society while also denying them the same advantages given to white and mixed-race Peruvians, as well as its iconography, which was based on European rather than Indigenous imagery. The iconography of large-scale commemorative projects such as the Bolognesi monument, which infused popular mythology surrounding the War of the Pacific within the visual form of contemporary European public sculpture—including, most notably, *Gloria Victis*—paved the way the Aristocratic Republic's most ambitious commemorative project, la Cripta de los Héroes.

La Cripta de los Héroes and Its Ritual Contexts

As a mausoleum, the origins of la Cripta de los Héroes and the commemoration of the War of the Pacific lie in civilian-led funerary practices during the war's final chapter, which consisted of gathering the remains of dead soldiers for burial. Given the lack of the Peruvian government's ability to effectively organize the collection of soldiers' bodies, beginning in 1882 civilians began to organize processions to the battlefields of San Juan and

45 Guillermo Fatás, ed., *Guía Histórico-Artística de Zaragoza* (Zaragoza: Ayuntamiento de Zaragoza, 2008), 359; *Guía de Zaragoza* (Zaragoza: Vincent Andrés, 1860), 230–231.

46 Cabanillas, "Arte y nación," 132.



Fig. 3.6. The archbishop of Lima blessing the caskets of Bolognesi and Grau at the foot of la Cripta de los Héroes. "Gloria Victis" *Variedades* (September 11, 1908): XV.

Miraflores to collect remains of the dead. What started as both a practical and metaphysical necessity—to clear the ground of human remains as well as to offer the soldier's souls their Christian burial rite—turned into an annual pilgrimage, both religious and patriotic, advertised in local newspapers. As these processions turned into an annual ritual, the government slowly began to assist, including through the establishment of the Miraflores Ossuary in 1891.

However, consistent state-organized commemorative practices did not begin until the tail end of the nineteenth century with the rise of the Civilista Party, who sought to harness these now-established collective memorial practices for their own national agenda. The Civilistas believed that the ritualized commemoration of fallen soldiers of the War of the Pacific could be utilized to assist their social and political goal of fostering a collective sense of Peruvian national identity. In particular, the Civilistas aimed to establish a cult of national heroes derived from the fallen soldiers of the War of the Pacific, whom they believed could serve as role models in their program of fostering civic ideals. The Civilista Party promoted their national cult through the publication of patriotic books, the creation of public monuments, and the organization of commemorative events, including repatriation pilgrimages. In 1901, pilgrimages to the battle sites and public ossuaries were organized by both the district councils and the National Defense League, many of whose members were either veterans or Civilistas. On December 3, 1906, the president of Peru, José Pardo, passed a law ordering the construction of a monument to honor the dead of the War of the Pacific. The commission appointed to manage the construction of la Cripta included a group of three Peruvian politicians—commission president Colonel Ernesto Zapata, treasurer Manuel G. Montero y Tirado, and secretary Carlos F. Basadre—in conjunction with French architect Émile Robert. The enactment of Christian funerary rites, which began as expressions of communal mourning, organized in part by necessity due to

the government's neglect to collect the bodies of fallen soldiers, had been appropriated by the Peruvian government and transformed into a ritual of civil religion whose principal focus was not to mourn the dead, but to pay homage to the nation for whom these martyrs supposedly died.⁴⁷

On the day of the inauguration of la Cripta, the Peruvian government organized a ritual processional that reflected those that had been organized by ordinary civilians since 1882, albeit with much greater nationalist pomp and ceremony. The main event of the ceremony was the transfer of the remains of Colonel Bolognesi and Admiral Grau to their new sarcophagi in the national pantheon of heroes, la Cripta de los Héroes. At three in the afternoon, President José Pardo arrived at the cemetery accompanied by representatives from the army and the navy, where they were received by the Peruvian members of the commission for la Cripta's construction. The national importance of the ceremony was underscored by the presence of the philharmonic orchestra, who played music by Peruvian composer José María Valle Riestra. The coffins of Bolognesi and Grau arrived, carried by students of the army and naval academies and placed at the front steps of the mausoleum. The image of Bolognesi's and Grau's remains carried by the youngest generation of Peru's soldiers reinforced the message that Bolognesi's and Grau's deaths should be seen as examples of patriotic sacrifice to be emulated by future generations. On the steps of la Cripta de los Héroes, directly beneath *Gloria Victis*, the coffins were blessed by the archbishop of Lima, who gave a speech according to the theme, "Religion has its martyrs, the Nation also has its own" (fig. 3.6).⁴⁸ The image of *Gloria Victis* above, as a civic reinterpretation of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, provided a visual illustration for the archbishop's pronouncement of the holy quality of national martyrdom.

Death and rebirth were a common theme during the ceremony. Grau and Bolognesi were presented as the fathers of the republic, the renewal of which was born via their sacrifice. The reinforcement of the sacred quality of military service, which the Aristocratic Republic sought to establish through the philosophy of *civilismo* and the creation of a cult surrounding the country's military defeat, is expressed through the mixture of Catholic ceremony and ancestral deification at the inauguration of la Cripta. The press

47 Alcides Daniel Sánchez de la Cruz, "Proceso Histórico y Memoria Colectiva Sobre la Guerra del Pacífico: La Cripta de los Héroes," *Museo Cementerio Presbítero Maestro* (Lima: Museo Cementerio Presbítero Maestro, 2017), 38–44.

48 The French Minister of Peru to Stephen Pichon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, September 15, 1908, 173–174.

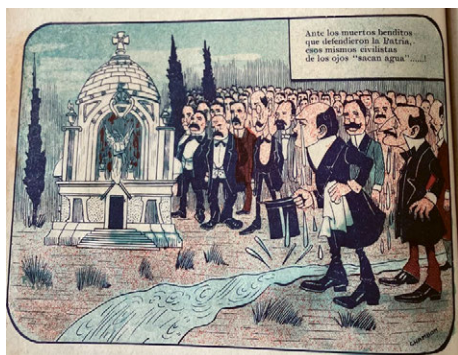


Fig. 3.7. Chambon, "Los Civilistas y los Héroes," *Fray K. Bezón* 10, no. 85 (1908): 4.

also played an important role in propagating the government's interpretation of the event as a sacred act, which disseminated the ceremony to the larger population through text and photo. One author in *Variedades*, for example, reframed Peru's defeat in a conciliatory light, as a symbol of the Peruvian patriot's faithful spirit, rooted in the temperament of their Inca ancestors:

Triumph and defeat are contingencies of war, as our poor Inca said with stoic resignation ... Loving one's country does not mean knowing how to kill, it is knowing how to die, and perhaps in the world the great vanquished are more glorious than the great victors. Peru has done a beautiful act of justice and gratitude by glorifying its losers in our last national war, because they justify and lend dignity to our history, because they are the true moralizers of our present and our future, because they, through their example, admirable love, civic virtue and courage are the strongest incentives for us to consider the nation as the noblest ideal of our efforts, because they are the symbol and expression of the most excellent virtues of our race.⁴⁹

Mirroring Pardo's speech quoted at the beginning of this chapter, the above quote illustrates how the commemoration of soldiers who died during the War of the Pacific was intended to serve as a reminder of the obligation of

49 "Triunfar ó ser vencido son accidentes usuales de la guerra como decía con estoica resignación nuestro pobre Inca ... Amar á la patria no es saber matar, es saber morir y quizá si en el mundo más glorificados son los grandes vencidos que los grandes vencedores. El Perú ha hecho una hermosa acción de justicia y gratitud glorificando á sus vencidos de nuestra última guerra nacional, porque ellos justifican y hacen grata nuestra historia, porque ellos son los verdaderos moralizadores de nuestro presente y de nuestro por venir, porque ellos con su ejemplo admirable de amor, de civismo y de valor son los más fuertes estímulos para que consideremos á la patria como el ideal más noble de nuestros esfuerzos, porque ellos son el símbolo y la expresión de las más excelsas virtudes de nuestra raza." "Gloria Victis," *Variedades* (September 11, 1908): II.

military service. What is unique about the article from *Variedades* is that it clearly articulates the tenets seen elsewhere in this book that established the cult of the Lost Cause as an international phenomenon at the turn of the century. The political outcomes of war—whether arms are taken up to secure civil rights, regain lost territories, or repulse foreign invasion—are treated as fleeting facts made trivial by the transcendent value of self-sacrifice for the nation. At the same time, the author puts forward the argument that the war's losers rather than its winners are more worthy of veneration, suggesting that their sacrifices have been made on principle rather than for the sake of obtaining a concrete outcome.

Similar to how the defeat of the Franco-Prussian War was treated in French memory, the author suggests that Peru is the moral victor of the War of the Pacific, despite being militarily defeated by Chile. It is this ethos that was commonly embodied in *Gloria Victis* as it was adopted by countries outside of its place of origin in France, and whose transmission was made possible both through adaptations by contemporary artists, including Querol, as well as through the sculpture's mass reproduction, including through both Barbedienne's factories and Italy's industrial carving workshops. The presence of the archbishop at the inauguration ceremony, blessing coffins of Grau and Bolognesi and professing the holiness of the act of self-sacrifice for the nation, reinforced the marble reproduction of *Gloria Victis* on la Cripta de los Héroes as a symbol of Peru's civil religion.

Not everyone in Peru was a believer in the Civilistas's political program or their dramatic display at the inauguration of la Cripta de los Héroes. After the inauguration of la Cripta de los Héroes, *Fray K. Bezón*, a satirical publication promoting free thought that was consumed by Peru's literate and semi-literate criollos,⁵⁰ published a cartoon accusing the Civilista rulers of using the event for self-serving purposes. The first register depicts a scene from the War of the Pacific, with Peruvian troops charging directly into gunfire and explosions while the Civilistas retreat under the pretext of "fetching water." The second register (fig. 3.7) depicts the inauguration of la Cripta in 1908, with the mausoleum and *Gloria Victis* clearly visible in the background, where the still-living Civilista veterans cry—their eyes watering (*sacan agua*)—the fallen comrades they had abandoned during the war.

50 Marcel Velásquez Castro, "Las encrucijadas de la modernidad criollo-popular: la revista limeña 'Fray K-Bezón' (1907–1910)," *Reflexiones marginales* 51 (June 1, 2019), <https://revista.reflexionesmarginales.com/ilas-encrucijadas-de-la-modernidad-criollo-popular-la-revista-limena-fray-k-bezon-1907-1910>.

The cartoon is clearly meant to mock wartime president Mariano Ignacio Prado, who had fled the country during Chile's advance under the pretext of seeking aid from Europe, but it is equally a sweeping critique of the Civilistas as a group. This is further illustrated by a poetic critique of the Civilistas in the same magazine issue: "Seeing at the gates / the invader and the battlefield / you deserted in the hundreds / or you took the road from France to England, / carrying Peruvian gold / in your overflowing coffers."⁵¹ The hypocrisy of the criollo elite, who profited from the sale of guano, who led the country into war and debt, and who had largely been spared from battle due to their wealth and family connections, mourning the memory of the largely working-class and Indigenous fallen soldiers was evident to many in Peru's society. Clearly, *la Cripta de los Héroes's* construction was a political maneuver, albeit one which was performed not only for consolidating national power but generating international connections as well. The Civilista Party's own idealization of French culture, and above all their reliance on French labor for the reform of their military and for the construction of monuments, however, created a system of neocolonial dependency which threatened the core of the nation-building project they were undertaking.

A "New Formula of Outward Expansion": The French Military Mission as Imperialism

While the exact motivation behind the Peruvian government's decision to invite a French military mission to Peru continues to be a source of conjecture, French political interests in supplying Peru with military training are clear. In an internal note discussing Peru's request, the French War Ministry noted the strong German military presence in South America, and especially in Chile, where the chief of staff of the army was Prussian. Over time, it was believed, France would lose its regional influence in Latin America, and worse yet, to the benefit of the German Empire.⁵² Along with asserting military power in Latin America, creating a system of foreign dependency was also one of the goals of the French military mission.

51 "Teniendo á las puertas / al invasor y del campo / desertabais por centenas / ó marchabais en camino / de la Francia a Inglaterra, / llevando de oro peruano / vuestras arcas las completas," "Veritas, 'Los Civilistas,'" *Fray K. Bezón* 10, no. 85 (1908): 3.

52 Note pour le général, chef d'état-major général de l'Armée, December 7, 1895. 7N1730, Pérou, Attachés militaires (1918–1949). Service historique de la Défense, Vincennes, France.

The goal of subordinating Peru economically and culturally is clearly expressed in the military reports given by Félix d'André, captain of the infantry for the French military mission in Peru from 1900 to 1911. Consistently described by his superiors as a model officer of exceptional intelligence and indefatigable work ethic, d'André was highly praised by both the French and Peruvian governments for his accomplishments during the mission, which included not only organizing and leading riflery instruction for the Peruvian army, but also engaging in civilian military instruction, personally leading a four-week test mobilization of largely Indigenous civilians in the central highlands of Junín in 1906, and helping establish over 150 shooting societies across Peru.⁵³ Learning from the recent example of Boer commandos during the South African War (1899–1903), d'André believed that independent guerilla combatants armed with rifles, taking advantage of the country's mountainous landscape, would play a role in defending Peru in the event of war.⁵⁴

While bolstering Peru's defenses against military invasion, however, d'André was simultaneously preparing the country for other forms of domination. In his 1909 report summarizing the development of the French military mission to Peru, d'André states that the ultimate goal of the mission was to assert political and economic dominance over Peru while simultaneously hiding the mechanisms of control through the veil of cultural goodwill. In contrast to traditional colonial rule, his "new formula of outward expansion," as d'André remarks, made the goal of French expansion possible without the need of physically occupying land, while it furthermore had the benefit of hiding France's political agenda.⁵⁵ While other European countries would always be viewed by Latin American governments as self-interested foreign capitalists, "the Frenchman sometimes appears (and his mere presence in a training mission

53 Pierre Merlou, *Ministre de France au Pérou à Picquart, Ministre de la Guerre. Au sujet du Capitaine d'André*, October 15, 1907; *Détail des États de Services du Commandant d'André; Feuillet Individuel de Campagne, 1902–1913*, GR 11 YF 11079, *Dossiers Individuels: Marie Auguste Albert Félix d'André*. Service historique de la Défense, Vincennes, France.

54 Félix d'André, *Le Tir Pour Vaincre* (Paris and Nantes: Librairie Militaire Berger-Levrault, 1915); Pierre Merlou, *Ministre de France au Pérou à Picquart, Ministre de la Guerre. Au sujet du Capitaine d'André*, October 15, 1907. GR 11 YF 11079, *Dossiers Individuels: Marie Auguste Albert Félix d'André*. Service historique de la Défense, Vincennes, France.

55 "La nouvelle formule d'expansion au dehors," in "Les Institutions Militaires du Pérou. Notes complémentaires, par le Capitaine d'André, de la Mission Militaire du Pérou," October 18, 1909, 26–27. 7N1730, *Pérou, Attachés militaires (1918–1949)*. Service historique de la Défense, Vincennes, France.

is clear proof of this) as the disinterested champion of the great cause of Latin Civilization.”⁵⁶

The resonance of d'André's remarks with what Michael P. M. Finch has termed the Gallieni-Lyautey method reference to the philosophy of mixing military power with “peaceful” penetration by the colonial architects Joseph Gallieni and Hubert Lyautey (1854–1934) is not coincidental.⁵⁷ According to Bullick, many of the French officers who led the military mission to Peru had been directly influenced by Lyautey's school of thought. Just as Lyautey promoted the role of officers as civic leaders and educators who met the social needs of the occupied population in order to gain their subservience, d'André expressed the belief that these methods could be employed in purely nonviolent means of military contact.⁵⁸ The French military mission to Peru fulfilled the French colonial philosophy of fulfilling the material and social needs of the Indigenous population through the projects of military education reform as well as creating a de jure egalitarian system of civilian conscription without shedding a single drop of blood and without facing the inevitably violent response to military occupation. D'André's vision of informal occupation was a much slower process of penetration than Gallieni's and Lyautey's, but he believed it would reap the same political and economic benefits.

Within the wider political aims of the French military mission to Peru in mind, la Cripta de los Héroes can be interpreted as playing a role not only in the Europeanizing efforts of the Civilista Party, but also France's systematic approach to using culture and education as a means of creating political influence over the long term. The military mission, according to d'André, was only the first step in asserting French influence in Peru. Soon, other education missions would follow, reshaping public institutions from agricultural schools to the postal system, in the image of France. French chemists, doctors, and architects already had a notable presence in Peru, whose expertise would ensure the dominance of French industry, all while

56 “Le français apparaît, parfois (et sa seule présence dans une mission d'instruction en est bien une preuve éclatante), comme le champion désintéressé de la grande cause de la Civilisation latine,” D'André, “Les Institutions Militaires du Pérou,” 28.

57 Michael P. M. Finch, *A Progressive Occupation: The Gallieni-Lyautey Method and Colonial Pacification in Tonkin and Madagascar, 1885–1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 23, 55, 61.

58 Lucie Bullick, “Pouvoir militaire et société au Pérou aux XIX^e et XX^e siècles” (PhD dissertation, Paris, 1991), chapter 2, paragraphs 61–64; Moshe Gershovich, “Collaboration and ‘Pacification’: French Conquest, Moroccan Combatants, and the Transformation of the Middle Atlas,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 24, no. 1 (2004): 139.

maintaining the façade of disinterested cultural exchange.⁵⁹ Likewise, in Peru, promoting involvement in the construction of la Cripta de los Héroes could not only promote the interest of French artists and engineers, but also in the long run shape Peruvian national memory in a manner sympathetic to France. Merlou wrote to Stephen Pichon after the inauguration to exalt Robert's talent and the architect's powerful use of *Gloria Victis* to express the immortality of the fallen Peruvian heroes.⁶⁰

Hiding the mechanisms of control, however, was important for the French system of imperialism to succeed. As illustrated by Peru's experience with the French bank la Société Générale, the country's leaders were intimately aware of the pitfalls of foreign economic predation. The French government was well aware of this history and therefore keen to not let greed hamper its growing influence in Peru. A small crisis within the French military mission occurred when the Peruvian government, having been unable to receive adequate loans from French banks for the purchasing of arms, instead went to the German banks, who supplied them with money to purchase German weapons. While the French Ministry of War considered the move adequate grounds for ending their training mission in Peru, the Ministry of Foreign affairs urged them not to break ties with Peru, reminding them that the ultimate goal of the military mission was not in fact military, but political.⁶¹

Stated otherwise, the military mission was not about exerting short-term hard power but establishing long-term soft power. Once Peru's infrastructure was succinctly shaped according to French ideals, d'André theorized, the state would become dependent on France. With Machiavellian clarity, d'André remarks that the young country's attempts to wrest itself from colonial power were futile, continuing: "It is in vain that a misguided indigenous nationalism will sometimes seek to emancipate small nationalities from foreign tutelage. From the moment the native is incapable, by his own means, of manufacturing the advanced industrial equipment he requires in an age of relentless mechanization, he will be compelled, one day or another, whether he likes it or not, to declare himself once again the obliged tributary of the great industrial powers, which will hasten to supply not only the weapon, the product of the workshop, but also the competent instructor and the

59 D'André, "Les Institutions Militaires du Pérou," 26.

60 Pierre Merlou, French Minister in Peru to Stephen Pichon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, September 15, 1908, 173.

61 Léon Bourgeois, Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Minister of War, April 18, 1906, 2. 7N1730, Pérou, Attachés militaires (1918–1949). Service historique de la Défense, Vincennes, France.

knowledge of how to use it.”⁶² Not only would the French military mission to Peru lead to dependence on French arms, according to d'André, but in an era of increasingly rapid technological development, a reliance on French training as well. In the case of providing military hardware and training, as d'André notes, there was little risk of demand running out, since a country's national safety relies upon the maintenance of its military.⁶³ Once a country monopolizes the means of producing a product which another country needs, a disparity of power will always exist between the two, with the producing country asserting its control over the consumer. Even d'André's own personal efforts in advancing Peru's military readiness against foreign invasion played a small role in furthering French dominance. In a 1910 letter addressed to Pichon by Jean Guillemin, plenipotentiary minister of France in Peru, the minister praised d'André's work in organizing shooting societies across Peru, remarking proudly that he had seen the French flag “flying next to the national flag on the shooting ranges established everywhere, even in the most obscure and remote localities.”⁶⁴

Conclusion

The social and political legacies of the Franco-Prussian War and the War of the Pacific—conflicts that had little to do with one another in their origins or outcomes—had brought Peru and France together via the increasingly complex entanglements of globalized politics at the turn of the century. Peru had already suffered immense disaster through its overreliance on French economic support during the guano age. Both the promise of guano as a nearly endless supply of money and the possibility of securing mutual, friendly relations with Europe proved illusory, and the debt accrued from

62 “C'est en vain qu'un nationalisme indigène, mal compris, voudra, parfois, émanciper les petites nationalités de la tutelle étrangère. Du moment que l'autochtone est incapable, par ses propres moyens, de fabriquer l'outillage perfectionné dont il a besoin, à une époque de mécanique à outrance, force lui sera, un jour ou l'autre, bon gré mal gré, de se déclarer, une fois de plus, le tributaire obligé des grands pays producteurs, lesquels s'empresseront de fournir, non seulement l'arme, le produit de l'atelier, mais encore, avec l'instructeur compétent, la manière de s'en servir.” D'André, “Les Institutions Militaires du Pérou,” 27.

63 D'André, “Les Institutions Militaires du Pérou,” 28.

64 “Flotter à côté du pavillon national sur les champs de tir établis partout jusque dans les localités les plus obscures et les plus reculées.” Jean Guillemin, Ministre plénipotentiaire de la République Française à Lima à Stephen Pichon, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères. Au sujet du Capitaine d'André. 12 Août 1910. GR 11 YF 11079, Dossiers Individuels: Marie Auguste Albert Félix d'André. Service historique de la Défense, Vincennes, France.

Peru's dealings with European lenders continued to have major consequences for the nation. As a result of Peru's debt to France, for example, the port of Callao continued to be administered by the French bank Société Générale until the Second World War.⁶⁵ France's relationship with Peru, as illustrated by the French military mission, was driven by imperialist interests. Nonetheless, the risky political maneuver of the Peruvian government's reliance on France did bring some political gains. After World War I, the victorious European allies helped push Chile to reenter into negotiations with Peru concerning the Tacna and Arica plebiscites promised in the 1883 treaty, leading to repatriation of both territories to Peru after the signing of the 1929 Treaty of Lima. Five years earlier, a sculpture commemorating Admiral Du Petit Thouars for his role in helping save Lima from destruction during the War of the Pacific was erected in the city. The monument, created by Peruvian sculptor Artemio Ocaña, depicts the admiral receiving flowers from Peru, personified as a woman with European features but dressed in the clothes of an Incan noble.⁶⁶

As with Denmark and the loss of Schleswig and Holstein to Prussia in 1864, studied in the previous chapter, Peruvian identification with French art and culture in the wake of defeat was in large part a political strategy. While on the surface, the histories of Denmark and Peru seem to have little in common, the histories of both countries erecting copies of *Gloria Victis*—1906 for Denmark and 1908 for Lima—reveal largely invisible connections between them. Like for Denmark, the experience of military defeat marked a strong decline in regional political and military power for Peru. Both countries lost substantial land due to territorial disputes with a more powerful neighbor, becoming small state actors in an era of big state imperialist politics, when Europe and North America's central powers were battling for global supremacy. As small, politically weak states, both countries had to maintain policies of neutrality within international politics, but their cultural relations—demonstrated through the example of *Gloria Victis*—reveal subtle political gestures that had important consequences. While military treaties and victories tell us of the tangible events of world politics, the transmission of cultural symbols across borders have the power to reveal the ephemeral realities that remain hidden beneath official historical discourse—the forgotten histories of failures, defeats, and unwritten

65 Pascal Riviale, *Una historia de la presencia francesa en el Perú, del Siglo de las Luces a los Años Locos* (Lima: Institut Français d'Études Andines, 2008), page 141, footnote 58.

66 Alfonso Castrillón-Vizcarra, *Escultura en el Perú* (Lima: Banco de Crédito del Perú, 1991), 335.

agreements that entangled groups of people in the past, including Peru, Denmark, and France.

What distinguishes the history of Peru's *Gloria Victis*, specifically in contrast with the copies held in France and Denmark, is the way it is tied to the racist reforms of the Aristocratic Republic. The Civilistas had promised a new nation defined by progress and equality, especially regarding its Indigenous communities, in the wake of defeat. Inclusion, however, equaled another form of servitude and class division, repeating many of the prior forms of discrimination seen in Peru's history. White supremacy came with a new face, replacing the power of the church with the power of capitalism. Both institutions had shackled Peru's communities under the promise of bringing them salvation. *Gloria Victis* played an essential role in mythologizing the Aristocratic Republic's cult of heroes from the War of the Pacific. Rising above the entrance of la Cripta de los Héroes, the Civilista Party's largest and most important monument, *Gloria Victis* embodies the sacred quality of the nation. Civil religion, like the broader components of the Aristocratic Republic's agenda, engenders unity, but ultimately for the sake of controlling the group, masking the processes of manipulation through the sacralization of violence.

4. The South and the US Civil War (1861–1865)

Abstract: Chapter 4 examines the adaptation of *Gloria Victis* imagery in the post-Civil War (1861–1865) United States, where Confederate monuments reimagined military defeat as moral victory. Focusing on the work of Alsatian-American sculptor Frederick Ruckstuhl, this chapter argues that the Lost Cause movement aligned itself with transnational commemorative strategies developed in post-1871 France. Southern elites used public sculpture to legitimize a new racial and political order, transforming defeat into redemption while reinforcing white supremacy under Jim Crow. By tracing the circulation and transformation of *Gloria Victis* motifs across the US South, the chapter demonstrates that Confederate commemoration drew not only on regional memory but also on international visual and ideological frameworks of nationalist defeat.

Keywords: Confederate States of America, Lost Cause, monuments, Jim Crow, France

The Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument, originally known by the title *Gloria Victis*, was created by American sculptor and former student of Mercié, Frederick Willington Ruckstuhl (1853–1942; later anglicized to Ruckstull) (fig. 4.1). Ruckstuhl's monument was unveiled on Mount Royal Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland, on May 2, 1903, where it stood on a pedestal bearing the Latin inscriptions “*Gloria Victis*” and “*Deo Vindice*,” the official motto of the Confederacy, meaning “Under God, our Vindicator.” The monument had been commissioned by the Maryland Chapter of the then-fledgling group, the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC). Founded as a women's charity group less than a decade earlier for supporting the ageing veteran populace and maintaining Confederate gravesites, the UDC gained ascendancy as the country's most prolific social force in shaping postbellum US public memory

Parkinson, Nicholas. *Commemorating Defeat: Viral Monuments and the International Cult of the Lost Cause, 1864–1914*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press/Central European University Press, 2026.

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Fig. 4.1. Frederick Wellington Ruckstuhl, Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument, originally titled *Gloria Victis*, 1903 (removed 2017). Bronze, 158 inches (not including the plinth). Baltimore, Maryland, USA. From: *Gloria Victis, 1861–1865. Unveiling of Confederate Monument, May 2, 1903* (Baltimore: Guggenheimer, Weil, & Co, 1903), 4. From the collection of the Maryland Center for History and Culture, Baltimore, Maryland, USA.

of the Civil War (1861–1865).¹ The UDC were key to promoting the narrative of the Lost Cause, which described the failed secession of the Confederate States of America as not a rebellion, but a noble and justified act of defending the Constitution. They spread their message to the public in both the South and the North through school books, popular magazines, and charity work, as well as through erecting public monuments. Most of these monuments, which the Southern Poverty Law Center estimates to be more than 700 in total, were erected in the first two decades of the twentieth century, fifty years after the Civil War started.² Through sculptures such as the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument, the UDC not only promoted the idea that Confederate veterans were just as worthy of public commemoration as Union veterans, but sought to create lasting public symbols that would preserve the Lost Cause ideology for generations to come.

The Maryland chapter of the UDC had been planning to construct a monument commemorating Confederate veterans both living and dead from their

¹ Karen L. Cox, *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2003).

² Southern Poverty Law Center. *Whose Heritage? Public Symbols of the Confederacy*, 3rd edition. (2022), <https://www.splcenter.org/resources/reports/whose-heritage-public-symbols-confederacy-third-edition/>.

state since 1898. Their statement of intent to erect the monument highlights common themes seen in Confederate Lost Cause ideology. Not only is the argument put forward that the defeated are just as honorable as the victors, and perhaps even more dear given their greater sacrifices—a central theme of all Lost Cause myths—but a particular emphasis is placed on maternal love and Christian purity. The Christian figure of Jesus Christ as a man born of God without the burden of original sin, who sacrifices his life in order to absolve the sins of humanity, is frequently evoked in descriptions of Confederate soldiers. The Maryland UDC's statement described the Confederate soldiers they intended to commemorate in precisely these terms, as "the purest, noblest, highest type of Christian warrior that the world has ever produced."³

The identification of the dying figure in Ruckstuhl's Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument as a "Christian warrior" adheres to the *Gloria Victis* archetype's visual reliance on the iconography of Christ's crucifixion and Mary's lamentation but also places it in similar framework of evoking blood sacrifice in line with Mercié's original sculpture. Similar to how Castagnary evoked the concept of "holy blood" when interpreting Mercié's *Gloria Victis* as a call to avenge France, so too did the idea of religious bloodshed have a strong influence in the development of the Confederate Lost Cause.⁴ Charles Reagan Wilson has noted that interpretations from white Southern ministers, who had a strong social prominence in developing the civil religion of the postwar South, played a strong role in shaping the Christian overtones of the Confederate cult of the Lost Cause. Wilson notes in particular the interpretation of Confederate defeat as a "baptism of blood," a common phrase used to place the memory of death in parallel with Christ's death and atonement of humanity.⁵ Within this context, therefore, Ruckstuhl's variation of *Gloria Victis*, seen in the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument, could be easily adapted to a Christian-centric postwar Confederate commemorative landscape.

While I have argued that allusions to Christian narrative are implicit in all examples of *Gloria Victis*, even in societies where strong proponents of secularism existed such as France's Third Republic, a rather unique aspect of *Gloria Victis*'s adoption within the US South is how post-Confederate ideals

3 Baltimore Chapter 8, "Statement of Intent to Build a Monument to the Soldiers and Sailors from Maryland," *Lady Louise, Founder of the Maryland Division, United Daughters of the Confederacy*, edited by Carolyn S. Billups, 2nd ed. (Camp Hill: AlphaGraphics, 2000), 39.

4 Jules-Antoine Castagnary, "Salon de 1874," in *Salons*, vol. 2, 1872–1879 (Paris: Charpentier, 1892), 129.

5 Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865–1920* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 3–4.

concerning women's role in society were transplanted onto it. Not only did the Maryland UDC intend their monument to commemorate the Christian soldiers who devoted themselves to the Confederate cause, but likewise the women who devoted themselves to these soldiers, and therefore stand as a "testimony of their reverence and their love."⁶ The strong role that women's societies such as the UDC played in developing the Confederate cult of the Lost Cause, especially through sculptural commemoration, therefore transformed the meaning given to *Gloria Victis*. While in other examples of *Gloria Victis* the female figure is given a broad allegorical role, broadly identified as Glory, Victory, or the Nation, in white Southern interpretations of Ruckstuhl's rendition, the female figure is given greater attention. Frequently interpreted in the South not in the classical tradition of pagan allegory, but in the Christian symbolism of a winged angel, she was seen as a personification of the ideal Confederate mother, wife, and daughter, who not only devotes herself to the Confederate man, but assumes the responsibility of immortalizing the Lost Cause through marble and bronze.

Ruckstuhl was a prominent US sculptor and founding member of the National Sculpture Society, known for leading the construction of the temporary Dewey Arch (1899–1900) in New York City to celebrate US victory in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War.⁷ Born in Alsace and raised in the United States, Ruckstuhl returned to France in 1885 to train as a sculptor at the Académie Julian in Paris. There, he trained with several notable artists, including Théodore Tholenaar, Jean Dampt, and Mercié, whom he frequently cited as his primary teacher in Salon exhibition catalogues.⁸ Ruckstuhl was deeply influenced by the latter artist's oeuvre, as is evident in both the name and the composition of the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument, more commonly known at the time of its inauguration as *Gloria Victis*. Ruckstuhl's sculptural group not only borrows from the name of Mercié's *Gloria Victis*, but its iconographic schema as well. Like Mercié's sculpture, Ruckstuhl's version depicts a winged allegorical female figure clutching the body of a fallen soldier. Ruckstuhl, however, makes several important adaptations to Mercié's original schema to cater it to US audiences. Ruckstuhl's sculpture incorporates greater realism and a simplified iconography, replacing Mercié's heroic nude with a common

6 Baltimore Chapter 8, "Statement of Intent to Build a Monument to the Soldiers and Sailors from Maryland," 39.

7 "Work on the Dewey Arch," *New York Times*, August 13, 1899, 4.

8 Frederick W. Ruckstuhl, *Great Works of Art and What Makes Them Great* (Garden City: Garden City Publishing Company, 1925), 522.

Confederate soldier. One contemporary critic identified the figure as a farm boy, an embodiment of the prewar South's agrarian society. His lack of a regular uniform expresses both his simple origins as well as his status as a civilian volunteer, while the tears and patches in his clothes tell "the tale of hardship in a campaign that ends in defeat."⁹ Ruckstuhl's monument further trades Mercié's broken sword for the Confederate battle flag (and in the artist's original design, a broken rifle), and moves the laurel crown from the hero's feet into the raised hand of the female allegory, clearly announcing his status as the victor despite his bodily defeat. The same critic continues, "It is a monument to the loser in a struggle, but to one who fought to the last. The appeal to the universal sentiment of pity for those who bravely contend and bravely fall goes out just as effectively to men who believe the South was wrong as to men who still hold that she was right."¹⁰

Allegorical portrayals of death and defeat initially had little place in the Lost Cause iconography, which tended to represent heroic soldiers at rest or ready to fight following the visual style of sculptural realism. Like in France, where sculptures evoking the consolation of defeat including Mercié's *Gloria Victis* travelled widely in Third Republican culture via the introduction of affordable bronze reductions, industrial foundries and carving companies shaped local tastes and tendencies in the United States by mass-producing monuments which could readily be bought through catalogues and newspaper advertisements. The result was the ever-present figure of the soldier at rest in both the North and the South, standing attentively with the butt of his rifle pressed against the ground.¹¹ Thomas J. Brown argues in his book *Civil War Monuments and the Militarization of America* that Ruckstuhl had to adapt Mercié's *Gloria Victis* to the ideological norm of Confederate triumphalism. Despite the fact that the Civil War led to the total destruction of the Confederacy as an independent state, the political realities of post-Reconstruction South meant that power remained in the hands of ex-Confederates and their sympathizers. By the 1870s, most ex-Confederate politicians and military leaders—like General Wade Hampton III, whose image Ruckstuhl reproduced in monumental form at least twice, including for South Carolina and for Washington, DC—were allowed to hold political office. Simultaneously, even though slavery had been abolished, white rule became the norm in most Southern states as Black elected officials nearly disappeared from Southern

9 Charles de Kay, "The Spirit of the Confederacy," *The Outlook* 71, no. 10 (July 5, 1902): 645.

10 De Kay, "The Spirit of the Confederacy," 645.

11 Sarah Beetham, "From Spray Cans to Minivans: Contesting the Legacy of Confederate Soldier Monuments in the Era of 'Black Lives Matter,'" *Public Art Dialogue* 6, no. 1 (2016): 13.

legislatures and local governments via threats of violence and the passage of voter disenfranchisement laws. Therefore, as Brown demonstrates, the “transcendence of defeat” inherent in Mercié’s *Gloria Victis* is intensified in Ruckstuhl’s sculpture, illustrated by the dead soldier’s upright stance and the triumphant display of a laurel crown above his head.¹²

Even with Ruckstuhl’s adaptations to white Southern commemorative conventions, however, the outright visual display of death and defeat embodied in the *Gloria Victis* archetype was not common within the Confederate memorial landscape. Ruckstuhl’s sculpture was rejected at a competition in Springfield, Missouri, for its representation of a dead soldier. Likewise, Mercié’s original design for the General Robert E. Lee Monument in Richmond, which featured the general surrounded by dying and wounded soldiers, was rejected by the jury, who required the artist to submit a more traditional equestrian portrait. Despite its unconventionality, the *Gloria Victis* motif nonetheless gained a popular following in the South, making its own mark on the cult of the Lost Cause. Ruckstuhl’s sculpture was reproduced in several formats, including once again as a bronze Confederate monument in Salisbury, North Carolina, as a smaller granite funerary sculpture decorating a Confederate grave in Portsmouth, Virginia, and as a stained glass window in the American Civil War Museum.

The reason that *Gloria Victis* gained a popular following in the South is in large part due to the influence of the UDC and the centrality of Christianity to the Lost Cause mythology. The iconographic reference to Christ’s death and resurrection inherent in the *Gloria Victis* visual formula meant that white Southern Christian audiences could easily interpret the sculpture and identify it with the Lost Cause tradition of interpreting defeat as a “baptism of blood.” At the same time, the UDC, undoubtedly the most influential group in financing and erecting Confederate monuments, identified their own agenda of promoting white female guardianship of Southern culture through Ruckstuhl’s beaux-arts rendering of a maternal yet powerful winged woman who embraces and upholds the Confederate soldier.

Beyond these ideological and iconographic affinities, however, the viral creep of *Gloria Victis* into US popular culture can also be seen as having some level of influence. By the 1880s, Barbedienne reductions had already made their way into the US and the phrase “*Gloria Victis*” began to appear in the titles of literature. Mass media and the industrialization of sculptural production brought the symbol into the folds of globalizing culture. As in other countries,

12 Thomas J. Brown, *Civil War Monuments and the Militarization of America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 208.

popular Barbedienne reductions of *Gloria Victis* could be found in the homes of the US bourgeois elite, as that of Irish American businessman Robert Campbell in St. Louis, Missouri (see fig. 0.5), as well as in major exhibitions, such as the Chicago World's Fair (see fig. 1.7). During the 1890s, there is evidence of *Gloria Victis*'s adoption within the visual rhetoric of Lost Cause commemoration as the phrase began to appear as an inscription on monuments across the South, including in Missouri, North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Whether these examples of imitation were made with conscious reference to Mercié's original monument or whether they were the product of an unconscious contagion, it is very likely that the entrance of *Gloria Victis* into the Lost Cause's mnemonic landscape helped prepare the acceptance and spread of Ruckstuhl's own sculptural adaptation of the motif.

As in previous chapters, I argue that *Gloria Victis* functioned in the context of civil religion, creating a mythology out of defeat to strengthen national sentiments and allegiances. What makes the case study of the Confederate Lost Cause different, however, is that the Confederate States of America no longer existed as an independent state in the wake of the US Civil War. Nonetheless the postwar South continued to operate with a degree of independence from the North, creating a culture and even legal framework of racial segregation which separated the Southern states from the rest of the country. Therefore, establishing a civil religion was still important for the white Southern social order, although no national government existed. The rites and rituals of white Southern collective identity were largely managed by private societies such as the UDC. The central role of women in shaping Southern civil religion, especially through the construction of collective memory, is illustrated in the unique emphasis placed on the female allegorical figure in interpretations of the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument.

I furthermore suggest that the appropriation of European symbols and the commissioning of artists who had trained in Europe within Confederate commemoration aimed to legitimize white Southern memory by attempting to place the Confederacy's failed attempt at independence in parallel with the ongoing European wars of national self-determination. As Niels Eichhorn argues, by comparing Confederate secession to past European revolutions such as in France and Greece, or to ongoing independence movements such as those in Ireland and Poland, pro-Confederate sympathizers attempted to bring philosophical validity to Confederate history both in the eyes of the members of white Southern society as well as in those of outsiders.¹³

13 Niels Eichhorn, *Liberty and Slavery* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2019), chapter 4, accessed May 8, 2024, <https://www.perlego.com/book/1097613>.

Both Ruckstuhl's training in Paris and the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument distinctly beaux-arts visual language added further legitimacy to the monument and its message.

Nationalism and Internationalism in the Confederate Cult of the Lost Cause

On December 20, 1860, nearly half a year before the outbreak of the Civil War, South Carolina became the first state to announce its plan to break away from the United States. The South Carolina Ordinance of Secession contains key rhetorical claims which later became core components of Lost Cause historical revisionism, focusing on outlining a legal rationale for the state's right to secede from the rest of the country, citing and issuing interpretations of several documents which lay at the core of the United States' formation, including the 1776 Declaration of Independence, the 1883 Articles of Confederation, and the 1783 Treaty of Paris. In the ordinance's opening, its authors declare: "And now the State of South Carolina having resumed her separate and equal place among nations, deems it due to herself, to the remaining United States of America, and to the nations of the world, that she should declare the immediate causes which have led to this act."¹⁴ While the Ordinance of Secession is squarely focused on United States history, this quote clearly anticipates its own international importance by implicitly declaring South Carolina to be a new nation amongst those of the world. Less than a month later, Florida issued a similar ordinance which reads, "the State of Florida is hereby declared a sovereign and independent nation."¹⁵

While the question of whether Confederate nationalism was a motivating factor in causing the Civil War has been debated by numerous scholars, it is clear that the language of nationalism was an important rhetorical tool used by the Confederate states and their sympathizers both at the start of and in the long aftermath of the war. Along with Brazil, which banned slavery in 1888, the US South was one of the last places in the West to legally permit slavery. The racism of white Southern plantation society, which was increasingly at odds with the modern world, helped foster the creation of a what Rollin G. Osterweis has described as "a group consciousness suggestive

14 David F. Houston, *Ordinances of Secession and Other Documents, 1860–1861* (New York: A. Lovell and Company, 1896), 3.

15 Houston, *Ordinances of Secession and Other Documents, 1860–1861*, 9.

of nineteenth-century European nationalism.”¹⁶ White Southern nationalism, according to Osterweis, drew heavily from European nationalist revolts such as the French Revolution and the Greek War for Independence, as well as the romantic philosophies of writers like Jules Michelet, Walter Scott, and Johan Gottfried Herder.¹⁷ Proponents of Southern states’ autonomy looked to Europe, and above all France because of its mythical image as the birthplace of liberalism and as the wellspring of culture, with the aim of legitimizing the image of the Confederacy. During the Civil War, the famous song of the French Revolution and later national anthem, “La Marseillaise,” became a popular song within the Confederate army.¹⁸ The lyrics of the “Southern Marseillaise” were changed to reflect the white Southern self-image as defenders of liberty against Northern tyranny: “The South, tho’ deepest wrongs bewailing / Long yielded all to Union’s name / But INDEPENDENCE now we claim / And all their threats are unavailing.”¹⁹ By likening the Confederate rebels to the French volunteers who had fought to preserve the French Republic against pro-monarchist Prussian and Austrian invaders, the song’s historical reference thereby attempted to lend historical legitimacy to Confederate secession.

France was given an elevated status within US civic consciousness as both a historical bastion of republicanism as well the wellspring of European culture—a point that will be explained later this chapter—but it was not the only European nation Confederate apologists looked to to justify secession. The US Civil War (1861–1865) coincided with several important international conflicts concerning nationality and territorial sovereignty, including the Second Schleswig War (1864) between Prussia and Denmark, the overthrow of Mexican president Benito Juárez by France (1861), and the January Uprising (1863–1864) of Polish and Latvian nationalists against the Russian Empire. Furthermore, the European nationalist movements of the first half of the century, including the Greek War of Independence (1821–1829) and the revolutions of 1848, were still in recent memory, and therefore continued to play an active role in political philosophy. The legal question of the right to self-determination was frequently placed within the ideological parameters of national identity, and while certain Confederate documents deny the importance of ethnic feeling for the reason of secession, including the Georgia Ordinance of Secession, many

16 Rollin G. Osterweis, *Romanticism and Nationalism in the Old South* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1949), vii.

17 Osterweis, *Romanticism and Nationalism in the Old South*, 27, 136.

18 Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State Press, 1988), 11.

19 A. E. Blackmar, *The Southern Marseillaise* (New Orleans: A. E. Blackmar and Bro., 1861).

Confederates sought to utilize the attractive force of national romanticism in order to further their political agenda. Eichhorn cites the example of South Carolina Senator Robert Barnwell Rhett, who in an 1859 speech in his home state drew direct parallels between the contemporary national independence movements of Europe, including Italy, Poland, and Ireland, with the secessionist ambitions of the South:

Gentlemen, we have before us now, raging on the continent of Europe, a bloody contest for the independence of nationalities ... There is not a generous heart in all Christendom, which does not sympathize with the Italian, and wish him God's speed as he rushes to the battle for his native land. Let Italy be for Italy, is the voice of humanity, although potentates may again cut up the map of Europe with their swords? And was it not so with Scotland, when for ages she resisted an amalgamation with England? And was it not, is it not so, with Poland? Even now the heart of the Pole yearns for the tempestuous and capricious despotism of his nobles in olden times, rather than the steady and more advantageous rule of Russian domination. Are the people of Ireland, to this day, content with her identification with England? The people of England and Ireland, Russia and Poland, Austria and Italy, are not more distinct and antagonistic in their characters, pursuits, and institutions, their sympathies and views, than the people of our Northern and Southern States. A common struggle for independence, and a sense of weakness, threw them together under one government. Disagreement and contention have marked their union from its commencement, until at length all sympathy between the two great sections of the Union seems to be lost.²⁰

Opening with a reference to the current event of the Second Italian War of Independence (1859), Rhett utilizes public sympathy for the independence movements in Europe to help legitimize Southern secession, aligning the North with imperialist oppression and the South with the struggle for freedom and self-determination. The Italian unification movement was a popular cause within the United States whose support spanned North and South. The declaration of a united Kingdom of Italy in 1861 coincided with the start of the American Civil War, and partisans on both sides of the conflict made comparisons between their own cause and that of Italy.²¹ Comparison to the

20 Daniel Wallace, *The Political Life and Services of the Hon. R. Barnwell Rhett, of South Carolina* (1959), 42–43.

21 Daniele Fiorentino, "Re-building the nation-state: the American Civil War in a Transnational Perspective," *Hispania Nova* 13 (2015): 205–206.

contemporary Italian independence movement was not only a convenient rhetorical device for garnering support at home, but also abroad. Confederate Secretary of State Robert Toombs, for example, argued that the British government's recognition of the Kingdom of Italy should equally lead to the government's recognition of the Confederate States of America.²²

European reaction to the Civil War, however, was mixed, and frequently did not align with the Confederate self-image of a war of emancipation from Northern despotism. Although European immigrants actively involved in the nationalist politics of their home countries volunteered for both sides of the Civil War, many of the figureheads associated with liberal revolutionary movements in Europe saw slavery as incongruent with their own fight for emancipation and therefore supported the Union. For example, the Holsteiner Theodor Olshausen, who had actively participated in the Schleswig-Holstein independence movement in 1848, saw the South as an illiberal and oppressive oligarchy whose support of slavery stood in direct opposition to the ideals of freedom and liberty.²³ Another anti-slavery advocate, Giuseppe Garibaldi, who was one of the principal leaders of Italian unification, also supported the Union cause, and, given his famed military leadership, was even invited to join the Union army as an officer.²⁴

By contrast, and although the Confederacy was never formally recognized by any foreign states, it gained much of its support from—excluding England—Europe's conservative and non-democratic powers, including the French Second Empire, the Vatican, Austria, and Spain. Although France and several other European nations remained neutral during the Civil War, the declaration of neutrality was beneficial to the Confederacy, as it granted the rebels official recognition as belligerents in war. As recognized belligerents, the Confederacy could conduct trade, including for arms, with governments that had taken a position of neutrality, and sail in international waters. The declaration of neutrality taken by France and other European nations thus angered the US federal government, which did not recognize the Confederacy's right to wage war.²⁵

Privately, however, Napoleon III favored the Confederacy. Napoleon III, who famously invented the idea of a so-called Latin America as an oppositional category to the Anglo-American United States, was hostile to the prospect

22 Robert E. May, ed., *The Union, the Confederacy, and the Atlantic Rim*, revised edition (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2013), 25.

23 Niels Eichhorn, *Liberty and Slavery* (Louisiana State University Press, 2019).

24 Fiorentino, "Re-Building the Nation-State," 202, 211.

25 Stève Sainlaude and Jessica Edwards, *France and the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2019).

of US expansion in the wake of the Mexican-American War (1846–1848). The emperor therefore saw the Civil War as a means of weakening the United States and expanding French interests in the Americas. In 1861, for example, France overthrew Mexican president Benito Juárez and installed a monarchy under Austrian archduke Maximilian I, who ruled as emperor until his overthrow and execution by Mexican Republicans in 1867. While each of these wars had distinct motivating factors, their contemporaneous occurrence led to the entanglement of their unfolding actions. The invasion of Mexico was predicated on the collection of national debt and led by France, England, and Spain. While Spain and England quickly withdrew from the conflict, however, Napoleon III's army continued in its invasion with the hope of imposing imperial influence by ousting Juárez, who was of Indigenous descent, and implementing a white, European ruler at the head of Mexico. Given the simultaneous occurrence of the US Civil War, Emperor Napoleon III correctly believed that the United States would be too busy with its own internal conflict to intervene. The Confederacy welcomed the invasion of Mexico and the assertion of a white ruler over Mexico's multiracial population, seeing Napoleon III as a potential ally through whom they might gain official recognition as an independent country.²⁶

Confederate support of the French campaign in Mexico demonstrates another layer of contradiction in the South's rhetorical reliance on nationalist independence and self-determination to justify its secession from the United States. The overthrow of a democratically elected government and the establishment of a monarchy by a foreign imperial power had little resemblance to the independence movements that had been occurring in Europe throughout the nineteenth century. Moreover, the Confederacy did not have a consistent policy of supporting other foreign national independence movements. For example, *The Index*, a newspaper which was the official mouthpiece for the Confederate government in Europe, consistently sided with Denmark and its goal of maintaining a unified kingdom during the Second Schleswig War rather than with the Schleswig and Holstein separatists.²⁷ Instead, the political sympathies of the Confederate States of America for the Second Mexican Empire rather than with contemporary nationalist movements in Europe illustrate the illiberal foundation of Confederate secession—like Napoleon III's overthrow of Juárez, the secession of Southern states was not a populist revolt but the rejection of a democratically elected leader by a conservative political elite.

26 Andre M. Fleche, "Race and Revolution: The Confederacy, Mexico, and the Problem of Southern Nationalism," in *The Transnational Significance of the American Civil War*, eds. Jörg Nagler, Don H. Doyle, and Marcus Gräser (Palgrave Macmillan: 2016), 195–97.

27 "Literary Notes," *The Index* 4, no. 128 (October 6, 1864), 629.

Nonetheless, the desire to link Confederate secession to the broader global movements of liberty and progress played an important role within the rhetoric of the Confederacy and its sympathizers both during and after the Civil War. Postwar commemorative trends in the South similarly borrowed European symbols and imagery. If the Confederacy compared their secession to the events of the French Revolution during the Civil War, then the propagators of the Lost Cause equally found inspiration from the French self-cultivated image of noble defeat in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War. Not only did the contemporary French cult of *revanchisme* serve as a suitable model from which the Southern Lost Cause could borrow, but the prestige which Americans tended to attach to French art and culture made Mercié's *Gloria Victis* an attractive archetype for visualizing a noble Confederate defeat amongst the white Southern elite.

As argued throughout this book, the commemoration of defeat by means of large-scale public works such as monuments is only possible through possessing great amounts of power and influence. Like the Aristocratic Republic of Peru's commemoration of the War of the Pacific through large-scale monuments like la Cripta de los Héroes, studied in the previous chapter, the postwar South's celebration of defeat can be understood as the means for a new political order to consolidate power. The celebration of the Confederate past linked the present rulers to the nostalgic memory of the antebellum South. Therefore, the construction of monuments helped solidify political legitimacy and social cohesion in the postwar South, much as it did in Peru during the same period. In both examples, moreover, the commemoration of defeat was very much linked to controlling and directing violence. The cult of the Lost Cause seen in both Peru and France coincided with the advent of universal conscription and the sacralization of national military service, but these civic ideals, despite their republican roots, were also used to preserve the power of a white bourgeois ruling class. Just as the Aristocratic Republic mythologized the War of the Pacific in order to preserve criollo rule, the white Southern social elite used the cult of the Lost Cause to preserve the powers and privileges of whites over the formerly enslaved Black Southerners. Confederate monuments in public spaces such as town squares and courthouse lawns were a reminder to all whites of their sacred duty to continue the tradition of preserving white supremacy and helped legitimize the use of violence, whether state-sanctioned or clandestine, to do so.²⁸

28 Beetham, "From Spraycans to Minivans," 19.

Elite Prestige and the Incorporation of French Symbols within Lost Cause Monuments

The comparison between Confederate secession and European independence movements did not come to an end with the South's defeat in 1865, but rather became an important means for creating a civic religion around white Southern exceptionalism. Acolytes of the Lost Cause, including politicians, judges, and religious preachers, looked to Europe's past and present in order to develop the mythology which transformed the violent secession of slaveholding states in 1861 into a narrative of the white Southern peoples' quest for freedom against Northern aggression. According to Charles Reagan Wilson, defeat transformed Southern independence from a political goal to a providential message. White Southern preachers claimed that Confederate secession had been the most concrete expression of the universal spirit of liberty. Not only was the Confederacy the true embodiment of the ideals of the American Revolution, but also for emancipation movements worldwide. Advocates of the Lost Cause mythology argued that the legacy of Confederate valor had led to US victory during the Spanish-American War (1898) and the so-called liberation of the Cuban peoples from Spanish rule. In another, more outlandish example of revisionist history, Reverend H. D. C. Maclachlan argued in 1909 that the ongoing revolutions and bids for independence occurring in Europe had been directly inspired by the Confederate secession.²⁹ Three years earlier, Judge Charles Scott, speaking at the inauguration of the Confederate Monument at Oxford, Mississippi, recounted in a similar manner of the ways in which the Confederacy had become a symbol of heroic virtue within the hearts of Europeans. Scott recalled that when dining at the Grand Hotel in Paris, the guests erupted in ovation when the band played Dixie. "Why is 'Dixie' so honored in the far-off land of the French lilies? The cause is not far to seek. It is the involuntary homage paid by the civilized world to the memory of the old South, once radiant with all the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome."³⁰

With regard to the importance of public art for both ancient Rome and the postwar South, Scott's comparison was apt. Few other societies, other than perhaps France, were as stricken by *statuomanie* than the South. Unlike Ancient Rome, however, the political power of "the old South" was hardly a

29 Charles Reagan Wilson, *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865–1920* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 164–165.

30 N. D. Deupree, "Confederate Monument at Oxford, Miss." *The Confederate Veteran* 14, no. 7 (July 1906): 37

distant memory. Despite the tendency for Confederate apologists in the wake of the Civil War to portray the South as tragic heroes and martyrs, white Southern power still continued through its local governments and institutions. At the same time that sculptural commemorations were becoming a major trend, Southern states began to leverage greater autonomy within the post-Reconstruction political landscape. Segregation, which became legal doctrine through the *Plessy vs. Ferguson* Supreme Court case, and voter disenfranchisement laws, such as through the implementation of poll taxes and literacy tests via the 1890 Mississippi constitution, were all part of Southern efforts to reintroduce white rule, which had been eroded during Reconstruction.³¹ Jim Crow laws and the cult of the Lost Cause were integrally connected to the resurgence of Confederate power in the United States even if the Confederate States of America formally ceased to exist.

Despite the relative power wielded by local governments, Confederate monuments remained a controversial issue in the United States, especially in the North. The construction of Confederate monuments were largely therefore undertaken as private initiatives, after which the monuments were donated to the local government for placement on public land. In part due to US society's gendered dissociation between women and military violence, private women's societies played an important role in shaping and promoting the postwar South's civil religion, including notably through the erection of Confederate memorials. Local Ladies' Memorial Associations appeared in the South in the chaotic aftermath of the Civil War for the very practical need to identify, record, and help maintain the graves of Confederate soldiers as well as providing monetary aid to Confederate veterans given that they were ineligible for federal pensions.³² Over the decades, and having developed ample experience raising money for charitable causes including the care of sick or ageing Confederate veterans, Ladies' Memorial Associations and other women's societies became involved in larger-scale initiatives, including the construction of monuments.³³

Despite their practical, humanitarian origins, women-led memorial associations were simultaneously a means of class differentiation and exclusion within the South's changing postwar social order. As care for the dwindling population of ageing Confederate veterans shifted to the responsibility of individual states at the turn of the twentieth century, a new

31 Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 14.

32 Caroline E. Janney, *Burying the Dead but not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 244, note 40.

33 Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 18.

generation of women, while continuing to pursue humanitarian purposes, put a newfound emphasis on constructing public memory of the Confederacy through the widespread creation of monuments. The act of financing, commissioning, and erecting public monuments not only solidified the place of the Lost Cause in the civil religion of Southern societies, but also preserved the elite social status of the women who led these groups. Groups like the UDC were highly discriminating in their admission process, limiting membership to those who could demonstrate their direct blood descent to a Confederate veteran, but also placed great emphasis on an individual's social status.³⁴ As Cox demonstrates in her book *Dixie's Daughters*, groups like the UDC illustrate the shifting and at times self-contradictory place of women within the South. At once socially conservative, Confederate memorial groups were in practice also a significant means for groups of women to exert power in public life prior to being allowed to officially participate in US politics. These groups gave women influence on areas of society such as education and urban planning, allowing them a platform to organize and speak publicly, and, through their highly successful efforts at fundraising, access to large sums of money through which they could exert their agenda. Although in viewpoint dedicated to preserving the memory of the Old South's patriarchal and agrarian way of life, memorial groups were symptomatic of how certain groups of women gained social presence in the industrialized New South. At the same time, the exclusionary quality of these women's groups—whose members almost unilaterally supported the social and economic subordination of Blacks, and frequently, although by no means universally, opposed women's suffrage—illustrate not only the intersection of race and gender in the push to commemorate Confederate defeat, but class politics as well.³⁵

The political maternalism of the UDC was therefore in certain respects not unsimilar to the paternalism of Peru's politicians during the Aristocratic Republic whose efforts to reknit the fabric of their war-ravaged society through welfare, education, and public art obscured their mission to strengthen the powers of the criollo bourgeois elite. The underlying function of Confederate monuments as a means for the South's social elite to symbolically preserve the class boundaries which distinguished them from not only Southern Blacks but working-class Southern whites as well within the changing socioeconomic landscape of the postwar South is illustrated by the General Robert E. Lee Monument in Richmond, Virginia (fig. 4.2). Costing \$77,500 to

34 Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 25, 30–31.

35 Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 40–45.



Fig. 4.2. Inauguration of Antonin Mercié's Monument to General Robert E. Lee in Richmond, Virginia. T. De Thulstrup (illustrator), *Harper's Weekly*, June 14, 1890. (Public domain; image courtesy VCU Libraries.)

construct at a time when mass-produced Confederate monuments could be purchased for as little as \$500, and standing over sixty feet tall, Mercié's Lee Monument was both one of the most expensive Confederate monuments to be created as well as one of the largest.³⁶ The monument was planned and commissioned by three different groups with at times competing desires and interests: the Lee Monument Association led by veteran officers from Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, General Lee's nephew and then-governor of Virginia, Fitzhugh Lee, and the Ladies' Lee Monument Association, who took the lead in raising funds.³⁷ Although two sculpture competitions had been held with the intention of selecting a design, disagreements amongst the different groups stalled any progress on the monument's creation, and the commission was eventually handed to Antonin Mercié.

The Ladies' Lee Monument Association were largely responsible for this decision, having long expressed their preference for Mercié due to his illustrious international reputation as a sculptor. By selecting Mercié, who at the time carried considerable international fame due to artworks like *Gloria Victis*, the Ladies' Lee Monument Association emphasized the role of a monument as a work of art. Women's Confederate memorial associations

36 Sarah Beetham, "Sculpting the Citizen Soldier: Reproduction and National Memory, 1865–1917" (PhD dissertation, University of Delaware, 2014), 141.

37 Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America*, New Edition (Princeton University Press, 2018): 135

were established on the prevalent idea that, while rebuilding the South politically and economically was the responsibility of white men, white women were obligated to preserve and help flourish Southern culture. Erecting an expensive monument by an academically trained French artist highlighted the sophistication and prosperity of the South, countering not only common Northern portrayals of white Southerners as uneducated and uncultured, but by also symbolically placing the South within the ideals of European cosmopolitanism.³⁸ The cultural legitimacy Mercié's sculpture lent to the South was affirmed by local newspapers. *The Richmond Dispatch* bragged about the great artistic value of the Lee Monument, arguing it to be at least as good as, if not better than any equestrian statue ever created in Europe. The newspaper equally praised the reputation of the artist, claiming that Mercié was "one of the four great sculptors of Paris," and that his *Gloria Victis* was "one of the three finest of pieces of modern sculpture."³⁹

As demonstrated throughout this book, employing French artists or training local artists in French ateliers was a common nation building strategy of the late nineteenth century, and elite of the South, like those in Peru, Denmark, or Serbia, associated France with prestige. While European nationalist revolutionary rhetoric had been adopted by secessionists prior to and during the war, the language of Confederate nationalism continued even after political independence ceased to be an ambition. This phenomenon can be explained largely, as suggested above, as a means of white Southern elites to maintain their status in the New South's post-slavery industrial society. This social ambition is visible not only in the elitist rules and practices of women's Confederate memorial groups, as illustrated in part by their insistence on selecting Mercié to create the monument to General Lee, but also in the monument's placement within Richmond.

Kirk Savage's analysis of the monument to General Lee's placement within Richmond precisely underlines the monument's function as a prestige project undertaken by white Southern social elites. While the Ladies' Lee Monument Association had initially proposed that the monument should be erected in a park, which had become a common practice in Europe, Governor Lee instead opted for an undeveloped plot of land on which the government had been planning to create a modern boulevard aiding the city's suburban

38 Jessica Owley and Jess Phelps, "The Life and Death of Confederate Monuments," *Buffalo Law Review* 5, no. 68 (2020): 1405; Caroline E. Janney, *Burying the Dead but not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 118, 131; Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 56.

39 "Monument Complete," *The Richmond Dispatch*, May 25, 1890, 1

expansion. In the following decades, Monument Avenue and the residential neighborhood surrounding it became the home of lawyers, businessmen, and the new generation of white Southern elites. Governor Lee's use of Mercié's prestigious monument as a means of promoting suburban gentrification had succeeded, but the use of public sculpture to further stratify Richmond along economic lines had already garnered pushback. Members of the Richmond city council had originally argued that the governor's plan would only benefit the city's wealthiest residents, but a successful opposition failed to materialize.⁴⁰ Virginia's most expensive public monument, created by a prestigious French sculptor, thus found itself at home in one of Richmond's wealthiest neighborhoods amongst the New South's burgeoning professional class.

Mercié's monument to General Lee is an important illustration of how the new convention of commemorating noble defeat through public sculpture could transcend its original nationalist function in Europe and be reemployed to further class- and race-based power structures in the postwar South. The artist's international fame at the turn of the twentieth century, the high monetary value of his monuments, and the consistent pattern of white Southern elites to align the South with France in an effort to gain political and cultural legitimacy are all factors which made Mercié an attractive choice for many involved in the efforts to erect the monument. The General Lee Monument expressed the hopeful march of the South from regional isolation into a prosperous future while still paying homage to their traditional Confederate icons.

Despite the desire of white Southern elites to don the New South in the fashions of bourgeois cosmopolitanism, Mercié's ostentatious sculptural style, while in vogue throughout much of contemporary Europe, did not easily cohere with their largely conservative tastes. Although the outcome of Lee Monument is an expression of state, class, and racial power through a conventional motif, Mercié's original design for the sculpture emphasized the theme of the South's glorious defeat in the artist's typically baroque style. Mercié had intended to represent General Lee at the Battle of Gettysburg—the military leader's greatest defeat and a turning point in the Civil War which effectively ended speculation of a possible Confederate victory. The artist envisioned General Lee passing along his dying troops, his horse rearing, and the fallen soldiers at his feet stretching to have one last look at their beloved leader.⁴¹

40 Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves*, 148–151.

41 Lida Rose McCabe, "Mercié Talks about Lee," *The Richmond Dispatch* 12, no. 116 (Sunday, May 25, 1890): 1.

Although the Monument Association found Mercié's original design to be too radical for local tastes, which tended towards sober expressions of white Southern courage and nobility, Mercié's completed design for the monument nonetheless incorporates the artist's penchant for altering convention to evoke defeat. While equestrian statue has traditionally been associated with military triumph, Mercié subtly transforms the iconography to suggest defeat. While the figure of General Lee remains stoic, he has removed his hat, which hangs from his right hand. His horse, rather than raising one front leg up in the air, keeps all its hooves planted on the ground and lowers his head. Mercié's representation is of a military leader's noble exit rather than his triumphant entry and therefore rests squarely within the artist's oeuvre of representing the transcendence of defeat via a superior and noble character—a motif that fits squarely into the Confederate myth of the Lost Cause, even when Mercié's artistic style did not.

The similar messaging seen within both French nationalist and white Southern elitist postwar narratives set fertile ground for the transmission of *Gloria Victis* throughout the Confederate commemorative landscape, where it became a minor but clearly recognizable trend in the US South.⁴² As in France, where *Gloria Victis*'s widespread transmission in the commemorative culture of the Franco-Prussian War was in large part due to the creation of smaller bronze serial editions by the foundry Barbedienne, *Gloria Victis*'s spread across the postwar US was greatly influenced by the industrial production. In the South, mass-produced sculptures representing a lone soldier at rest produced by companies such as New England Granite Works, the Monumental Bronze Company, and the Muldoon Monument Company, remained the most widely used means of commemoration. In 1890, "Gloria Victis" began to appear as an inscription on Confederate monuments. Within the context of this current study, the first recorded use of this inscription can be traced to the Blandford Cemetery Confederate Monument in Petersburg, Virginia. An initiative of the Ladies' Memorial Association of Petersburg, the monument was inaugurated on June 9, 1890, to commemorate the 1864 Battle of Petersburg, which marked the beginning of the ten-month Siege of Petersburg. Stylistically, the monument is highly conventional, consisting of an industrial zinc sculpture of a Confederate soldier at rest standing on a plain granite shaft upon which is inscribed the names of the dead, the dates of the war, and short funerary inscriptions. On the top of the shaft, just below the feet of the Confederate soldier, appears the phrase "Gloria Victis."

42 Sarah Beetham, "An Army of Bronze Simulacra: The Copied Soldier Monument and the American Civil War," *Revista de Arte Ibero Nierika* 7 (2015): 36–37.

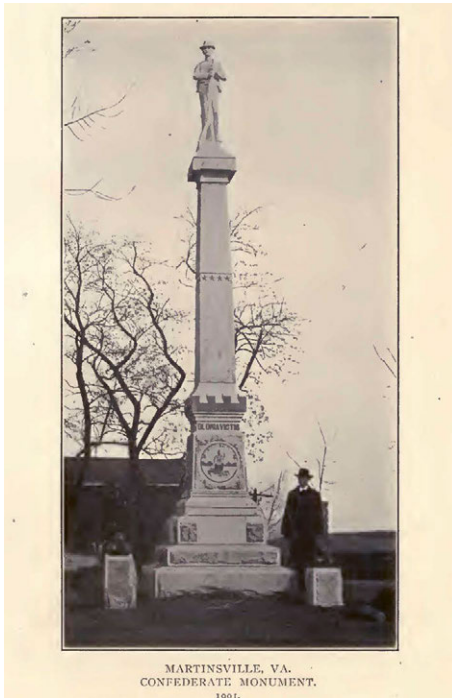


Fig. 4.3. Martinsville, Virginia, Confederate Monument, 1901. From B. A. C. Emerson, *Historical Southern Monuments* (New York and Washington: The Neale Publishing Company, 1911), 225.

Despite the fact that Blandford Cemetery is located directly outside Richmond and that the monument was erected just a week after Mercié's General Lee monument, it cannot be said with certainty if Mercié's artwork directly influenced the monument's design. The phrase "Gloria Victis" could already be found in Civil War literature before 1890, as illustrated by the 1885 poem "Gloria Victis: An Ode on the Death of General Ulysses S. Grant" by Jasper Barnett Cowdin.⁴³ Moreover, Barbedienne bronze reductions of *Gloria Victis*—several examples of which are currently held in US museums—were beginning to appear in the US market at this time, including through the foundry's partnerships with the Bigelow-Kennard company in Boston and Tiffany & Co. in New York City.⁴⁴ In other words, evidence of the viral transmission of *Gloria Victis* predates Mercié's famous Richmond sculpture, having already become a catchword or slogan amongst the educated class.

What is clear is that "Gloria Victis" continued to be integrated into the Lost Cause commemorative lexicon over the next decade, where it frequently

43 Jasper Barnett Cowdin, *Gloria Victis: An Ode on the Death of Gen. Ulysses S. Grant* (Brooklyn, NY: D. S. Holmes, 1885).

44 Florence Rionnet, "Barbedienne ou la fortune de la sculpture au XIXe siècle," *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de l'art français* (2002): 315.

appeared alongside other common Confederate mottos. For example, the Henry County Monument in Martinsville, Virginia, funded by Mildred Lee Chapter of the UDC and erected on June 3, 1901—the birthday of Jefferson Davis, the leader of the CSA—is a typical monument for its era (fig. 4.3). The monument, which stands in front of the Henry County courthouse, presents a standing Confederate soldier with the butt of his rifle resting against the ground. The unsigned sculpture is one of the thousands of mass-produced standing soldiers or silent sentinels erected across the US, both North and South, in the wake of the Civil War. The soldier stands on top of an obelisk, at the bottom of which, at the height of the viewer, are several inscriptions. On one side is written “Defeated, yet without stain,” taken from the poem “The Sword of Robert E. Lee” by priest and Confederate sympathizer Abram Joseph Ryan (1838–1886).⁴⁵ On another side of the obelisk is the state seal of Virginia, which depicts the goddess Virtus (Virtue) standing triumphantly on the chest of tyranny alongside the state motto “sic semper tyrannis” (Thus to tyrants). Although the Virginia state seal dates back to the American Revolution, symbolizing defiance to British colonial rule, “sic semper tyrannis” was frequently associated with the legacy of the Confederacy and was famously uttered by John Wilkes Booth at the moment he assassinated President Abraham Lincoln in 1865. Above the seal is written “Gloria Victis.” The latinized neologism, invented at the same time as Mercié’s sculpture in the 1870s, coheres the monument’s mixture of classicizing and romantic symbols to complete the monument’s message—tyrants shall be vanquished, and justice shall come to the righteous defeated.

The appropriation of French commemorative symbols which originated in the wake of the Franco-Prussian War played a key part of the Lost Cause visual language in the United States. Just as the proponents of Confederate secession made comparisons to contemporary independence movements in Europe to defend their actions as rooted in the ideals of liberalism, white Southern elites in the wake of the Civil War looked to France for inspiration as part of their efforts to valorize Confederate defeat as well as to preserve their own social and political power. The oftentimes viral nature of the influence of French commemoration, particularly Mercié’s *Gloria Victis*, can be seen in both the iconography and the mass-produced nature of many Confederate monuments erected in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This French influence is further evident in the case of the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument created by Ruckstuhl, a former student of Mercié’s, which drew directly on the visual language of defeat and heroic sacrifice seen in the original French work.

45 Abram Joseph Ryan, *Father Ryan’s Poems* (Mobile: J. L. Rapier and Co., 1879).

Ruckstuhl's Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument

Ruckstuhl's Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument, known as *Gloria Victis* at the time of its inauguration in 1903, is a significant work that reflects the influence of French commemorative art on the Lost Cause movement in the US. Ruckstuhl drew inspiration from Mercié's commemoration of the Franco-Prussian War to craft a monument that captured the romantic ideals of the Confederacy. The monument's realization as a project of the UDC further transformed the meaning of Mercié's original sculptural group of a dead soldier held in the arms of an allegorical female. Contemporary audiences interpreted the winged female figure not in the French tradition of a *génie*—that is to say, a personification the style of Greco-Roman cult statues of Nike and other goddesses—but in the ecclesiastical tradition of an angel. The visual and interpretive transformation effectively adapted the Gloria Victis archetype with white Southern Christian interpretation of the Confederacy's defeat as a baptism of blood, thereby affirming the revisionist message that Confederate secession was not an act of treason but a noble act of sacrifice vindicated by God. The newfound emphasis placed on the female sculptural allegory as an angelic, maternal figure further aligned the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument to the UDC's mission to establish the organization as the gatekeepers of white Southern culture to the exclusion of Blacks, Republicans, carpetbaggers, and undesirable Southern whites. Finally, it simultaneously illustrates attempts by Confederate apologists to link the bravery of the Confederate troops to the United States' increasingly important military presence abroad.

According to the artist, the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument, which he originally titled Spirit of the Confederacy, had been created for a competition in Springfield, Missouri, Ruckstuhl's home state. Ruckstuhl claimed on several occasions that the design came to him in a vision, giving a rather lengthy description of his experience shortly after the monument's inauguration in 1903:

One evening two years ago, I sat in the Metropolitan Opera House. "Tannhauser" was being played. I had been groping for days for a conception for a Confederate monument for Springfield, Mo., when suddenly I became oblivious to "Tannhauser" and I saw a typical Southern soldier, with worn shoes and his clothes torn by bullets, having thrown away all his military accoutrements, his coat and hat, and even rolled up his sleeves as if for a final desperate fight to the finish. He was looking sternly toward me with flashing eyes and quivering nostrils. Suddenly he placed his left

hand over his heart as if to stifle the pain of a shot, with his right arm, which held a shattered gun, became rigid with an involuntary grasp, as his body straightened up. His face changed from an expression of pain and anger to one of a calm feeling of triumph even in defeat, and then to a pathetic expression, as if saying, "Forgive them, Father, they know not what they do." He began to sink. All rancor left his face, just one touch of sadness for his country remained. He was about to fall into the mire when I saw a tall, powerful, splendid winged Victory swoop down from the sky and clasping him to her breast, while holding aloft a crown, she said, "Hold: right or wrong, he fought a good fight. He followed the right as God let him see the right. Touch him no more, for he belongs to me."⁴⁶

Despite his detailed account of the sculpture's origins, however, Ruckstuhl never mentions the influence of his teacher, Mercié, on its design. Although this book argues throughout that the viral nature of *Gloria Victis*'s cultural transmission oftentimes diminishes the original artist's connection to the work in the process of its recontextualization, it is inconceivable that Ruckstuhl, who trained with Mercié in the 1880s, would have been unfamiliar with the artist's sculpture. Rather than using his sculpture to create a comparison between the Franco-Prussian and American Civil Wars, Ruckstuhl downplayed the foreign origins of the monument in order to more greatly align his sculpture with local Lost Cause tropes. One of the common postwar narratives illustrated in Ruckstuhl's monument was that Confederate soldiers, despite having less training and equipment, were superior to their Northern counterparts, and therefore only lost due to the sheer magnitude of the industrialized Union army. The soldier's unpretentious demeanor communicates his material disadvantage but also his moral superiority as he continues to fight even after having fired his last bullet. Having moved to St. Louis, Missouri, at a young age, Ruckstuhl contended that he had always held sympathy for the South and had vowed since his days training in Paris to one day create a Confederate monument.⁴⁷

The jury for the Springfield monument competition, however, rejected Ruckstuhl's proposal. The committee wanted their monument to represent a fighting soldier, not a dead soldier. Mirroring the rejection of Mercié's original design for Richmond's Robert E. Lee monument in 1890, which represented the Confederate general surrounded by dying troops, the visual

46 "Spirit of the Southern Confederacy," *The World To-Day: A Monthly Record of Human Progress* 5, no. 3 (September 1903): 1209–1210.

47 "Realized at the Opera," 1.

representation of death and defeat did not cohere with common trends of Confederate commemoration. On stylistic grounds, the baroque emotionalism of French academic sculpture clashed with the sober realism which had become convention within Southern commemorative landscapes. On ideological grounds, the promise of resurrection and impetus towards revenge embodied in *Gloria Victis*'s call for the viewer to bear witness to the death of the nation's martyrs did not cohere with the message of Confederate triumphalism. To return to Brown's argument, sculptural commemoration of the Civil War in large part functioned to celebrate the political victories of the post-Reconstruction South and consolidate power around the white Southern Democrat political order.⁴⁸ It is perhaps telling that Ruckstuhl's Monument to Confederate Soldiers of Arkansas, erected just a few years later in 1905 in Little Rock, radically reconfigures his original *Gloria Victis* design to Southern conventions by representing a confident—and living—Confederate flag bearer standing on his own feet at the monument's base and placing the laurel-bearing winged female allegory at the top, proudly proclaiming victory.

Although cases of Springfield and Little Rock illustrate in what ways *Gloria Victis* clashed with the cultural norms of Southern white commemoration of the Civil War, this did not prevent it from becoming an important visual counterpoint to the tradition of Confederate triumphalism. Ruckstuhl was convinced that others would recognize the merit of his *Gloria Victis* inspired design. He not only held onto the rejected model from the Springfield competition but, in anticipation of being able to realize a bronze in the near future, proceeded to create a monumental version out of clay in his New York studio.⁴⁹ The artist was correct in assuming that his sculpture would eventually be purchased. According to the artist, the sculpture attracted several potential buyers, including the Missouri chapter of the UDC, who hired Ruckstuhl to cast his sculpture in bronze for the Confederate Home in Higginsville.⁵⁰ As late as May 1902, local newspapers reported on advancement of The Spirit of the Confederacy for Higginsville. However, two months later, newspapers announced that The Spirit of the Confederacy had been purchased by the Maryland Chapter of the UDC for Baltimore.⁵¹

48 Brown, *Civil War Monuments and the Militarization of America*, 208.

49 "Art Notes," *The New York Times*, Sunday, June 22, 1902, 11.

50 "The Spirit of the Confederacy," *The Monumental News: A Monthly Journal of Monumental Art* XIV, 8 (August 1902), 477.

51 "Grand Memorial for Confederate Soldiers," *The Ragan News*, May 23, 1902, 7; "Tribute of Maryland Women to Maryland Confederates," *The Times Washington*, July 27, 1902, section 3, page 4.

Although the politics that lay behind this affair remain unclear, the Higginsville monument was never realized, likely due to a combination of financial troubles, career ambitions, and an interstate UDC rivalry. Ruckstuhl remarked in an interview that the Missouri UDC had never confirmed their acquisition and lacked the money to do so. Original bronze monuments were exceedingly more expensive than industrial monuments, and it was a perhaps overly ambitious project for the Missouri UDC to have Ruckstuhl's monument erected in the small town of Higginsville. *The New York Times* reported in April that, given that Ruckstuhl's monument, referred to by an alternative titled, *Gloria Victis*, was destined for a small town deep in the American heartland, the artist had organized an invitation-only exhibition to see the clay model in his studio before it was sent away to Missouri. According to the Maryland UDC, they decided to purchase the sculpture after one of the members in Atlantic City, New Jersey, referred to in a local newspaper report as Mrs. Thomas B. Gresham, read about the exhibition and sent the artist a request to visit his studio. Shortly thereafter, the Maryland UDC agreed to purchase the sculpture.⁵² Given that the Maryland UDC had already raised the funds to purchase the sculpture, the opportunity to have it erected in a major city such as Baltimore convinced the artist to step back from his prior commitment to Missouri. In an attempt to sidestep controversy, Ruckstuhl suggested that his decision to sell the same monument for the Maryland UDC did not interfere with his agreement with the Missouri chapter, as he had sufficiently changed the design for the Baltimore monument by replacing the soldier's gun with a flag.⁵³

The Maryland UDC had been planning to erect a monument since 1898, when the idea to erect the state's first Confederate monument was proposed by the division's Baltimore chapter.⁵⁴ The state of Maryland had in fact never joined the Confederacy. As a border state, however, a significant minority of white Maryland residents sympathized with or joined the Confederacy during the Civil War. Given that the majority of both Black and white Maryland residents had not been staunch supporters of the Confederacy, the UDC's proposal to erect the monument in Druid Hill Park was initially received with hesitation by the City Council, who twice rejected it in 1898 and 1899. One of the concerns the council cited was that

52 "Realized at the Opera. Ruckstuhl Had Statue in Mind for Years. Tells of Baltimore Work," *The Sun*, December 13, 1902, 1.

53 "Art Notes," *The New York Times*, April 7, 1902, 9; "Realized at the Opera," 1.

54 "Daughters of the Confederacy-Start a Fund for a Monument to Maryland Soldiers and Sailors-Delegate to National Body," *The Sun*, October 27, 1898, 10.

they had recently rejected a similar proposal to erect a Union monument in the same park. The intercession of fellow council member George Reinhart, who urged a third vote in favor of the monument not only out of the spirit of fraternity and reconciliation, but also as a means of thanking the UDC, and indeed all women of Maryland, for their incessant efforts to honor those who fought during the Civil War.⁵⁵ The City Council's debate on the matter of erecting a monument to commemorate Maryland citizens who fought for the Confederacy not only demonstrates the politically divisive nature of Confederate commemoration, but also the strong power that women's societies held within advancing the cult of the Lost Cause.

After Ruckstuhl agreed to sell his monument to the Maryland UDC, the title was officially changed to *Gloria Victis* in honor of the UDC's Baltimore chapter, whose motto was "Glory stands beside our grief." As noted above, the soldier in Ruckstuhl's monument originally held a broken rifle in his left hand, but the UDC requested him to exchange the gun for a flag in order to reflect the monument's commemoration of not only Confederate army troops, but naval combatants as well.⁵⁶ Not only did Ruckstuhl's sculpture express the themes desired by the Maryland UDC's commemoration initiative, but the artist's origins and reputation held currency as well. Ruckstuhl had roots in both Alsace and Missouri, which, like Maryland, was also a border state which had officially remained part of the Union but retained close connections to the Confederacy. Newspapers often mentioned his training in Paris and the accolades that his sculptures, such as *Evening* (1887, carved in marble 1891, Metropolitan Museum of Art), had received in both France and the United States. Moreover, Ruckstuhl had previous experience creating Civil War monuments commemorating the Union army, including the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, a victory statue also known as *La Renommée* erected in New York City in 1896, as well as an equestrian statue of General John Frederick Hartranft in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in 1899. Given the controversial nature of erecting monuments to Confederate soldiers, as the debate in the Baltimore City Council cited above has illustrated, Ruckstuhl's prior work on a Union monument could have been seen as a useful line of defense against those who might accuse the monument of promoting sectarianism, much like how the UDC's status as a civilian

55 "City Council-First Branch Passes the Daughters of the Confederacy's Monument Ordinance. All Opposition Withdraws-Unfavorable Report of Committee on Parks Rejected," *The Sun*, January 24, 1899, 10.

56 "Realized at the Opera," 1.

women's society cast their commemorative efforts as memorial rather than political in nature.

The inauguration was typical of nationalist commemorative events in its mixture of military and religious themes. The ceremony commenced with a prayer by Reverend William M. Dame, the UDC Maryland chapter chaplain, who spoke about death and defeat as a baptism of blood, for which he offered thanks to God: "We praise Thee that Thou didst give them the faithful and true heart to endure, in loyal service unto the end, and then lay their bodies, and pour out their precious blood, on the great altar of sacrifice, unto God, and for their fellow men."⁵⁷ Reverend Dame's interpretation of the sacrifice of Confederate soldiers contains a double meaning. On the one hand, he evokes the idea that the soldiers died in honoring their civic duty to protect their fellow Maryland citizens and comrades in arms. On the other hand, his reference to precious blood and his description of the soldiers' death as an offering unto God is clearly meant to create a parallel between the deaths of Confederate soldiers and the death of Christ. In this latter sense, their sacrifice "for their fellow men" has a metaphysical sense as a redemptive blood offering made for the sake of all, especially future generations. Reverend Dame continued his speech by evoking the importance of the monument for educating children of "their noble fathers," reminding them to follow in the footsteps of "patriotism and unselfish duty."⁵⁸ As was typical of most Confederate inauguration, the act of unveiling the monument was done by two young girls, both of whom were great granddaughters of Confederate officers, thus reinforcing the theme of the generational transfer of redemption and obligation via the blood of soldiers.⁵⁹

While other examples in this book have shown that young men frequently held an important place in civil religion rituals, Confederate ceremonies stand out via their emphasis on the civic and sacred duty of young women. Each of the orators at the inauguration of the *Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument* paid a special homage to the UDC, thanking them not only for their contribution to erecting the monument, but emphasizing that the monument was also a commemoration of the special role that women played in the Confederacy. One speaker, Major-General Andrew C. Trippe, referenced the Maryland state motto, "Fatti Maschi, Parole Femine," inscribed on the monument's pedestal, to highlight this point. Although

57 *Gloria Victis, 1861–1865. Unveiling of Confederate Monument, May 2, 1903* (Baltimore: Guggenheimer, Weil, and Co, 1903), 4. Maryland Center for History and Culture.

58 *Gloria Victis, 1861–1865. Unveiling of Confederate Monument, May 2, 1903*, 4.

59 Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 61.

frequently translated as “Manly Deeds, Modest Words,” “Parole Feminine” more directly translates to “feminine words.” Thus, the speaker implied, the manly deeds of soldiers cannot bear meaning without the support of women to propagate the ideals of the Confederacy through their families and through greater society.⁶⁰ Similarly, the allegorical figure of the woman supporting the defeated Confederate soldier in Ruckstuhl’s sculpture was interpreted within the common portrayal of the Confederate woman as the indispensable companion to the Confederate man and as the backbone of greater society. The female figure was frequently described in maternal terms, as is illustrated in the interpretation of UDC Maryland chapter president, Louise Wigfall Wright, who described the dead soldier’s pose as “like a tired child safe in his mother’s arms, falls asleep on Glory’s breast.”⁶¹

An addition to being seen as a maternal figure, the female figure in Ruckstuhl’s sculpture was also frequently interpreted as an angel.⁶² While these interpretations at once evoked the Christian ideals of both God’s love and God’s glory, in another instance the critic Charles de Kay interpreted the angel as an immortal witness of the Confederate rebellion within the broader view of global history:

In his figure of the Spirit the sculptor has embodied the Consoling Angel of the losers in a struggle that shook the earth and changed the face of history, little as the participants may have realized its magnitude at the time and the far-reaching effects it would have. One needs only to recall the withdrawal of France from Mexico, the destruction of the colonial power of Spain, and the changes which have taken place in the attitude of the Great Powers toward the United States. This “Victory for the vanquished” holds out a laurel wreath in token of the fact that there is a consolation for the conquered which has a finer, more spiritual side than is offered by the material results attained by the conqueror.⁶³

The philosophical base of de Kay’s quote comes from the longstanding tradition, which predates the Civil War itself, of affirming the South’s right to secession via analogy to the liberal-nationalist movements which swept

60 *Gloria Victis, 1861–1865. Unveiling of Confederate Monument, May 2, 1903*, 7.

61 “The Defeated South Idealized in the Maryland Confederate Monument, Baltimore,” *The Confederate Veteran* 10, no. 10 (October 1902): 433

62 A. J. Emerson to Mary Hall, May 21, 1908, United Daughters of the Confederacy papers, SC140-B1–F1, Maryland State Archives, Annapolis, MD.

63 De Kay “The Spirit of the Confederacy,” 645; “The Heroes of the Lost Cause,” *Baltimore Sunday Herald* (May 3, 1908), in *Gloria Victis, 1861–1865. Unveiling of Confederate Monument, May 2, 1903*, 52.

across Europe at the end of the eighteenth century. Yet rather than justifying Confederate secession by comparing it to the European revolutions of 1789 or 1848, de Kay instead reframes Confederate secession as the spark that ignited the anti-European independence movements that occurred in Asia and the Americas in the second half of the century, including in Mexico in 1867, Cuba and Puerto Rico in 1895, and the Philippines in 1896.

While de Kay's analogy exhibits a common function of Confederate apologist rhetoric—that is, defending the contemporary white supremacist social order by portraying the South's failed secession as part of a noble and ongoing march of humanity towards freedom—the examples he uses are deeply significant with regard to the transformation of the Lost Cause within the geopolitical shift toward US hegemony. While the revolutions in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines all successfully threw off the centuries-long yoke of Spanish imperial rule, US military intervention brought these countries into the direct sphere of American imperial power. Puerto Rico became a US overseas territory as did the Philippines up until 1946. While Cuba remained independent from direct US rule, it operated under the country's *de facto* suzerainty due to the latter's insistence on controlling Cuba's military affairs, which became part of the 1901 Constitution of Cuba via the Platt Amendment.⁶⁴

De Kay's integration of the Lost Cause with the Monroe Doctrine, which presumed the Americas and the Pacific to be the US's rightful sphere of power, is illustrative of more than just a rhetorical update to the Lost Cause. As Cox has argued, the US declaration of war against Spain and the subsequent plundering of its former colonies had a direct influence on ameliorating sectionalist antagonism in the post-Civil War American landscape. For the first time, sons and daughters of Union and Confederate soldiers served on a united military front. The Spanish-American War was therefore used by Confederate apologists as proof that white Southerners were true American patriots without having to recant their secessionist sympathies.⁶⁵ Newfound Northern trust and sympathy for white Southerners, ignited by the common patriotic zeal experienced by both sides via imperial conquest, not only permitted the South's Jim Crow social order to expand without federal restriction, but provided further legitimization to Southern white supremacy. Just as the US justified imperialism as the "white man's burden" to rule until Filipinos, Cubans, and Puerto-Ricans, and other races

64 Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1980), 303–305.

65 Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 142–143.

demonstrated their ability to self-govern, so too did some white Southern politicians justify the disenfranchisement of Southern Blacks as a form of benevolent racial paternalism.⁶⁶

The above examples illustrate how Ruckstuhl's Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument embodied different ideologies pertinent to the Southern white elite. The monument embodied established Lost Cause rhetoric identifying Southern white society with civilization, culture, and Christian righteousness, but was also adapted to the new realities of the turn of the century, defined by an increasingly industrialized domestic landscape and expansionist foreign policy. Particularly noteworthy is the way in which the UDC and their ambition to position themselves as the protectors of white Southern culture is reflected in the greater interpretive emphasis placed on winged female allegory—a figure often given secondary importance in the *Gloria Victis* archetype. Just as it did in other countries, however, the proliferation of Ruckstuhl's sculpture and related *Gloria Victis* across Southern society through industrial mass-production added further complexity and meaning to *Gloria Victis* as a Confederate symbol.

The Spread of Ruckstuhl's *Gloria Victis*

Mirroring the spread of Mercié's *Gloria Victis* across French cities at the turn of the twentieth century, reproductions of Ruckstuhl's monument in bronze, granite, and even stained glass subsequently appeared across at least three more cities in the upper South Atlantic states in the decade following the inauguration of the Baltimore Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument. These visual adaptations of the Baltimore bronze, in tandem with the continued use of "Gloria Victis" as an epitaph on Confederate memorial sites, illustrate the virality of *Gloria Victis* within the cult of the Lost Cause. Although *Gloria Victis* never became a dominant motif in the South as it had in France, evidence of its nonlinear, contagious spread illustrates the relative ease in which white Southern culture accepted the symbol into the fold. It is nonetheless clear in many of these instances, however, that the symbol's status as a marker of elite culture and as an expression of financial power were essential to creating the strong draw that *Gloria Victis* had on certain Southern white communities.

In 1904, the Maryland UDC commissioned Tiffany Studios in New York to reproduce Ruckstuhl's Baltimore monument as a stained glass window for

66 Cox, *Dixie's Daughters*, 106–107.

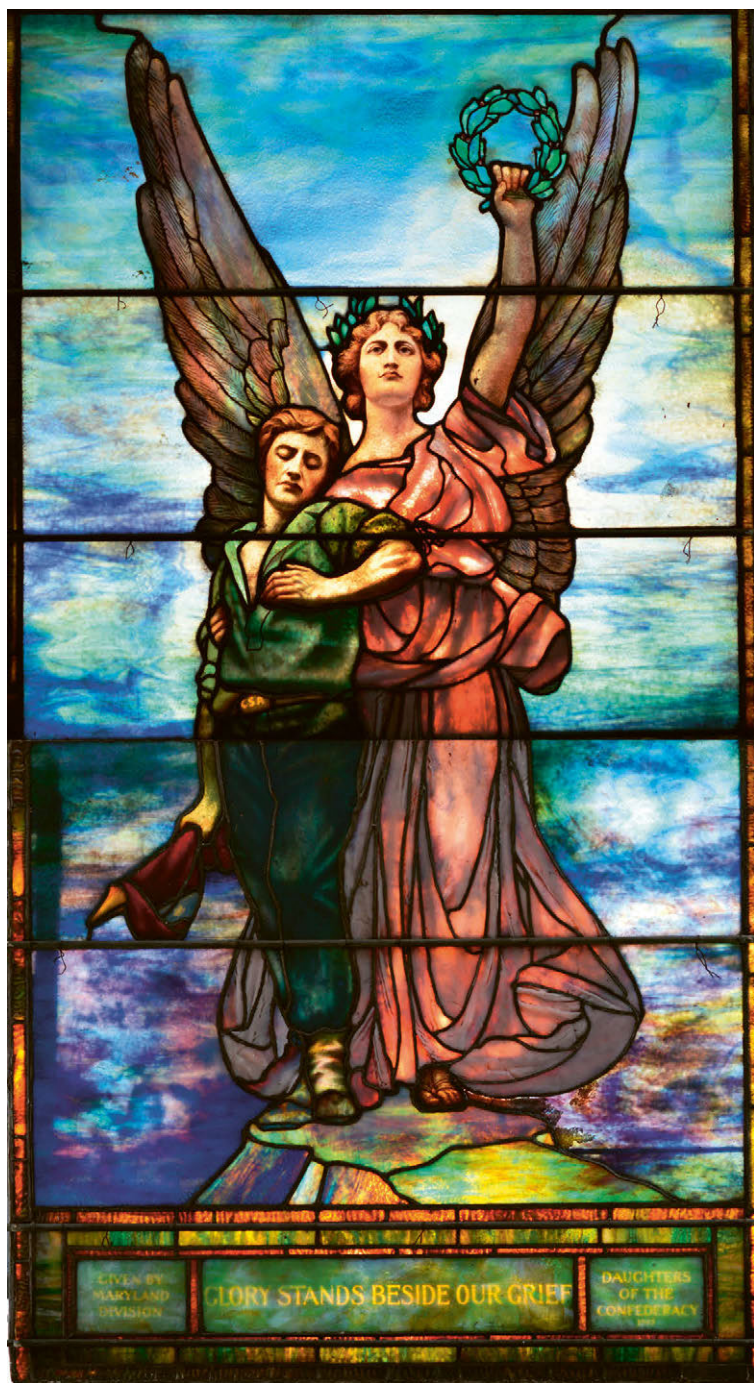


Fig. 4.4. Tiffany and Company, New York, *Poe Memorial Window*, 1905. Leaded glass. Civil War Museum, Richmond, Virginia. Color Photograph.

the price of \$1,075 (fig. 4.4).⁶⁷ The stained glass reproduction of the Baltimore monument is a faithful reproduction of Ruckstuhl's design, albeit rendered in vibrant color via Tiffany's trademark opalescent glass. The dying soldier and the female allegory, whose garments are given complimentary green and rose hues, are not depicted on a battlefield but transported into an otherworldly ether of opulent color. In the register below the figures is the Maryland UDC's motto, "Glory Stands Beside Our Grief."

Just as Ferdinand Barbedienne and Alphonse Goupil had made sculpture and engraving available to the mass public in France via their industrialized processes, Louis Comfort Tiffany's workshops and innovative experiments ushered in a vogue for stained glass windows in the United States beginning in the 1870s.⁶⁸ The subsequent increased availability and affordability of stained glass, and the medium's strong association with Christianity, made them a popular material for commemorations of the Confederacy. Notable contemporary examples include the stained glass windows Confederate Memorial Chapel in Richmond (1887) and the Blandford Memorial Chapel in Petersburg (1904–1912), where the mixture of Confederate battle flags and state seals with images of saints and other traditional Christian iconography helped solidify the Lost Cause of the Confederacy as a genuine cult.⁶⁹ Undoubtedly, local interpretations of Ruckstuhl's winged female allegory as an angel helped created a strong theme of white Southern Christian piety which united the *Gloria Victis* motif with the stained glass. The symbiosis between symbol and medium amplified the message that the blood sacrifice of white Southern men had not occurred in vain, as God had vindicated Confederate defeat as part of a greater holy destiny for Southern whites.

Just as important for affirming a window's sacred meaning was its location. The Maryland UDC's window was destined for Jefferson Davis's home in Richmond, another spot of Lost Cause veneration which in 1896 had been transformed into the Museum of the Confederacy. Fourteen of the rooms in Davis's former residency were converted into individual galleries dedicated to each of the states that had joined or had made steps to join the Confederate States of America, filled with photographs of notable persons, documents, and letters, as well as artworks. The stained glass window was installed in

67 "To Give Memorial Window," *The Baltimore Sun*, May 3, 1904, 6.

68 *Louis Comfort Tiffany at the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998), 29.

69 Anne Hunter McLean, "Unveiling the Lost Cause: A Study of Monuments to Civil War Memory in Richmond, Virginia and Vicinity" (Dissertation thesis, University of Virginia, 1998), 144–146, 162–171.

the Maryland Room, situated in Davis's former dressing room, rendering the space into a chapel of saintly veneration for the former Confederate leader.⁷⁰

The stained glass window was unveiled one year later, in 1905, and given a public dedication. The inauguration was led by the window's financier, John Prentiss Poe, dean of the Maryland University School of Law, Democratic state senator, and fierce proponent of racial segregation in the state. The year of the inauguration, Poe had spearheaded but failed to pass a bill in the Maryland State Senate aimed at disenfranchising Black Maryland voters via a grandfather clause and literacy test, which had become popular across many states in the wake of Reconstruction. Couched within the rhetorical folds of Christian salvation, Poe's vision of the resurrection of Confederate white supremacy are interwoven in his interpretation of the female allegorical figure represented in the stained glass window: "Amidst the encircling gloom, surrounded by the universal emblems of sadness and sorrow too deep for words, she turned from the wreck of the dead past to the blessed work of regeneration in the patriotic and holy hope that in the achievements and power of a truly reconstructed South, chastened and purified by the afflictions, there should be seen everywhere in God's good time the gladsome fruition of a resurrection to a higher and nobler life."⁷¹ Poe's exegesis follows from the common Lost Cause reading of defeat as an act of ritual purification via an arduous trial of faith, which, in the end, would progress the South to a higher spiritual plane. A "truly reconstructed South," however, naturally signaled a South in which Blacks were once again forced by law to be subservient to whites. Nonetheless, despite the clear initiative led by many white government officials across the South to create a society based on inequality, the myth of Confederate soldiers as freedom fighters persisted in Lost Cause rhetoric. Mirroring De Kay's commentary on the inauguration of the Baltimore Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Poe later praised Northern and Southern collaboration in the Spanish-American War, furthering the interpretation of Confederate secession as a war of liberation by referring to the Museum of the Confederacy as a "Sanctuary of Universal Freedom."⁷²

Beyond Maryland, Ruckstuhl's *Gloria Victis* spread into North Carolina, which had successfully passed a voter disenfranchisement law in 1900. In 1903, the same year that the Baltimore Confederate Soldiers and Sailors

70 "It Lights Davis' Room. Maryland Memorial in Confederate Museum in Richmond," *The Baltimore Sun*, May 16, 1905, 8.

71 Address of John Prentiss Poe at the Unveiling of the Memorial Window Placed by the Maryland Daughters of the Confederacy in the Confederate Museum, Richmond, Virginia, (May 13, 1905), 5. Archives of the Museum of the Civil War, Richmond, Virginia, USA.

72 Address of John Prentiss Poe, 6–7.



Fig. 4.5. Frederick Wellington Ruckstuhl, Confederate Monument, called *Fame* or *Gloria Victis*, in Salisbury, North Carolina, 1909. Bronze, 133 inches (not including plinth). Undated postcard. Public Domain. Image courtesy of the Durwood Barbour Collection of North Carolina Postcards (P077), North Carolina Collection Photographic Archives, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill.

Monument was unveiled, the Robert F. Hoke chapter of the North Carolina UDC solicited Ruckstuhl to create a duplicate monument to commemorate the fallen Confederate soldiers of Rowan County. The monument, which was titled *Gloria Victis*, or alternatively *Fame*, is identical to the Baltimore bronze except for the Confederate soldier, who holds a broken gun instead of a battle flag, in line with Ruckstuhl's original design for the sculpture (fig. 4.5). The Hoke chapter chose to erect the monument in the city of Salisbury, the county seat, at an intersection in the city's downtown business district.

Like Mercié's Lee Monument in Richmond, Salisbury's *Gloria Victis* was meant to project prestige. The Hoke chapter's decision to commission a well-known artist to create an original bronze sculpture for its monument instead of purchasing a more affordable mass-produced zinc or granite is relatively unique. The Hoke chapter had rejected the idea of purchasing an industrial monument, instead insisting on a sculpture of "artistic value."⁷³ Almost all large-scale Confederate monuments created by individual artists were erected in Southern state capitals, where financial resources were more abundant. As one local newspaper suggested, however, there were potential

73 "Beautiful Monument is Unveiled at Salisbury," 11.

economic incentives invested in the erection of a costly statue.⁷⁴ In the wake of inauguration of the Baltimore Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Ruckstuhl's first Confederate monument, the artist became a celebrated sculptor within white Southern society. He was commissioned to create two other major Confederate monuments, the soldiers' monument titled *Defending the Flag* (1905, Little Rock, Arkansas), and the equestrian monument to General Wade Hampton III (1906, Columbia, South Carolina), both of which were prominently erected on the grounds of the state capitol. Given Ruckstuhl's reputation, as a local Salisbury newspaper suggested, one of the attractive qualities of having a duplicate of the Baltimore monument in Salisbury was the economic development that it could help bring to the town. Possessing a copy of Ruckstuhl's famed sculpture, despite its costs, had the potential of attracting pilgrimages of Confederate sympathizers, the presence of whom could be advantageous to local businesses in Salisbury. The cult of the Lost Cause of the Confederacy was not just a civil religion; it was also a business.

Nonetheless, Salisbury was a small town of just a few thousand inhabitants with limited resources. As illustrated in the earlier example of the Missouri UDC's failure to raise sufficient funds to purchase Ruckstuhl's monument for the Confederate Home in Higginsville, commissioning individual artworks was a risky venture. With the Baltimore bronze, which had cemented the artist's fame, already erected, Ruckstuhl was willing to be more forgiving with the Hoke chapter of the UDC. According to local papers, Ruckstuhl agreed to sell his sculpture at the discounted price of \$10,000. Including the pedestal, the Salisbury monument cost approximately \$11,5000, a significant reduction from the \$15,000 paid by the Maryland UDC for the Baltimore monument. The reason that Ruckstuhl was likely able to meet the economic restrictions of Salisbury is explained by the monument's size and his choice of foundry. While the original sculpture used in the Baltimore Soldier and Sailors Monument measures over thirteen feet in height, the Salisbury bronze is approximately two feet shorter, standing just over eleven feet.⁷⁵ Furthermore, while the Baltimore bronze was created by the Henry Bonnard Bronze Company in the US, the Salisbury bronze was made by a different foundry located in Belgium, Luppens H. & C. In addition to producing a more economical monument, Ruckstuhl was also willing to be more patient with being paid. Although the monument arrived in Salisbury in 1904, the UDC's fundraising efforts faced many difficulties. Rather than repossessing his sculpture in order to

74 "All About the Monument," 1.

75 Email correspondence with the Salisbury Department of Planning and Neighborhoods and the Baltimore Department of Planning, January 2025.

resell it, however, he allowed the Salisbury monument to remain in storage for another five years until the UDC was able to raise the necessary funds.⁷⁶

The inauguration ceremony of Salisbury's *Gloria Victis* in 1909 mirrored that in Baltimore six years earlier. The event commenced with a prayer by a local minister, recalling the sacred nature of the soldiers' mortal sacrifices. Francis Tiernan, who wrote under the pseudonym Christian Read, read an original poem she composed for the event titled "Gloria Victis" which nostalgically described the soldiers' gallant martyrdom as a long-gone warrior trait. The inheritance of civic duty was once again symbolized through the involvement of children, hundreds of whom had been gathered to place flowers at the base of the monument. Speeches were given by ex-Confederate military leaders who praised both the sacrifices of the dead as well as the incalculable contribution the women of the UDC played in upholding the collective memory and culture of the Confederate South.

One unique adaptation of the Lost Cause mythology visible at the inauguration of Salisbury's *Gloria Victis* appears in a comparison made by General Bennett H. Young between the bravery of Confederate soldiers with those of Meiji Japan during the recent Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905).⁷⁷ The war had been a major surprise for Western audiences, marking the first time in modern history that an East Asian country had decisively defeated a European military force, and marking the rise of Japan into an important imperial power. General Young proclaimed at the inauguration that the heavy losses Japanese troops had incurred faced against the much larger imperial Russian army proved to be a "baptism of blood" which further prepared and motivated them for ultimate victory.⁷⁸ Just as other Confederate apologists of the early twentieth century placed Confederate secession in comparison with the anti-imperial movements in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, Young's analogy—in addition to being an unusual comparison between Confederates and non-whites—illustrates the manner in which both *Gloria Victis* and the Lost Cause rhetoric surrounding its interpretation were continually adapted to the circumstances of their time and location.

76 "All about the Monument. What Will Be Done with It and When It Is Ours," *Salisbury Globe*, October 6, 1904, 1; "Beautiful Monument Is Unveiled at Salisbury. Masterpiece of Sculptor Ruckstuhl," *Charlotte Observer*, May 11, 1909, 12; "How Monument Fund Was Spent," *The Baltimore Sun*, May 3, 1904, 6.

77 Interestingly, Russia's experience of defeat with Japan ultimately led the country to orient its imperial ambitions away from Asia and towards southeast Europe, creating an alliance with Serbia that helped foster the outbreak of the First World War. Marko Attila Hoare, *Serbia: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 439. Digital edition.

78 "All about the Monument," 1; "Beautiful Monument is Unveiled at Salisbury," 11–12.

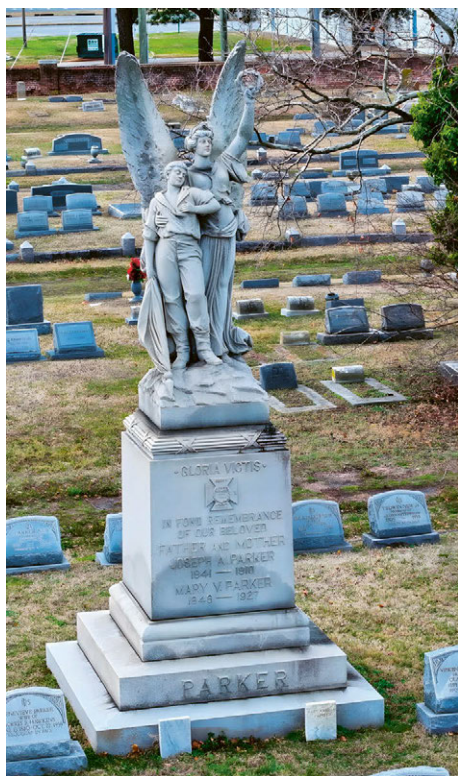


Fig. 4.6. Grave of Joseph A. Parker (1841–1910), Oak Grove Cemetery, Portsmouth, Virginia. Stone (likely granite) reduction of Ruckstuhl's *Confederate Soldier and Sailors Monument* by Archibald Ogg, approximately eight feet tall. Dedicated in 1911. Photo courtesy of Aaron S. Cohen, City of Portsmouth, VA.

Finally, the viral transmission of *Gloria Victis* is also evidenced in Virginia, where an eight-foot stone version of Ruckstuhl's monument, locally known as the Parker Monument, was created in 1911 to decorate the grave of Joseph A. Parker (1841–1910) in Portsmouth's Oak Grove Cemetery (fig.4.6). Not unlike the stone *Gloria Victis* decorating Peru's la Cripta de los Héroes, the Parker monument blurs the line between funerary and civic monument but for the unique purpose of venerating a local rather than a national patriarch. Parker was a celebrated Confederate war hero, having participated in several renowned raids and ambushes against Union forces while serving as a member of McNeill's Rangers. After the end of the war, Parker became an accomplished businessman as the owner of Parker Hosiery Mill and a director of the Merchants and Farmers Bank. During this time, he remained active in promoting Confederate memory as a leader of Portsmouth's local Stonewall Camp of the United Confederate Veterans Association.⁷⁹ The Parker monument was commissioned at

79 "Death Ends Useful Life of Mr. Joseph A. Parker: Banker, Manufacturer, Confederate Veteran and Esteemed Citizen Passes Away," *Portsmouth Star*, January 1, 1910, 1.

the request of Parker's family via a local artist, Archibald Ogg, whose company in Portsmouth, employing a dozen stone carvers, was a prominent specialist of granite and marble funerary monuments. With a few minor changes, likely due to the weightier and more fragile nature of stone, Ogg's sculpture is a nearly identical replica of the original Baltimore bronze, distinguished by the soldier holding a flag instead of a gun. A Southern Cross adorns the center of the pedestal and contains the inscription "Deo Vindice, 1861–1865." At the top of the pedestal, "Gloria Victis" is inscribed in bold letters.

The transmission of Ruckstuhl's *Gloria Victis* from its origin as a major city monument in Baltimore occupying public land and funded by the powerful UDC to a funerary monument in Portsmouth celebrating a famed local patriarch demonstrates the impact of viral iconography in a decentralized commemorative landscape. In the post-Reconstruction South, structures of power emanated from state and municipal rather than national bodies. Not unlike the political practices that enforced segregation and Black disenfranchisement across the Jim Crow South, common cultural rituals of Confederate commemoration occurred through a process of Tardian imitation.⁸⁰ By the time the Parker funerary sculpture was erected, "Gloria Victis" had become a relatively common inscription for Confederate monuments throughout the South, from Virginia to Louisiana. *Gloria Victis* had become part of the shared cultural language of the Confederate cult of the Lost Cause, in large part divorced from its origins in France via Mercié's sculpture.

This somnambulistic appropriation and transmission of symbols is equally tangible in the Parker monument. Despite being a direct copy of Ruckstuhl's monument in Baltimore, it remains unclear how or if Ogg obtained permission from Ruckstuhl for the creation of the Portsmouth monument. No reference to Ruckstuhl, the UDC, or the city of Baltimore are inscribed on the monument. Upon the monument's unveiling in Portsmouth's Oak Grove Cemetery, a local newspaper wrote that the design was based on a monument in Baltimore but gives little other information about its origins or authorship. Instead, the newspaper refers to the Parker monument in a broader sense as "a representation of *Gloria Victis*."⁸¹

80 See the book's introduction for a discussion of Gabriel Tarde's theory of imitation.

81 "Parker Memorial is Now Finished," *Virginian-Pilot*, July 30, 1911, 20; "The Marble and Stone Works of Mr. Archibald Ogg," *The Portsmouth Star*, September 3, 1909, 13.

Conclusion

Ruckstuhl's Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument, itself originally titled *Gloria Victis*, helped usher *Gloria Victis* into the visual lexicon of the cult of the Lost Cause of the Confederacy. This transformation of a visual form originally used in France to commemorate their own Lost Cause following the defeat of 1871 fit well within the longstanding strategy of Confederate apologists to look to Europe. Before and during the war, white Southern leaders framed their secession as a continuation of the struggle for independence, akin to historical revolutions in Europe, such as those in France and Greece, as well as contemporary nationalist movements in countries such as Italy and Ireland. By invoking the idea that their fight was for liberty against Northern aggression, they sought to position their actions within a narrative of self-determination that resonated with European liberal revolutionary ideals. In the wake of the Confederacy's defeat, this comparative rhetoric did not fade. Alongside creating nostalgic comparisons of the Old South to the glories of past European civilizations such as Rome, white Southern ministers and politicians at the turn of the twentieth century claimed that the example of the Confederacy's brave fight for independence against a superior military force continued to inspire nationalist movements abroad.

The image of France played a notably important role within the mythologization of the history of the Confederacy not only due to the importance of the French Revolution within nationalist ideology, but also due to prestige that French culture held within white Southern bourgeois society. The appropriation of beaux-arts styles and the preference for artists trained in France, including Mercié and Ruckstuhl, not only further reinforced the idea that the Confederacy's struggle was part of a grand narrative of freedom, but it also, somewhat paradoxically, helped validate the idea of a distinct white Southern culture not only in the ex-Confederate states but in the North as well. In an era when mass-produced sculptures dominated the Southern commemorative landscape, the women's societies in Richmond, Baltimore, and Salisbury who were essential to commissioning monuments by either Ruckstuhl or Mercié in their respective cities understood the social and economic benefits that fine arts monuments could bring to their communities.

While the allure of exclusivity helped validate the importance of Ruckstuhl's and Mercié's monuments in the South, industrial reproduction played an equal if not more important role in the adaptation of *Gloria Victis* into Confederate commemorative culture. The proliferation of workshops relying on technological innovation and industrial production methods to make

traditionally fine art mediums such as sculpture and stained glass more available for a larger audience of consumers set the ground for the cult of the Lost Cause to become a mass visual phenomenon in the South. Due to this, the phrase “*Gloria Victis*” frequently appeared as an inscription on the standing soldier monuments mass-produced by local bronze manufacturers and stone carving companies. The fact that the appearance of these inscriptions predate the inauguration of Ruckstuhl’s Baltimore monument points to the role that books, statuettes, photographs, and other forms of consumer media played in disseminating *Gloria Victis* across the South.

These monuments, in all their variations of context and medium, helped shape civil religion in the South. Even though the states that formed the short-lived Confederate States of America failed to be recognized as sovereign nations, as expressed in the Articles of Secession, a civil religion nonetheless developed and flourished in the postwar South. The relatively high degree of power and autonomy which local governments wielded in the wake of the Reconstruction meant that Southern states were able to continue on the Confederate ideal of white supremacy through the enactment of segregation and disenfranchisement laws aimed at oppressing Black Southerners. The creation of a collective memory of an idealized Confederate way of life, along with the constant reminder that public monuments played in reminding white Southerners of their indebtedness to the Christlike sacrifice of their Confederate forefathers, helped transform the practice of segregating and subjugating Black Southerners into a cultural belief that many white Southerners held with the same religious zeal with which they defended their Christian beliefs, and that they were willing to resort to acts of violence to defend.

Given the organization of white Southern civil religion on a nonfederal level, and given the contention that many Americans, especially Northerners, held towards the practice of Confederate commemoration, private groups such as women’s societies played a uniquely important role in developing the cult of the Lost Cause of the Confederacy. Organizations like the UDC organized memorial services, established cemeteries, and erected monuments, ensuring that the sacrifices of the Confederate dead were the object of sacred veneration. The essential role that women played in erecting Confederate monuments changed the manner in which the central theme of *Gloria Victis* was interpreted. While critics in France had frequently placed emphasis on the dying soldier’s act of national martyrdom, the white Southern interpretation of Ruckstuhl’s sculpture placed equal emphasis on the winged female figure. Newspapers emphasized her as a maternal figure who comforts and nurtures the dying soldier, symbolizing the essential task

that white women had in carrying Southern culture out of the ruins of defeat and teaching it to future generations. The equally frequent interpretation of the female figure as a Christian angel rather than a classical deity further demonstrates the ideological importance that both women and religion played in *Gloria Victis*'s adaptation in the Confederate cult of the Lost Cause.

The following chapter, which looks the defeat of the Boer republics during the South African War (1899–1902), examines a similar scenario of a society creating a Lost Cause mythology despite losing independence. As in the US South, the Lost Cause civil religion celebrated by local Afrikaans-speaking communities was deeply influenced by Christianity. The interpretation of defeat as a “baptism of blood” offered by white Southern ministers was closely paralleled by the South African ministers’ reference to their loss as a “baptism of fire.”⁸² Moreover, both societies perpetuated their respective Lost Cause cults not only as a means of demonstrating the social superiority of their communities but explicitly did so as a means of oppressing local Black residents.

82 Retief Müller, “War, Religion, and White Supremacy in Comparative Perspective: South Africa and the American South,” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 25, no. 1 (2004): 195.

5. The Boer Republics, France, and the South African War (1899–1902)

Abstract: Chapter 5 analyzes the entanglement of French and Boer commemorative cultures during and after the South African War (1899–1902). In France, the conflict fueled anti-Dreyfusard nationalism, with the death of Colonel Georges de Villebois-Mareuil transformed into a symbol of French grievance following 1871, the Dreyfus Affair, and the Fashoda Incident. His 1902 monument in Nantes linked French victimhood to Boer resistance against British imperialism. Boer leaders such as Paul Kruger strategically mobilized this symbolism to cultivate international sympathy. While *Gloria Victis* played a more limited role in South Africa, monuments in Potchefstroom and Rustenburg reveal how French Lost Cause ideology intersected with Boer Christian nationalism and postwar mythmaking.

Keywords: Dreyfus Affair, right-wing politics, imperialism, monuments, Fashoda Incident

The Monument to Villebois-Mareuil by French artist Raoul Verlet was erected in 1902 at the place de la Bourse in Nantes (fig. 5.1). Born in Nantes in 1847, Georges de Villebois-Mareuil was a lifelong military veteran who died in battle on April 5, 1900, having achieved the rank of colonel in the French army, serving in the French colonies of Vietnam and Algeria. He was also a celebrated hero of the Franco-Prussian War, during which he was wounded at the 1870 battle to recapture the French city of Blois from the Prussian army. Villebois-Mareuil's participation in this battle is commemorated via one of the bronze reliefs on the monument's pillar, where he is depicted as heroically leading a group of soldiers to recapture a bridge. In the 1880s and 1890s, Villebois-Mareuil later became involved in right-wing nationalist politics, first by serving as a member of Minister of War Georges Boulanger's cabinet, and then later by helping found the ultranationalist, anti-Semitic

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Fig. 5.1. Raoul Verlet, *Monument au colonel de Villebois-Mareuil*, Place de la Bourse, Nantes, France. Bronze, 1902. (Author's photo.)

monarchist group, Action Française. Despite his reputation as an ardent patriot, however, Villebois-Mareuil did not die defending the French flag. Rather, he died as a foreign combatant in the Boer army during the South African War (1899–1902) in South Africa. A second plaque on the monument commemorates his death at the Battle of Boshof, where he was shot and killed by British troops while commanding other mercenaries who had left Europe to fight on behalf of the Boer republics. Boers, or Afrikaners, were predominately white Calvinist Europeans of Dutch origin who had arrived at the southern tip of Africa in the seventeenth century. The predominantly Boer South African Republic and Orange Free State had existed under the suzerainty of the British Empire since the early nineteenth century, but a failed war in 1899 led to the republics' collapse and absorption into the empire. A second plaque commemorates Villebois-Mareuil's death during the South African War, representing him in the moment he is fatally struck by a British bullet, falling backward with arms outstretched. Villebois-Mareuil's Christlike pose is mirrored in the principal bronze statue, where he falls into the arms of a female figure holding a flag, an allegory of the motherland.

The monument portrays Villebois-Mareuil as a martyr for patriotism; but whose country did he die for, the Boer republics or France? While Villebois-Mareuil died fighting in a foreign war, certain French groups, especially those connected with the nationalist far right, interpreted Villebois-Mareuil's

participation in the South African War as a patriotic gesture of France's commitment to the ideals of nationalism, an expression of French military prowess, and a blow to the country's principal rival in the spreading colonization of Africa—England. Tied together with contemporary politics, and visible within the monuments' iconography, is the lingering memory of the Franco-Prussian War. The sculpture's creator, Raoul Verlet, had originally titled his work *Gloria Victis* when he exhibited at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris two years earlier. Even though it lacks the wings of *Gloria Victis*, Verlet's monument clearly references Mercié's sculpture—which was still being erected as a Franco-Prussian War monument in cities around France at that time—through its representation of a martyred soldier falling into the arms of a patriotic female allegory. The implicit comparison between the South African War and the Franco-Prussian War within the principal bronze grouping is more clearly made by the mirroring bronze plaques representing Villebois-Mareuil's campaigns in Blois and Boshof. Simultaneously honoring victory and defeat, these plaques create an intentional diptych paralleling the French and the Boers as two peoples engaged in a righteous struggle against an imperial invader and promising a future victory, whether real or symbolic, for both.

One of main motivating factors behind the creation of the Nantes monument to Villebois-Mareuil has to do with the entanglement of the South African War with the Dreyfus Affair within French national politics. Even though these two events have no direct correlation, they became connected within French discourse due to their highly mediatized nature. The anti-Dreyfusard movement in France, which included figures on the far right, including Villebois-Mareuil, closely associated itself with the pro-Boer movement. Most pro-Boer committees were led by and attracted members amongst France's anti-Dreyfusards. Some of the more notorious anti-Dreyfusards involved in promoting the Boer cause include newspaper editor Henri Rochefort, Chamber of Deputies representative Georges Berry, the writers Jules Lemaitre and François Coppée, both of whom were member of the Ligue de la patrie française, the anti-Semitic novelist Sibylle Riquetti de Mirabeau, who wrote under the nom-de-plume Gyp, as well as Edouard Drumont, a writer and one of the leading promoters of anti-Semitism in France.¹

The principal reason behind the involvement of anti-Dreyfusards in the South African War had to do with their fundamental support of the French

1 Guy Pelletier, "France and the Boer War 1. The Beginning of the War to the Death of Villebois-Mareuil," *Historia* 33, no. 1 (1988): 20.

military. The year prior to the outbreak of the South African War, the French military had suffered two highly mediatized humiliations—the Dreyfus affair and the Fashoda Incident. The Dreyfus affair had placed France in such a highly negative light within the international community that countries threatened to boycott the upcoming Paris Exposition Universelle of 1900. Nine months later, Émile Zola published “J’Accuse ... !” in *L’Aurore*, which shocked France by directly naming and condemning numerous high-ranking French military officers of intentionally fabricating their accusations against Auguste Dreyfus. The reputation of the French military, a sacred institution in Third Republican civil religion, had been tarnished not only nationally, but internationally as well, as foreign heads of state, and especially those in England, were openly critical of the handling of Dreyfus’s trial. A second humiliation for the French military occurred in the East African town of Fashoda, presently known as Kodok in South Sudan. France, having colonized much of West Africa sought to build a route between the Atlantic Ocean and the Red Sea. The United Kingdom, having colonized Egypt and South Africa, desired to complete a rail line connecting its two foreign territories. Both countries ventured towards East Africa as part of their expansion campaigns, and, in 1898, competing military expeditions led by French Captain Jean-Baptiste Marchand and British Colonel Herbert Kitchener crossed paths in Fashoda. Although both countries claimed the land for themselves, France eventually withdrew, causing an uproar of Anglophobia amongst French nationalists.²

The South African War presented itself as an opportune event to enact revenge on England. England was heavily chastised by the international community for its ruthless tactics to subdue the Boer republics, which included burning down homes and placing civilians in concentration camps, where tens of thousands of South African noncombatants died of starvation and disease. Pro-Boer groups, almost all of which were organized by the anti-Dreyfusard French right, collected funds for securing supplies, including medical equipment and clothing, to be sent to the Boer republics. While expressing sympathy for the plight of the Boer people, they made no effort to hide their ulterior motive of enacting revenge on England by financing Boer fighters. Most astonishingly, these groups also recruited volunteers to fight with the Boer foreign legion, helping them obtain supplies, fake passports, and transportation to South Africa. In all, roughly 240 French citizens fought into the South African War, many of whom served under Villebois-Mareuil.

2 Robert Lynn Fuller, *The Origins of the French National Movement, 1886–1914* (Jefferson, North Carolina, and London: McFarland and Company), 80, 106–107.

Fighting for a foreign nation was highly illegal under Article 21 of the French Civil Code, which stipulated that those caught doing so would have their citizenship revoked.³ Immediately following Villebois-Mareuil's death just a few months after his arrival in South Africa, he became a martyr for various factions of the anti-Dreyfusard right, from establishment republicans to revolutionary monarchists, all of whom clamored to erect monuments, plaques, and street names in his honor.

Beyond the immediate politics of the anti-Dreyfusard right, an additional reason that the commemoration of Villebois-Mareuil found broad support within France had to do with the connections made between the South African War and the Franco-Prussian War within the French media. Christophe Prochasson argues that following the Fashoda Incident and the South African War, England was placed in the same villainous role that Germany had occupied in the French psyche since 1870.⁴ The thought of two Christian republican countries being invaded by an unscrupulous land-grabbing empire resonated deeply with the French public. Visual mass media in France, which came to a new pinnacle at the turn of the twentieth century through the rapid expansion of illustrated journals, the popularization of postcards, and increased literacy, frequently portrayed the Boers in a romantic light which reflected French self-perception. As a result, iconography such as *Gloria Victis*, which was linked to the memory of the Franco-Prussian War, was frequently reappropriated within French visual culture to communicate a moral interpretation of the South African War. The commemoration of Villebois-Mareuil, who had fought in both wars, therefore became a cipher for affirming French identity as a righteous people and reigniting longstanding resentments against Germany.

The intense international media response to the South African War circled back to South Africa. On March 24, 1906, four years after the collapse of the Boer republics, now under the rule of the United Kingdom, the *Gloria Victis* monument was inaugurated on the grounds of the Potchefstroom Theological Seminary to commemorate students and alumni who had died during the war. Although the monument is visually distinct from the original *Gloria Victis* created by Mercié, French commemorative culture made a distinct impact on the expression of a Boer Lost Cause mythology.

3 H. F. Rivière, *Les codes français: conformes aux textes officiels*, 28th edition (Paris: Chevalier-Marescq et Cie, 1894): livre premier, des persons, article 21.

4 Christophe Prochasson, "Une crise anglaise de la pensée française? Les intellectuels français face à l'Angleterre au temps de Fachoda et de la guerre des Boers," *Les Cahiers du Centre de Recherches Historiques* 31 (2003): 1.

Physically overpowered by the British military, international propaganda played an important role in the Boer war effort. Boer politicians frequently appealed to their French supporters by meeting with political leaders on both the left and the right, actively participating in French cultural events including ceremonies, inaugurations, and exhibitions, and, above all, rendering homage to Villebois-Mareuil. As a result, French iconography relating to the South African War, including occasional public monuments, were reincorporated into South African commemorations of the war. In the case of *Gloria Victis*, the idea of celebrating noble defeat merged with the development of the postwar Christian nationalist civil religion. Stemming from their Calvinist beliefs and insular society, Boer civil and religious leaders promoted the belief that God had directly chosen the Boer people. As a result, the defeat of the South African War was recast in terms of a biblical narrative as a trial of faith, and a finite hurdle in the eventual victory of the Boer people.

This chapter therefore examines not only how the South African War became incorporated into French national politics, but how the French response to the war was reincorporated into the visual culture of Boer national memory. The production, circulation, and repurposing of iconography between South Africa and France are not only illustrative of the entanglement of national and international politics, as seen in the conflation of anti-Dreyfusard and pro-Boer sympathies in France, but moreover of the increasingly influential role of reproducible media within the transmission of ideas and images. The Dreyfus affair and the South African War are undoubtedly two of the most mediatized events.

A Brief History of the South African War

European colonization of present-day South Africa began in 1652 with the arrival of ships from the Dutch East India Company, who established a settlement which would later become Cape Town. The company employed agrarian workers from the Netherlands to settle the colony in exchange for land and protection. These Dutch Calvinist rural laborers, intermingling with other European groups such as the French Huguenots, settled permanently in the Cape Colony, and became popularly known as Boers or “farmers” in the dominant Dutch-based Afrikaans language. European colonization at the Cape brought Dutch settlers into violent conflict with Indigenous communities, particularly the Khoikhoi and the San. These early encounters marked the beginning of land dispossession, coerced labor, and racial

hierarchies that would expand over subsequent centuries into a broader system of colonial domination and racial oppression across southern Africa.

In 1814, after the Napoleonic Wars, the Netherlands ceded the Cape Colony to the British. The subsequent influx of English-speaking settlers, imposition of English as the official language, and abolition of slavery in 1834 were greatly resented by the Boers, leading to a mass migration of Boers away from the coast to establish their own colony, the Natalia Republic, later known as the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free State. By the mid-nineteenth century, there were three major powers existing in present-day South Africa: the British Cape Colony and the Colony of Natal, the Boer republics, and the Zulu Kingdom. The British Empire engaged in an aggressive campaign to assert control over its neighbors, leading to the Zulu War of 1879 and the First Boer War of 1880. While the defeated Zulu Kingdom was absorbed into the Colony of Natal, the Boer republics, which had greatly defied British incursion, agreed to becoming self-ruling suzerain states.

Despite the peace, the relationship between the Boer republics and the British government remained contested, with the former emphasizing the republics' *de facto* independence and the latter their *de jure* existence under the umbrella of the empire. The discovery of diamonds and gold on the hitherto largely undesirable lands which the Boers had colonized earlier in the century during the Great Trek exacerbated the question of national versus imperial authority, as did Boer discrimination against foreigners, including British citizens, living in the republics and working in the mines. These conflicts lead to the eruption of the South African War, also known as the Second Boer War, at the end of 1899. Despite early successes by the Boer armies, which were equipped with modern military machinery acquired through the trade of natural resources, they eventually succumbed to the much larger British military, and by September 1900 both of the Transvaal Republic and the Orange Free State had been overtaken.

For two more years, the South African War continued in the form of guerilla conflict. In an effort to stifle local support for the guerillas, a policy of severe oppression and civilian reprisals ensued. The British military forced local populations into concentration camps, where over 27,000 Boer civilians died. Reports led by the British humanitarian activist Emily Hobhouse of the dire conditions of the camps—along with photographs of starving children, such as the infamous photograph of seven-year old Lizzie van Zyl, who died in the Bloemfontein concentration camp—led to international condemnation spanning from the United States to Croatia of the British war effort. The ability for such images to cause such widespread shock had in large part to do not only with the novelty of being confronted

with harrowing visual proof of a civilian population's suffering under the hands of a military occupation, but also how widespread such technology had become at the turn of the twentieth century.

The clearly atrocious actions of the British army against the Boer populace gained condemnation by the international media, no doubt in large part because of the fact that the population that was being massacred were white. By contrast, Filipinos, who suffered profoundly similar circumstances of forced civilian displacement and colonization during the concurrent Philippine-American War (1899–1902), received comparatively much less sympathy amongst Western populations. Behind the highly mediatized plight of Boer women and children was the largely hidden suffering of Black South African populations, which up until recently has been deeply under-analyzed. The South African war was known as a “white man’s war,” and at the start of the war, both the English and the Boers forbid the use of Black Africans in their regiments. Black South African populations were excluded not out of a desire to limit the war’s violence, but rather because both regimes believed that to let the Black population take up arms against any white population, whether Boer or English, would have disastrous effects on the racial hierarchy. Nonetheless, Black South African populations suffered at the hands of both the British and Boers. Between 14,000 and 21,000 Black South African civilians died in British camps alone, while both British and Boer forces routinely executed those who were accused of collaboration with the enemy.⁵

By the spring of 1900, it was already clear to many within the Boer republics that the war effort was in vain. The capital city of the Free State of Orange, Bloemfontein, had already fallen into the hands of the British army, and Pretoria was next. British victory seemed to be an inevitable fact for those living in the Boer republics. Paul Kruger, president of the South African Republic, refused to surrender, instead fleeing to Europe, where he hoped to garner support from sympathetic governments. Seeing no reason to risk their lives for a lost cause, thousands of soldiers abandoned their posts and returned to their family farms.⁶ Nonetheless, a guerilla war against the British army continued on for two more years, fought by the most die-hard

5 Jackie Grolber, *Anglo-Boer War (South African War) 1899–1902: Historical Guide to Memorials and Sites in South Africa* (Pinetown, South Africa: 30 Degrees South Publishers, 2018), 217, 221; John Lambert, “‘Loyalty Its Own Reward’: The South African War Experience of Natal’s ‘Loyal’ Africans,” in *Writing a Wider War: Rethinking Gender, Race, and Identity in the South African War, 1899–1902*, eds. Greg Cuthbertson, Albert Grundlingh, and Mary-Lynn Suttie (Athens, Ohio: University of Ohio Press, 2002), 118.

6 Grolber, *Anglo-Boer War (South African War) 1899–1902*, 79.

republicans, the so-called *Bittereinders*, or Bitter Enders, a group of soldiers frequently romanticized in historiography who preferred to fight on under impossible circumstances rather than admit defeat, until defeat was finally accepted by the remaining Boer commanders at the Treaty of Vereeniging on May 31, 1902. Such stories of the profound suffering and enduring bravery of the Boer people had a long-lasting impact on the French, many of whom did not see the Boers as losers, but, much like themselves, noble victors in the pursuit of a Lost Cause.

Public Reactions towards the South African War and Anti-Dreyfusard Politics in France

Although far from France's colonial interests in northern and central Africa, the war between the British Empire and the Boer republics fanned the flames of current political tensions surrounding the Dreyfus affair. Dreyfus had already been granted a presidential pardon by Émile Loubet in September, two months before war broke out in South Africa, but the affair had caused deeper cultural and political division within French society, igniting conflicts that spread beyond the debate around Dreyfus's culpability. On February 23, 1899, the nationalist poet and political activist Paul Déroulède led a bloodless attempt to overthrow the French Parliament. Déroulède's failed coup d'état led to a government crackdown against various radical nationalist movements, including monarchists, anti-Semites, and anti-parliamentary republicans. The broad reactions amongst elements of the French right to these events, starting with Dreyfus's pardon and Déroulède's arrest, were accusations of government persecution and deepened factionalism within French politics.

An example of how the South African War became entangled in the French political divisions of 1899 can be seen in the events surrounding a meeting organized by le Comité d'action de la jeunesse française en faveur du Transvaal (The French Youth Action Committee in Support of the Transvaal) at Tivoli-Vauxhall in Paris in December 1899. The committee was formed with the purpose of recruiting volunteers to fight for the Boer army and send supplies to those already in South Africa. Although nominally a student-led pro-Boer committee, the group was deeply entrenched in the anti-Dreyfusard, pro-military politics of the French right wing. The group's intellectual leadership drew from well-known nationalists including la Ligue de la Patrie française (The League of the French Fatherland) member Lieutenant-Colonel Parfait-Louis Monteil, Chamber of Deputies representative and director of *La*

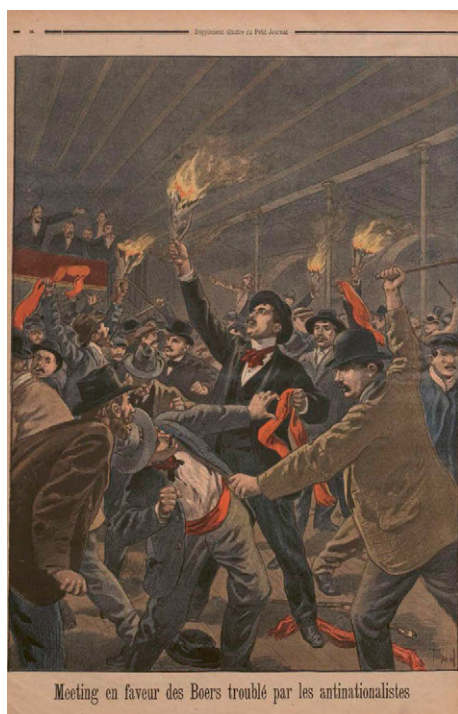


Fig. 5.2. Osvaldo Tofani, "Boer Rally Disrupted by Anti-Nationalists," colored engraving, *Le Petit Journal: Supplément illustré* 11, no. 477 (January 7, 1900): 8.

Patrie Lucien Millevoye, and fellow deputy Georges Berry, the committee's honorary president.⁷ Shortly after the committee's meeting began, a group of political rivals who had infiltrated the meeting started a brawl, wielding knives and clubs, waving red flags, and shouting the Dreyfusard slogan "Vive Loubet." While it is unclear which group was responsible for the disruption of the meeting, the *Petit-Journal*, which published an illustration of the brawl, labeled the protesters as anti-nationalists (fig. 5.2). The right-wing *l'Intransigeant* referred to them as anarchists, further accusing the national government of complicity while being under the control of so-called Jewish cosmopolitans. Regardless of the actuality of the event, it is clear that the violent division between France's anti-Dreyfusard and Dreyfusard camps had become entangled in the foreign politics of the South African War.⁸

The violence witnessed at the December meeting of Comité d'action de la jeunesse française en faveur du Transvaal not only illustrates how

7 Laurent Joly, "Antisémites et Antisémitisme à La Chambre Des Députés Sous La IIIe République," *Revue d'histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* (1954-) 54, no. 3 (2007): 73–75; Pelletier, "France and the Boer War 1," 20.

8 Gaston Laporte, "Un guer-apens policier," *L'Intransigeant*, 24 décembre 1899, 1–2.

the South African War stoked already existent divisions between French political factions, but also how it became an important recruiting tool for the right, and a political win following the pardoning of Dreyfus and the arrest of Déroulède. While the militant pro-Boer groups in France tended to be led by persons associated with the anti-Dreyfusard nationalist right, support for the Boers was not exclusive to the right. Left-leaning newspapers including *La Petite République* expressed bias towards the British Empire and right-leaning newspapers including *La Patrie* and *L'Intransigeant* favored the Boers, but a general admiration for the Boer people manifested itself throughout much of French society, regardless of political ideology.⁹

The unexpectedly strong military resistance on the part of the Boers despite a clear asymmetry between the two belligerent forces, as well as the commonly accepted perception that the British provoked the war out of greed for the region's newly discovered natural resources, made the Boers attractive folk heroes in the eyes of much of the French public at the start of the war. When news spread in 1900 of the collective punishment of the civilian population through concentration camps and the burning of homes, public disgust against the actions of the British Empire were so great that even French media outlets otherwise supportive of British legal claims over South Africa expressed sympathy for the Boers. Due to these injustices, the Boers received broad international support, including even in England. In France, a particularly romanticized image of the Boers arose in part due to a cultural tendency towards self-identification with this group. The French media cast the Boer republics as the victims of imperial aggression. Victimhood had become a facet of Third Republican French civil religion, which continued to vilify the German Empire long after the defeat of 1871.

Therefore, a strong bias towards the Boers arose in French culture in which symbols traditionally associated with French nationalism and the memory the Franco-Prussian War were reassigned to the South African War. Pro-Boer sentiments were expressed widely across French material and visual culture through books, toys, plates, postcards, and commemorative medals. One phrase that commonly accompanied such materials was "Gloria Victis," as illustrated by the pro-Boer book *Gloire aux Vaincus* and also by a pair of pro-Boer French postcards produced shortly after 1902 (fig. 5.3).¹⁰

9 Alvan F. Sanborn, "Gloria Victis! Krueger's Reception in Paris: Another View," *Boston Evening Transcript*, December 19, 1900, 14. Guy Pelletier, "France and the Boer War 2. The Death of Villebois-Mareuil to the End of the War," *Historia* 34, no. 1 (1989): 55; Pelletier, "France and the Boer War 1." 24.

10 Paul Deschamps, *Gloire aux Vaincus!* (Montluçon: Grande impr. du centre, 1901).



Fig. 5.3. Osvaldo Tofani, "Boer Rally Disrupted by Anti-Nationalists," colored engraving, *Le Petit Journal: Supplément illustré* 11, no. 477 (January 7, 1900): 8.

The first postcard, titled "Les Zéros Anglais" (The English zeros), depicts the British Empire's political and military leaders, including Lord Kitchener, already villainized in France for his role in the Fashoda Incident. Alongside these portraits are illustrations emphasizing England's cruelty and greed, including a depiction of Death, a sack of gold, and a mocking depiction of an ass. At the bottom is written "L'or prime le droite" (gold trumps law), a satirical slogan lampooning a phrase commonly attributed to General Bismarck in France, "La force prime le droite" (might makes right).

The accompanying postcard, "Les Héros Boers" (The Boer heroes), similarly portrays important political and military leaders of the Boer republics, including presidents Paul Kruger and Marthinus Theunis Steyn and General Louis Botha, but also the French colonel Villebois-Mareuil. The phrase "Gloria Victis," printed at the bottom of the postcard mirrors the satirically Bismarckian motto, "L'or prime le droite," accompanying the British counterpart. Through a play with established symbols and the newly established icon of the martyred Villebois-Mareuil, these postcards, like many other examples of pro-Boer memorabilia, implicitly weave together memories of the Franco-Prussian War with public perceptions of the South

African War to not only foster pro-Boer sympathies, but also reinforce self-perceptions of righteous victimhood.

Riding on the wave of his international popularity, the exiled president Kruger visited France in November 1900 with the hopes of rallying support for the ongoing war. There was practically no hope for a definitive Boer military victory as the guerilla war continued through the end of the year, but Kruger and his colleagues were eager for a European power to intervene on behalf of the Boer republics and act as a mediator between the two belligerent parties. Kruger had several meetings with important French statesmen, including Loubet, Prime Minister Pierre Waldeck-Rousseau, and Foreign Minister Théophile Delcassé, but with no promise of concrete action. One of the consistent concerns of the national government, as expressed through both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance, was of the disruption the war would cause on the exploitation of minerals from South African mines.¹¹ The desire to preserve French business interests was therefore a major reason for maintaining official neutrality, but so was the government's desire to foster good terms with England in case of a conflict with Germany, a desire that was fulfilled in 1904 with the establishment of the Entente Cordiale with England.

Nonetheless, Kruger and his delegation received a more welcoming reception at the Hôtel de Ville. Senator Louis Pauliat, an anti-Dreyfusard nationalist and president of le Comité pour l'indépendance des Républiques sud-africaines (The Committee for the Independence of the South African Republics) had convinced his politically likeminded colleagues in the Paris Municipal Council, including Louis Dausset, one of the leaders of Ligue de la Patrie française, to have a formal reception for Kruger.¹² There, several speeches were made expressing sympathy for the Boer cause and comparing their suffering to France's own, including for example, one by Adolphe Chérioux, General Council of the Seine, who exclaimed, "Ah! We too have known the tragic days and the great national sorrows. And that is why all the echoes of France have felt so strongly about your misfortunes!"¹³ Beyond

11 Letter from Joseph Caillaux, Ministre des Finances, to Théophile Delcassé, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, September 30, 1899; letter from Théophile Delcassé, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, [to Victor Aubert], Consul Général de France, Pretoria, October 5, 1899. 204CPCOM, Correspondance politique et commerciale, Nouvelle série, Transvaal-Orange, Volume 28, Politique Étrangère: Dossier général. Centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, France.

12 Philippe Deschamps, *Livre d'or transvaal and de l'orange* (Paris: 1901): 137.

13 "Ah! nous avons connu, nous aussi, et les jour tragiques et les grandes douleurs nationales. Et c'est pourquoi tous les échos de France ont tant ressenti de vos malheurs!" Adolphe Chérioux, November 26, 1900, in *Réception des délégués des deux républiques de l'Orange et du Transvaal et*

these patriotic words, however, the reception was diplomatically impotent. Delcassé made sure that any government dialogue with the Boer delegation remained simple gestures of courtesy and banned any formal pomp, including the Paris Municipal Council's plan to host a party for Kruger.¹⁴

While the French national government kept the issue of the South African War at arm's-length and the infatuated French public eagerly consumed news of the war in the manner of an entertaining spectacle, the French right was one of the few groups to offer concrete support. What separated right-wing supporters from the masses were three tendencies: a belief in military intervention rather than arbitration, Anglophobia, and anti-Semitism. The pro-military stance has already been illustrated above through the example of the *le Comité d'action de la jeunesse française au Transvaal*, which sought to gather and finance French mercenaries to fight alongside the Boers. Alongside this group, similar committees, including *le Comité de Défense des Boers* (The Committee for the Defense of the Boers) and *le Comité français des Républiques sud-africaines* (The French Committee for the South African Republics), were organized with the purpose of providing material aid to the Boers through fundraisers and public subscriptions. In one particular booklet which was used to help enlist volunteers, *le Comité d'action de la jeunesse française au Transvaal* boasted that 4,000 Frenchmen had enlisted. In reality, however, the number of French mercenaries was much smaller, estimated to be around 240.¹⁵

The military action proposed by these groups was motivated less by the defense of the Boers than by a desire to fight and kill English soldiers. While Anglophobic imagery was a common facet of popular pro-Boer media, it was only a minor component within public sentiments, whereas the French Right sought to cast real blows to the British Empire either through economic boycotts or through physical violence. The booklet referenced above by the *Comité d'action de la jeunesse française au Transvaal* summarizes the Anglophobic motivations behind their support for the Boers succinctly in stating their primary agenda: "To bring aid to the French established in the Transvaal and who are enlisted in the Boer army to fight the common enemy: the English."¹⁶ The underlying motivation

du président de la République Sud-Africaine. Compte Rendu Officiel (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1901), 20.

14 Pelletier, "France and the Boer War 2," 57.

15 *Comité d'action de la jeunesse française en faveur du Transvaal, Les Français au Transvaal* (Paris: Paul Dupont, 1900), 20; Pelletier, "France and the Boer War 1," 25.

16 "A porter secours aux Français établis au Transvaal et qui sont enrôlés dans l'armée boër pour combattre l'ennemi commun: l'Anglais," *Comité d'action de la jeunesse française en faveur*

for promoting anti-English violence was lingering resentment regarding the Fashoda Incident and a desire to reassert France's military power. In an article published in *L'Intransigeant* during the Fashoda Incident, the right-wing paper's editor in chief, Henri Rochefort, called for France to utilize its military alliance with Russia to assert its position on Fashoda, vowing that France should not allow itself to be humiliated by England just as it had been by Germany.¹⁷ The South African War was therefore used as a pretext by French nationalists to engage in combat against England and fulfill their desire for *revanche* in the wake of decades of perceived victimhood by other European powers.

The final and arguably most important factor in motivating right-wing involvement in the South African War was the ongoing Dreyfus affair, which infused nearly every aspect of French politics. The broad support for Dreyfus within the British press and the denunciation of the French military for unjustly imprisoning the Jewish captain upset France's nationalists, thereby motivating their bellicose response to both the Fashoda Incident and the subsequent South African War.¹⁸ The entanglement of pro-military rhetoric, post-Fashoda Anglophobia, and anti-Dreyfusardism in the right's support of the Boers is illustrated a speech given by Georges Berry, on March 10, 1900, organized by the Comité d'action de la jeunesse française au Transvaal, in which the Deputy states: "Shame on England, who having failed in her criminal designs, acclaimed Dreyfus the same day that the French flag was torn to pieces by a delirious crowd. But let her be reassured: that tricolor flag, torn down at Fashoda and torn apart in London, was carried to Pretoria by French volunteers, and it is under its folds, mingled with those of the banner of the South African Republic, that the Boers will defeat their oppressors and win their independence."¹⁹ As a result of the conflation of the Anglo-Boer War with the Dreyfus affair in French politics, more extreme anti-Semitic theories crept into pro-Boer literature.

du Transvaal, *Les Français au Transvaal*, 8.

17 Henri Rochefort, "Autre Soufflet," *L'Intransigeant*, October 13, 1898, 1.

18 Prochasson, "Une crise anglaise de la pensée française?" 22–25.

19 "Honte à elle, qui ayant échoué dans ses criminels desseins, fit le même jour acclamer Dreyfus et lacérer le drapeau français par une foule en délire. Mais qu'elle se rassure, ce drapeau tricolore arraché de Fachoda et déchiré à Londres, a été porté à Pretoria par des volontaires français, et c'est, abrités sous ses plis, mêlés à ceux de l'étendard de la République du Sud que les Boers battront leurs oppresseurs, et conquerront leur indépendance." Georges Berry, *Français-Boërs: conférence de M. Georges Berry, Député de Paris; précédée d'une introduction de M. de Mahy, Député de la Réunion, Ancien Ministre de la Marine* (Paris: Mercadier 1900), 61.

Drawing from the common accusation that the United Kingdom was motivated by the desire to control Boer diamond and gold mines, the theory that financial institutions run by a Jewish cosmopolitan elite were ultimately behind British military efforts became a common theme in pro-Boer media.²⁰ The intersection between support for the Boers and anti-Semitism within the far right is clearly evidenced by Rochefort's article, "Les dreyfusards et le Transvaal." In the article, the author argues that only the Dreyfusard newspapers expressed sympathy for England when reporting on the South African War, claiming that these newspapers were secretly in the pocket of Jewish diamond and gold interests in South Africa, "And do you know why these former employees of the Dreyfusard synagogue are so unanimously sending their support to the Queen's Highlanders? You've probably already guessed: quite simply, because most of the gold and diamond mining companies in that rich country are headed by English Jews, who, out of the hundred and ten million contributed for the salvation of the traitor by Jewry from both hemispheres, subscribed nearly forty million themselves."²¹ Rochefort's argument draws for *L'Intransigeant's* readers a line connecting Dreyfus's pardon with the South African War, claiming that the money procured from South Africa's mineral deposits went directly into the pockets of Dreyfus's supporters, including the French press.

It is important to note that not all pro-Boer anti-Dreyfusards were political anti-Semites, and that plenty of leaders of the French Dreyfusard left supported the Boer cause. Nonetheless, the pro-Boer sentiments of the right led certain critics to take a contrary stance to that of their political rivals. Yves Guyot, director of the newspaper *Le Siècle*, wrote an essay in 1900 challenging French support for the Boers. He sought to dismantle the romantic image of Boers as a peaceful people victimized by the English, critiquing the Boer republics' policy of discrimination against both Black natives and non-Boer Europeans, and placed blame on Kruger and his compatriots for instigating the conflict. He equally criticized the pro-Boer infatuation of the right, arguing that the same delusional nationalism which led France to declaring war on Prussia in 1870, despite the latter's superior military might, would inevitably lead to a

20 Firmin de Croze, *Un Peuple Héroïque: les Boërs* (Limoges: Marc Barbou, 1901), 100; Laporte, "Un guer-apens policier," 2.

21 "Et savez-vous pourquoi ces anciens salariés de la synagogue dreyfusarde adressent avec cette unanimité leurs encouragements aux high-landers de la reine? Vous l'avez sans doute déjà deviné: tout bonnement parce que la plupart des sociétés des mines d'or et de diamants dont ce pays est si riche, ont à leur tête des juifs anglais, lesquels sur les cent dix millions versés pour le salut du traître par toute la youpinerie des deux mondes, en ont souscrit à eux i seuls près de quarante." Henri Rochefort, "Les dreyfusards et le Transvaal," *L'Intransigeant*, December 20, 1899, 1.

losing battle with England, Europe's leading naval power: "I am as horrified by the aberration that dominates our foreign policy as by the aberration that has caused ministers, the general staff and so many millions of French people to deny, for years, the innocence of Dreyfus. They sacrificed justice to miserable considerations, and today, those who have become infatuated with sympathy for the pillaging policy of the Boers seem to have as their ideal to complete the disaster of 1870!"²² Guyot's description of militarism as a delusional and suicidal ideology was echoed by other critics of French involvement in the foreign conflict. Outright favoritism towards the United Kingdom, however, put the anti-militarist anti-Dreyfusards in the precarious position of being labeled hypocrites given the widespread public condemnation of the United Kingdom's questionable motivations for engaging in military action against the Boer republics and especially their use of concentration camps and other forms of collective punishment against Boer civilians.²³ As a result, some on the left, such as the socialist Georges Georgel, took the position of expressing sympathy for the Boers but condemned the violent Anglophobia of the French nationalists.²⁴ Gabriel Monod, cofounder of the Dreyfusard group, *Ligue des droits de l'Homme*, placed the war within the broader context of nineteenth-century independence movements, defending his support of the Boers as stemming from the same anti-colonial philosophy that led him to champion the peoples of the Philippines and Schleswig against their imperial oppressors.²⁵

For both the left and the right, international affairs had thus become hopelessly intertwined with national politics. This entanglement became only more complicated with the death of the French Colonel Villebois-Mareuil in 1900 while fighting on behalf of the Boers. At once an established military veteran and celebrated hero of the Franco-Prussian War and a fringe extremist who supported the restoration of the monarchy, Villebois-Mareuil already had a complicated legacy in France. The commemoration of his involvement in the South African War, as illustrated by the monument erected to him in Nantes in 1902, became a further source of political contention between France's political parties.

22 "Je suis aussi épouvante de l'aberration qui domine notre politique extérieure que de l'aberration qui a fait nier, pendant des années, par les ministres, l'état-major et tant de millions de Français l'innocence de Dreyfus. Ils sacrifiaient la justice à des misérables considérations, et aujourd'hui, ceux qui se sont engoués de sympathie pour la politique pillarde des Boërs semblent avoir pour idéal de compléter le désastre de 1870!" Yves Guyot, "La Politique Boër: Faits et Documents en Réponse au Dr. Kuyper," *Siècle*, 1900, 99.

23 Prochasson, "Une crise anglaise de la pensée française?" 22.

24 G. Niplu, "Contre le Nationalisme," *La Petite République Socialiste*, November 25, 1900, 2.

25 Letter to the editor, Gabriel Monod, July 10, 1900, *Le Cri du Transvaal*, July 21, 1900, 2.

Villebois-Mareuil in South Africa

Villebois-Mareuil was in many ways an archetypical figure for the French pro-Boer right. He was a decorated hero of the French army, having fought in both the Franco-Prussian War and the French colonial campaigns in Cochinchina (i.e., Vietnam) and Algeria. In 1886, he served in the cabinet of General Boulanger, minister of war and populist right-wing political figure who developed a cult-like following in France through his promise to exact revenge on Germany. Villebois-Mareuil was also a conservative political activist, participating in some of the era's most extreme political movements, including Paul Déroulède's nationalist *Ligue des patriotes*, Drumont's *Ligue nationale anti-sémitique de France*, and, most importantly, was a founding member of the pro-monarchist, anti-Semitic group, *Action Française*, led by Charles Maurras. At the outbreak of the South African War, he joined the *Comité français des Républiques sud-africaines* alongside Lucien Millevoye, whose right-wing newspaper *La Patrie* Villebois-Mareuil contributed to.²⁶

While the exact details of how or why Villebois-Mareuil went to fight with the Boer are unclear, he had already left his military post in 1897 as a means of protesting the army's refusal to deploy him to Madagascar. Unemployed, with ample military experience in Africa, and evidently desiring to return to the continent, Villebois-Mareuil left France at the end of 1899. He had undoubtedly made his way to Africa via ship from Portugal, a common way for French mercenaries to arrive in the Transvaal, arriving in Lourenço Marques (now Maputo) in Portuguese East Africa (now Mozambique) on November 24, crossing the border via train and arriving in the South African city of Koomatiport the same day.²⁷ Like many of his pro-Boer, right-wing compatriots, Villebois-Mareuil was also motivated by Anglophobia. In one frequently reprinted quotation, attributed to a letter sent to his colleagues at the Catholic journal *Le Correspondant* before his departure, Villebois-Mareuil remarked on his decision to join the Boers, "I do not know what kind of help I will be able to give to these little people, but at least I will have the joy of usefully serving my country by striking blows at the English."²⁸

26 Richard Tholoniati, "Le Carnet de campagne du colonel de Villebois-Mareuil: journal de bord d'un 'volontaire' d'extrême-droite troublé," *Revue LISA/LISA e-journal* 20, no. 53 (2022): 6–7.

27 Colonel de Villebois-Mareuil, *Carnet de Campagne* (Paris: Société d'Éditions Littéraires et Artistiques, 1902), 1–3; Pelletier, "France and the Boer War I," 26.

28 "Je ne sais pas bien quel genre de concours je pourrai donner à ce petit peuple mais, du moins, j'aurai la joie de servir utilement mon pays en portant des coups à l'Anglais." G. Félix, *Le colonel de Villebois-Mareuil et la guerre sudafricaine* (Tours: Alfred Cartier, 1901), 8.

Although his hatred for the British remained unshaken, Villebois-Mareuil's xenophobic attitudes were also challenged by his experiences fighting along other foreigners volunteering for the Boer army. Because of his military expertise, Villebois-Mareuil was given the position of general and the task of commanding the foreign fighters serving in South Africa. German, Dutch, Irish, and Scandinavian fighters, having either already lived in the Boer republics prior to the war or arriving as mercenaries to fight for the Boer cause, outnumbered the French, putting Villebois-Mareuil in a position of camaraderie other Europeans he might have, during other parts of his life, considered to be rivals and enemies. Villebois-Mareuil had a particularly close rapport with the German volunteers. He writes affectionately in his war diary of a "very kind" German officer who offered him tea and biscuits, despite having few provisions for himself.²⁹ After Villebois-Mareuil's death, a Prussian officer who had served under him had similarly affectionate words for his former commander. The officer wrote a letter to Nantes City Hall in 1902, praising them for their decision to erect a monument to Villebois-Mareuil. The Prussian officer highlights in his letter that, despite their differences in language and nationality, all the soldiers serving under Villebois-Mareuil, German, French, and others, considered him to be their brother.³⁰

Even more surprising than Villebois-Mareuil's experience with German soldiers was the close relationship he established with French Jews serving in South Africa. Villebois-Mareuil expressed his deep admiration for two French Jewish artillery officers in the Boer army, Sam Léon and Léon Grunberg, representatives of Schneider et Cie arms manufacturer in Le Creusot who supplied the Boer republics with heavy guns.³¹ Villebois-Mareuil developed a friendship with both of them, staying at Léon and Grunberg's residence in Pretoria when arriving in January, 1900.³² When Léon was severely wounded in battle alongside him, Villebois-Mareuil dedicated several pages in his diary about the incident and the care that he took to aid Léon, writing about him not only as a good friend, but also an ideal French citizen: "He was affectionate, attentive to me to excess, skillful, easy-going, a sympathetic conversationalist, full of tact and just and noble views on things. Above all, he remained passionately French, and what he did here to boost commerce and industry of our country, although he

29 "Très aimable." Villebois-Mareuil, *Carnet de Campagne*, 196.

30 [Signature illegible], translated by Michel Dupont, Vienna, October 28, 1902. 1M1136, Archives de Nantes.

31 Howard Clemens Hillegas, *The Boers in War* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1900), 239.

32 Villebois-Mareuil, *Carnet de Campagne*, 158.

was unable to thaw the routine, should already be enough to earn him the recognition of all those who would like France to be ever greater, ever more radiant.”³³ Villebois-Mareuil’s sincere feelings for Léon, evidenced by his dairy passage, is even more intriguing given that Alfredy Dreyfus—the ultimate traitor for the anti-Semitic right—was himself an artillery officer and had been accused of providing Germany with information concerning France’s recently developed Obusier de 120 mm canon. His admiration for Léon and Grunberg, both of whom he regarded as great patriots, was such that it even led Villebois-Mareuil to waver on the so called Jewish question.³⁴

The nature of Villebois-Mareuil’s experiences on the cosmopolitan battlefield of the South African Transvaal makes it tempting to wonder how his political stances might have changed had he been able to return to France. Yet in death Villebois-Mareuil was destined to be immortalized as an icon of the nationalist right. Villebois-Mareuil died April 5, 1900, at the battle of Boshof while commanding a legion of foreign troops. Two weeks later, the Ligue de la patrie française and Action française organized a mass for their fallen comrade at the Notre Dame de Paris. The mass was attended by prominent persons including Jules Lemaître, Lucien Millevoye, François Coppée, Louis Dausset, and Colonel Parfait-Louis Monteil, all of whom were leaders in the anti-Dreyfusard movement. The memorial service transformed into a political rally, with the crowd shouting slogans such as “Vive l’armée!” “Vive Mercier,” along with “Vive les Boers,” before a brawl erupted. Echoing the events at the meeting of the Comité d’action de la jeunesse française en faveur du Transvaal in Paris four months earlier, the violence had been caused by Dreyfusard instigators who had slipped into the crowd. The police, waiting in anticipation at the sidelines, moved in and disrupted the event, arresting several of the nationalist attendees including Millevoye, which *L’Intransigeant* cited as further evidence of political persecution by the French government.³⁵

While Villebois-Mareuil become a martyr for the far-right movement in France, he was largely seen as a nuisance for French diplomatic officials. Victor Aubert, the consul general of France in Pretoria remarked in a letter

33 “Il était affectueux, attentif pour moi à Texcès, adroit, facile à vivre, causeur sympathique, plein de tact et de vues justes et nobles sur les choses. Il restait surtout passionnément Français, et ce qu’il a fait ici pour appeler le commerce et l’industrie de notre pays, bien qu’il n’ait pu en dégeler la routine, devrait déjà suffire à lui valoir la reconnaissance de tous ceux qui voudraient la France toujours plus grande, toujours plus rayonnante.” Villebois-Mareuil, *Carnet de Campagne*, 256–257.

34 Villebois-Mareuil, *Carnet de Campagne*, 32.

35 “Une manifestation patriotique,” *L’Intransigeant*, April 20, 1900, 1.

to Delcassé that the involvement of Villebois-Mareuil in the South African War alongside dozens of other French volunteers, many of whom were now imprisoned in British military camps, was an embarrassment for France.³⁶ Diplomatically, the affair threatened to sour the positive Anglo-French relations that Delcassé sought to create as a means of opposing German power. Villebois-Marueil's involvement in the conflict had already aroused accusations of French government complicity within the British press. At the end of December 1900, Achille Raffray, the consul general of the French consulate in Cape Town, sent Delcassé an article appearing on the 27th in the local *Cape Argus*, and originally published in *The Times*, which accused Delcassé of having secretly put Villebois-Mareuil in contact with William Johannes Leyds, the South African republics' diplomat in Europe.³⁷ Even before the letter reached Delcassé from South Africa, the French ambassador to England, Paul Cambon, employed the help of Elie Mercadier, of the Havas news agency, to write a letter to the editor of *The Times* denying the accusations.³⁸ There was also the problem of how to deal with the French volunteer fighters who had illegally waged war for the Boer republics. Given that the French Civil Code suggested that French fighters serving in a foreign army lost their citizenship, Aubert urgently wrote to Delcassé for clarification on whether or not the embassy in Pretoria should recognize the dozens of foreign fighters that were now imprisoned in South Africa by the British army.³⁹

In the end, the citizenship of French volunteer fighters was not revoked, and they were repatriated to France. Given the large number of foreign fighters from different countries held prisoner by the British army along with the latter's non-retaliatory attitude to their respective governments, the department of foreign affairs eventually came to their aid.⁴⁰ In a letter

36 Letter from Victor Aubert, Consul Général de France, Pretoria, to Théophile Delcassé, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, April 23, 1900. 204CPCOM, Correspondance politique et commerciale, Nouvelle série, Transvaal-Orange, Volume 29.

37 Letter from Achille Raffray, Consul Général de France, Cap de Bonne Espérance, to Théophile Delcassé, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, December 29, 1900. 204CPCOM, Correspondance politique et commerciale, Nouvelle série, Transvaal-Orange, Volume 26.

38 Paul Cambon, Ambassadeur de France, Londres, to Théophile Delcassé, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, December 17, 1900. 204CPCOM, Correspondance politique et commerciale, Nouvelle série, Transvaal-Orange, Volume 30.

39 Letter from Victor Aubert, Consul Général de France, Pretoria, to Théophile Delcassé, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, April 10, 1900. 204CPCOM, Correspondance politique et commerciale, Nouvelle série, Transvaal-Orange, Volume 29.

40 Letter from Victor Aubert, Consul Général de France, Pretoria, to Théophile Delcassé, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, May 7, 1900. 204CPCOM, Correspondance politique et commerciale, Nouvelle série, Transvaal-Orange, Volume 29.

to Delcassé, however, Aubert angrily chided the pro-Boer committees as reckless for sending French volunteer fighters to South Africa, many of whom he remarked had arrived unequipped and unwanted by the Boer republican forces.⁴¹ The pro-Boer movement had proved to be a headache for France's diplomatic policy of British appeasement, but at the same time the government did not want to upset the sizable population of persons sympathetic to the Boer cause at home. Therefore, much like the decision to repatriate French citizens fighting in South Africa, the government took a laissez-faire approach to the continued stream of commemorations surrounding the martyrdom of Villebois-Mareuil in France, including several monuments inaugurated in France in the immediate years after this death in South Africa.

The Villebois-Mareuil Monument

Like the Boer-War, Villebois-Mareuil's memory straddled a fine line between that of a popular French patriot who had shed his blood for both France and the Boers and martyr of the political nationalists. Many French newspapers, regardless of political bias, reported Villebois-Mareuil's death with somber respect. At the same time, however, Villebois-Mareuil undoubtedly became an icon of far-right ideologies. References to the Dreyfus affair and anti-Semitic proclamations went hand in hand with elegies to Villebois-Mareuil.⁴² Over the next few years, several plaques and monuments were erected throughout France in his honor. The first large-scale public sculpture erected in his honor was a bronze bust of Villebois-Mareuil by sculptor Raoul Verlet erected in May of 1901 in Grez-en-Bouère. In 1902, a bronze full-sized sculpture by Arthur Guéniot—later destroyed during the Vichy regime—representing Villebois-Mareuil raising his sword in victory was erected in Montaignu, near the colonel's residence.

The most well-known monument to Villebois-Mareuil, however, is the one erected in 1902 in Nantes. On the same day that Villebois-Mareuil's death was announced, the anti-Dreyfusard newspaper *La Liberté* published a call to erect a monument in his memory. The newspaper stressed that all French nationals were encouraged to contribute a donation for the

41 A Letter from Victor Aubert, Consul Général de France, Pretoria, to Théophile Delcassé, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, April 23, 1900. 204CPCOM, Correspondance politique et commerciale, Nouvelle série, Transvaal-Orange, Volume 29.

42 Philippe Deschamps, *Livre d'or transvaal and de l'orange* (Paris: 1901), 116–119.

sculpture, regardless of political affiliation.⁴³ Nonetheless, the committee created to manage the funding of the monument clearly veered to the right. The creation of the monument was headed by three persons: committee president Georges Berthoulat, director of *La Libértré* and Chamber of Deputies representative, Joseph Thierry, fellow deputy and vice president of the Groupe Progressiste of the so-called *républicains progressistes*, and Camille Krantz, another deputy who was briefly minister of war in 1899 as well as a fellow *républicain progressiste*. The rest of the committee were largely military and political figures along with one artist, Jean-Léon Gérôme.⁴⁴

While at least one figure of the extreme right, Monteil, was included in the committee, the leadership was part of the establishment anti-Dreyfusard republican milieu. The *républicains progressistes*, of which both Thierry and Krantz were members, were successors of the opportunists of the 1880s, and largely, although not exclusively, anti-Dreyfusard. While there have been relatively few scholarly analyses of Berthoulat or Thierry, a sketch of Krantz's political orientation serves as a case study of what sort of persons led the inauguration of the monument. A brief sketch of Krantz's opinions on pivotal events at the turn of the century serves as a further case study of the political orientation of those who led the monument's creation. Krantz was, as Bertrand Joly has argued, a typical French anti-Dreyfusard. He was conservative, against the separation of church and state, and a staunch believer in republican ideals. His political anti-Dreyfusardism stemmed less from a personal conviction of Dreyfus's guilt than from his opposition to the Dreyfusards, whom he considered to be a threat to the republic and, like Dreyfus, to be in the pocket of foreign agents. Even though his belief in Dreyfus's guilt lay in his patriotic faith in France's military and judiciary systems, he did not turn a blind eye to the conspiratorial acts of fellow anti-Dreyfusards in the military. During his brief tenure as minister of war starting in May 1899, during the height of the affair, he dismissed Captain Louis Cuignet for leaking documents to the press and authorized the arrest of Lieutenant Colonel Armand du Paty de Clam, one of the affair's chief architects, on the grounds of forgery. As an establishment anti-Dreyfusard, he expressed repugnance towards the political anti-Semitism of the far-right milieu. He also distanced himself from the militarism of far-right nationalists, many of whom were either anti-republican or held radical

43 "Souscription patriotique pour élever un monument funéraire au colonel de Villebois-Mareuil," *La Liberté*, April 7, 1900, 1.

44 "Le Monument Villebois-Mareuil," *Mémorial de la Loire et de la Haute-Loire*, April 26, 1900, 1.

revolutionary visions of republicanism which threatened to upend the Third Republic.⁴⁵

In the light of Krantz's convictions, the project to erect a monument to Villebois-Mareuil can be interpreted as not only an homage to a fallen military veteran, but as a symbol of resistance against the perceived threats to the republic that existed both externally and internally. Like the politics of mainstream anti-Dreyfusardism, pro-Boer sentiments were to a large degree motivated by a revanchist reflex to uphold the French state whose international reputation had been damaged by both the Fashoda Incident and the Dreyfus affair. The reactionary xenophobia of both of these political beliefs, however, also led to the seemingly contradictory action of right-leaning establishment republicans to erect a monument to an anti-republican nationalist like Villebois-Mareuil. But just as the battlefield had led Villebois-Mareuil to befriend both Jews and Germans in the Transvaal, the South African War was equally a unifying front for French conservatives holding the common goal of upholding French power.

A competition for the design of the monument was set up at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, including an exhibition for the submissions which took place in November of that year. The competition required artists and architects to propose a statue of Villebois-Mareuil accompanied by bas-reliefs of two major events in the colonel's life: the liberation of Blois in 1870 and his death in Boshof in 1900. In total, ten submissions were examined by the jury. The maquettes mixed together allegorical and historical figures, including weeping personifications of Liberty and Victory, Boer women holding laurel crowns, and Boer men holding rifles surrounding the central figure of Villebois-Mareuil, depicted as a leader or a martyr, and holding a sword or a revolver in his hands. Submissions were presented on an anonymous basis, accompanied only by titles including *Liberté*, *liberté chérie*, *combats avec tes défenseurs*, *Sans peur et sans rapproche*, and *Gloria Victis*, the latter of which was used as a title for two different maquettes. Despite the anonymous character of the exhibition, the newspaper *La Presse* divulged the names of five of the artists without linking them to their individual submissions, mentioning Eugène Boveri, Jacques Froment-Meurice, Constantin Meunier, Émile Peynot, and Jean-Pierre Barreau. At least one of the submissions, however, has been identified with near certainty, which is *La Liberté pleure Villebois-Mareuil* by Anatole Marquet de Vasselot, reproduced in a piece of

45 Benoît Linel, *Camille Krantz: Un républicain lorrain sous la IIIe République* (Paris: Éditions Glyphe, 2013), 244–250; Bertrand Joly, *Histoire Politique de l'Affaire Dreyfus* (Paris: Fayard, 2014), 318–319; Krantz (Charles, Camille, Julien), *Dictionnaire des Parlementaires français (1889–1940)*, Vol. VI.



Fig. 5.4. E. and C., "Project for the Monument to Villebois Mareuil shown to Mr. Kruger at the École des Beaux-Arts," *Le Pèlerin* 24, no. 1249 (December 9, 1900): 838. In this illustration, the artist has erroneously replaced the allegorical representation of the Loire River, which was on the back of the maquette, at the front base of the pedestal with figures representing an elderly Boer woman and child.

French pro-Boer literature, *Livre d'or transvaal & de l'orange*.⁴⁶ The maquette represents Villebois-Mareuil as a noble and heroic soldier ready for combat, holding a revolver in his right hand and grasping his sword in his left. Below, on the front of the pedestal, is an elegiac personification of Liberty wearing mourning garb and holding the fallen officer's sword. Although Marquet de Vasselot's submission was ultimately rejected by the committee, the artist was commissioned the following year to execute a commemorative plaque of Villebois-Mareuil for the Institution de l'Immaculée Conception, a Catholic secondary school in Paris.

The judges ultimately chose submission number eight, *Gloria Victis*, designed by Raoul Verlet along with his collaborator, the architect Henri Déglane, both of whom executed the Grez-en-Bouère monument the year prior (fig. 5.4). A former student of the École des Beaux-Arts where he was a student of Pierre-Jules Cavelier and Louis Ernest Barrias, Verlet was experiencing a high point in his career in 1900, having won the médaille d'honneur at the Salon, and, therefore, talent-wise a clearly capable artist to execute the monument. Moreover, regardless of what his personal political beliefs might have been, he also associated with groups and persons positioned on the political right, including the Union des catholiques des beaux-arts as

46 Philippe Deschamps, *Livre d'or transvaal and de l'orange* (Paris: 1901), 590.

well as the nationalist writer Maurice Barrès.⁴⁷ Verlet's maquette, like the final statue, represents Villebois-Mareuil at the moment of being mortally wounded, falling into the arms of an allegorical female figure, who was interpreted as representing the Nation, carrying a flag. The maquette also included several figures surrounding the central group that were not included in the final monument. To the rear, a Boer soldier aims his rifle. Nearby, an old woman and a child are situated next to a mine entrance, representing the plight of civilians as their fathers and husbands left to fight. At the foot of the statue in the front is a reclining nude female holding a water jar representing the Loire River, which traverses Nantes.⁴⁸ The committee had specifically requested the removal of the reclining nude figure upon selecting Verlet's sculpture, but it is not clear when or why the Boer figures were removed. Instead, any additional narration was fulfilled by the mirroring plaques representing the battles of Blois and Boshof which, consequently, also led to a stronger visual parallel between the French and Boer war experiences.

Clearly, with the maquette's title, *Gloria Victis*, along with the iconographic references to Mercié's statue, this parallel between the Franco-Prussian War and the South African War referenced more than just a biographical narration of Villebois-Mareuil's life but expressed a broader ideological statement concerning French nationalism. Verlet's design for the monument to Villebois-Mareuil exhibited at the competition at the École des Beaux-Arts clearly recycles his original maquette for the Franco-Prussian War monument in Chateauroux inaugurated in 1897. The maquette represents a soldier with a similarly erect posture and Christlike pose falling into the arms of a winged female allegorical figure. Parallels between the South African and Franco-Prussian wars were also alluded to in public speeches by members of the monument committee. When Paul Kruger visited the exhibition to see the maquettes during his trip to France at the end of 1900, he was accompanied by Berthoulat, who emphasized the sculpture's allusion to a Franco-Boer affinity, remarking: "This monument will evoke for immortality the fraternal friendship of France and the Transvaal, sealed by noble blood shed nobly."⁴⁹ Berthoulat's comment strongly resembles Carl

47 L. Dimier, "Informations: Pour la protection des églises," *L'Action Française* 4, no. 69 (10 mars 1911): 3; "Informations: La messe du souvenir," *L'Action Française* 17, no. 18 (18 janvier 2023): 2; Béatrice Rolin, *Fantômes de pierre: la sculpture d'Angoulême* (Angoulême: GERMA, 1995), 99–100.

48 "Le Monument de Villebois-Mareuil," *La Voix du Peuple*, November, 27 1900, 3.

49 "Ce monument évoquera pour l'immortalité l'amitié fraternelle de la France et du Transvaal, scellée par un noble sang répandu noblement." Gaston Laporte, "Kruger à Paris," *L'Intransigeant*, December 1, 1900, 4.

Jacobsen's remarks to Mercié, cited in chapter 2, concerning his plan to erect a copy of *Gloria Victis* to commemorate "the glory of two vanquished peoples," the Danes and the French.

While French nationalists like Villebois-Mareuil initially engaged in the South African War with the hopes of enacting revenge on Great Britain for the humiliation of France during the Fashoda Incident, the impossibility of Boer victory by mid-1900 transformed the pro-Boer narrative into a metaphysical connection of noble defeat endured at the hands of an unscrupulous enemy, Great Britain. This connection between the plight of the French and the Boer peoples is crucial to the Nantes monument, as it is the only monument to Villebois-Mareuil which makes visual reference to the South African War. The Grez-en-Bouère monument, for example, features an identical relief representing the battle of Blois, but not the battle of Boshof, thereby focusing commemoration on Villebois-Mareuil's sacrifices for France rather than for the Boer republics. For the pro-Boer nationalists who directed how Villebois-Mareuil would be commemorated in Nantes, however, the South African War was integrally connected to their conception of French patriotism.

Inauguration, Controversy, and Government Policy

The inauguration of his monument in Nantes on October 26, 1902, had the tone of a pro-Boer rally despite the official defeat of the Boer republics in May of that year. Vendors surrounded the event selling commemorative medals and insignia with the Boer republican flags, and shouts of "Vive les Boers" could be heard during the ceremony.⁵⁰ The ceremony was presided over by the mayor of Nantes, Emile Sarradub, whose government had helped pay for the cost of installing the monument.⁵¹ Representatives from the now-defeated republics, including the former consul general in Paris, J. Pierson, and the grandnephew of President Kruger, Piet Grobler, were given a place of honor at the inauguration. The committee had additionally invited Boer generals Louis Botha and Koos de la Rey. However, as they were unable to attend, they, together with General Christiaan de Wet, sent a wreath and a telegram which was read by Sarradub during the inauguration. Alongside the Boer

50 "Le Monument de Villebois-Mareuil," *L'Intransigeant*, October 28, 1902, 3; "Le Monument Villebois-Mareuil," *Le Petit Journal*, October 27, 1902, 1.

51 Paul-Émile Sarradin, le Maire de Nantes, "Protection d'un monument à la mémoire du colonel de Villebois-Mareuil. Choix d'emplacement," no date. 1M136, Archives de Nantes.

representatives, Villebois-Mareuil's friend and fellow veteran, Léon, was also present. Finally, several high-ranking generals were given seats in the honorary tribune next to Boer representatives, including committee member General Krantz, General Adolphe Paul Grisot, and General Auguste Mercier.

Despite the international atmosphere of the inauguration, however, the event remained a purely local affair. The ceremony included no official representation by either the French military or government, and military figures who attended the event did so as a personal choice in an unofficial capacity. Much like its policy of neutrality during the war itself, the French government kept a largely laissez-faire attitude toward the legacy of Villebois-Mareuil, who wished to neither sanctify nor denounce his reputation. A telling indication of the delicacy of this affair for French government came in the form of a letter from Albert Kaempfen, Director of National Museums in France to Delcassé. Kaempfen had earlier been approached by Gérôme on behalf of the Villebois-Mareuil monument committee to request space at the École des Beaux-Arts to host the design competition. Following this exchange, Kaempfen wrote to Delcassé to ask if he would have any objections to such an exhibition.⁵² Delcassé wrote back with a short response approving the request, but the unusual circumstance of the director of national museums asking the minister of foreign affairs permission to hold an exhibition at the École des Beaux-Arts illustrates how controversial the legacy of Villebois-Mareuil was in France. As illustrated above, French diplomats had found the Villebois-Mareuil affair to be deeply harmful to France's international image, but again Delcassé remained hands-off regarding the monument from the very beginning, undoubtedly not wishing to stoke the flames on an already politically tense era.

The lack of an official government position for or against Villebois-Mareuil may have saved the French government from a potential crisis either nationally or internationally, but their silence evoked anger from both the right and the left. Unsurprisingly, nationalist newspapers including *le Gaulois* and *Le Libre Parole* denounced their silence as a lack of patriotism, but even more prominent critiques issued from left-wing media sources.⁵³ While Villebois-Mareuil's death was largely treated with neutrality, the government's decision to allow a monument to be erected in his honor was

52 Albert Kaempfen, Directeur des Musées Nationaux et de l'École du Louvre, to Théophile Delcassé, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, December 17, 1900. 204CPCOM, Correspondance politique et commerciale, Nouvelle série, Transvaal-Orange, Volume 30.

53 Xavier Reynes, "Inauguration Monument Villebois-Mareuil," *Le Gaulois*, October 27, 1902, 2; J. Saint-Léon, "Le Monument Villebois-Mareuil," *Le Libre Parole*, October 27, 1902, 2.

clearly a step too far for the left. One year earlier, the Nantes socialist and self-proclaimed Dreyfusard, Charles Brunellière, had been one of the few counsellors to object to the proposition of having a monument erected to Villebois-Mareuil. Brunellière insisted that his objection to the monument was not for political reasons, but his broader opposition both to the creation of statues commemorating persons and to encumbering foot traffic at the Place de la Bourse.⁵⁴ Nonetheless, Brunellière's stated reasons for objecting to the monument hid deeper concerns pertaining to the growing threat of the right in his area of jurisdiction. Writing to a colleague, he had already complained that anti-Semitism, inspired by the ideas of Jules Lemaitre and radical Catholic priests, was spreading across the countryside surrounding Nantes. This growing political problem, Brunellière adds, distracted not only from the social reforms he was trying to implement for the region's agricultural workers, but had also led to direct physical threats against himself.⁵⁵ Undoubtedly, the establishment of a monument honoring the legacy of a militant nationalist and anti-Semite would have been an unsettling development for Brunellière, and a sign of the right's increasing regional influence.

Others associated on the left, however, were more direct in their criticism of the monument. The anti-Dreyfusard newspaper *Le Siècle* pointed out the seemingly bizarre logic of the Third Republican administration allowing for a monument to be erected to anti-republicans like Villebois-Mareuil, writing: "We are surprised that the government has granted the use of a state monument for such a purpose. Colonel Villebois-Mareuil was an opponent of the Republic. He left the French army because he was not satisfied with his promotion. It is known that he was among the conspirators who wanted the overthrow of the Republic. Finally, he enlisted in the Transvaal War, thereby forfeiting his status as a Frenchman; and the French government has no need to honor a belligerent."⁵⁶ The author of the article questioned how a monument could be erected to man who

54 "Erection d'un monument à la mémoire de du Colonel de Villebois-Mareuil. – Choix d'un emplacement," March 1, 1901, 1533W332, Archives de Nantes.

55 Charles Brunellière to Auguste Andrieux, Nantes, March 12, 1900. Claude Willard, *La Correspondance de Charles Brunellière, Socialiste Nantais, 1880–1917* (Paris Librairie CA. Klincksieck, 1968), 172

56 "Nous sommes surpris que le gouvernement ait accordé l'usage d'un monument de l'État pour un pareil objet. Le colonel Villebois-Mareuil était un adversaire de la République. Il avait quitté l'armée française parce qu'il n'était pas satisfait de son avancement. On sait qu'il était parmi les conspirateurs qui voulaient le renversement de la République. Enfin, il s'est engagé dans la guerre du Transvaal, perdant ainsi sa qualité de Français; et le gouvernement français n'a pas à honorer un belligérant." "Une faute," *Le Siècle*, November 24, 1900, 3.

was associated with Paul Déroulède and his circle when the high court had just condemned several of these men for attempted treason in early 1900. Beyond questioning his loyalty to the Third Republic, the article further interrogates Villebois-Mareuil's status as a French patriot. Given that he had fought with the Boer forces, and French law stipulated that those who fought in a foreign army were subject to having their citizenship renounced, *Le Siècle* therefore argues that Villebois-Mareuil should no longer be a French citizen, but rather a foreign combatant. This was an argument intentionally aimed to undercut the ideals of the right, who prided themselves as the upholders of both law and patriotism in their condemnation of Dreyfus and their support of French military order. Furthering this line of attack accusing the right of hypocrisy, Guyot writes that, despite being frequently accused of being antipatriotic by his nationalist adversaries, the "*vrais sans patrie*" (truly stateless), a derogatory term commonly used by nationalists to disparage both Jews and their so-called socialist allies, were those who knowingly broke French law by offering their allegiance to a foreign government.⁵⁷

One of the most controversial events was the decision to give Mercier a seat of honor at the inauguration. General Mercier had been one of the leading architects of the conspiracy to indict Dreyfus of treason, presiding as the minister of war during his trial, and continued to be a prominent voice of the anti-Dreyfusards in the ongoing affair. In protest, the socialist republicans of the Nantes municipal council, led by Brunellière, boycotted the event. Brunellière later published an open letter in the newspaper *Le Populaire* defending his decision, explaining that in principle he had no objection to the monument itself, but that the presence of Mercier, along with Krantz, Berthoulat, Thierry, and Admiral Charles Édouard de la Jaille, had effectively turned the ceremony into a nationalist rally.⁵⁸ Krantz issued a response to Brunellière affirming his loyalty to republicanism and denying that he was ever associated with the nationalists while the rest remained silent.⁵⁹

Brunellière's carefully worded objections to the monument were intended to not cause public backlash in the volatile political climate, but others did not hesitate in taking a more directly oppositional voice concerning his legacy. *La Révue Maçonnique* accused the pro-Catholic right of wasting

57 Y. G. [Yves Guyot], "Les Sans-Patrie," *Le Siècle*, October 31, 1902, 1.

58 Charles Brunellière, "Une lettre de Charles Brunellière," *Le Populaire*, October 28, 1902, 2.

59 "Une Lettre de M. Krantz," *Le Nouvelliste de l'Ouest*, October 31, 1902. 1533W332, Archives de Nantes.

public money by commemorating a soldier, who, the newspaper adds, was in reality quite mediocre.⁶⁰ *Le Siècle* frequently responded to Villebois-Mareuil's commemoration in a critical tone, questioning his military abilities, his patriotism, but also, in an attempt to undermine his status as a martyr for the nationalists, his true convictions concerning the culpability of Dreyfus.⁶¹ Reporting on the inauguration, Guyot similarly questioned Villebois-Mareuil's efficacy as a soldier while continuing to question the legality of his status as a French citizen.⁶²

Villebois-Mareuil's Legacy within Boer Propaganda

Off to the sidelines of this debate were the Boers, who were careful to not become ensnared in a local French political debate in their mission to find support for the war. They had their own strategies for how the commemoration of Villebois-Mareuil could be used to their political advantage. Given the asymmetrical quality of the South African War, manipulating public perception was an essential part of the Boer war strategy. The importance of media for military strategy was explicitly acknowledged by Kruger during his visit to the École des Beaux-Arts to see the maquettes of the future Nantes monument. After praising the sacrifices of Villebois-Mareuil, Kruger also specifically thanked the French media for their contribution in the battle for Boer independence, making a direct analogy between journalists and soldiers.⁶³ Given Villebois-Mareuil's rank and reputation, the Boer leadership was more than happy to advertise his support of the Boer republics, both while he was alive and after his death.⁶⁴ Noticing the keen importance that Villebois-Mareuil played in French memory, his image was incorporated into Boer national iconography. Shortly after his death, for example, at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1900, his image appeared at the exhibition hosted by the Transvaal and Orange republics. There, they erected a replica of a Boer farmhouse decorated with of simple furniture, a Bible, and a picture of the martyred Villebois-Mareuil adorned

60 Cited in "Villebois-Mareuil et le Franc-Maçonnerie," *Le Nouvelliste de l'Ouest*, October 31, 1902. 1533W332, Archives de Nantes.

61 "Nouvelles Politiques. Le Colonel de Villebois-Mareuil et la revision," *Le Siècle*, April 13, 1900, 2; D., "Menées Nationalistes," *Le Siècle*, April 20, 1900, 2; Yves Guyot, "Un Nationaliste d'Outre Tombe et l'Armée," *Le Siècle*, May 12, 1900, 1.

62 "La Capacité militaire de Villebois-Mareuil," *Le Siècle*, July 31, 1902, 1.

63 Deschamps, *Livre d'or transvaal and de l'orange*, 255.

64 Tholoniât, "Le Carnet de campagne du colonel de Villebois-Mareuil," 25–26.

with black crepe fabric. Boer delegates visiting France frequently evoked Villebois-Mareuil's memory in order to stoke the pride of their hosts. Speaking at the inauguration of the monument at Nantes, Pierson, the former consul general in Paris, proclaimed that Villebois-Mareuil would forever be part of South Africa's great history and that his name was engraved in the hearts of Boer children.⁶⁵

That the memory of Villebois-Mareuil was explicitly used by Boer politicians to evoke empathy from French audiences, however, is underlined by the relative obscurity of Villebois-Mareuil's name and image in South Africa. Whereas in France there are at least eighty-six streets named after Villebois-Mareuil alongside numerous plaques and monuments, there are no monuments dedicated to Villebois-Mareuil in South Africa other than his gravestone and only one street named in his honor.⁶⁶ The rarity of Villebois-Mareuil symbols within twentieth-century Afrikaner memory of the South African War further illustrates a broader local ambivalence toward the legacy of foreign fighters in the pro-Boer independence movement. The Pretoria-based newspaper *De Volkstem* reported on Villebois-Mareuil's death in 1900 with solemn reverence, labeling him a hero and noting Kruger's sadness on hearing news of the event.⁶⁷ According to General Consul Aubert, however, who was based in Pretoria, behind closed doors local military leaders largely resented the presence of foreign fighters, whom they considered to be a risk to local fighting regiments. Villebois-Mareuil, although recognized as a capable military leader, was largely employed for the purpose of keeping foreign volunteers out of the way.⁶⁸

Outward veneration and inward ambivalence toward Villebois-Mareuil's underlines the tendency for the Boers to adopt popular foreign symbols as a means of communicating with sympathetic audiences in France while at the same time rarely attempting to carry these traditions back to South Africa. In France, the image of Joan of Arc—sculptures of whom were widely popularized in the wake of 1871—was used to appeal to French national sentiments, while in the United States the term “Lost Cause” was

65 Pelletier, “France and the Boer War 2,” 53; *Inauguration du Monument de Villebois-Mareuil* (Nantes: A. Dougas, 1902), 13.

66 Michel André Rateau, “La diffusion du nom De Villebois-Mareuil dans l’odonymie française: le reflet équivoque et héroïsant d’une volonté populaire et politique,” *Actes des congrès nationaux des sociétés historiques et scientifiques* 134, no. 2 (2010): 72.

67 “The Late Col. De Villebois,” *De Volkstem*, April 11, 1900, 1.

68 Letter from Victor Aubert, Consul Général de France, Pretoria, to Théophile Delcassé, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, April 23, 1900. 204CPCOM, Correspondance politique et commerciale, Nouvelle série, Transvaal-Orange, Volume 29.

similarly used to align the cause of Boer independence with local Confederate narratives.⁶⁹ By contrast, however, most monuments created for white Afrikaans-speaking communities to commemorate the South African War were created by local artists and employed references to culturally specific tastes and ideologies. Despite the fact that Paul Kruger's former residence in Pretoria was filled with patriotic icons gifted by French admirers—including a fittingly allegorical Barbedienne reduction of Mercié's *David Vainqueur*, given to him by the students of the Lycée Charlemagne of Paris—which were so actively present in everyday rituals of nationalism in France, the transmission and intermixing of French Lost Cause iconography within South Africa was relatively rare.⁷⁰

In contrast to the earlier case studies on Peru and the United States, where the respective criollo and white Southern communities saw French sculpture as a mark of prestige, white Afrikaans-speaking communities showed a much more limited tendency to adopt French symbols. This is illustrated by a 1909 letter from the French general consul in Pretoria and Johannesburg, Abel Chevalley to Stephen Pichon, the new minister of foreign affairs, that South African society was “the least penetrable and the least penetrated by our intellectual influence.”⁷¹ Nonetheless, certain similarities between how the memory of defeat was practiced in both South Africa and France, as well as a continued romantic fascination with the Boers in France, meant that a “peaceful penetration”—to borrow a phrase used in France's colonial missions—of South African commemorative culture did occur in limited but notable occasions.

Christian Nationalism and the Boer Interpretation of Defeat

A willingness to devote oneself to a Lost Cause, fighting for the sake of principle rather than concrete political gain was an integral part of the Boer memory of the war. This ethos, which later became an integral part of Boer nationalism, was embodied not only in the actions *Bittereinders*, or Boer

69 Pelletier, “France and the Boer War 2,” 52; Benjamin Johannes Viljoen, *Under the Vierkleur: A Romance of a Lost Cause* (Boston: Small, Maynard and Co., 1904).

70 Kr954–2, Kruger Museum, Pretoria, South Africa. Email correspondence between the author at the Paul Kruger Museum (November 6, 2024).

71 “Un des moins pénétrables et des moins pénétrés par notre influence intellectuelle.” Letter from Abel Chevalley, Consul Général de France, Pretoria and Johannesburg to Stephen Pichon, ministre des Affaires Etrangères, April 10, 1900. 204CPCOM, Correspondance politique et commerciale, Nouvelle série, Transvaal-Orange, Volume 4.

guerillas who fought until the “bitter end,” but also Kruger, who preferred to die in exile than to admit defeat. On May 7, 1900, Kruger gave his last speech before the First Volksraad, or People’s Council, of the Transvaal Republic before fleeing to Europe. Sitting at the head seat as British troops closed in on Pretoria, Kruger seemed to acknowledge that there was no hope for keeping the enemy at bay. Nonetheless, Kruger assured his fellow patriots the inevitable collapse of the Boer republics was not a defeat. Instead, he contended that this fate was all part of God’s divine plan to purify the Boer people before leading them to victory:

This war is a sign of the times. It amounts to this, that the Beast receives the power to persecute the Church and will succeed until the Lord says, “Hitherto, but no further.” And why? Because the Church must be tried and purified, for there is much evil among us ... When He permits that punishment descend upon us, we must submit and humble ourselves, confess our sins and return unto the Lord. Then, when the whole nation stands in humility, seeing that it can do nothing, but only the Lord, then assuredly we shall at once obtain peace ... There is no doubt that eventually the Lord will lead us to victory. The day of grace is not far off for His people. Let us not doubt, but remain true to God’s word and fight in His name. When the water shall rise to our lips and we humble ourselves earnestly before the Lord then shall the day of Grace have come.⁷²

Like all of the Lost Cause narratives seen in this book, Kruger’s speech denies that defeat is in reality a defeat. His words minimize the role of the enemy force, denying the military superiority of the British, and instead place agency on both God and the Boer people. Similar arguments were employed in the postwar South of the United States, where Confederate sympathizers maintained their military superiority over the Union, contending instead that they had simply grown weary of fighting. Most importantly, Kruger’s speech denies defeat by mythologizing the events of the war as part of a broader divine teleology. Like many parables of the Old Testament from Noah to Moses, Kruger interprets the war as both a test and a cleansing of the faith of the Boer people. Once the Boer people have passed their trial of hardship—the downfall of Boer republics—and demonstrated their worthiness, then God will finish the prophecy and lead them to lasting victory.

72 Paul Kruger, “Speech delivered on the 7 of May by President Kruger in explanation of his. Opening Speech at the Ordinary Session of. 1900,” *The Memoires of Paul Kruger* (New York: The Century Co., 1902), 394, 396.

This interpretation of the South African War as a test from God, an act of divine purification, and the fulfilment of a people's sacred destiny was an important narrative in postwar South Africa. A belief that the Boers were God's chosen people, in parallel with biblical people of Israel, had played an important part in both religious and nationalist beliefs long before the fall of the Boer republics. One of the defining events of Boer collective memory was the Battle of Blood River in 1838, when a band of several hundred Voortrekkers, facing an army of 20,000 Zulus, made a promise to God that they would keep that day a day of holy remembrance if they should be victorious. That day became the Day of the Vow, celebrated annually on December 16, as a day which solidified the covenant between the Boer people and God. Yet, as Anthony Smith notes, Paul Kruger only made the day of remembrance into an official holiday when their independence was challenged by British colonial advances. The first official Day of the Vow was also the first day of the first South African War (1880–1881). The Boer belief in being a chosen people went together with the historical experience of facing existential threats to the community.⁷³

The experience of defeat during the South African War, however, provided a challenge to the common belief that the Christian god favored the Boers and would therefore lead them to victory over the British, just as they believed that their god had led them to victory during the battle of Blood River. The fact of defeat, therefore, had to be reconciled with the social belief in divine selection. Many religious and political leaders, including Kruger, believed that the defeat was a consequence of the Boer people having strayed from their holy covenant with God since 1838. Crucially, however, it was believed that this military and political defeat was only temporary and would be rectified by God once the Boer people expressed their penance. The influential religious leader Reverend Stephanus Jacobus du Toit, for example, interwove the Boer experience of the war with the Calvinist-derived theology of election to argue that the defeat suffered in 1902 was a test of strength for the Boer people in both their spiritual and national destiny.⁷⁴ Religious belief therefore came to have a new significance in the wake of the South African War, becoming not only a means to cope with the tragedy of the loss of life and political self-determination, but

73 Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 79.

74 Jackie Grober, "Memories of a Lost Cause. Comparing remembrance of the Civil War by Southerners to the Anglo-Boer War by Afrikaners," *Historia* 52, no. 2 (November 2006): 203, 209; Sammy Jane-akson, "Acendancy of the Vanquished: A Story of Dixie and the Boer Republics," *Vulcan Historical Review* 22, no. 7 (2018): 40–41; Müller, "War, Religion, and White Supremacy in Comparative Perspective," 195.

also to deny the outcome of the war as defeat, which, according to the Boer nationalist religious ideology, was merely a divine trial in God's shepherding of the Boer people to victory. As the Boer experience of the South African War demonstrates, whether a community remembers the outcome of a conflict as a reward or punishment from God, the interpretation of divine intercession still affirms their selection.

Given the destruction of the nation state and the prevalence of religion in society, the culture of defeat that developed in South Africa after 1902 bears several similarities to those developed in the post-Confederate South after 1865. As Retief Müller argues, du Toit's popular description of the South African War as a "baptism of fire" clearly resembles the rhetoric of a "baptism of blood," highlighting that both render suffering as "a ritual of consecration."⁷⁵ In both the Boer and the Confederate interpretations of ritualized suffering, war transcends the physical, military, and political fact of defeat to become an anointment which marks the group as part of the divine elect whose God will lead them to victory and negate the earlier defeat.

As a consequence of this interpretation of the war, Müller argues that civil religion and traditional religion were nearly indistinguishable in Boer nationalism.⁷⁶ T. Dunbar Moodie draws very similar conclusions, contending that the experience of the South African War was key to developing twentieth-century Boer nationalism, which merged the Calvinist theological concept of election, where certain individuals are predestined to be saved by God, with a national romantic fixation on language and culture:

The roots of the Afrikaner doctrine of election grew out of the Calvinism of Paul Kruger and the experience of the Boer War, and the young shoots of Afrikaner nationalism were nurtured in the post-Boer War language movement. The divine agent of the Afrikaner civil faith is Christian and Calvinist—an active sovereign God, who calls the elect, who promises and punishes, who brings forth life from death in the course of history. The object of his saving activity—the Afrikaner People—is not a church, a community of the saved, however; it is a whole nation with its distinct language and culture, its own history and special destiny.⁷⁷

75 Müller, "War, Religion, and White Supremacy in Comparative Perspective," 195.

76 Müller, "War, Religion, and White Supremacy in Comparative Perspective," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 25, no. 1 (2004): 195.

77 T. Dunbar Moodie, *The Rise of Afrikanerdom: Power, Apartheid and Afrikaner Civil Religion* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1975), xvii.



Fig. 5.5. The Burger Monument, inaugurated 1909. Moederkerk, Senekal, South Africa. Author and material unknown.

Boer nationalism fostered the idea that it was the entire national group which had been elected by God, and therefore emphasized language, culture, and history as sacred principles. By consequence, commemoration of the South African War took on not only a national but religious tone as well—a tendency which is illustrated by their monuments.

The Limited Adoption of Foreign Symbols within Boer Iconography

The inseparable nature of civil religion and Calvinist belief is crucial to understanding the nature of commemoration of the South African War in Boer communities. South African monuments erected by Boer communities in the wake of defeat are quite different from those studied in the previous chapters of this book, including France and the former Confederate States. While the British government erected numerous bronze sculptures in town centers to commemorate fallen soldiers and victorious battles, most of the monuments erected by Boer communities were erected on the grounds of churches. The relegation of these monuments to churchyards has in part to do with the fact that the defeated Boers were no longer fully in control of their government and therefore limited

in their means of expression.⁷⁸ Nonetheless, it should not be assumed that these monuments had a solely funerary function. Instead, the establishment of monuments celebrating national sacrifice on church grounds illustrates the inextricability of civic and religious practices in postwar South African Boer communities. Despite the peculiarly religious context and messaging of Boer commemorations of the South African War, the monuments themselves borrowed heavily from foreign commemorative trends. These monuments, oftentimes created by industrial carvers in Italy, adopt designs and motifs from the commemorations of conflicts from the recent past, including the United States Civil War and the Franco-Prussian War, in order to express the Boer Christian nationalist ideology.

The Boer monument at the Dutch Reformed Moederkerk in Senekal is an example of a common local style of sculpture erected to commemorate the South African War (fig. 5.5). The monument was unveiled in 1909 by Martinus Theunis Steyn, former president of the Orange Free State, to commemorate sixty-one soldiers from the community that had died during the war. Frequently, such monuments feature a dedication to the local individuals who died along with a religious or patriotic verse. In the case of the Senekal monument, alongside the names of the persons who died, the dedication reads “Our lifeblood was poured out / Our life laid down / For home and hearth / For country and people / For freedom and for justice / REST, NOBLE DEAD!”⁷⁹ While many if not most of the monuments erected to commemorate common soldiers are nonfigurative, the Senekal monument demonstrates a common figurative sculptural motif found throughout the South Africa, including in Standerton, Belfast, Lichtenburg, and Heilbron. The design consists of a stone statue of a bearded Boer soldier standing on the lookout from atop a rock, holding a pair of binoculars in his left hand and a rifle in his right, and with a bandolier draped across his chest. These representations of common infantrymen strongly resemble realist commemorative styles seen in the United States in the wake of the Civil War and the Spanish-American War, and more specifically John Kelly’s sculpture of Union Brigadier General John Buford erected on the Gettysburg Battlefield in 1895. Both sculptures represent their respective soldier with similar stances, their weight shifted onto one leg, staring out into the distance as they hold

78 Grolber, *Anglo-Boer War (South African War) 1899–1902*, 18.

79 “Ons levensbloed werd uitgestort, / Ons leven afgelegd / Voor huis en haard, / Voor land en volk, / Voor vrijheid en voor recht. / RUST EDELE DOODEN.” A. Dreyer, *Zuid-Afrikaanse Monumenten Album* (G. D. van Tonder, Kaapstad, 1916), 94; Grolber, *Anglo-Boer War (South African War) 1899–1902*, 292.



Fig. 5.6. Geo F. Kirkbridge, *Gloria Victis*, or The Student Monument, Potchefstroom, South Africa, inaugurated 1906. Marble.

their binoculars at mid-waist as they survey the distant horizon. The main difference between the two sculptures are the ethnographic details that signal them as being either Boer or Union soldiers, such as their uniform, facial hair, or weaponry.

Whether out of ideological sympathy or out of material necessity, a conscious decision to borrow symbols from other cultures appears to have played a limited role in the Boer strategy of finding a suitable means of commemorating military and political defeat. Above all, artists looked to France for inspiration, and in at least one instance the title “Gloria Victis” can be traced to a South African monument to the South African War (fig. 5.6). *The Student Monument* in Potchefstroom, also known as the *Gloria Victis* monument, commemorates five students and former students from the Reformed Church Theological School who died during the war. The monument, which was erected on the theological school grounds, is in the form of a simple funerary obelisk carved from marble by Geo F. Kirkbridge. On the neck of the obelisk, above the dedication naming the theological students who died, the words “Gloria Victis” are inscribed. The monument was arranged and funded by the fallen students’ classmates, who unveiled it on March 24, 1906. At the unveiling, a song composed by Jacob Daniël du Toit, son of the Reverend du Toit and known by the pen name Totius, was played to the tune of the Netherlands’ national anthem, “Wilhelmus van Nassouwe.”⁸⁰ Totius’s song, titled “Gloria Victis,” focuses on the theme of heroic defeat, and ends with the verse: “Defeated, yet with honor, / The weaker side’s wreath of honor; / Defeated, yet in dying, / Having fought it through completely; / Defeated, yet not alive; / Defeated only after death, / Thus those five men remain, / Though defeated, great.”⁸¹ Totius’s elegiac verse proposes a Calvinist understanding of divine providence and spiritual transcendence. God permits—or even ordains—the soldiers’ deaths. Like Jesus’s capture and execution by the Romans, their earthly defeat in dying has no more impact on their greatness than Jesus’s death on the cross. The dead soldiers remain victorious in Christ. The monument therefore suggests

80 Piet van der Schyff, *Sages en Legendes en ander lekker stories oor die PUK* (Potchefstroom, South Africa: Potchefstroomse Universiteit vir Christelike Hoër Onderwys, 2003), 27; G. C. P. van der Vyver, *My Erfenis Is Vir My Mooi 1869–1969* (Potchefstroom, South Africa: Potchefstroom Herald, 1969), 92–94; Van der Schyff, *Wonderdaad ...! die PUK tot 1951*, 102–104.

81 “Verwonnen maar meteere, / Der zwakkren eerekrans; / Verwonnen, doch in ‘t sterven, / En uitgestreden gansch; / Verwonnen, doch niet levend; / Verwonnen na hun dood, / Zoo blijft dat vijftal mannen, / Ofschoon verwonnen, groot.” Van der Vyver, *My Erfenis Is Vir My Mooi 1869–1969*, 93.

that their martyrdom serves as an example for the Boer people, who remain triumphant even after the fall of the Boer republics.

Totius's song illuminates the Christian logic of death and resurrection inherent in all iterations of *Gloria Victis* going back to Mercié's original sculpture. The title of the *Gloria Victis* monument, however, did not come from Totius, but rather from the Jan Lion Cachet, a professor at the Burgersdorp Theological School. Cachet's son, Calman, who died during the war in 1901, is one of the five students memorialized by the *Gloria Victis* monument. As a testament to the meaningfulness of the phrase "Gloria Victis" to Cachet, the inscription also appears on Calman's gravestone in Steynsburg. Cachet was a Dutch Jewish-born Christian minister who joined the Dutch Reformed Church and moved to South Africa at a young age.⁸² He became a proponent of Christian nationalism and helped develop the foundations of Boer civil religion through his cultural activism, especially through the promotion of the Afrikaans language and the translation of texts into Afrikaans.⁸³ Cachet's work as a teacher, activist, and scholar therefore helped solidify the interrelationship between religion, nation, and ethnicity within Boer communities. While the exact details of what led Cachet to adopt "Gloria Victis" when commemorating his son and his comrades are unknown, it is not hard to imagine how he could have come across this term in this early era of globalization. As outlined in the introduction to this book, even when used in secular contexts, *Gloria Victis* assumes the audience's understanding of the biblical narrative of Christ, where glorious resurrection follows death and defeat. Within the context of Boer Christian Nationalism, *Gloria Victis* had the capacity to be readily understood by locals and incorporated into the broader national memorial landscape.

Beyond *Gloria Victis*'s ideological appropriateness, another explanation for how it became incorporated into Boer commemorative culture is the symbol's broader saturation within international media concerning the South African War. As illustrated above, allusions to the sculpture *Gloria Victis*, including the use of the phrase, had become entrenched in popular pro-Boer French propaganda. Postcards, books, and journals frequently employed *Gloria Victis*'s symbolism when referred to the South African War. While this book focuses on the public sculpture, it has repeatedly emphasized the importance of mass media for transmitting *Gloria Victis* across cultures. This was particularly true for Boer leaders, such as Kruger,

82 Van der Vyver, *My Erfenis Is Vir My Mooi* 1869–1969, 93.

83 Vincent Kuitenbrouwer, *War of Words: Dutch Pro-Boer Propaganda and the South African War 1899–1902* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 24.



Fig. 5.7. Jean Georges Achard, *Independence or The Resistance of the Boers*, ca. 1900. Location and material unknown.

who weaponized mass media as an important arm of their war effort. The proliferation of illustrated print media at the turn of the twentieth century allowed communities across Europe and the Americas to stay informed about the war and was key to provoking international outrage against British mistreatment of Boer civilians, including the burning of farms and the use of concentration camps. While sculptures have a narrower means of communication than print media given the cost of their production and diffusion, the prestige attached to these artworks and their creators made them an influential medium nonetheless for transmitting nationalist imagery to government leaders across countries. During his visit to France in late 1900, Kruger received several fine arts gifts from French artists, including several medals and even a gallic sword designed by the anti-Semitic sculptor Jean Baffier, financed by a public subscription through *L'Intransigeant*.⁸⁴ The adoption of the Gloria Victis motif within Boer communities' commemorative culture can therefore be interpreted as the result of the globalized manner in which information about the South African War was communicated, which included mass

84 Santillane, "Les Sabres et Épées d'honneur," *Gil Blas*, December 1, 1900, 1.



Fig. 5.8. Jean Georges Achard, Paul Kruger Monument, inaugurated 1921. Bronze, Rustenburg City Hall, South Africa. Photo: Fritz Joubert, 2015. CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>).

media, the personal exchange of objects, as well as the inauguration of public sculptures.

One French artist who directly influenced the South African commemorative landscape through his personal exchanges with Boer leaders was Jean Georges Achard. Unlike many of the conservative activists who flocked to Kruger when he visited Paris in 1900, Achard does not appear to have been motivated by any particular political motivations for his visit beyond an obvious sympathy, as many French citizens felt, for the independence of the Boer republics. Achard took deep interest in expressing human psychology through sculpture and became famous during his career for his busts of French celebrities, including leaders of the anti-Dreyfusard movement like Émile Zola and Georges Clemenceau. According to the artist's account, he had visited Kruger several times at his hotel in Paris during the autumn of 1900 when he was just twenty-nine and still a relatively little-known sculptor. During one such visit, he gifted Kruger a maquette commemorating the Boers' ongoing fight with the British Empire. Referred to alternatively as *l'Indépendance* or *la Résistance des Boers*, Achard's maquette represents three Boer soldiers, recognizable by their bandoliers, irregular uniforms, and beards, during a battle (fig. 5.7). One soldier aims his rifle as another advances forward. The third soldier lies dead on the ground in front of them. Behind the Boers stands a winged female figure holding a flag in her left hand and a crown of laurel leaves in her right who crowns the courageous soldiers. On the base of the sculpture Achard has placed the inscription "Pour l'Indépendance" (for independence).⁸⁵

The origins of Achard's *Gloria Victis*-styled maquette are unknown. Achard never exhibited it in the Salon nor do any of the figures appear to represent Villebois-Mareuil, thereby making it unlikely that it had been

85 Henri Daragon, *Le président Kruger en France: Marseille, Dijon, Paris, 22 novembre–1^{er} décembre* (Paris: Henri Daragon, 1901), 57.

made for the monument competition in Nantes. Furthermore, the maquette seems to have never been realized as a monument to the Boer cause in either France or South Africa. Instead, it was repurposed by the artist in 1924 to commemorate inhabitants of Poix-du-Nord who had died during the First World War. Nonetheless, Achard's visit to Kruger had an impact in the long term, and through which he was able to transmit his theme of noble defeat to South Africa via a portrait of Kruger which eventually became a public monument. Achard reported that his encounters with Kruger in his drawing room had left a lasting impression on him. He emphasized Kruger's "tragic greatness," describing how the "wounded and broken" character of this great Afrikaner had inspired his sculpture.⁸⁶ He attempted to translate this impression into an elegiac portrait of the Boer leader in exile and defeat, seated in a chair and looking towards the ground, lost in contemplation. The large plaster maquette was exhibited at the Salon in 1901. While it received no official medals, it was reported to be a favorite amongst French visitors, who showered it with flowers in homage to the Boer president.⁸⁷

Achard's maquette was eventually realized as a monument after a visit to the artist's studio by Louis Botha, who was then prime minister of the Union of South Africa, in 1919. Although it was Achard's idea to have the sculpture cast in bronze and sent to South Africa, the proposal came at a useful time in South African politics.⁸⁸ Rising Afrikaner nationalism, which included promotion of the Afrikaans language and the search for new national symbols, had become one of the defining topics of debate since the origin of the Union in 1910.⁸⁹ The Union itself had become bitterly divided between the ruling South African Party, led by war veterans Jan Smuts and Botha, and the rival National Party, led by fellow veteran James Barry Munnik Hertzog. The National Party had emerged as a pro-labor ethno-nationalist party in 1914 shortly before the outbreak of the First World War. While the South African Party viewed the Union of South Africa as part of the British Empire, and therefore unequivocally implicated in the country's fight against Germany, Afrikaner nationalists saw the Union of South Africa as first and foremost Afrikaner. They resisted the steady displacement of white Afrikaners working in the gold mines by Black South

86 "Tragische grootheid," "gewonde en gebroekene." M. Scharthen-Antink, "Een vergeten Krüger-monument," *De Amsterdammer Weekblad voor Nederland*, August 28, 1904, 5.

87 Scharthen-Antink, "Een vergeten Krüger-monument," 5.

88 "Nos Echos: Un monument au président Kruger," *La Liberté*, October 27, 1919, 2.

89 Mark Suzman, *Ethnic Nationalism and State Power: The Rise of Irish Nationalism, Afrikaner Nationalism and Zionism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), 36–37.

Africans who could be hired at a lower cost. The National Party also worked against the perceived displacement of the Afrikaans language and promoted bilingualism in schools and government posts.⁹⁰

In the midst of this division, Botha, who had been travelling to Paris to attend the Paris Peace Conference, made the decision to have Achard's Kruger monument cast in bronze using state funds after being invited to the artist's studio. Although Botha died later in the year, the creation of the monument proceeded. The bronze was cast and exhibited in Paris's Salon des Artistes Français in 1920, where critics responded with nostalgic praise for the sculpture of the now-deceased South African president who, two decades earlier, had evoked an outpouring of excitement and sympathy amongst the French public. In praising the statue, one critic, Clément Morro, evoked the romantic sentiments of noble suffering which French audiences had attached to the Lost Cause of Boer nationalism, calling Achard's sculpture "more of a symbol of pain and despair than a portrait."⁹¹ After the Salon, the monument was delivered to Pretoria, where it remained in storage until a proper place for its placement was decided. Although several locations were considered, including Church Square in central Pretoria, South Africa's administrative capital, it was finally decided in February 1921 to erect the monument in front of City Hall of Rustenburg.

The monument was inaugurated on December 16, 1921, on the Day of the Vow. Kruger's grandnephew, Grobler, who had been present at the inauguration of the monument to Villebois-Mareuil in Nantes nearly twenty years earlier, presided over the event. Unlike other contemporary public statues of Kruger which represent him as a noble statesperson, such as Anton Van Wouw's bronze erected in Pretoria 1913, the Rustenburg bronze represents Kruger as Achard had known him in 1900—as an aged political exile uncertain of his or his country's fate. Rather than being represented standing in the fashion of a public orator, Kruger is seated in solemn contemplation over the disastrous outcome of the South African War. Citing Kruger's speech in May of 1900, discussed above, Grobler remarked that although the monument represented the exiled Kruger in a state of mournful contemplation over the Boer republics' defeat, "he did not mourn like someone who no longer has hope, because from his last message to his people it seems he believed that God would raise up his people again. Paul Kruger himself was

90 Leonard Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, 4th edition (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), 180–182.

91 Clément Morro, "Plus encore un symbole de la douleur et de la désespérance qu'un portrait," "Beaux-Arts: les sculpteurs," *La Revue Moderne des Arts et de la Vie* 21, no. 21 (November 15, 1921): 14.

a powerful monument of unfailing hope.”⁹² As the last acting president of a Boer republic, Kruger had become an important symbol of a collective Boer identity which could bridge the memory of the republics with the present Union and offer people a sign of hope. Following Grobler’s interpretation, the Kruger monument in Rustenburg is not merely an homage to an important statesperson, but an expression of the belief in the Boer peoples’ divine destiny and the transcendence of defeat, which Kruger had assured the Boer people of during his last public speech in 1900.

Conclusion

The commemoration of the South African War reveals a complex interplay of national identity, political ideology, and cultural memory shaped by both local and international dynamics. The war not only left a profound mark on South Africa but also resonated deeply in France, where the war’s memory became entangled with the Dreyfus Affair, splitting public opinion along the lines of Dreyfusard and anti-Dreyfusard camps and reflecting broader anxieties about France’s place amongst the international community. In the aftermath of Dreyfus’s pardoning and the government’s crackdown on revolutionary far-right groups, various anti-Dreyfusard factions appropriated the South African War as a means of attacking both France’s Dreyfusards and their international supporters, above all England. In addition to responding to contemporary politics, anti-Dreyfusard groups also drew upon longstanding social grievances by drawing parallels between the South African War and the Franco-Prussian War.

The response of anti-Dreyfusard groups to Villebois-Mareuil’s death and the subsequent creation of monuments in his honor, above all the statue erected in Nantes, serve as examples of how commemoration was be mobilized for political purposes. Colonel Georges de Villebois-Mareuil, as a symbol, became a conduit for expressing the diverse and at times conflicting political ideologies embraced by anti-Dreyfusard groups, including pro-Republican patriotism, revolutionary nationalism, and political anti-Semitism. For all of these groups, however, the Monument to Villebois-Mareuil served as a symbol of vindication

92 “Hy het nie getreure soos iemand wat geen hoop meer het nie, want uit sy laaste boodskap aan sy volk blyk dit dat hy geglo het dat God sy volk weer sou oprig. Paul Kruger self was ‘n kragtige monument van onfeilbare hoop.” H. M. Rex, “Die Rustenbergse Kruger-Standbeeld,” *Pretoria* 19 (April 1956), 7–12.

in the wake of defeats ranging from the Franco-Prussian War to the Fashoda Incident, constructing a narrative of noble suffering through which anti-Dreyfusards linked the struggle of the Boers to their own self-perceived victimhood.

The attachment of diverse political beliefs with the memory of Villebois-Mareuil further underlines the multidirectional entanglement of national and international politics within the South African War. Just as anti-Dreyfusards utilized the war in South Africa as a means for advancing local politics, so too Boer leaders capitalized on Villebois-Mareuil's memory as a tool for potentially bolstering French support for the Boers in their fight against the British army. The prevalence of Villebois-Mareuil's image in France, but not in South Africa, illustrates the strategic manner in which Boer leaders targeted local audiences, but more broadly their heavy reliance on international media as a weapon against the militarily superior British Empire.

Yet as a consequence of the globalized mediatization of the South African War, international symbols were also adopted into the commemorative practices of Boer communities in the wake of defeat. In South Africa, Boer communities merged Calvinist theology with their nationalistic aspirations, interpreting the war as a divine test that consecrated their struggle for autonomy. Boer monuments—often situated in religious spaces—served not only as memorials to the fallen but also as enduring symbols of divine favor and future hope. These memorials reinforced a collective identity centered on resilience and a belief in a divinely ordained destiny, transcending their immediate funerary purposes to contribute to a Lost Cause mythology that echoed postwar cultures in other parts of the world, and above all in France.

The commemorative practices surrounding the South African War thus demonstrate how local memory is shaped by, and in turn shapes, international political and ideological currents. The shared use of the motif “*Gloria Victis*” in both the Monument to Villebois-Mareuil and the *Student Monument* in South Africa highlights the transnational dimensions of memorial culture, as both French and Boer communities appropriated narratives of defeat and resilience to further their own political agendas. Nonetheless, the additional use of non-French symbols and materials in Boer commemorative practices further highlights a broader global diffusion of Lost Cause narratives and symbols. While *Gloria Victis* originated in France, its global transmission, its transformation according to local cultural norms and circumstances, and its subsequent rediffusion demonstrate the motif's viral quality, where the symbol's original authorship, meaning, and context is replaced by local interpretation.

6. Serbia and the Battle of Kosovo (1389)

Abstract: Chapter 6 examines Serbia's monument to the Kosovo heroes, *Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima*, as an adaptation of the *Gloria Victis* motif of heroic defeat. Sculpted by Paris-trained Đorđe Jovanović, the monument translated French commemorative aesthetics into a modern nationalist vision rooted in the 1389 Battle of Kosovo. Both the Obrenović and Karađorđević dynasties mobilized the Kosovo legend to legitimize authority, fusing medieval martyrdom with contemporary militarism and monarchy. At the same time, the monument's stylistic affinity with French public sculpture reinforced Franco-Serbian diplomatic alignment before World War I. The chapter demonstrates how defeat functioned as a productive political resource, shaping national cohesion and international orientation rather than collective mourning.

Keywords: World War I, Đorđe Jovanović, France, nationalism, monuments, Eastern Europe

In July of 1892, a competition for the construction of a national monument was held in the old National Assembly building of Belgrade, Serbia. The Kingdom of Serbia had been established just a decade earlier, in 1882. Serbia had recently seceded from the Ottoman Empire as a result of their success during the Serbian-Ottoman War (1876–1878). Serbia's victory was a monumental event, marking the first time since the fourteenth century that the country was no longer under foreign rule. Paradoxically, however, the intention of the committee was not to erect a monument to celebrate the country's recent victory, but rather one that commemorated a medieval defeat.

The Serbian government desired to erect a monument commemorating the medieval Battle of Kosovo between the principality of Moravian Serbia and the Ottoman Empire. On June 28, 1389, the Serbian Prince Lazar led a coalition of Balkan forces against the advancing Ottoman army commanded by Sultan Murad I on the Kosovo Plain. Although the battle marked the

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Fig. 6.1. Đorđe Jovanović, *Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima* (Monument to the Kosovo heroes), inaugurated 1904. Bronze. Kruševac, Serbia. Photo: Undated postcard, Philatelic Society of Kruševaca. (In public domain.)

beginning of Serbia's vassalage under the Ottoman Empire for the next five centuries, the story of the battle itself was subject to a long process of mythological construction within Serbian culture, resulting in the so-called Kosovo legend. This legend originated in church tracts between 1390 and 1420, designed to promote the cult of Prince Lazar, whom the Orthodox Church canonized soon after the battle. Over the next centuries, the narrative evolved into an epic legend. Central events of the story, many of which were added over time, include the capture and martyrdom of Prince Lazar, the betrayal of Serbian nobleman Vuk Branković who retreated from the battlefield, and the heroic infiltration of the Ottoman camp by Serbian knight Miloš Obilić, who assassinated Sultan Murad I, after which he was immediately killed.¹ More than a folk tale, however, the Kosovo legend became a sacred covenant to preserve the Serbian nation within which great personal suffering and even military defeat are viewed as divine trials to test the Serbian peoples' will.²

1 David A. Norris, *A Cultural History of Serbia: Tradition and Change* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 28–30.

2 Miloš Ković, "The Kosovo Covenant and Serbian national identity," in *Artistic Heritage of the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija: History, Identity, Vulnerability, Protection*, eds. Dragan Vojvodić and Miodrag Marković (Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2017), 120–124.

Clearly, national and religious beliefs had very strong overlap within Serbian collective memory, as Lazar, occupying the role of both a founding father and a saint, was a figure of veneration within both the Orthodox Church and the Serbian civil religion. It was particularly during the nineteenth century, as Nenad Makuljević argues, that Serbia's national, dynastic, religious institutions began to overlap through public rituals involving the cult of Saint Lazar and other heroes of either national or religious importance.³ One of the principal ways in which the Kosovo legend was maintained in collective memory was through its annual commemoration on June 28 (oftentimes referred to as June 15, following the cycle of the Julian calendar) during the feast day of St. Vitus, or Vidovdan. The codification of Vidovdan as a day of remembering and as a pledge of allegiance to the state follows a parallel trajectory to the establishment of the Day of the Vow in 1880 in South Africa, both being part of the same nineteenth-century tendency towards the invention of traditions to support nationalist goals. In Serbia, it was only in 1889 that Vidovdan became an official holiday, an event that not only sealed the Serbian government's promise to erect a national monument in honor of the Kosovo legend but aimed to inextricably intertwine the cult of Lazar with the Serbian monarchy within the collective conscious.

The winner of the monument competition was Đorđe Jovanović, a young Serbian sculptor who had just returned from completing his studies in Paris. The principal figures in the monument, inaugurated in 1904 as *Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima* (Monument to the Kosovo Heroes) (fig. 6.1), consisted of a *vila* (fairy) seen in Slavic folk legend, and the knight Boško Jugović. As Boško Jugović stumbles to the ground, holding a broken sword in his right hand, the *vila* retrieves the flag from his hands and crowns the martyred hero with a wreath of laurels. One critic reviewing the exhibition for a local Serbian newspaper praised Jovanović's sculpture as worthy tribute to the Serbian people, describing his design as "a *Gloria Victis*."⁴ While the grouping of the winged *vila* and the dying Boško Jugović undoubtedly bring to mind Mercié's sculpture commemorating France's defeat during the Franco-Prussian War, Jovanović created further parallels to *Gloria Victis* as well. The sculptor identified the *vila* as a personification of *Slava*, a popular personification of pan-Slavic nationalism rooted in traditional folk practice whose name means "Glory."⁵

3 Nenad Makuljević, *Umetnost i nacionalna ideja u XIX veku* (Belgrade: Zavod za udžbenike i nastavna sredstva, 2006), 309. Unless otherwise indicated, all texts originally written in Cyrillic have been transliterated into Latin script for this publication.

4 "Spomenik kosovskim junacima," *Srbija* 1, no. 8 (July 18, 1892): 3.

5 Mila Ilić, "Devedeseti rođendan našeg najstarijeg skulptora Đorđa Jovanovića," *Književne novine* (February 13, 1951): 4.

The unnamed critic's reference to Jovanović's design in broad categorical terms as "a *Gloria Victis*," rather than as a sculpture inspired by Mercié's *Gloria Victis*, demonstrates just how popular and widespread the theme of defeat had become in sculptural commemoration by the 1890s. What distinguished Jovanović's *Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima* from other *Gloria Victis* monuments is that, while most countries erecting monuments to defeat did so to commemorate recent military losses, Serbia was still celebrating its groundbreaking victory against the Ottoman Empire. Nonetheless, for many nationalists, the Serbian people still had yet to see true victory. The Treaty of San Stefano and the subsequent Treaty of Berlin (1878), which concluded the war with the Ottoman Empire, brought newfound independence to much of southeastern Europe. For many Serbian nationalists, however, it was an independence that was only partial. Kosovo remained in the Ottoman Empire, while Austria-Hungary, which already ruled over the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia, gained control of the states of Bosnia and Herzegovina because of the treaty. A movement to free Serbian speaking peoples from Austrian and Ottoman rule therefore became a prominent political movement amongst Serbian nationalists who wished one day to see all Serbian-speaking peoples united under a single national government.

As seen in all previous case studies examined in this book, from Peru to the US South, *Gloria Victis* monuments were erected not to mourn the past, but to consolidate power for the future. The same interpretation is readily evident in the design and interpretation of Serbia's *Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima*. A second female allegorical figure, identified as Liberated Serbia, is seated at the base of the monument's left side. She holds a sword in her left hand and wears a crown of laurels on her head, proclaiming her as the champion. Above her is the date 1882, when the Kingdom of Serbia was proclaimed next to the government's coat of arms. Jovanović's contemporaries, however, did not interpret the figure of Liberated Serbia as a resolution to the defeat suffered at the Battle of Kosovo. According to the same journalist who referred to *Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima* as a *Gloria Victis*, the figure of Liberated Serbia embodied the ongoing fight to establish a Serbian nation. Still grasping her sword in her hands, she fights for the freedom of all Serbs and will only drop her weapon once the aims of her people have been realized.⁶

Exactly ten years after the inauguration of *Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima* (June 28, 1904), the Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated by

6 "Spomenik kosovskim junacima," *Srbija*, 3.

the Bosnian Serb Gavrilo Princip (June 28, 1914). Princip was a member of the Serbian nationalist Black Hand group, whose aim was to free Bosnia and Herzegovina from Austro-Hungarian control. Carrying out the assassination on June 28 was a symbolic gesture, as it was the important national holiday of Vidovdan, which commemorates the Battle of Kosovo. For Princip and other Serbian nationalists, therefore, the death of Archduke Franz Ferdinand symbolized the end of an occupation that started in 1389. To a large degree, their symbolic action had concrete results. By the end of the summer, the First World War erupted, unleashing decades of lingering grievances caused by the prior century's nationalist conflicts; and the network and formal and informal alliances that had been built up during this period of simmering hostilities entangled large parts of the world into the war. After the end of the war, Bosnia and Herzegovina were reunited with Serbia, together with many other ethnic groups, under the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

Politically, Serbia's situation at the turn of the twentieth century is not unlike other states with nationalist irredentist ambitions. Much like Peru, the Kingdom of Serbia emerged in the nineteenth century from within a vast landscape that had endured centuries of foreign rule. As a newly independent state, however, Serbia was weak and unstable, subject to internal political upheavals along with territorial disputes with its neighbors. Serbia's claim to Bosnia and Herzegovina in major ways mirrored the Alsace-Lorraine question in France or the Schleswig question in Denmark. Each dispute involved multiethnic states with complex administrative histories and, perhaps most importantly, neighbored by states that claimed their right to rule them, usually based on the idea of ethnic and historical kinship.

Like several other countries at this period, the Serbian government sought aid from France. In 1861, the Serbian government, existing as an autonomous state within the Ottoman Empire, invited a French military mission led by Captain Hyppolite Mondain, replacing the Russian model on which its army was based with that of modern France. While Serbia's military relations with France remained relatively uneventful for the next forty years, this changed in 1908 when Austria formally annexed the Serbian speaking territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which until then had remained unincorporated territories of the empire. With the formation of the rival alliances well established in Europe at this pre-war point, the overlap of French and Serbian hostilities toward members of the Triple Alliance put them in closer relation, and eventually into an alliance in 1914.⁷

7 Mile Bjelajac, "L'influence française sur l'Armée yougoslave entre les deux guerres mondiales," *Revue Historique des Armées* 97 (1994): 45–46.

Before the events leading to the alliance of the French and Serbian armies and the outbreak of the First World War, the two countries were also developing an important relationship of cultural exchange. The Kingdom of Serbia actively sought to develop its arts as part of its nation building plan, including through the production of monuments and providing their artists with training abroad, in which France played a significant role. Like the Danish artist Hans Peder Pedersen-Dan and the Alsatian-born American artist Frederick Wellington Ruckstuhl, respectively studied in chapters 2 and 4 of this book, Jovanović trained in Paris at the tail end of the 1880s. Jovanović had convinced the government to fund his education in Paris, arguing that France's academies and salons were the world's best, and that Serbia could only enter into the league of European civilization if it had artists capable of expressing its national history. Even though Serbia was recognized in Europe for its rich heritage, including for the Kosovo myth, it had very little in terms of contemporary infrastructure to develop and communicate its cultural assets, including no formal education system to train future artists. In the cultural politics of nineteenth-century artistic production, a country that was rich in history, but had no means to express itself according to the mandates of academic style, was not a living nation but a relic of the past.

The Kosovo Legend as Civic Cult, the King as Embodiment of Prince Lazar

The Serbian government's decision to erect a monument to the Kosovo legend in 1889 was the product of party rivalries that arose in the 1880s during the first decade of the Kingdom of Serbia's existence as an independent state. Facing popular opposition from the anti-monarchist and populist People's Radical Party, the monarchy and its allies sought to preserve the king's authority by associating his rule with the Kosovo legend. In 1889, King Milan Obrenović, who had ruled as the prince of Serbia prior to independence, stepped down from the throne, handing the crown over to his son, Alexander Obrenović, just twelve years old at the time. Vidovdan was declared a national holiday and Prince Alexander Obrenović led an elaborate and highly symbolic ceremony laying down the monument's foundation immediately before his coronation. The Kosovo legend and the king's authority were thus unified, or at least this was the intended message before his assassination in 1903.

Serbian politics in the 1880s was shaped by a struggle for power between two of the country's most important political parties, the Progressive and the Radicals. The Serbian Progressive Party was liberal and pro-European, but also one of King Milan's most important backers. King Milan tried to stabilize the kingdom and solidify his power through a policy of appeasement towards Austria-Hungary, despite popular hostility towards the empire for their rule over Bosnia and Herzegovina. Progressive leaders including Milan Piroćanac, a French-educated politician and prime minister of Serbia from 1880 to 1883, supported the King and his pro-Austria policies. The Progressives faced fierce opposition from the Radicals, led by Nikola Pašić, who believed in a decentralized state, the maintenance of a militia instead of a standing army, and a political focus on the country's working-class populace. The party was inspired by left-wing ideologies coming from Russia and France, borrowing their party name from that of France's Radical Party. While they did not advocate for the abolition of the monarchy, the Radicals believed that the king should be politically powerless. Intensely nationalist and promoters of Bosnia and Herzegovina's independence, the Radicals vehemently opposed the king's subservience to Austria, and the Progressive's allegiance to the king.⁸

Fearing the possibility of rebellion, the king established a formal standing army in 1883, disbanding the national militia, which at that point existed as the nation's principal military body. In consolidating control over the Serbian military, the king also made military service compulsory, with most men of military age being required to serve around two years in the armed forces and confiscated civilian arms. The Timok Rebellion, a Radical-supported peasant revolt in the eastern Timok region, ensued. The government's response to the rebellion, which it quickly suppressed, was heavy-handed, sentencing nearly one hundred of the leaders to death, although many were later given amnesty. The rebellion and the government's response solidified not only the Radicals' opposition to the king but also fostered political connections with the pan-Slavism of the Russian Empire—despite the latter's embodiment of illiberal monarchical ideals—as the only power capable of opposing King Milan and the Austria-Hungarian Empire.⁹

Power turned against the king and the Progressives following the government's disastrous declaration of war against Bulgaria (1885), which ended in defeat, and the election of a new coalition government in 1887 formed by Radicals and their allies, the Liberal Party. Facing internal and

8 Marko Attila Hoare, *Serbia: A Modern History* (London: CA. Hurst and Co, 2024), 297–302.

9 Hoare, *Serbia: A Modern History*, 309–316.

foreign unpopularity, and fearing a total takeover by the Radicals, the king established a new constitution that implemented direct parliamentary elections, universal male suffrage, and limited the power of the monarchy. In return for these reforms, the Radicals not only softened their animosity towards the monarchy but also abandoned their agenda of reestablishing a national militia. As a final act of reconciliation, the king abdicated in 1889.¹⁰

During the period of the young Alexander Obrenović regency, the king's inner circle pushed him towards a strong policy of nationalism, which was supported by the Radicals and their allies. The policy of promoting a cohesive national agenda was important for the Serbian ruling elite not only given the fact that was the Kingdom of Serbia was a new state but also given that the kingdom was ethnically heterogeneous. Although much of Serbia's Muslim Albanian population had either fled or been expelled during the war, there were significant Christian minority populations including Greeks and Aromanians. Given that the Ottoman Empire had historically weaponized ethnic division as a means of maintaining control over its Balkan territories, and given the strong philosophical impetus towards nationalism in state building at the time, the Serbian government aimed to establish cultural homogeneity in the state.¹¹ Further pressure was placed on Alexander Obrenović to put forward a strong policy of nationalism given that the year that he became king, 1889, was the 500th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, a battle which had risen to great importance for Serbian nationalists during the nineteenth century. The government therefore sought to elevate the Kosovo legend as one of the cornerstones of the national civic religion, celebrating the liberation of all of the kingdom's citizens, but one which implicitly urged assimilation into a unified Serbian culture.¹²

To solidify the connection between the new ruler and the legendary Battle of Kosovo, the king's coronation was preceded by a grand ritual commemorating Vidovdan in the city of Kruševac. Kruševac was the seat of power of the legendary Prince Lazar, as well as the site of several significant medieval sites, including the fourteenth-century Lazarica Church and the remnants of the Kruševac Fortress. Although Vidovdan had been celebrated in Serbia throughout the nineteenth century, it was declared an official national holiday in 1889. The ceremony in Kruševac took place over the

10 Hoare, *Serbia: A Modern History*, 321–329.

11 Miloš Jagodić, "The Emigration of Muslims from the New Serbian Regions 1877/1878," *Balkanologie* 2, no. 2 (1998), <https://doi.org/10.4000/balkanologie>.

12 Igor Borožan, "Kruševac kao ideološki topos i konstruisanje kosovskog mita u 19. veku," *Muzeologija, nova muzeologija, nauka o baštini* (Belgrade: Centar za muzeologiju i heritologiju, 2013), 265–266, 271.

course of two days, beginning with a period of national mourning. On June 27, the day before Vidovdan, a day of fasting and remembrance was declared. The symbolic death of the Serbian nation at the Battle of Kosovo was enacted through this collective elegiac ritual, followed by a celebration of national rebirth the following day, on Vidovdan. Mihailo Jovanović, the Metropolitan or Orthodox bishop of Belgrade, gave a speech, calling on all Serbs to love their homeland and calling on Saint Lazar to unify the Serbian lands. One of the main events of the day involved the consecration of the site for the future Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima by the soon-to-be king, who symbolically started its construction by laying down the first stone of its foundation. Prince Alexander, however, was interested in proving that his commitment to honoring the covenant to liberating Serbia, which was laid down by the martyrdom of the Kosovo heroes, went beyond religious and symbolic action. The following day, Prince Alexander also laid down the foundation of a nearby gunpowder factory, evoking a promise to defend the Kingdom of Serbia through bloodshed when necessary.¹³

The implicit message of Prince Alexander's benediction of the gunpowder factory through a promise to support the military was that all Serbian citizens were collectively bound to the same obligation both via their covenant with the heroes of Kosovo as via their legal duty to serve in the recently centralized national army. Likewise, though the foundation of the monument was symbolically initiated by the monarch, the government announced through newspapers that financing the monument would be a public effort, with committees from each of Serbia's municipalities created to organize the mass collection efforts until the celebration of Vidovdan the following year.¹⁴ Though many of the visual spectacles during the 1889 Vidovdan commemoration centered on legitimization of Alexander's rule, the main objective was to create dutiful Serbian citizens by not only keeping alive the cultural memory of defeat during the Battle of Kosovo but also by institutionalizing it. The Kosovo legend, transformed into a cult of the Lost Cause, thereby needed a symbol that communicated its newfound civic meaning. The government therefore aimed to erect a public symbol which, while embodying Serbia's ethnic identity through the evocation of a mythical collective history, would also be communicated in the language of

13 Borozan, "Kruševac kao ideološki topos i konstruisanje kosovskog mita u 19. veku," 269–272; Makuljević, *Umetnost i nacionalna ideja u XIX veku*, 316; Uroš Šešum, "Obeležavanje petstote godišnjice Kosovske bitke 1889. godine," *Dinastija Obrenović i proglašenje Kraljevine Srbije*, ed. Suzana Rajić (Niš: National Museum Niš, 2023), 288–289.

14 "Odbor za prikupljanje priloga za Kosovski spomenik," *Zastava* 24, no. 109 (June 21, 1889): 3.

modern European civic nationalism. A bronze figurative monument, created in the academic style, was the ideal symbol to embody the new civic cult.

Đorđe Jovanović and the Monument Competition

Beginning in the 1880s, the newly independent Serbian government, after centuries of being in the cultural and political orbit of the Ottoman Empire, believed that creating contemporary art according to academic standards was an important means for presenting Serbia as a modern European state.¹⁵ Having no official art academies in Serbia, however, the government had few resources to provide locals with artistic training. Đorđe Jovanović was one of the first modern Serbian sculptors to receive a cosmopolitan education in sculpture, studying in fine arts academies in Austria, Germany, and France. Understanding the important role that artistic production played in the cultural politics of European nations, Jovanović convinced the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs to finance his education abroad starting in 1884. He argued that only through demonstrating its competence in contemporary arts would Serbia be able “to stand alongside other European nations,”¹⁶ promising to take the lead in training a new generation of Serbian artists upon his return to Belgrade. Jovanović began his education under Edmund von Hellmer at the Academy of Fine Art in Vienna before transferring the following year to the Munich Academy, where he trained with sculptor Max von Widmann. When he was not training in his studio, he was visiting museums like Munich’s Glyptothek, studying the foundation of European Academic ideals through antique and Renaissance sculpture. During his summer break, he returned home to Serbia to study local costumes. Like many other artists of his generation who had lived through the centuries’ wars and revolutions, he was interested in the idea of developing a so-called national style of art, finding support from the government throughout much of his career.

After the unexpected retirement of professor von Widmann in the spring of 1887, Jovanović decided to continue his artistic training in Paris where he studied with Henri Chapu at the Académie Julian. Although there is no

15 Uroš AniĆ, “Kosovski spomenik Đorđa Jovanovića i pariska skulptura s kraja XIX veka,” *Sveske* 8, no. 16 (1985): 74.

16 “Da stanu naporedo sa ostalim evropskim narodima,” Đorđe Jovanović to the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs, April 22, 1885. Letters prepared by Radivoje Bojović in “Studentska prepiska Đorđa Jovanovića,” *Vajap Đorđe Jovanović* (Čačak: National Museum Čačak, 2007), 65.

evidence to suggest that Jovanović studied with Mercié, the latter taught at the academy while Jovanović was a student, training other international sculptors such as Frederick Wellington Ruckstuhl. There is therefore no doubt that Jovanović would have been familiar with Mercié either on a personal basis or as one of the Académie Julian's most famous sculptors. Jovanović adapted quickly to life in Paris and was eager to be recognized by the greater artistic community. His first opportunity to exhibit an original sculpture took place in Paris in 1889. The Serbian Exhibition Committee had invited Jovanović to show some of his works at the Paris Exposition Universelle, where he exhibited *The Guslar*. The sculpture represents a blind Serbian man playing a gusle—a bowed instrument deeply attached to Serbian national culture, and particularly epic poetry. Shortly before the start of the Exposition Universelle, Jovanović wrote to the Serbian government explaining the meaning of *The Guslar*, stating that the sculpture represents “not a blind man, a beggar, but a freedom fighter who was blinded in battle and took up the gusle to sing the greatness and glory of Serbian heroes, and thereby to encourage and create fighters for the freedom of the fatherland and the nation.”¹⁷

The Guslar was well received by the exposition's jury, helping Jovanović obtain a bronze medal in 1889, and a strong opening statement for an artist who had begun his studies in sculptures just five years earlier. The sculpture's success helped solidify Jovanović's reputation as capable of producing sculptures embodying Serbian nationalism while also expressing these ideals within the language of contemporary beaux-arts aesthetics. Riding off of his recent success, he convinced the Serbian government to extend his scholarship to 1891, arguing that the French Salon was the most important test of artistic merit, and promising to produce monuments for his home country. He wrote to the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs with the proposition of creating a monument to the famed Serbian botanist Josif Pančić (1814–1888) who had recently died: “All educated nations raise monuments to their great people, only the Serbian people are not so lucky as to be able to pay respect to their famous people in the same way.”¹⁸ The sculpture, which was eventually erected in bronze in 1897, became Jovanović's first commissioned monument.

17 “Ne jednoga slepca, prosjaka, nego borca za slobodu, koji je oslepio u ratu i latio se gusala, da peva veličinu i slavu srpskih junaka i da time hrabri i stvara borce za slobodu otacbine i narodnosti.” Đorđe Jovanović to the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs, March 11, 1889. Bojović, “Studentska prepiska Đorđa Jovanovića,” 79.

18 “Svi obrazovani narodi podižu spomenike njihovim velikim ljudima, edino srpski narod nie te sree, da može da oda na isti način poštu negovim znamenitim l'udima,” Đorđe Jovanović

During this period of career growth, Jovanović promoted himself as the most suitable candidate to construct a monument to the Battle of Kosovo. On July 9, 1889, less than two weeks after the king's ceremonial anointment of the site in Kruševac where the monument was to be erected, the government formed a committee of nineteen Serbian individuals which included clergy, statesmen, academics, military officers, and businessmen to oversee the construction of a monument and the collection of funds.¹⁹ Jovanović had written to the government in 1890 proposing his idea for a monument. Although no description of the monument is given in the letter, Jovanović later revealed that his design consisted of the figure of Slava, later incorporated into his *Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima*, and that he intended to have the monument moved to Belgrade rather than Kruševac.²⁰ Although it is unclear what the government's response to Jovanović's preemptive proposal was, in February of 1892, a year after Jovanović returned to Belgrade, the Ministry of Construction formally announced a call for artists to deliver propositions for a national monument commemorating the Battle of Kosovo.

Only two artists submitted designs for the competition: Jovanović and his older contemporary, Petar Ubavkić (1852–1910), who had also studied in Vienna and Munich. Both sculptors had the difficult assignment of creating a design which was both fundamentally nationalist and yet sufficiently cosmopolitan to demonstrate Serbia's equality amongst European nations, mixing well-known narratives from the Kosovo legend with common iconography from the academic sculptural tradition. Furthermore, the artists faced the conundrum of equally evoking both elegy and elation, representing what one Serbian journalist described as the "most magnificent, and at the same time, the saddest event in the history of the Serbian people."²¹

The principal group in Ubavkić's design consisted of Prince Lazar shaking hands with the legendary knight Miloš Obilić. On the pillar's front facade Ubavkić's placed a female figure blowing a trumpet, interpreted as representing Glory. On the reverse side of the monument, Ubavkić represented a Kosovar girl holding Pavlo Orlović in her arms, another legendary warrior who died

to the Minister of Education and Religious Affairs, April 8, 1890. Bojović, "Studentska prepiska Đorđa Jovanovića," 83.

19 Milutin R. Jugović, *Spomenik kosovskim junacima* (Kruševac: Historical Archive, 1966): 19–20.

20 Ilić, "Devedeseti rođendan našeg najstarijeg skulptora Đorđa Jovanovića," 4.

21 "Najveličanstveniji a u isto vreme i najtužniji događaj u istoriji srpskog naroda," N. M. (Nestor Manojlović), "Spomenik kosovskim junacima," *Srpska tehnička lista* 3, no. 6 (November and December 1892): 178.



Fig. 6.2. Đorđe Jovanović, model for *Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima*, ca. 1902. Location of artwork unknown.

at the Battle of Kosovo. Finally, Ubavkić placed reliefs—"Departure into Battle" and "Kosovo Dinner," when Lazar dined with his companions on the eve of the battle—on the left and the right side of the monument.²² The latter scene from the Kosovo legend is commonly understood as being modeled after the biblical story of the Last Supper, when Jesus foretells the prophecy of his betrayal by one of his disciples, later revealed to be Judas. The scene of Lazar's dinner had been a popular motif amongst Serbian artists even before independence, as illustrated by Adam Stefanović *Kneževa večera* (1871; The prince's supper), who deepened the connection between Lazar and Jesus through creating visual parallels to popular representations of the Last Supper.

Like Obilić, Jovanović included reliefs narrating scenes from the Kosovo legend on the pillar of his monument along with additional allegorical figures. On the left side of the monument, Jovanović included a copy of his earlier sculpture *The Guslar*, which, as described by Jovanović above, embodied the tradition of epic poetry in recounting the Kosovo myth. Opposite to *The Guslar* is another female allegory representing liberated Serbia, creating a dialectic between Serbia's past and future. On the front and back of the monument are two reliefs, respectively depicting Obilić slaying the Ottoman Sultan Murad I and the army receiving the sacrament of communion before battle. These

22 Manojlović, "Spomenik kosovskim junacima," 178.

designs, visible in the sketch (fig. 6.2) from the 1892 competition, differed little from the final monument erected twelve years later. The primary revision Jovanović made to his original sketch was the representation of the falling warrior. Compositionally, the martyr figure seen in the 1892 sketch is quite similar to that seen in the final bronze. However, this figure was originally identified as a standard bearer, and the jury, upon pronouncing Jovanović as the winner, required him to change the figure to the legendary Boško Jugović.²³

Despite being younger and far less experienced than his competitor, Jovanović's connections to France played an influential role in the jury's decision. Jovanović planned to execute the monument in Paris. For the leaders of the young Serbian Kingdom, the Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima was not only intended to instill national pride in local citizens but to validate Serbia as a sister nation to other European governments. Both the jury and subsequent newspaper articles espoused the belief that having the monument constructed in France and exhibited in the Salon before its final erection would ensure its artistic integrity.²⁴

In addition to believing Jovanović's connections to France would be an asset to the monument's success, the jury also praised the central theme of self-sacrifice expressed through the monument's principal group. In contrast to Ubavkić's design, which relegated the theme of defeat to the back of the monument, Jovanović's foregrounded it. Journalists furthermore praised Jovanović for his principal allegorical grouping, which implicitly commemorated all of the martyrs of the battle of Kosovo rather than placing sole focus on two of the central heroes as Ubavkić had done.²⁵ It was this combination of sculptural allegory and realism to create a narrative about national suffering that made it, in the words of the journalist cited at the beginning of this chapter, "a Gloria Victis."

Politics, Betrayal, and the 1904 Inauguration

As noted above, the 1889 Vidovdan ceremony was intended to bring national unity to Serbia after the turmoil of its early years of independence. By promoting a mystical association between King Alexander with the Kosovo cult, those within power sought to protect the young king from dissent and

23 Manojlović, "Spomenik kosovskim junacima," 179.

24 "Kosovski spomenik," *Zastava* 27, no. 35 (March 3, 1893): 4; "Književnost i umetnost. Vajarska izložba u Novom Sadu," *Zastava* 30, no. 183 (November 26, 1895): 3; Manojlović, "Spomenik kosovskim junacima," 178.

25 "Spomenik kosovskim junacima," *Srbija*, 3.

make the monarchy into a stable pillar within the government. The intention of the monument to promote the image of a unified and stable government was clear even during the 1892 competition, when the jury noted their disapproval with Ubavkić's choice of the theme of the "Kosovo Dinner" for one of the reliefs. Although an important story in the Kosovo legend, the premonition of Vuk Branković's betrayal of Prince Lazar is a key element to this narrative. The jury argued that the story of treachery from within was inappropriate for a national monument since it could be interpreted as highlighting division and disorganization within the Serbian leadership.²⁶

Political division and betrayal within the Serbian government, however, had an acute effect on the early decades of the Kingdom of Serbia, which in turn subjected Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima to numerous delays. It was only in 1894 that the government provided the artist with a contract to produce a preliminary model for the monument, while a contract to produce the final monument was not produced until 1897. Throughout this period, Jovanović exhibited the monument or elements of the design in both Serbia and in France.²⁷ In Paris, the finished Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima bronze was exhibited at the 1900 Paris Exposition Universelle where the sculpture, despite being largely ignored by the French press, helped Jovanović obtain a gold medal. Later in life, Jovanović blamed the delays on the Serbian royal family who, according to Jovanović, had also prevented the artist's ambition to have his monument erected in Belgrade.²⁸ The idea to have the monument placed in Belgrade gained popularity not only given that it was the center of Serbian political life, but that it lay directly next to the Serbian territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and therefore might be seen as a message of unification for Serbs across the border. King Alexander, however, ultimately put an end to these plans after intervention from representatives from Kruševac.²⁹

In 1903, King Alexander and his wife Draga Mašin were murdered by a group of conspirators within the Serbian army who were convinced of the young king's inability to govern. It was only after Alexander's assassination and the arrival of King Peter I, Jovanović argued, that efforts to have Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima erected were finally realized.³⁰ Like

26 Manojlović, "Spomenik kosovskim junacima," 178.

27 "Iz Srbiji. Vajarska izložba u Beogradu," *Srbija Sion* 11, no. 26 (July 1, 1901): 443; "Književnost i umetnost. Vajarska izložba u Novom Sadu," *Zastava*, 3.

28 Zvonimir Kulundžić, "Vajar Đorđe Jovanović," *Beogradske opštinske novine* 57, no. 8 (August 1939): 471; Ilić, "Devedeseti rođendan našeg najstarijeg skulptora Đorđa Jovanovića," 4.

29 Borozan, "Kruševac kao ideološki topos i konstruisanje kosovskog mita u 19. Veku," 277.

30 Kulundžić, "Vajar Đorđe Jovanović," 471.

his predecessor, King Peter utilized rituals blending national history and religious mythology to cement his legitimacy. The new king was anointed in 1904 on the centenary of the First Serbian Uprising. Although the 1804 uprising resulted in defeat rather than independence, it was also considered retroactively as the rebirth of the Serbian state. The coronation ceremony thereby presented Peter's reign as a continuation of the country's modern independence movement.³¹

The same year of his coronation, Peter brought to completion the long-delayed Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima, usurping Alexander's efforts to tie his reign to the national Kosovo legend. Like the monument's foundation-laying ceremony in 1889, the inauguration took place in Kruševac on Vidovdan. While Alexander's ceremony in 1889 was cloaked in sacred rituals intended to connect the monarch with the legacy of Lazar, the ceremony led by Peter relied on populist symbolism. Arriving the day before, the king met with local school children, soldiers, and farmers to inquire about daily events, from the opening of a new school to an ongoing problem with disease amongst livestock. On Vidovdan, the inauguration ceremony commenced with a sermon from a priest, who described Vidovdan as a day of national mourning, as a longstanding example of heroic sacrifice, and, most importantly, as a day which has for generations reminded all Serbs "that what has been lost must be regained."³² At the end of the speech, Peter unveiled Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima and, with a short declaration, symbolically handed over custodianship of the monument to the people of Kruševac. In a significant expression of his desire to use the ceremony to create a close relationship with the Serbian military, after the unveiling the king joined local soldiers at the barracks of the Twelfth Regiment for a celebration, where the regiment's commander gave a speech reminding soldiers of their duty to take revenge for Kosovo. Finally, before leaving Kruševac, Peter visited the gunpowder factory that King Alexander had, like the monument, laid a symbolic foundation for in 1889.³³

While the symbolism of the 1889 and 1904 ceremonies differed, both prominently used ritual in an attempt to deepen the link between nationalism and militarism. Afterwards, the official newspaper, *Srpske Novine* (Serbian newspaper) reproduced a written speech by Peter in which the

31 Borozan, "Kruševac kao ideološki topus i konstruisanje kosovskog mita u 19. Veku," 278; Makuljević, *Umetnost i nacionalna ideja u XIX veku*, 317; "Proslave i prilike. Otkrivanje spomenika kosovskim junacima," *Kalendar Matice srpske* (1905): 109.

32 "Se izgubljeno povratiti mora," "Kruševac 16 jun," *Srpske novine* 71, no. 128 (July 16, 1904, Julian calendar): 1.

33 "Kruševac 16 jun," 1–2.

king praised Jovanović's sculpture as beautiful and one that would inspire important lessons for future generations. Nonetheless, the King added, no monument could ever capture the depths of feeling that the Battle of Kosovo inspired deep in the heart of every Serb. Evoking deeply populist sentiments, he declared that every Serb is a descendant of the Kosovo heroes, and that this common national spirit will ensure Serbia's existence against any foreign threat. "The spirit of Kosovo," the King proclaimed, "the spirit of those heroes who gloriously fell in the defense of their homeland will inspire us whenever we need to ensure our national survival."³⁴

Beyond the nationalist ideologies that defined the monument's inauguration, there was an evident desire within the Serbian press to frame the event as a European affair. Newspapers reported on the inauguration with typical patriotic enthusiasm, with one journalist noting with evident pride the monument's creation by the Val d'Osne foundry in France while also boasting that the granite pillar, made in Serbia, surpassed any marble that could have been carved in Carrara.³⁵ Newspapers also emphasized not only the national but international importance of the Vidovdan, portraying Serbian vassalage under the Ottoman Empire as an act of self-sacrifice to defend the rest of Europe from Turkish invasion.³⁶

It was the Kingdom of Serbia's contentious contemporary relationship with Austria-Hungary rather than the Ottoman Empire, however, that pulled the country into the fold of European international politics. The abdication of Milan in 1889 had displeased Austria, and the philosophy of pan-Slavic nationalism popular amongst certain groups like the Radicals brought a closer relationship to Russia. The simultaneous formation of the Franco-Russian Alliance in the early 1890s therefore led to the entanglement of French and Serbian politics as well as economics at the turn of the twentieth century.

Public Sympathy and Economic Dependency: Serbia's Relationship with France

Franco-Serbian exchange was to a certain degree a relationship of entanglement, shaped by either country's primary relationships with major

34 "Duh Kosovski, duh onih junaka, koji slavno padoše na braniku otadžbine svoje, zadahnuće nas kad god nam bude trebalo da osiguravamo narodni opstanak svoj," "Govor," *Srpske novine* 71, no. 128 (July 16, 1904, Julian calendar): 1.

35 "Spomenik kosovskim junacima," *Štampa* 3, no. 162 (June 14, 1904): 1.

36 "Kosovski spomenik," *Branik* 20, no. 137 (June 30, 1904): 1.

powers including Britain, Russia, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Peter I's ascension to the throne following the murder of King Alexander Obrenović and Queen Draga in May 1903 signaled a gradual reorientation of Serbian foreign policy away from Vienna and toward St. Petersburg. The brutal coup, however, was fiercely condemned abroad, most significantly in Britain, where diplomatic relations with Serbia were suspended in protest until 1906.³⁷ This rupture reverberated through European diplomacy: Paul Cambon, France's ambassador in London, reported that King Edward VII expressed irritation that other European powers had not joined Britain in breaking ties with Belgrade.³⁸ As seen in the previous chapter on the South African War, cultivating strong relations with Britain had been an important strategy of Foreign Minister Delcassé, whose diplomatic acumen led to the Entente Cordiale between Britain and France in 1904. In this way, Serbia—once peripheral to France's orbit—became a state whose affairs acquired indirect significance for the Triple Entente after its establishment in 1907 as well as, more broadly, France's post-1871 competition with Germany.³⁹

In 1908, the crisis of Bosnia and Herzegovina placed Serbia into the lime-light in France and had the effect of increasing public sympathy for Serbia. In violation of the 1878 peace agreement, Austria-Hungary formally annexed the territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908. The French press broadly rallied behind Serbia during the event, but especially far-right newspapers, in typical fashion, related the affair back to their own nationalist agendas. Spreading fears of a European-wide process of Germanization, *L'Action* wrote in October 1908, "the Bosnia-Herzegovina question is for [Serbia] what the Alsace-Lorraine question is for France."⁴⁰

In 1911, following the Bosnia-Herzegovina crisis, King Peter I made an official visit to France. Much like Paul Kruger's diplomatic visit to France in 1900, when public sympathy for the Boer republics reached fever pitch, Peter was able to present himself as a highly likable character, thereby deepening French public sympathy toward Serbia. A thematic issue that reoccurs

37 Wayne S. Vucinich, *Serbia Between East and West: The Events of 1903–1908* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1954), 109.

38 Letter from Paul Cambon, Ambassadeur de France, London, to Maurice Rouvier, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, France, November 25, 1905. Serbie I, P/18770. Centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, France.

39 Letter from Léon-Eugène-Aubin Coullard Descos, Ministre de France en Serbie to Justin de Selves, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, France, December 21, 1911. Serbie I, P/18770. Centre des Archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve, France.

40 "La Bosnie-Herzégovine est pour eux ce que la question d'Alsace-Lorraine est pour la France," Maurice de Waleffe, "La Crise Orientale," *L'Action*, October 12, 1908, 4.



Fig. 6.3. "The President of the Republic Awards the Medal of 1870 to His Majesty King Peter of Serbia," *Le Petit Journal: Supplément illustré* 22, no. 1097 (November 26, 1911). (Artwork in the public domain; image provided by the Bibliothèque nationale de France.)

during his visit was the commemoration of the Franco-Prussian War. It was well known in France that Peter, while enrolled at the prestigious officers training school Saint Cyr, had voluntarily joined the Foreign Legion during the Franco-Prussian War.⁴¹ Thus, Peter made a point of visiting Saint Cyr during his diplomatic visit and proudly brought with him the Legion of Honor medal he had received long ago for his contributions to the war. Another highly symbolic visit included Peter's visit to the Élysée presidential palace. There, during an official ceremony, President Fallières bestowed Peter with la Médaille commémorative de la guerre de 1870–1871 (The Medal of the War of 1870–1871), the first medal to recognize combatants of the Franco-Prussian War, which had become an official award that same year (fig. 6.3).

The evocation of historical memory was a prominent symbolic device within the diplomatic rituals performed by both the Serbian and French representatives. When Peter visited the Paris Hôtel de Ville, he was received according to official ceremonial standards. The Municipal Council met Peter and his entourage at the base of *Gloria Victis* in the central courtyard, which had been transformed into a winter garden. At the foot of the statue,

41 Stanislav Sretenović, "Francusko-srpski odnosi u XIX i XX veku," *Međunarodni problemi* 61, no. 4 (2009): 538.

the council president gave a speech expressing gratitude not only to Peter for his military service to France, but to the Serbian people for being the guardians of Europe against so-called foreign invaders. Peter, wearing his Medal of the War of 1870–1871 as well as his medal of the Legion of Honor, which he had been awarded after 1871, gave a speech on the common values of liberty, equality, and justice that had long united the Serbian peoples. He recalled the story that the Notre Dame Cathedral of Paris had rang its bells in 1381 to celebrate the news of the heroic resistance of the Kosovo heroes against the Ottoman Empire. This event, reasoned Peter, was but one illustration of France's historical role as the benevolent protector of aggrieved peoples: "France, liberal and generous, embracing, as the most brilliant pages of its history show, causes outside its own good, always attracted to itself the nations that are victims of injustice. This attraction must have been even more powerful on the Serbian people, who, conscious of their right to a better fate, also feel themselves imbued with this same ideal, to the accomplishment of which France has devoted her most persevering efforts."⁴² In the wake of the defeat of 1871, as both a rhetorical and practical strategic mechanism, France had made a practice of forming formal or informal relations with small states that equally had grievances with France's current or historical adversaries. In reality, this strategy was not based on the moral principle of promoting liberty, which France's colonial policy itself disproved, but on the strategic assets that these relationships afforded. The French government courted Denmark, for example, not out of sympathy for events of 1864, but because they desired to keep the Baltic waterways out of German control and because Denmark provided a neutral space for corresponding with France's principal ally, Russia. By contrast, the French government did not intercede on behalf of the Boer republics when they were invaded by the British Empire, despite widespread outcry amongst the general public in France and beyond, and in contrast to the empty words of moral support they gave Boer delegates, because it was not convenient for France to create an enemy out of England. Supporting Serbia played into the interests of the French government not only as a means of countering German-Austrian military power, but also given that Serbia was economically dependent on France.

42 "La France, libérale et généreuse, embrassant, comme le montrent les pages les plus brillantes de son histoire, les causes en dehors de son propre bien, attira toujours à elle les nations victimes d'injustices. Cette attraction doit être plus puissante encore sur le peuple serbe, qui, conscient de son droit à un meilleur sort, se sent aussi pénétré de ce même idéal, à l'accomplissement duquel la France a consacré ses efforts les plus persévérants." "Le Roi de Serbie à Paris," *L'Indépendant Rémois*, November 18, 1911, 3.

Although the public rituals performed during Peter's reception at the Hôtel de Ville evoked national romantic ideals about the common destiny of the French and Serbian people, one of the central reasons for Peter's mission to France in 1911 was to discuss economic relations with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁴³ Mirroring Peru's economic situation in the turbulent early decades of independence, Serbia was dependent on loans from other European countries at the turn of the twentieth century. As part of Serbia's shift away from Austrian appeasement that corresponded the rise of the Radicals and the coronation of Peter, the Serbian government organized a loan from France in 1904 as a means of furthering itself from Austrian economic influence. Even though Serbia had already begun to move away from Austria politically, it remained financially tied to the latter in large part because of Serbia's pork exports to Austria. With Serbia's successful procurement of a loan from France in 1906, part of this money was used to procure arms from France. As a result of Austria's anger concerning Serbia's increased trade relations with France as well as with neighboring Bulgaria, the Pig War (1906–1908) ensued. Rather than a military conflict, this was a means of economic assault by which Austria cut off all major imports from Serbia, including pork. Austria's move, however, only encouraged Serbia to further encourage foreign investment. The Serbian government received two more loans from France in 1910 and 1913, by which time France owned 79% of all of Serbia's foreign debt.⁴⁴

Serbia's loosening of its economic ties with Austria-Hungary was encouraged not only by French banks, but by Minister of Foreign Affairs Théophile Delcassé. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs sought to strengthen the Triple Entente through an informal association with Serbia, who already had an unofficial military alliance with Russia, and who were now economic partners with France, a relationship which had itself been encouraged by Russia.⁴⁵ It was arguably France's habit of opposing German power in Europe by its pattern of entangling itself with other countries hostile to Germany and its Austro-Hungarian allies that led France into World War I. France did not enter into World War I because of Serbia, but was preemptively invaded by Germany because of its alliance with Russia and Russia's support of Serbia.

43 Sretenović, "Francusko-srpski odnosi u XIX i XX veku," 541.

44 Christopher Andrew, *Theophile Delcassé and the Making of the Entente Cordiale: A Reappraisal of French Foreign Policy 1898–1905* (Toronto: Palgrave Macmillan, 1968), 245; Ali Coşkun Tunçer, *Sovereign Debt and International Financial Control: The Middle East and the Balkans, 1870–1914* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 94; Čedomir Antić, *Ralph Paget: A Diplomat in Serbia* (Belgrade: Institute for Balkan Studies, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2006), 58.

45 Andrew, *Theophile Delcassé and the Making of the Entente Cordiale*, 244–245.



Fig. 6.4. "'Gloria Victis!' Serbia in Exile." Centerfold image from *Excelsior* 6, no. 1854 (December 13, 1915). (Artwork in the public domain; image provided by the Bibliothèque nationale de France.)

Furthermore, although the Triple Entente was formed as a defensive alliance against the German Empire, Serbia's nationalist agenda deepened the crisis of war. The Serbian government's Niš Declaration, issued in December of 1914, called on all Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes under foreign rule to revolt and unite in one state.⁴⁶ Thus, international entanglements had disastrous effects.

The assassination of Archduke Ferdinand on Vidovdan in 1914 caused division within the circle of the far-right press, traditionally anti-German and militarist in ideology. *L'Action Française*, being ultra-Catholic and royalist, denounced the murder of a member the Hapsburg's Catholic dynasty, floating conspiracies that the assassination was carried out by Freemasons of Asian descent.⁴⁷ By contrast, the ultra-nationalist Catholic Republican newspaper, *La Libre Parole*, had a more providential message in response to the assassination, blaming the Hapsburgs for sowing their own demise, warning France to prepare itself for an impending conflict: "The House of Habsburg has had the most glorious splendors among all; for nearly ten centuries, it has dominated the greater part of Eastern Europe; but a time came when it betrayed its mission by making itself the complacent of the sects ... Death is relentless against it, as it has done against all the royal races who deserted the providential ways and whose throne was delivered to the Revolution. May France, more than ever, watch and prepare! Such events shake Europe and hasten the hour of the terrible denouements."⁴⁸ Initially, the rest of the French press reacted largely

46 Sretenović, "Francusko-srpski odnosi u XIX i XX veku," 542.

47 "Le meurtre de François-Ferdinand," 7, no. 185 (July 4, 1914): 3.

48 "La Maison de Habsbourg a eu des fastes glorieux entre tous ; elle a, depuis tantôt dix siècles, dominé sur la plus grande partie de l'Europe orientale; mais une heure vint où elle trahit sa mission en se faisant la complaisante des sectes ... La mort s'acharne sur elle, comme elle l'a fait sur toutes les races royales qui désertèrent les voies providentielles et dont le trône fut livré à la Révolution. Que la France, plus que jamais, veille et se prépare! De tels événements ébranlent

negatively to the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand on Vidovdan in 1914. With the Serbia's military defeat and invasion by German and Austrian armies in 1915, however, French media once again cast Serbia as a martyr through language that echoed France's own collective memory of occupation in 1871. Headlines of "Gloria Victis" (fig. 6.4) appeared atop images of Serbian refugees in newspapers, where photos were now reproduced widely via the proliferation of halftone printing technology. At the same time, newspapers in France began to widely print explanations and translations of the Kosovo legend.⁴⁹

While newspapers evoked collective memories of France's defeat in 1871 when reporting on the battlefields in Serbia for their adult audiences, one of the most compelling examples of how the Kosovo legend became integrated into French civic consciousness during the war comes from its integration in public education. According to Laurence Messonnier's analysis of *Le Manuel général de l'instruction primaire*, which served as a guide for school instruction, teachers were encouraged to integrate war themes into all subjects, using grammar, dictation, and composition to instill nationalist and militaristic ideals. The curriculum was intended to instill in students a sense of patriotic duty and an idealization of sacrifice, positioning students as the future defenders of France.⁵⁰ Lessons about the Kosovo legend became part of the French public curriculum in 1915 when all schools observed "Serbia Day."⁵¹ In one particularly telling lesson topic suggested in March 1915, students were given three texts to examine: the first, a story about the mother of the Jugović brothers, who were legendary heroes on the Kosovo Battlefield; the second, "Le Bon Gîte," a poem written by Paul Déroulède during the Franco-Prussian War; the third, two contemporary stories of heroism from the ongoing war. Each story focused on the heroic young men who left their homes, their mothers, and their families to fight and die on the battlefield. Serbian nationalist legends were imprinted on the French collective memory, and these collective memories fueled the

l'Europe en hâtent l'heure des redoutables dénouements." Henri Bazire, "L'Assassinat de l'héritier d'Autriche," *La Libre Parole* (June 29, 1914): 1.

49 Camille Julian, "Le Patriotisme Serbe et la Poésie Populaire," *La Revue politique et littéraire* 53, no. 4 (February 12–20, 1915): 50–57; Léo d'Orfer, "La Poésie Nationale Serbe," *La Grande revue* 18, no. 16 (February 1, 1915): 552–586.

50 Laurence Messonnier, "Le Manuel général de l'instruction primaire (1914–1919). Pédagogie heuristique, rémanence revancharde et mobilisation patriotique." *Les Écoles dans la guerre*, ed. Jean-François Condette (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.septentrion.7195>.

51 Gaston Baty, "La Serbie Épique," *La Revue des jeunes* 5, no. 3 (November 10, 1915): 153–169.

contemporary moral beliefs about the obligation of all young French men to fight for their country.⁵²

Conclusion

Jovanović's Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima demonstrates the discursive matter in which late nineteenth-century representations of defeat travelled between nations. By imitating French artistic principles and commemorative practices, Jovanović and the Serbian authorities aimed to cultivate a national artistic identity that resonated with international standards, thereby establishing Serbia as a credible player in European cultural discourse after centuries of existing within the political sphere of the Ottoman Empire. Even more importantly, however, and like examples seen in previous chapters, Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima used *Gloria Victis* and the well-understood narrative of defeat and nationalism it presented to redefine the Kosovo legend according to modern sentiments.

The inauguration ceremonies of 1889 and 1904 highlight the differing political ideologies of King Alexander and King Peter and their respective approaches to commemorating defeat for political ends. The 1889 ceremony, conducted under King Alexander, was steeped in sacred rituals, tightly aligning the monarchy with the mythos of Prince Lazar and the Kosovo legend. This approach aimed not only to elevate the figure of Lazar as a national hero but also sought to legitimize the young king's legitimacy in the wake of the political infighting that marked the end of King Milan's rule. By contrast, the 1904 ceremony led by King Peter marked a departure from the more regal and religious symbolism of his predecessor. Peter's approach embraced populist themes that focused on connecting with the broader populace, as he engaged directly with local citizens, military personnel, and schoolchildren. This shift in tone represented an effort to democratize the narrative of the Kosovo legend, transforming it into a shared heritage that transcended royal lineage and became a unifying symbol of Serbian identity.

Moreover, the Kosovo legend's political utility extended beyond Serbia's borders, as its interpretation was strategically aligned with themes from the Franco-Prussian War, where King Peter had served. By drawing parallels between the struggles of Serbs and the experiences of the French, Serbia leveraged the resonance of shared suffering and heroism in the memories

52 "Les Lectures du Samedi," *Le Manuel général de l'instruction primaire* 24 (March 27, 1915): 383–384.

of 1389 and 1871. Capitalizing on mutual animosities towards Austria and Germany, but also their mutual alliance with Russia, Serbia was able to make advancements in distancing itself from Austria economically while also satisfying France's self-interests, which tended to make small states into economic dependents.

Jovanović was providential when he argued that his artistic training in France was essential for Serbia to "stand side by side with other European nations." Whether through art or economics, Serbia's mission to become an important player in European politics succeeded in entangling France into its own regional political affairs, thereby, whether intentionally or unintentionally, drawing France into its goal of liberating fellow ethnic Serbs from Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire through violent conflict. Thus, France was forced to "stand side by side" with Serbia despite never having formed an alliance with them.

The viral proliferation of the Kosovo legend in French media at the start of World War I, where it intermixed with symbolism relating to its own collective memory of defeat during the Franco-Prussian War, brings the pattern of discourse into full view. Starting with the design's inauguration at the 1892 competition, Jovanović imitated *Gloria Victis* in the creation of Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima to reinterpret the Kosovo legend in terms of modern nationalist ideals which spoke to both Serbian and international audiences. Little more than twenty years later, the Kosovo Legend, in its modern, European nationalist interpretation, was itself incorporated into French nationalist media and propaganda, becoming a source of mediation in how France reconciled their memory of the Franco-Prussian War with their contemporary entanglement in a war which not only pitted them against Germany once again, but incorporated a slew of other nations, including Serbia.

Conclusion

Abstract: The conclusion reflects on how monuments to military defeat operate as instruments of state-building rather than mourning. Tracing *Gloria Victis* from post-1871 France to Denmark, Peru, South Africa, Serbia, and the United States, it shows how defeat was ritualized as civic duty, sacrifice, and national destiny. Together, the case studies reveal the international cult of the Lost Cause as a form of civil religion that stabilized fractured national identities and legitimized political authority. The sculpture's viral adaptability enabled its ideological reuse across divergent contexts, transforming loss into symbolic capital. The chapter concludes by tracing the persistence of noble defeat into the twenty-first century, where its logic reappears in nationalist and right-wing populist rhetoric across Eastern Europe and the United States.

Keywords: populism, Hungary, Serbia, the United States of America, monuments

Gloria Victis stands at the intersection of art, politics, and collective memory, revealing the complex mechanisms through which societies commemorate military defeat. From its origins in post-1871 France to its widespread replication and adaptation across national contexts, the sculpture's trajectory underscores the role of monumental art in shaping narratives of loss, sacrifice, and resilience. The case studies examined in this book—ranging from Denmark's silent alliance with France, to Peru's integration of defeat into a state-building project, to the Confederate South's transformation of the Lost Cause into a sacred myth—each demonstrate how commemorative culture operates as both a national and international phenomenon.

At its core, the international cult of the Lost Cause, as explored in this book, is a manifestation of civil religion—a process by which defeat is rendered meaningful through ritual and material culture. Whether in France's Third Republic, Peru's Aristocratic Republic, or Serbia's nascent

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monarchy, the sanctification of sacrifice served as a crucial tool for state legitimacy. Counterintuitively, many of these monuments were not created to mourn the dead. Instead, they were created to instruct the living, shaping future generations' understanding of patriotism and duty. In societies where national identity was fragile or contested, the memory of military failure could be instrumentalized to fortify collective consciousness. The French example remains foundational: the Franco-Prussian War's disastrous conclusion was recast not as a moment of shame, but as a moral trial that would prepare the nation for its eventual redemption. Mercié's *Gloria Victis* was both a lament and a promise, an artistic embodiment of France's determination to reclaim what had been lost.

What this book has demonstrated is that the visual grammar of noble defeat proved to be remarkably adaptable across geographical and political boundaries. Denmark, still reeling from its 1864 loss to Prussia, used *Gloria Victis* to articulate a sense of solidarity with France and reinforce its cultural pivot away from Germany. Peru, in the wake of the War of the Pacific, turned to the same sculptural language to elevate the fallen into heroes, incorporating the memory of loss into a larger nationalist project of regeneration. In South Africa, the Boer republics—vanquished by British imperial expansion—absorbed elements of the *Gloria Victis* mythology, merging it with their own Calvinist belief structures to construct a redemptive framework for their political future. In Serbia, where defeat at the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 had long since been mythologized into an origin story of religious faith and national endurance, a sculptural adaptation of Mercié's motif helped tether medieval memory to modern statecraft, reinforcing the narrative of Serbian martyrdom in the struggle against foreign rule.

One of the most striking examples of the viral nature of *Gloria Victis* can be seen in the comparison between Đorđe Jovanović's *Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima* and Frederick Wellington Ruckstuhl's *Confederate Soldier and Sailors Monument*. While both undoubtedly draw inspiration from Mercié's sculpture, they share several iconographic elements that cannot be traced directly to *Gloria Victis*. Compositionally, the works mirror one another, each consisting of a female allegory standing behind a soldier who has just received a mortal wound. In both sculptures, the female figure presents a crown of laurels in her hands—a significant departure from *Gloria Victis*, in which the laurel crown rests on the ground. The similarities extend further: both Jovanović and Ruckstuhl chose to depict their soldiers in historically specific dress rather than the classical nudity of Mercié's composition, visually rooting their respective works in the precise historical moments they sought to commemorate. Finally, both wounded men press their left

hands against their chests, as if covering an unseen wound—distinguishing them from the Christlike outstretched arms of Mercié's soldier.

While it may be tempting to suggest that Ruckstuhl borrowed from Jovanović's design—especially given that there is no evidence of a conceptual plan for his Confederate monument until around 1900—such a direct line of influence is ultimately impossible to confirm. More importantly, this impulse to identify a single point of origin obscures the viral quality of *Gloria Victis* that gave it such a profound global influence. The very notion of direct transmission fails to capture the complexities of how visual motifs spread and mutate within cultural memory. Similarly, while it is undeniable that both Ruckstuhl and Jovanović were exposed to Mercié's work—both having studied sculpture in Paris during the late 1880s, when *Gloria Victis* was omnipresent in French visual culture—it would be reductive to assert a simple, unmediated influence between Mercié's original sculpture and their respective adaptations. By the time both artists arrived in Paris, *Gloria Victis* was no longer a single artwork but a widely disseminated symbol, reproduced through mass-market bronze reductions, illustrated journals, and official state commissions.

Indeed, the very iconographic elements that Jovanović and Ruckstuhl share—such as the crowning gesture of the female allegory and the soldier clutching his wound—had already appeared in earlier adaptations of *Gloria Victis*, such as Frédéric Bogino's Franco-Prussian War monument in Mars-la-Tour (1875). While it is possible that both sculptors drew inspiration from Bogino's work, his monument itself was an adaptation of Mercié's sculpture, further demonstrating the recursive nature of *Gloria Victis*'s visual legacy. Even when individual iconographic traits can be traced from one artist to another, the sheer saturation of these images within turn-of-the-century culture renders traditional provenance studies incomplete in capturing the full scope of their transmission. The virality of *Gloria Victis* was not merely about the replication of a single image but the broader dissemination of an idea—one that could be reshaped, reinterpreted, and recontextualized to serve new historical narratives and political needs.

While the proliferation of *Gloria Victis* at the turn of the twentieth century reflected the global resonance of noble defeat as a political tool, it also signaled deeper anxieties about national survival in an era of rapid geopolitical transformation. Many of the nations examined in this book were caught in the throes of imperial realignments, industrialization, and the emergence of mass politics, all of which destabilized traditional sources of power. In this context, the memory of past defeats offered a sense of continuity and reassurance but also hope for a more glorious future. The

promise of resurrection, so vividly expressed in Mercié's composition, made it possible to believe that the past could be restored, that wrongs could be righted, and that the nation itself could be reborn into something even greater.

The Death and Rebirth of *Gloria Victis*: A Postscript Narrative of Viral Dormancy and Reinfection

The conclusion of the First World War quickly made Mercié's *Gloria Victis* a moot symbol. For a short time, *Gloria Victis* continued to be used in public ceremonies during the state of exuberance that followed French victory, as evidenced by its continued ritual importance during the reception of US President Woodrow Wilson to the Hôtel de Ville in 1918. But after the reintegration of Alsace and Moselle into France in 1920, *Gloria Victis* no longer had a clear *raison d'être*. In Paris, the decision to remove the original bronze from the Hôtel de Ville was made in 1921 by the architect of the central administration of Paris, who observed, "to me, the symbolic group no longer seems appropriate after the victory."¹

The same year that Alsace and Moselle were returned to France, Northern Schleswig was ceded to Denmark. The Copenhagen *Gloria Victis* shared a similar fate to its counterpart in Paris and was removed from the Glyptotek in 1927. In a fitting fate, the bronze was sent to decorate the Lysglimt rest facilities for the elderly in the idyllic coastal village of Gilleleje, remaining in an adjacent park for the rest of the twentieth century. However, the historical, geographic, and ethnographic complexities of Schleswig meant that the Second Schleswig War did not so easily retire from Danish collective memory. Given that Schleswig had never been part of Denmark—existing prior to 1864 as a duchy—and that Northern Schleswig was not a distinct political or geographic entity, debate ensued in Denmark concerning where a border should be drawn in the so-called Reunification. For many conservatives in Denmark and the Danish minority population in the southern region of Schleswig, including Flensburg which remained a part of Germany, the new border between Denmark and Germany did not resolve the conflict of 1864. Although the Danish government preceded after 1920 as if the country had officially put the Schleswig question behind them, the memory of

1 "Ce groupe symbolique ne me paraît plus à sa place après la victoire," Henri-Jacques Hermant, L'Architecte en Chef de la Ville de Paris, "Enlèvement du Gloria Victis de Mercié," box 10624/72/1, folder 129, Archives de Paris.

defeat continued throughout the interwar period in public discourse and occasionally even through public sculpture.²

The continued life of Denmark's cult of the Lost Cause after 1920 is illustrated poignantly by a war monument erected during this period not in Denmark, but in France. At the initiative of a group of local Danish residents in France, the Monument aux volontaires danois (Monument to Danish volunteers), which commemorates thirty Danish volunteers who died in the service of the French foreign legion during the First World War, was inaugurated in the town of Rueil (today known as Rueil-Malmaison) immediately outside of Paris on April 26, 1925. Although the local Danish committee had originally selected the Norwegian-born Danish sculptor Stephen Sinding to execute the sculpture, after Sinding's death in 1922 Hans Peder Pedersen-Dan, author of *Landsoldaten med den Lille Hornblæser* (1899), was hired to create the monument. Pedersen-Dan was already well-known for his monument. The monument represents the Norse goddess Saga who, in the interpretation of Danish diplomat Herman Anker Bernhoft, symbolizes history and memory.³ Below Saga is a dedication in Danish taken from poet Frederik Paludan-Müller's 1864 poem, "Fremtidsmaalet" (The future goal), and reads "Slesvigs Land genvundet / Det er Kampens Maal" ("The land of Schlesvig reclaimed / that is the struggle's aim").⁴ At the inauguration ceremony, presided over by Herman Anker Bernhoft, France's Under Secretary of State Jean Ossola, and the town's mayor, André Lachaud, Bernhoft remarked that while the Danish volunteers fought for France's liberty, they equally fought with the knowledge that the victory of France would deliver Schleswig back to Denmark after more than fifty years of German domination.⁵ The Monument aux volontaires danois embodied the exact sentiments of binational memory of defeat that Carl Jacobsen had intended but largely failed to elicit when erecting *Gloria Victis* at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in 1906.

The continued relevance of the international cult of the Lost Cause is illustrated by the other *Gloria Victis* sculptures examined in this book that had longer lifespans. Until the early twenty-first century, the *Gloria Victis*

2 Jens Lei Wendel-Hansen, *De Træer, de Drypper Endnu: 1864 i Dansk politik* (København: Nord Academic, 2023), 223–227.

3 "Aux Volontaires Danois morts pour la France," *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* 137, no. 116 (27 April 1925): 4.

4 Inge Adriansen and Jens Ole Christensen, *Anden Slesvigske Krig 1864: Forhistorie, forløb og følger* (Sønderborg: Museum Sønderjylland, 2013): 34.

5 "Aux Volontaires Danois morts pour la France," *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* 137, no. 116 (April 27, 1925): 4.

sculptures in the US made by Frederick Wellington Ruckstuhl continued to be focal points of commemoration for Confederate memory groups like the United Daughters of the Confederacy. After the Black civil rights movements of the 2010s, however, when the public turned away from accepting the Confederate Lost Cause narrative, leading to a spate of protests demanding the removal of Confederate statues, both Ruckstuhl's Confederate Soldier and Sailors Monument in Baltimore along with his teacher Mercié's Monument to General Robert E. Lee in Richmond were taken down in 2017 and 2021, respectively. Ruckstuhl's monument was revived in 2025 as part of the MONUMENTS exhibition at The Brick and the Geffen Contemporary at MOCA in Los Angeles (October 23, 2025, to May 3, 2026) which juxtaposed decommissioned Confederate monuments with contemporary artworks. The Baltimore monument's sister sculpture in Salisbury, on the other hand, has had a much quieter retirement from public life. The monument was moved to a local cemetery in 2021, and, like the stone reduction in Portsmouth, transformed into a funerary symbol rather than a monument to celebrating defeat. The Tiffany stained glass window reproduction of Ruckstuhl's *Gloria Victis* remains in storage, and the Museum of the Confederacy, as a former temple of the Lost Cause, was transformed into the American Civil War museum in 2014. With the erasure of many of its public symbols, the days of the Lost Cause of the Confederacy seem to be numbered, but its ability to stir ethnic and political tensions means that future eruptions of violence are still quite possible.

Similarly, in post-Apartheid South Africa, the growing emphasis on the historical victimization of Black persons within white-dominated society and the longstanding erasure of their own battles, victories, and defeats from collective memory has also strongly shaped discourse in recent years. While the Rhodes Must Fall campaign, which began in 2015 to remove Marion Walgate's statue of Cecil Rhodes from the University of Cape Town, is arguably the most well-known example, both the legacy of the South African War as a valorization of Boer suffering which has excluded the remembrance of Black victims of war as well as the enduring valorization of Paul Kruger, including through public statues, has been the subject of protest and debate.⁶ Perhaps unsurprisingly given the history of these

6 Albert Grundlingh and Daniel Compagnon (translator), "L'instrumentalisation politique de la commémoration du centenaire de la guerre sud-africaine de 1899–1902," *Politique africaine* 90, no. 2 (2003): 162–76; Pieter Labuschagne, "Memorial Complexity and Political Change: Paul Kruger's Statue's Political Travels through Space and Time," *South African Journal of Art History* 26, no. 3 (2011): 142–154.

monuments, while the *Gloria Victis* monument of Potchefstroom continues to garner relatively little attention, the Monument au Colonel Georges de Villebois-Mareuil in Nantes, France, dedicated to a far-right volunteer fighter who died during the South African War, has been the subject of several protests and defacements over the past decade. In the case of Villebois-Mareuil monument, the actions directed against it are a symptom of not only the increasingly vocal critique of the history of European colonialism in Africa and elsewhere, but also of France's enduring struggle to combat internal right-wing extremism over the past century.⁷

Peru's Cripta de los Héroes, situated prominently within the highly popular Cementerio Presbítero Matías Maestro, still functions as a monument and as a center for public education concerning the War of the Pacific. Even as late as 1986, more remains of fallen soldiers were interred in the crypt, on the occasion for which an extension was added to the structure. As a symbol of civil religion, however, its most significant change occurred during the Ochenio de Odría, when General Manuel A. Odría led the country under a dictatorial presidency. In 1953, Odría officially named la Cripta as a patriotic sanctuary, placing the monument under the administrative jurisdiction of el Centro de Estudios-Histórico Militares del Perú. This was just one action in Odría's effort to restore military values to Peru through commemoration of the War of the Pacific. One year later, the Odría government took down Agustín Querol's Monumento a Francisco Bolognesi with what they claimed to be a more appropriate image of the colonel. The new sculpture by Artemio Ocaña, in contrast to Querol's image of a mortally wounded Bolognesi falling to his knees, represents a triumphant hero waving a flag in the air.⁸

Perhaps more than any of the other principal monuments studied in this book, Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima (Monument to the Kosovo heroes) has continued in recent history to enflame nationalist ideals. On December 15, 1992, during the height of the Bosnian War (1992–1995), Serbian President Slobodan Milošević visited Kruševac to deliver a speech in front of Jovanović's monument. In an uncanny and likely unconscious repetition

7 "Nantes: rassemblement contre le Service National Universel," *Contre Attaque* (November 12, 2021), <https://contre-attaque.net/2021/11/12/nantes-rassemblement-contre-le-service-national-universel/>; "Nantes. La manif antifa a fait du bruit dans les rues," *Ouest France* (January 21, 2022), <https://www.ouest-france.fr/pays-de-la-loire/nantes-44000/nantes-la-manif-antifa-a-fait-du-bruit-dans-les-rues-e65fb5ec-7af9-11ec-9c59-cf797ef5ccae>.

8 *Cripta de los héroes de la guerra de 1879, guía histórica y biográfica* (Lima: Centro de Estudios-Histórico-Militares del Perú, 1999); Rafael Dias Scarelli, "De héroe mártir a héroe victorioso: intelectuales peruanos frente al monumento de Francisco Bolognesi y la tesis de un proyecto primitivo para el monumento," *Revista Del Instituto Riva-Agüero* 5, no. 1 (2019): 84–88.

of King Alexander's and King Peter's respective visits in 1889 and 1904, Milošević visited two local factories in Kruševac—albeit not the gunpowder factory, which still exists—to inquire about their production status in the face of United Nations-backed international sanctions. He met with the workers and, in a speech, reminded them that they too, as industrial workers, were fighting for Serbia's freedom. Later, in front of thousands of people, Milošević laid down a wreath in front of Spomenik Kosovskim Junacima, where he gave a defiant speech comparing the country's current battles with those faced in 1389:

Citizens of Kruševac! Cheers! Here, in front of the monument to the Kosovo heroes I want to tell you that Serbia will not surrender. Throughout its history, Serbia has earned something from Europe by fighting against occupiers, because by fighting for its freedom it also protected those countries that are now denying our republic and our people these same rights. We are now exposed to greater pressure, but even under this pressure we are going to give up neither our country nor our people ... This people knows very well how much it has sacrificed for its freedom, how high a price it paid for this freedom, and there is no price for which it could lose it.⁹

Milošević's evocation of the narrative of Serbia's eternal suffering and subjugation, its status as the protector of Europe, and the will of the people to protect their freedom at any cost, echo many other speeches given by political leaders during the Kingdom of Serbia's early years of independence. In addition to the Bosnian War's status as being the costliest in terms of human life in Europe during the second half of the twentieth century, the war is also infamous for the genocide of Bosnian civilians by ethnically Serbian combatants.

Eastern Europe's unresolved political issues that have arisen from nineteenth-century nationalist conflicts, the creation and dissolution of the Soviet Union, as well as a cacophony of more recent troubles in the twenty-first century have made the region arguably the last place where *Gloria Victis* has survived, not just in the spirit of the Lost Cause ideology, but as a symbol as well. As demonstrated in previous chapters, the viral transmission of *Gloria Victis* occurred not just through visual repetition of the sculpture's motif, but through the repetition of the title itself. In

9 Foreign Broadcast Information Service, "Milosevic Vows not to 'Surrender,'" *Daily Report: East Europe* (December 16, 1992): 56.

1908, Polish writer Eliza Orzeszkowa published the novella *Gloria Victis* to commemorate the forty-fifth anniversary of the January Uprising of 1863, which sought to liberate Congress Poland from the Russian Empire. Given the rebellion's failure, and repression from the Russian Empire, erecting large scale figurative commemorations was not possible. Orzeszkowa intended her novella, whose title she borrowed from Mercié's sculpture, to be a means of publicly honoring those who lost their lives to the fight for Polish independence.¹⁰ Nearly half of a century later, in 1946, the *Gloria Victis* Memorial was erected in Warsaw's Powązki Cemetery to commemorate the fallen soldiers of the Polish Home Army during the 1944 Warsaw Uprising, World War II's largest uprising against German occupation, in which the Polish insurgents capitulated after two months of fierce fighting.¹¹

The *Gloria Victis* Memorial, a large black obelisk, evokes few visual connections to Mercié's sculpture other than the words "*Gloria Victis*" emblazoned on the front. Moreover, few if any visitors to the Powązki Cemetery to commemorate the sacrifices of the Polish Home Army would call Mercié's sculpture to mind. The memorial references Orzeszkowa's novella, thus evoking connections to the country's literary heroes as well as the longer memory of Poland's struggle for independence in the nineteenth century; yet Mercié's sculpture is nonetheless present, even if invisible in its iconography, and even if unintended by those who erected the memorial. Since the closure of the Second World War, the phrase "*Gloria Victis*" spread to many other Polish memorials as well, just as it did in Confederate soldiers' monuments in the US South beginning in 1890 (chapter 4). The viral nature of "*Gloria Victis*" expresses itself not only through its global transmission, but its endurance across time as well, going into periods of dormancy before reemerging in a new form; yet the purpose and meaning remain surprisingly unaltered.

A final example that demonstrates that *Gloria Victis*'s viral transmission still occurs today can be found in Hungary, with the inauguration of the memorial *Gloria Victis* on October 21, 2006. Located outside of Budapest in the town of Csömör, *Gloria Victis* was erected to commemorate the international victims of communism. Created by artist János Víg, the monument

10 Ursula Phillips, "Glory to the Vanquished or Tribute to the Lived Experience: Eliza Orzeszkowa's Recreation of 1863 in her cycle *Gloria Victis* (1910)," in *Mapping Experience in Polish and Russian Women's Writing*, eds. Marja Rytönen, et al. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 74.

11 Krystyn Ewa Siellawa-Kolbowska, "War after War: Second World War Memorials as Memory Sites—the Case of Warsaw," in *Collective Memories of War*, eds. Elena Rozhdestvenskaya, et al. (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 103–105.

consists of a quarter-circle brick “world-wall” representing the global impact of communism, marked by lead rosettes to indicate affected territories. Barbed wire evokes the memory of the suppression of civil liberties, while crosses evoke Christian faith. A central arched structure, resembling a battleship, emerges from the wall to signify the 1956 revolution’s role in weakening communist rule. The memorial also features Hungary’s historic map, an inscribed poem, and a steel flag with a cutout emblem referencing defiance. The immediate source of the monument’s title is borrowed from exiled Hungarian poet Tibor Tollas’s edited volume of poetry, *Gloria Victis*. Originally published to commemorate the ten-year anniversary of the failed 1956 Hungarian Revolution, which was notoriously suppressed by the Soviet Army, *Gloria Victis* featured poems by a diverse group of contributors commemorating the failed revolution.¹² The 2006 monument in Csömör, however, is an incarnation of the rebirth of authoritarian politics in Hungary. In typical patriotic fanfare, the inauguration of *Gloria Victis* included a benediction by a bishop, the reading of national poems, and, most notably, a welcoming address by future-PM Viktor Orbán of Hungary’s right-wing Fidesz Party.¹³

The Fidesz Party has consistently weaponized Hungarian memory of defeat to gain popular support, beginning with the so-called Trianon trauma. In 1920, following the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary lost major portions of its territories to neighboring states including Romania, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Austria, transitioning from a formidable European power to a weakened, landlocked country. The perceived national humiliation incurred by Hungary led to the flourishing of irredentist, nationalist, historical myth-making symptomatic of all Lost Cause ideologies, and which continued to be used for political effect by Fidesz in their growing rise to power in the early 2000s.¹⁴ Since being elected Prime Minister in 2010, Orbán has repeatedly used the phrase “Gloria Victis” in public speeches and social media posts commemorating the Hungarian Revolution. Like the Trianon trauma, the 1956 Hungarian Revolution has become central to Orbán’s Lost Cause narrative, but he does not need a copy of Mercié’s sculpture to develop

12 Tibor Tollas, ed., *Gloria Victis: Szabadságharcunk a világirodalomban 1848–1948* (Munich: Nemzetőr, 1973).

13 “Orbán Viktor köszöntője,” Gloria Victis Foundation.

14 Bartek Pytlas, *Radical Right Parties in Central and Eastern Europe: Mainstream Party Competition and Electoral Fortune* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2016), 179–181; Kristian Gerner, “Open Wounds? Trianon, the Holocaust and the Hungarian Trauma,” in *Collective Traumas: Memories of War and Conflict in Twentieth-Century Europe*, eds. Conny Mithander, John Sundholm, and Maria Holmgren Troy (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007), 91–92.

his civic cult. Orbán has been active in shaping historical memory, including by forcing the Central European University out of Budapest, inaugurating the nationalist VERITAS Research Institute for History, removing a statue of communist-era PM Imre Nagy away from Parliament, and ordering the reconstruction of the fascist-era Monument to National Martyrs.¹⁵ Many of Orbán's opponents interpret these actions as proof of the ruling Fidesz Party's desire to rewrite history according to an ultra-nationalist, Eurosceptic, and authoritarian narrative. In his 2024 commemoration of the Hungarian Revolution, he once again borrowed the phrase "Gloria Victis" as a means of evoking the collective memory of revolt against and repression by the Hungarian government and its Soviet supporters, remarking: "For the next thirty-four years they kept the dogs on a short leash, and eventually they simply went home. That is why we can stand here today, that is why we can be free today, and that is why today everyone around the world knows that Hungarians must be treated with respect. Gloria victis! Glory to the heroes!"

The majority of Orbán's speech, however, was not focused on the memory of the Hungarian Revolution. Instead, he focused on the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine and the longstanding nemeses within his cult, Brussels and Washington. Orbán issued a large number of conspiratorial accusations within his speech, some old, like the threat of so-called internationalists from within Hungary's border, to more recent, more convoluted claims:

The time has come to say it: the European leaders, the Brussels bureaucrats, have led the West into a hopeless war. In their heads, dizzy with the hope of victory, this war is the West's war against Russia, which they must win, bring the enemy to its knees, and wring from it whatever they can. This is their grand collective goal. Now they want to openly drag the entire European Union into the war in Ukraine. The new victory plan has been made public. The victory plan is to extend the war. The plan is to invite Ukraine into NATO immediately. The theatre of war will be

15 Norman Eisen and Meilin Scanish, "History in the (Un)Making: Historical Revisionism in Viktor Orbán's Hungary," *Brookings Institute*, November 25, 2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/11/25/history-in-the-unmaking-historical-revisionism-in-viktor-orbans-hungary/>; Vivian S. Walker, "It with Statues: Brick and Mortar Revisionism in Orbán's Hungary," *War on the Rocks*, February 8, 2019, <https://warontherocks.com/2019/02/say-it-with-statues-brick-and-mortar-revisionism-in-orbans-hungary/>; "Felavatták a Nemzeti vértanúk emlékművét," *PestBuda*, October 31, 2019, https://pestbuda.hu/cikk/20191031_pestbuda_hu_ujra_felavattak_a_nemzeti_vertanuk_emlekmuvet/; Valerie Hopkins, "Hungary's Viktor Orban and the Rewriting of History," *Financial Times*, July 25, 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/c7032cb2-aca5-11e9-8030-530adfa879c2>.

moved to Russian soil. Part of the plan is that, having won on the Eastern Front, Ukraine will undertake to replace the Americans and guarantee the security of the whole of Europe with its own reinforced army. In other words, we Hungarians would wake up one morning to once again find Slavic soldiers from the East stationed on Hungarian territory.

Thus, Orbán suggested that the ultimate goal of Brussels was to use Ukraine to invade Hungary. Although Orbán provided no evidence to back up his claim, the mere evocation of the Hungarian Revolution was sufficient enough to rally nationalists behind him. Adherents of the cult of the Lost Cause rely on sacred scripture, not proof. Orbán closed his speech by referencing the historical lessons of Hungary's victories and defeats against foreign invaders, declaring:

'56 was a freedom fight, Hungary's freedom fight against a world empire. As it was against the Ottomans at Nándorfehérvár/Belgrade or against Vienna in 1848, so it was in 1956 against Soviet troops ... To be Hungarian is to fight. This is what the heroes of '56 taught us. This is what the heroes of '56 demand of us. We shall not tolerate Hungary being turned back into a puppet state, a vassal of Brussels. They shall not succeed. They shall not break through here. We will win, they will lose. We Hungarians can do it and shall do it. We shall do it again.¹⁶

In ending his speech, Orbán refers to the Hungarian Revolution not as a historical event, but as a sacred covenant that bound all citizens: just as the martyrs of 1956 gave their lives to defend the Hungarian nation, so must you. This is, perhaps, is the true political power of defeat. While the memory of victory elicits pride, the memory of defeat evokes an enduring debt which must be paid, and if necessary, by blood.

Orbán's speech in October 2024 leads us back to Donal Trump, whose copy of *Gloria Victis* was analyzed at the beginning of this book, and his return to the presidency the same year. Not only does Trump, an ally of Orbán, express similar skepticism towards global institutions via conspiracy-laden nationalist rhetoric, but as argued earlier, his Make America Great Again campaign embodies important contemporary components of the cult of the

16 Cabinet Office of the Prime Minister, "Speech by Viktor Orbán on the 68th anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and Freedom Fight," October 23, 2024, Official website of Prime Minister Victor Orbán, <https://miniszterelnok.hu/en/speech-by-viktor-orban-on-the-68th-anniversary-of-the-1956-hungarian-revolution-and-freedom-fight/>.

Lost Cause. Many elements of his presidency's visual and verbal propaganda attempt to harness the cultural and political debates surrounding the continuing presence of Confederate sculptures across the US commemorative landscape. The incorporation of public monuments into his political agenda began near the end of first term in 2020. Video of the murder of unarmed Black American George Floyd by a police officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in May 2020 went viral internationally, leading to months of civil rights protests, frequently under the banner of the Black Lives Matter movement. In the heated national discussion concerning the US's enduring legacy of state violence against persons of color, public anger about the George Floyd case translated into the toppling, defacement, or removal of dozens of public monuments across the US connected to the celebration of the Confederacy, the forced displacement of Native Americans, and other painful moments within national memory. The most famous site of protest was none other than Antonin Mercié's Robert E. Lee Monument in Richmond, Virginia, the massive pedestal of which became in essence a public canvas for graffiti, video projections, and other forms of protest art. Along with the video of George Floyd's murder, the toppling and defacement of monuments itself became something of a viral symbol of protest internationally, as protesters in England, France, Belgium, Columbia, and many other countries engaged in similar iconoclastic actions both as an act of solidarity with US protesters and as a means of confronting their own national histories of racism and colonialism.¹⁷

In response, Trump issued the Executive Order on Protecting American Monuments, Memorials, and Statues and Combating Recent Criminal Violence on June 26, 2020, ordering the attorney general to aid local police agencies in the guarding of monuments, prioritize the prosecution of suspected vandals, and punish local agencies which did not protect monuments in their jurisdiction. The executive order not only meant to sharpen the teeth of judiciary and law enforcement agencies to stop the defacement of monuments, but it did so in highly politically antagonistic terms, blaming "anarchists and left-wing extremists" for the violence and destruction.¹⁸

17 Rory Carroll in Dublin, Jennifer Rankin in Brussels, Kim Willsher in Paris, Sam Jones in Madrid, and Tom Phillips in São Paulo, "Activists Target Removal of Statues Including Columbus and King Leopold II," *The Guardian*, June 10, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/jun/10/columbus-king-leopold-ii-statues-could-be-next-to-fall-black-lives-matter-protests>; "Colombia: Indigenous Protesters Topple Conquistador's Statue," *BBC*, September 17, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-54186047>.

18 Donald J. Trump, Executive Order on Protecting American Monuments, Memorials, and Statues and Combating Recent Criminal Violence, June 26, 2020, Trump White House Archives,

From this point forward, monuments became part of Trump's political language not only in terms of their protection but their creation as well. Less than a week later, and with explicit reference to his prior executive order, Trump issued the Executive Order on Building and Rebuilding Monuments to American Heroes, which called for the reinstalment of toppled or removed statues during the recent "assault on our collective national memory" as well as the opening of a National Garden of American Heroes in the spirit of "civic education."¹⁹ Both directives have been reinstated and fleshed out in the first year of the second Trump presidency. In 2025, the National Endowment of the Humanities offered grants of up to \$200,000 for each sculpture commissioned for the National Garden of American Heroes, set to open by July 2026 in celebration of the 250 Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.²⁰ Later, in August, the National Park Service announced the restoration and reinstallation of the monument to Confederate General Albert Pike in Washington, DC, which was toppled and vandalized during the George Floyd protests in the summer of 2020.²¹

Trump is by no means the first US president to fund the creation of patriotic monuments, praise the legacy of controversial US figures, or prosecute protesters. What makes Trump's actions worthy of note for this study in particular is the rhetorical and political context in which these actions have coalesced. This becomes all the more evident in the August 2025 White House report *Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History*, which argues that universities, museums, and historical organizations, including the Smithsonian, have succumbed to a "corrosive ideology," embodied in systems of thought like critical race theory, decolonization, and trans inclusivity, and resulting in "a concerted and widespread effort to rewrite our Nation's history, replacing objective facts with a distorted narrative driven by

<https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-protecting-american-monuments-memorials-statues-combating-recent-criminal-violence/>.

19 Donald J. Trump, Executive Order on Building and Rebuilding Monuments to American Heroes, July 3, 2020, Trump White House Archives, <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-building-rebuilding-monuments-american-heroes/>; Donald J. Trump, Executive Order on Building the National Garden of American Heroes, January 18, 2021, Trump White House Archives, <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-building-national-garden-american-heroes/>.

20 National Garden of American Heroes: Statues, National Endowment for the Humanities, accessed August 30, 2025, <https://www.neh.gov/program/national-garden-american-heroes-statues>.

21 Mark Litterst, "National Park Service to Restore and Reinstall Albert Pike Statue," US National Park Service, August 4, 2025, <https://www.nps.gov/nama/learn/news/pike.htm#:~:text=WASHINGTON%20%E2%80%93%20the%20National%20Park%20Service,during%20riots%20in%20June%202020>.

ideology rather than truth.”²² Central to this narrative is the belief that the US has been betrayed from within—that its decline has been orchestrated not by foreign enemies but by domestic elites who have abandoned patriotic values in favor of divisive cultural agendas. As with the cult of the Lost Cause, defeat is not final but a rallying cry: it sanctifies struggle, moralizes suffering, and casts restoration as destiny. Trump’s promise to “make America great again” via reforming US public sculptures and museums thus mirrors the commemorative strategies traced throughout this book, using monuments, ritual, and historical revisionism to construct a redemptive national myth in which he himself becomes the agent of resurrection. In this framework, sculpture becomes a political instrument not just for remembering the past, but for staging a return to imagined greatness.

What the actions of Trump, Orbán, and other leaders demonstrate is that the international cult of the Lost Cause is not dead. The mythologizing of defeat which infected social and political ideology at the turn of the twentieth century, and which manifested in public sculptures and civic rituals, lives on in the rhetoric of national resurrection today. Although Mercié and his oeuvre will probably never regain the fame they once had internationally, *Gloria Victis* lives on, as evidenced by the examples from Eastern Europe, albeit in abstracted forms and the disembodied linguistic symbols. The survival of *Gloria Victis* is thanks to the very viral essence which made it a cultural force over a century ago, embodied in its capacity for adaptation and transmutation in the process of changing hosts. In this afterlife, the aesthetics of defeat continue to scaffold the politics of power.

22 Donald J. Trump, Executive Order on Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History, March 27, 2025, The White House, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/restoring-truth-and-sanity-to-american-history>.

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