An Age of Neutrals

An Age of Neutrals provides a pioneering history of the role of neutrality in the international system between the Congress of Vienna and the outbreak of the First World War. The ‘long’ nineteenth century (1815–1914) was an era of limited war. It was a century of industrialisation, imperialism and globalisation; one which witnessed the economic and political hegemony of the great powers across the world. Dr Maartje Abbenhuis explores the ways in which neutrality reinforced these developments. She argues that a passive conception of neutrality has thus far prevented historians from understanding the high regard with which neutrality, as a tool of diplomacy and statecraft, was held by states and governments during this era. This is a compelling, new history in which neutrality is exposed as a vibrant and essential part of the international system; a powerful instrument with which to solve disputes, stabilise international relations and promote European interests worldwide.

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Great power politics, 1815–1914

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For Gord
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Note to readers

For ease of reference, I use ‘Great Britain’ or ‘Britain’ to refer to the islands we now call the United Kingdom (including Ireland) and which during the nineteenth century were referred to as England, Scotland, Wales and so forth. Likewise, I use the term ‘Britons’ to refer to citizens and subjects of the English crown in that same period. I use ‘Prussia’ to refer to the pre-1871 Prussian state and ‘Germany’ to the post-1871 unified state. ‘The Habsburg monarchy’ refers both to Austria before Ausgleich with Hungary and the Austro-Hungarian Empire after 1867. Where possible, I have identified the full names and formal titles and positions of individuals, but I have not always been able to do so. All the translations are my own, except where indicated differently.