

**WAR, DIPLOMACY AND
THE RISE OF SAVOY
1690–1720**



CHRISTOPHER STORRS



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THE SAVOYARD ARMY, 1690–1720

Armies, particularly standing ones, and their development, have figured largely in accounts of state formation, particularly for those who see this as being about the state's assertion of a monopoly of legitimate force within its own borders.¹ Some historians are now less inclined to see this as of overriding importance, rightly urging the need to beware of seeing the use of coercive force by the prince as the only (or even the decisive) element in the consolidation of the state.² However, it would be difficult to deny the contribution of armed might in the formation of the Savoyard state between 1690 and 1720. Firstly, it defended that state from foreign conquest, removed threats (Casale, Pinerolo) to its independence and ultimately underpinned its sovereignty.³ Secondly, the ducal forces conquered places and territories which contributed to the enlargement and reshaping of Victor Amadeus' state. These included the conquest of the Alpine fortresses, which provided that state thenceforth with a more defensible frontier, and of the Pragelato. After securing the latter, Victor Amadeus rejected a request that he respect the Pragelato's traditional liberties, instead asserting his own right of conquest.⁴ This episode reveals, thirdly, that the duke's army could assert his authority within his

¹ T. Blanning, *The French Revolutionary Wars 1787–1802* (London, 1996), 30. See S. E. Finer, 'State and nation building in Europe: the role of the military', in C. Tilly, ed., *The Formation of Nation States in Western Europe* (Princeton, 1975), 84 ff. and S. Clark, *State and Status: the rise of the state and aristocratic power in Western Europe* (Cardiff, 1994), 12.

² See J. Lynn, *Giant of the Grand Siècle: the French army 1610–1715* (Cambridge, 1997), 1 ff. and S. Lombardini, 'La costruzione dell'ordine: governatori e governati a Mondovì (1682–1687)', in G. Lombardi, ed., *La Guerra del Sale (1680–1699): rivolte e frontiere del Piemonte barocco*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1986), I, esp. 220 ff.

³ R. D. Handen, 'The Savoy negotiations of the comte de Tessé 1693–1696' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Ohio, 1970), 129, notes Victor Amadeus' determination to avoid restrictions on the size of army which he, as a sovereign prince, could maintain in peacetime. ⁴ VDM to Fagel, 2 Jan. 1709, Turin ARAH/EA/VDM/33, f. 1.

dominions. The entry of his forces was a crucial symbolic, and real, part of his assumption of territories ceded to him. His troops also supplemented the exiguous ‘police’ forces which the duke had at his disposal⁵ and (see below, p. 38) were used to chivy communities felt to be too slow in fulfilling their obligations to supply men, provisions, draught animals, transports and taxes. In the interval between the Nine Years War and the War of the Spanish Succession, the duke successfully concentrated his forces (many of them veterans of the Nine Years War) against Mondovì, bringing that province to heel at last in a way which had eluded his mother (see Chapter 6). Not surprisingly, the acquisition by Victor Amadeus of a permanent and powerful instrument which he could use to assert his authority at home – against, for example, rioters at Cigliano (1724) protesting against new taxation associated with Victor Amadeus’ new law code, the so-called Constitutions (1723) – and to defend his independence, or sovereignty, against foreign attack, is one that most historians of the subject still feel they cannot ignore.⁶

This aspect of state formation is sometimes linked with another phenomenon which some historians have identified in the early modern period. The thesis of the ‘Military Revolution’, formulated by Michael Roberts forty years ago, suggested that fundamental changes in the nature of warfare between the middle of the sixteenth and the middle of the seventeenth centuries had important knock-on effects and ultimately contributed to state formation and the rise of centralised absolutism, an implication more fully worked out by some of the later contributors to the discussion. Not all agree with this formulation. Frank Tallett, noting the enormous gulf between what armies attempted and what (held back by logistical problems) they could do, has questioned the notion of a ‘revolution’. Jeremy Black, on the other hand, has argued that if there was a revolution in warfare, it occurred after 1660 and was the consequence, not cause, of an absolutist consensus. Among the examples Black cites in support of this contention is the Savoyard state.⁷

⁵ G. Prato ‘Il costo della Guerra di successione Spagnuola e le spese pubbliche in Piemonte dal 1700 al 1713’, in *CGP*, X, 248 ff. puts at just 200 men the ordinary forces of law and order in the Savoyard state. In 1713, Victor Amadeus reinforced Turin’s garrison on the occasion of the peace celebrations, Payne to Ayerst, 26 July 1713, Turin, SP 92/27, f. 623.

⁶ See F. Venturi, ‘Il Piemonte dei primi decenni: del Settecento nelle relazioni diplomatiche inglesi’, *BSBS*, S4, 1956, 237–8.

⁷ M. Roberts, ‘The military revolution 1560–1660’, in Roberts, *Essays in Swedish History* (London, 1967); G. Parker, *The Military Revolution: military innovation and the rise of the West 1500–1800* (Cambridge, 1988); F. Tallett, *War and Society in Early Modern Europe 1495–1715* (London, 1992); J. Black, *A Military Revolution? Military change and European society 1550–1800* (London, 1988). See, also, C. J. Rogers, ed., *The Military Revolution Debate: readings on the military transformations of early modern Europe* (Boulder, CO, 1995).

In fact, we still know relatively little about the Savoyard army in the early modern era. This is not to deny the existence of some fine older general histories of that army⁸ and of an exceptionally well documented account of the first years of the War of the Spanish Succession,⁹ whose continuing importance as a quarry of information will be evident from the following pages. There are also some impressive more recent monographs. However, most of these focus largely on the era after 1713, while the Savoyard army hardly figures in most English-language surveys of early modern European armies (and is notable by its absence from Geoffrey Symcox' otherwise excellent survey of the reign of Victor Amadeus II).¹⁰ Apart from the War of the Spanish Succession (and above all the years between 1703 and the end of the siege of Turin in 1706), the Savoyard army between 1690 and 1720 remains relatively unexplored. And yet, these decades were crucial in transforming the Savoyard state from one characterised by a propensity to violence which was not monopolised by, and was in fact in large part directed against the 'state' (the Parella and Mondovì revolts, 1682) to one in which after 1713 (despite such apparently provocative measures as Victor Amadeus' revocation of fiefs, 1720), armed resistance of the earlier sort failed to materialise and was in fact simply inconceivable. For most historians of the subject, the Savoyard state after 1713 was, on the other hand, highly 'militarised', a higher proportion of its population being under arms than in most other states.¹¹ Although the development of a nucleus of standing regular ducal forces was largely the achievement of Charles Emanuel II after 1659, for many, not surprisingly, Victor Amadeus II was the creator of the Savoyard army.¹²

However in recent years some older views of the Savoyard army, and its role in Savoyard state and society, have come under fire, above all from Walter Barberis. Whereas, for Quazza and others, the Savoyard army perfected by Victor Amadeus II was very much the instrument of the

⁸ Comte A. de Saluces, *Histoire militaire du Piémont*, 5 vols. (Turin, 1818), still probably the best general account of the evolution of the Savoyard army between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries (containing valuable details on administration and individual corps) and of its campaigns; N. Brancaccio, *L'Esercito del vecchio Piemonte: sunti storici dei principali corpi*, (Rome, 1922); Brancaccio, *L'Esercito del vecchio Piemonte: gli ordinamenti*, (Rome, 1923).

⁹ All the CGP volumes include a mass of relevant materials from the Archivio di Stato, Turin.

¹⁰ Symcox, *Victor Amadeus*; G. Quazza, *Le riforme in Piemonte nella prima metà del Settecento*, 2 vols. (Modena, 1957), I, 108 ff.; W. Barberis, *Le armi del principe: la tradizione militare sabauda* (Turin, 1988); S. Loriga, *Soldati: l'istituzione militare nel Piemonte del Settecento* (Venice, 1992). P. Bianchi, 'Esercito e riforme militari negli stati sabaudi del Settecento: un bilancio storiografico', in Società di Storia Militare, *Quaderno 1995* (Rome, 1995), 7–38 is a useful survey. ¹¹ Quazza, *Le riforme*, I, 105.

¹² *Ibid.*; Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, I, 310 (and passim); Prato, 'Il costo', CGP, X, 258 ff.

absolute state, for Barberis it was just another arena in which state (i.e. the duke) and society (i.e. his subjects) ‘negotiated’ service for rewards. Related to this is Barberis’ attack on a Piedmontese historical tradition, which sees the Savoyard army as an alliance between a warrior dynasty and a loyal, warrior people (symbolised by the hitherto obscure ‘sapper’ Pietro Micca, killed in Victor Amadeus’ service during the siege of Turin in 1706), a union which achieved its apotheosis in the nineteenth century with the expulsion of the ‘foreigner’ and the unification of Italy under the Casa Savoia.¹³

The object of the present chapter is threefold: firstly, and above all, simply to detail just how Victor Amadeus fought the two major wars which played so important a part in the longer-term process of Savoyard state formation; secondly, to show the extent to which the success of the Savoyard state between 1690 and 1713 was based upon non-Savoyard military resources; and, thirdly, to demonstrate the degree to which the needs of war (and after 1713 the problem of defending an enlarged state without outside help) obliged Victor Amadeus to impose new military obligations upon his subjects and to elaborate new military institutions. Consideration of these issues should help to enlarge the debate about armies and warfare (and their relationship to the wider polity and society) in the early modern era, not least because most discussion of this subject focuses on a rather restricted range of armies.

ARMY EXPANSION

The years between 1690 and 1713 saw a remarkable growth in the size of the Savoyard army.¹⁴ This was the more remarkable, in the Nine Years

¹³ See Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, V, 139–40, 178, for the loyalty of the duke’s subjects in the military crises of 1690, 1703 and 1706. The first eulogy of Micca was published in 1781 in Bava di San Paolo’s *Piemontesi Illustri*, Barberis, *Le armi*, 237. For a criticism of some of Barberis’ more general contentions, see E. Stumpo, ‘Tra mito, leggenda e realtà storica: la tradizione militare sabauda da Emanuele Filiberto a Carlo Alberto’, *RSI*, 103, 1991, 560 ff.

¹⁴ All troop numbers, including official ones, must be treated with caution and some scepticism. Most figures, derived from the periodic troop reviews (below) were just a snapshot of the situation at one point in time and were invariably promptly rendered out of date by desertion, loss of life and illness on the one hand and by new levies and recruiting on the other. The original review may, anyway, have fraudulently exaggerated the numbers of men (to enable officials to draw the pay of non-existent men). In 1692 Victor Amadeus observed the difference between the Miremont regiment as reviewed and as seen by him, and suspected fraud, F. Guasco, ‘Vittorio Amedeo II nelle campagne dal 1691 al 1696’, *Studi su Vittorio Amedeo II* (Turin, 1933), 270. For a general discussion of the unreliability of official records, and their tendency to overestimate the number of troops at Victor Amadeus’ disposal, see Prato, ‘Il costo’, *CGP*, X, 326. See also J. Lynn, ‘Recalculating French army growth during the Grand Siècle 1610–1715’, *French Historical Studies*, 18, 4, 1994.

Table 1.1. *The growth of the Savoyard army 1690–1696*

	Infantry	Cavalry and dragoons	Total
1690	7,250	1,420	8,670
1691	11,107	2,775	13,882
1692	14,467	2,775	17,242
1693	14,499	2,683	17,112
1694	15,745	2,682	18,427
1695	20,752	2,537	23,289
1696	21,508	2,515	24,023

Source: Figures taken from Prato, 'Il costo', *CGP*, X, p. 260. For 1691, cf. ARAH/SG/8643/140. For a much higher total in 1695 of 26,290 (23,800 infantry and 2,490 cavalry) cf. *mémoire* sent to Madrid in AGS/E/3421/20. For a lower estimate of Victor Amadeus' forces in 1696, of just 20,000 (but with no indication of all the units involved) cf. VDM to Fagel, 16 July 1696, Turin, ARAH/SG/8644/279.

War, given the despatch to France in 1689 of three of Victor Amadeus' regular regiments (Aosta, Marine, Nizza), in response to a request by Louis XIV for troops for the war which had begun in Flanders in 1688. (They were also a pledge of Victor Amadeus' good faith in the escalating European crisis.) This was not the first time that the ducal army had grown as a result of the Savoyard state's participation in major conflict. In 1625 when Victor Amadeus' great grandfather, Charles Emanuel I, joined with Louis XIII of France in an attack against Genoa and Spain, the Savoyard army rocketed to an astonishing 26,500, a figure not reached again before the War of the Spanish Succession. Between the late 1630s and the Peace of the Pyrenees (1659), war between Spain and France, which had inevitably extended to Italy, affected the Savoyard state, whose army again grew to nearly 18,000 in 1649. After 1659, however, the Savoyard army dwindled substantially. This was only interrupted by the expansion associated with the disastrous war against Genoa (1672) and with the fears of renewed war between France and Spain in north Italy in 1683–84. Generally speaking, however, the Savoyard forces in the generation after 1660 fluctuated between 5,000 and 6,000, reflecting in part the extent to which the dukes of Savoy were satellites of the French king, who was suspicious of any attempt on their part to maintain a larger army (and perhaps pursue a more independent foreign policy).¹⁵ At the start of 1690, before his breach with Louis XIV, but following Victor Amadeus' efforts to increase his forces to meet the challenge of the returned Vaudois (see

¹⁵ See Prato, 'Il costo', *CGP*, X, 259–60, for the general evolution in overall numbers (and costs); and C. de Rousset, *Histoire de Louvois et de son administration militaire*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1879), IV, 284 ff. for concern about the size of the Savoyard army at the French court.

Chapter 6), the Savoyard army totalled just over 8,000 men: 6,800 infantry (in six regiments: Guards, Savoy, Piedmont, Monferrato, Saluzzo, Chablais, and the recently levied Fusiliers), 490 cavalry (four companies of guards and four of gendarmes) and 800 dragoons (in two regiments: Verrua and the recently levied Chaumont or Genevois).¹⁶ Thereafter, the Savoyard army expanded as shown in Table 1.1. In all, there was a substantial, if uneven, threefold increase in the size of Victor Amadeus' forces between 1690 and 1696. Growth was especially notable between 1690 and 1691, when the duke's forces nearly doubled,¹⁷ between 1691 and 1692 and again between 1694 and 1695, when they grew by 25 per cent. Expansion was slowing down by the end of the war¹⁸ but only really faltered between 1692 and 1693. This expansion, way beyond anything allowed by Louis XIV before 1690, was also notable given the losses sustained by Victor Amadeus' forces in successive campaigns.¹⁹

Growth of this sort has often been seen as part of a much longer-term growth in armies in early modern Europe.²⁰ However, although the Savoyard army expanded over the early modern era as a whole it was by no means continuous and cumulative²¹. Victor Amadeus's *volte-face* of 1696 was followed by a reversal of the recent growth. Partly to satisfy the terms of the neutralisation of Italy, partly to reverse the haemorrhage of funds associated with nearly seven years of war (see Chapter 2), between 1696 and 1698 the duke's forces were reduced to under 10,000 (8,000 infantry and 1600 cavalry and dragoons).²² This was still sizeable, and was a measure of the extent to which Victor Amadeus had freed himself from French tutelage, obliging Louis XIV to recognise his right to have an independent army. Nevertheless, the Savoyard state remained a third (or even fourth) rank military power by contrast with both Louis XIV and the emperor, whose much larger armies caused him some anxiety.²³ Indeed, by 1700 his army was smaller than on the eve of his entry into the Nine Years War: 8,569 (7,291 infantry and 1,278 cavalry and dragoons).

¹⁶ J. Humbert, 'Conquête et occupation de la Savoie sous Louis XIV (1690 à 1691)', *Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences, Belles-Lettres et Arts de Savoie*, 6th ser., IX, 1967, 18.

¹⁷ See the order to levy thirty new companies, Jan. 1691, Duboin, XXVI, 117.

¹⁸ In the winter of 1695–96 Victor Amadeus increased his Chablais and Monferrato regiments by a battalion each but this was offset by a reduction of five men in every company in all his regiments, DLT to ST, 20 Jan. 1696, London, AST/LM/GB, m. 8.

¹⁹ At the battle of Marsaglia (1693), the duke's losses were put at 1,500 (of an allied total of 5,500), about 9 per cent of his total forces: VA to DLT, 12 Oct. 1693, Turin, AST/LM/Olanda, m. 4.

²⁰ This issue is discussed in Lynn, 'Recalculating French army growth'.

²¹ See figures for Savoyard forces 1580–1795 in Loriga, *Soldati*, 5.

²² Prato, 'Il costo', *CGP*, X, 260; Duboin, XXVII, 78 (artillery) and XXVI, 127 (Guards) and 1851 (general); and Bazan to Carlos II, 15 Nov. 1697, Turin, AGS/E/3659/95.

²³ See Bazan to Carlos II, 17 Apr. 1698, Turin, AGS/E/3660/27.

Table 1.2. *The growth of the Savoyard army, 1701–1710*²⁴

	Infantry	Cavalry and dragoons	Total
1700	7,291	1,278	8,569
1701	11,078	2,678	13,756
1702	10,915	2,678	13,593
1703	10,855	2,660	13,515
1704	23,087	3,460	26,547
1705	12,905	3,360	16,265
1706–7	13,395	3,539	16,934
1707–8	13,664	3,540	17,204
1708–9	13,978	3,500	17,478
1710	15,611	3,753	19,364

Nevertheless, this was still higher than the level which had prevailed before 1690. Expectation of war, and war itself from 1701, prompted renewed growth of the duke's forces (as in Table 1.2). Once again, expansion was erratic. The ducal army nearly doubled between 1700 and 1701 and again between 1703 and 1704. The latter achievement was the more astonishing because of the detention of about 4,500 of his regular troops by the Bourbon forces at San Benedetto in Lombardy in the autumn of 1703.²⁵ But expansion at this rate was impossible to sustain: the duke did not again in the War of the Spanish Succession have as many troops in his service as in 1704. Nevertheless, his army did expand,

²⁴ Prato, 'Il costo', X, 260. An alternative set of figures, prepared on a rather different basis and with different results by the Ufficio del Soldo in 1712, *ibid.*, 320 ff. are given below mainly because they give an idea of troop levels after 1710. For a figure for 1708 (of 12,885 infantry and 3,640 cavalry, a total of 16,525) given by Victor Amadeus himself, see VDM to Fagel, 25 Apr. 1708, Turin, ARAH/EA/VDM/32, f. 64. For the 1710 figure given below, see Loriga, *Soldati*, 5. The 22,000 given below for 1712 is also in Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, V, 263. The discrepancies emphasise the problem of harmonising different sets of figures, but the growth is unmistakable.

	Infantry	Cavalry and Dragoons	Total
1701	12,410	2,864	15,274
1702	12,304	2,864	15,168
1703	13,044	2,864	15,908
1704	26,326	3,697	30,033
1705	15,223	3,587	18,810
1706	16,575	3,760	20,335
1707	15,301	3,768	19,069
1708	16,032	3,769	19,801
1709	16,697	3,750	20,447
1710	18,739	3,753	22,492
1711	18,535	3,398	21,933
1712	18,507	3,398	21,905

²⁵ See figures calculated in CGP, I, 24 ff.

steadily rather than dramatically, in the second half of the conflict. Inevitably, peace in 1713 was accompanied by a ‘reform’, or reduction, of this enlarged army (see below, p. 68), but it did not again fall below 10,000 men and rose again to well over 23,000 during the struggle for Sicily (1718–20). It had risen just above this level a decade later, in 1730. Participation in the European struggle since 1690 had thus underpinned the long-term expansion of the Savoyard army.²⁶

Any consideration of the enormous military undertaking of the Savoyard state in these decades must also take into account the importance of the fortresses around which most contemporary warfare revolved.²⁷ Apart from the defences of Savoy (notably Montmélian) and Nice, Piedmont was ringed by a number of modern bastioned fortresses, guarding the exit from and entrance to the passages through the Alps between Piedmont and Dauphiné and Provence in the west and defending the more open parts of the Savoyard state in the east. These included Cuneo, Demonte, Susa, Bard, Ivrea, Vercelli and Verrua. Turin, too, was heavily fortified.²⁸ These places were, and were expected by others to be, key concerns of the duke of Savoy.²⁹ Similarly, sieges of most of these places were among the most important actions of the wars fought by the Savoyard state in these decades, and were at least as important as the three big battles fought in 1690, 1693 and 1706. The siege of Turin in 1705–06, which was ended by Victor Amadeus’ and Prince Eugene’s victory there in September 1706, followed the surrender of virtually all of the duke’s other major fortresses. Besides these major operations, there were numerous sieges of lesser fortified towns, suddenly placed in the front line. The extent to which the security, definition and enlargement of the Savoyard state was seen in terms of fortresses is suggested by Victor Amadeus’ argument in 1709 for his gaining the French fortress of Briançon in the coming peace: that he had no major fortress between Briançon and Susa, leaving his states exposed to Louis XIV.³⁰

²⁶ Loriga, *Soldati*, 5; Brancaccio, *Esercito. Ordinamenti*, I, 184; Symcox, *Victor Amadeus*, 168–9. In 1716, VA’s forces totalled 16,423 (14,620 infantry and 1,803 cavalry), AST/MM/UGS, m. 1 *d’addizione*, no. 9. The 23,600 men (Brancaccio) for 1720 include 6,000 militia. ²⁷ See Parker, *Military Revolution*, esp. ch. 1, *passim*.

²⁸ For the setting and appearance of the fortresses of the Savoyard state, see the *Theatrum Sabaudum*, of 1682, ed. L. Firpo, 2 vols. (Turin, 1984–5).

²⁹ In 1689 the duke’s apparent unconcern about a threat from the Milanese to Vercelli (on which vast sums had been spent *c.* 1680), was one indicator at the French court of his waywardness, R. Oresko, ‘The diplomatic background to the Glorioso Rimpatrio: the rupture between Vittorio Amedeo II and Louis XIV (1688–1690)’, in A. de Lange, ed., *Dall’Europa alle Valli Valdesi: atti del convegno ‘Il Glorioso Rimpatrio 1689–1989’*, Turin, 1990, 262.

³⁰ VDM to Fagel, 25 Sept. 1709, Turin, ARAH/EA/VDM/33, f. 161. The war in Sicily, 1718–20 also revolved around sieges of key positions, including Messina, Trapani and Siracusa: Carutti, *Storia della Diplomazia*, III 548, 550.

Victor Amadeus necessarily took a great personal interest in the condition of the fortresses which defended his state. In the summer of 1691, for example, when his state faced arguably its most serious challenge in this era apart from that of 1705–06, and with substantial works being carried out in and about Turin itself to withstand a siege, he visited Avigliana, to ensure that it could resist any French force invading Piedmont through the Susa valley.³¹ Equally important, as an indicator both of the value he placed on these fortresses (and of his distrust of some of his own subjects in this time of crisis) was the fact that, once a major fortress was threatened, the duke sometimes replaced its commander with a close confidant or somebody known to be reliable. He did this on various occasions in both the Nine Years War and the War of the Spanish Succession.³² These decades saw extensive (and costly) improvements to many of the fortifications of the Savoyard state, both in war and peace (when the opportunity was taken to repair and rearm those places which had been seriously damaged during the fighting).³³ Despite the expulsion of the Bourbons from Piedmont towards the end of 1706, the duke could not completely ignore the French threat thereafter³⁴ and was also increasingly concerned – because of his growing difficulties with the emperor – with the defences of eastern Piedmont.³⁵ In 1713, Victor Amadeus visited some of the key fortresses of his mainland territories, to ensure their effectiveness, before he departed for Sicily.³⁶

Supplying garrisons for these fortresses substantially reduced the number of men Victor Amadeus could put into the field. In 1691, he blamed his inability to go to the relief of Nice on the governor of Milan's failure to supply him with Spanish troops (freeing his own garrisons for the field). He could therefore only field 6,000–7,000 men (about half his

³¹ VDM to Fagel, 5 May 1691, Turin, ARAH/SG/8643/133.

³² In 1691, following the French incursion into the Val d'Aosta, the duke sent to Ivrea conte Francesco Provana di Frosasco, hero of the recent siege of Nice, VDM to Fagel, 23 June 1691, Turin, ARAH/SG/8643/152. In 1704, after the loss of Susa and Vercelli, the emperor demanded that his men share the command of some of the duke's key fortresses, Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, V, 150. (Of course, this might also prevent the duke from effecting the sort of *volte-face* he had made in 1696.) In 1706, the besieged Turin was under the command of the imperial commander, Marshal Daun.

³³ See *DBI*, 'Caraglio' (Nice) and Nicolas, *La Savoie*, I, 42 (Montmélian).

³⁴ Fears about French designs on Susa in 1708 prompted the rapid transfer of troops there, VDM to Fagel, 18 Feb., 28 Mar. and 25 Apr. 1708, Turin, ARAH/EA/VDM/32, fs. 32, 51 and 65.

³⁵ Chetwynd to Dartmouth, 24 Aug. and 2 Dec. 1712, Turin, SP 92/28.

³⁶ Chetwynd to Dartmouth, 14 June and 12 Aug. 1713, Turin, SP 92/28, fs. 607, 631; L. Einaudi, *La finanza sabauda all'apirsì del secolo XVIII e durante la guerra di successione spagnuola* (Turin, 1908), 412.

army).³⁷ That same summer, the duke was informed that he needed 12,000 infantry (in effect all the available allied infantry) to defend Turin.³⁸ Victor Amadeus might raid his garrisons for a prized object: in 1692, he offered 3,000 men (from his garrisons) if the allies should besiege Pinerolo.³⁹ At other times he might take more drastic action to reduce this drain on his military manpower. In 1694, in order both to reduce the need for garrisons and to prevent the enemy from establishing themselves in Piedmont, he destroyed a number of secondary fortifications there.⁴⁰ But the normal practice was to give priority to the defence of fortresses. This widely acknowledged need could facilitate Victor Amadeus' other schemes. In 1696, with a large French force invading Piedmont, he had ample justification for strengthening his garrisons at the expense of his contribution to the allied field army,⁴¹ weakening the latter and facilitating his diplomatic and military *volte-face*. In the first years of the War of the Spanish Succession, large numbers of ducal troops were again tied up in garrisons. In July 1704 the despatch of troops to Avigliana, Ivrea and Vercelli (whose garrison totalled about 8,000 men) was said to have left Victor Amadeus with a field army of just 8,000.⁴² After 1706, with Piedmont largely free of enemy forces, the duke could put far more of his forces into the field, and reduced his garrisons for the Alpine campaigns of 1708 and 1709.⁴³ Nevertheless, the expansion of Victor Amadeus' own forces between 1690 and 1713 could not, alone, have ensured a field army large enough to successfully oppose that of his enemy.

³⁷ VA to DLT, 3 Apr. 1691, Turin, AST/LM/Olanda, m. 1; VDM to Fagel, 21 Apr. 1691, Turin, ARAH/SG/8644/127.

³⁸ VA to DLT, 17 June 1691, Turin, AST/LM/Olanda, m. 1.

³⁹ VA to DLT, 28 July 1692, Arches, AST/LM/Olanda, m. 3.

⁴⁰ VDM to Fagel, 23 and 30 Apr. 1694, Turin, ARAH/SG/120, 121. For a similar policy in the subsequent conflict, see VDM to Fagel, 11 Mar. 1705, Turin, ARAH/EA/VDM/30, 20. Vauban calculated that fewer fortresses would give Louis XIV thousands more troops: J. Lynn, 'The trace Italienne and the growth of armies; the French case', *Journal of Military History*, 55, 1991, 10.

⁴¹ ST to DLT, 10 Mar. 1696, London, AST/LM/Olanda, m. 4; VDM to Fagel, 27 Apr. and 18 May 1696, Turin, ARAH/SG/8644/255, 262.

⁴² VDM to Fagel, 4 July 1704, Turin, ARAH/EA/VDM/29, 114. The surrender of Vercelli meant the loss of large numbers of men, C. Faccio, 'Assedio di Vercelli. Primo periodo della campagna di Guerra per la Successione di Spagna: anno 1704', *CGP*, X, 411 ff.

⁴³ See VDM to States, 31 Mar. 1708, Turin, same to Fagel, 25 Apr. 1708, Turin, and 28 Aug. 1708, Balbote, ARAH/EA/VDM/32, fs. 53, 64–5, 164. The duke claimed to have left only two battalions in garrison: one in Turin, the other divided between Alessandria, Valenza and Casale. In 1709, Victor Amadeus put all his troops into the field, using the urban militia to defend Turin, Chetwynd to Townshend, 20 July 1709, Turin, *HMC, 11th Report, Appendix IX, part IV*, 53.

COMPOSITION OF VICTOR AMADEUS' FORCES

The expansion of Victor Amadeus' forces depended upon a substantial supply of manpower: his regiments required 3,000 recruits for example in the winter of 1708–09.⁴⁴ Just how was the Savoyard army raised to the extraordinary levels achieved in both the Nine Years War and the War of the Spanish Succession, and who were the men who made up his forces? As we shall see, like most of his contemporaries, Victor Amadeus necessarily relied on a mix of both 'nationals' and foreigners to man his armies. However, these labels are themselves deceptive. Even those regiments nominally filled by the duke's own subjects, and which we might be tempted to label 'national', were often much more diverse in composition. At the end of 1694, for example, Victor Amadeus agreed to the levy of two German and three Irish companies to complete the second battalion of his Chablais regiment; and in 1701, his recruiting captains were allowed ten foreigners per new company of fifty men.⁴⁵ Clearly, the distinction between units comprising Victor Amadeus' own subjects and those made up of 'foreigners' was not always easy to draw.

However, the duke's subjects did provide a substantial proportion of his own troops, as he acknowledged: in 1709 Victor Amadeus claimed to have recruited since 1700 (roughly speaking, since the start of the War of the Spanish Succession) a total of 70,000 men, 55,000 of his own subjects and 15,000 foreigners.⁴⁶ The company of miners in which Pietro Micca served was overwhelmingly 'native', the vast majority of Micca's fellow sappers originating from the Valle d'Andorno and Savoy.⁴⁷ The duke's own subjects were particularly likely to be used in times of crisis when it might take foreign corps some time to arrive, assuming negotiations for them had been successful (see below, p. 46). Thus in November 1689, when Victor Amadeus was increasing his forces to deal with the returned Vaudois (and the escalating European crisis), he agreed a capitulation with one of his subjects, the marquis de Chaumont, a captain of dragoons and member of the Senate of Savoy, for the levy of a dragoon regiment of 400 men (8 companies of 50 men each) in three months. The regiment, largely raised in Savoy, was complete by the spring of 1690.⁴⁸ Victor Amadeus continued to look to his own subjects as a source of military

⁴⁴ VDM to Fagel, 30 Jan. 1709, Turin, ARAH/EA/VDM/33, f. 12.

⁴⁵ Duboin, XXVI, 1132, 1134 (1694); *CGP*, I, lxx (1701).

⁴⁶ VDM to Fagel, 13 Mar. 1709, Turin, ARAH/EA/VDM/33, f. 36.

⁴⁷ E. Casanova, 'Contributo alla biografia di Pietro Micca e di Maria Chiaberge Bricco e alla storia del voto di Vittorio Amedeo II', *CGP*, VIII, 196 ff.

⁴⁸ L. Provana di Collegno, 'Lettere di Carlo Ciacinto Roero, conte di Guarene, capitano nel reggimento dragoni di Genevois, 1704–1707', *CGP*, VIII, 339; Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, I, 330; *CGP*, I, *passim*.

manpower in the War of the Spanish Succession, successfully appealing to his Protestant Vaudois subjects in the crisis of 1703–04.⁴⁹ Inevitably, however, following the loss of Savoy (and Nice) at an early stage in the Nine Years War and the War of the Spanish Succession, relying on the duke's own subjects meant in effect depending on Piedmont and (to a much lesser degree) on his other remaining territories.⁵⁰

One source of veterans among Victor Amadeus's own subjects in 1690 were his three regiments in Louis XIV's service in Flanders, and whose retention by the French king was a serious blow to the duke's military strength. But, not least because these regiments were far from Piedmont, recovering them was not easy.⁵¹ Victor Amadeus' envoy, de la Tour, who was contacted soon after his arrival at The Hague in 1690 by the chevalier de St George (a major in the Marine regiment), sought to co-ordinate the escape of some of these troops, initially with little success;⁵² and in early 1691 obtained an order from the governor of the Spanish Low Countries, the marques de Gastanaga, for the reception of any deserters from those regiments in the fortresses of Spanish Flanders and sought funds from William III for the project. By late April 1691, 100 men had been collected. De la Tour despatched them to Piedmont (via Cologne, Frankfurt, the Grisons and the Milanese), with passports from the emperor. He hoped to secure more men in the summer, with the armies in the field (and desertion rather easier), although little more seems to have been achieved in 1691.⁵³ However, in 1693, another forty Piedmontese reached Turin from Flanders.⁵⁴ Victor Amadeus now saw this source as a means of compensating for his failure to secure German hire troops (see below, p. 46), especially as both William III and Elector Max Emanuel of Bavaria (now governor of Spanish Flanders) favoured the scheme (which

⁴⁹ Symcox, *Victor Amadeus*, 146–7.

⁵⁰ The governor of the tiny coastal exclave of Oneglia raised 100 men for the duke in 1695, Duboin, XXVII, 1382. Victor Amadeus might still look to Savoy. In the autumn of 1693, he gave a commission to the marquis de Sales to recruit a Savoyard regiment, Duboin, XXVI, 108; and in the later stages of the War of the Spanish Succession took the opportunity of his incursions into French-occupied Savoy to raise men. In 1711 Victor Amadeus ordered the levy of 1,100 men there, to complete his Savoy regiment, Chetwynd to Dartmouth, 15 Aug. 1711, Marches, SP 92/27.

⁵¹ Primarily because of Victor Amadeus's insistence that they not be used against his suzerain, the emperor. This meant they could not serve on the Rhine, Oresko, 'Diplomatic background', 260–1.

⁵² DLT to VA, 5 Sept. 1690 and same to ST, 13 and 20 Oct. 1690, Hague, AST/LM/Olanda, m. 1. What, above all, prevented the officers from leaving the French king's service was a lack of money.

⁵³ DLT to VA, 4 Mar., 3 and 27 Apr. and 17 and 25 May 1691, Hague, AST/LM/Olanda, m. 2. ⁵⁴ VDM to Fagel, 4 May 1693, Turin, ARAH/SG/8643/31.

for them had the advantage of weakening Louis XIV's forces in the Low Countries). Victor Amadeus expected to form a new regiment in this way, hoping to obtain cash help from William, arms and uniforms from the Dutch, and an assembly point and staging posts, or *étapes, en route* to Piedmont from Max Emmanuel.⁵⁵ An assembly point (at Louvain) was obtained from the latter and a contribution from William III of 4 écus plus a daily bread ration per man during their stay in those quarters and by mid-summer Victor Amadeus' envoy at Brussels, conte Tarino, had assembled sixty men.⁵⁶ This was an expensive and not plentiful source of recruits. But the duke continued to seize any opportunity to recover these troops: in 1695 he ordered Tarino to obtain as many men as possible from his regiments which were in garrison there when the fortress of Namur surrendered to his allies.⁵⁷

Prisoners of war were another source of veterans. They were particularly important in the first phase of the War of the Spanish Succession, because of the detention by the Bourbons in 1703 of so many of the duke of Savoy's regular troops and the fact that the Bourbon armies were taking far more enemy prisoners in Italy than were the allies. There was an established procedure for the exchange of prisoners, i.e. the conclusion of formal agreements or cartels, of the sort concluded after the battles of Staffarda, 1690 and Marsaglia, 1693. However, between 1703 and 1706 the French king was apparently determined to retain the troops taken by his forces, in the belief that Victor Amadeus would be unable to replace his losses and thus could not fight on.⁵⁸ Inevitably, some of these prisoners were able to escape and to rejoin Victor Amadeus' forces.⁵⁹ He could also seek to turn to his own advantage the victories of his allies in Germany and the Low Countries, and to ensure that the cartels for prisoner exchange concluded in those theatres provided for his own recovery of

⁵⁵ VA to ST, 4 June 1693, Chieri, AST/LPDS, m. 68 13/271; ST to DLT, 9 June 1693, Turin, AST/LM/Olanda, m. 3. The duke hoped to obtain further *étapes* from the emperor.

⁵⁶ DLT to VA, 14 July 1693, Hague, AST/LM/Olanda, m. 3. De la Tour did not seek cash help from the Dutch, since they never gave more than a third of what William gave, in this case a trifling sum.

⁵⁷ ST to DLT, 19 Aug. 1695, Turin, AST/LM/Olanda, m. 4.

⁵⁸ Symcox, *Victor Amadeus*, 148. In 1705 Victor Amadeus allowed the governor of the besieged Verrua to capitulate if he could save its garrison, although this proved impossible, Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, V, 164.

⁵⁹ Of the more than 21,000 troops Victor Amadeus hoped to have in 1704, 1,000 were returned prisoners, *CGP*, I, 67. In reply to enemy complaints of prisoners breaching their parole in this way, the duke claimed that nothing could dispense subjects from the duties they owed their sovereign and that the French had violated their treaty obligations by seizing (1703) his troops, *CGP*, I, 66.

some of those men whom the French king refused to return – yet another example of the multifaceted ‘dependence’ of the Savoyard state in this era on its allies.⁶⁰ After 1706, with Victor Amadeus himself on the offensive, this problem was less serious.⁶¹

However, recovered prisoners of war were an uncertain source of military manpower and could never fully make good the losses incurred from one campaign to the next, or supply the foundation of a substantial increase in numbers.⁶² Clearly, if Victor Amadeus was to raise substantial numbers of men from among his own subjects, he must try other means, including voluntary enlistment. Pay and conditions might attract some of Victor Amadeus’ subjects into the ranks. They included 5 soldi a day, a rate of pay laid down by Charles Emanuel II in 1673, and a bread allowance of 24 ounces a day, with occasional bonuses and gratifications.⁶³ Officers, whose basic pay was increased by Victor Amadeus in December 1693,⁶⁴ also enjoyed extra allowances, while colonels of regiments were allowed to claim a certain number of ‘dead places’ (no doubt, in part, to prevent greater fraud). However, there were also remarkable differences both within and between the various ducal regiments.⁶⁵ The most generously treated were Victor Amadeus’ Guards and White Cross regiments, whose officers and men enjoyed pay and conditions superior to his other national regiments. In 1692, whereas a colonel in the Guards received 7,400 lire a year, a colonel in the Savoy regiment received just 3,000 lire.⁶⁶ In 1703 Victor Amadeus again increased army officers’ pay, at a time when the emoluments of other officials were being cut – no doubt as an incentive to service and loyalty – but the differentials within

⁶⁰ See VA to Duke of Marlborough, 13 Jan. 1706, Turin, CGP, V, 450; and VDM to Fagel, 10 June 1705 and 10 Feb. 1706, Turin, ARAH/EA/VDM/30, 65, 196.

⁶¹ See cartel for exchange of prisoners between the allies and the Bourbons in north Italy, Mar. 1707, CGP, VIII, 356 ff.; and VDM to Fagel, 19 Sept. 1708, Turin, ARAH/EA/VDM/32, f. 179.

⁶² The same was true of another source of recruits, the ‘reform’ of existing units and the distribution of their soldiers among the duke’s other regiments. In 1710, Victor Amadeus’ White Cross regiment, which had lost many men at the siege of Turin, was incorporated into his Piedmont regiment, CGP, VIII, 295, n. 1.

⁶³ See CGP, I, lxxiv–lxxv; Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, I, 252; Barberis, *Le armi*, 148, for terms (including 5 soldi a day pay) offered to those who would serve in the seven new regiments the duke was hoping to raise for 1704. For rewards for bravery and merit, see Prato, ‘Il costo’, CGP, X, 278.

⁶⁴ See the *mémoire* of contadore Filippone, AST/MM/UGS, m. 1/14 (no. 51).

⁶⁵ In 1691 Victor Amadeus ordered that bombardiers should receive 10 soldi a day, plus the bread allowance, Duboin, XXVII, 69.

⁶⁶ Victor Amadeus, hoping to obtain foreign hire troops for 1693, was prepared to pay what his White Cross regiment received, and (if absolutely necessary) what he paid his Guards, VA to DLT, 28 July 1692, Arches, AST/LM/Olanda, m. 3.

and between regiments persisted.⁶⁷ The benefits (bread, uniform, winter quarters – in effect a supplement to normal pay during the six winter months) enjoyed by the soldiers were not entirely free. During the Nine Years War, of each 5 soldi of pay received by the infantry, 1 (the so-called *droit de la Trésorerie*) was deducted centrally to pay for the uniform provided, and another by the company captain for those provisions for which he was responsible.⁶⁸ The soldier therefore only received 3 soldi a day. Senior officials were paid quarterly, but the troops received their pay every five to ten days, in the form of an advance from the captain on their monthly pay. (According to the duke, this prevented the men from wasting their money in the cabarets.)⁶⁹ Similar deductions were made from the pay of the cavalry.⁷⁰

Voluntary recruitment, not surprisingly, was most effective at times of dearth, including the years 1694–95 and 1708–09, when the army was at least a guarantee of bread. However, in less pressing times (and at a time of crisis, as in 1703–04, when many more recruits were required than was normal) it was much harder for captains to find enough recruits, not least because a soldier's pay was less than the average civilian wage.⁷¹ The duke was therefore obliged to resort to other means. In 1688–89 he raised men for the Aosta, Nizza and Marine regiments by offering pardons to those convicted of minor offences who would join up.⁷² This means was used again in 1703–04⁷³ and 1706.⁷⁴ Victor Amadeus might also resort to coercion of sorts. In both the Nine Years War and the War of the Spanish Succession, he banned his subjects from entering foreign service and

⁶⁷ Prato, 'Il costo', *CGP*, X, 266 ff.; Barberis, *Le armi*, 171–2; Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, I, 308.

⁶⁸ These deductions did not, however, always cover the outlay: see a *mémoire* on the cost of clothing 640 of Victor Amadeus' Guards regiment in 1690, AST/MM/UGS, m. 2/44.

⁶⁹ See *mémoire* re pay of recently levied Protestant battalions, 1691, ARAH/SG/8643/165; VDM to Fagel, 14 Nov. 1692, Turin, ARAH/SG/8643/287 and same to same, 12 June 1693, Turin, ARAH/SG/8644/45; and *CGP*, I, lxxiv–lxxiv. and 113 (pay arrangements for militia, Oct. 1703).

⁷⁰ See Duboin, XXVII, 1061 (for order, Jan. 1689, to deduct 3 lire a month from the pay of his Guardie del Corpo for remounts). In 1698 Victor Amadeus issued new orders, for deductions for clothes and remounts for his cavalry and dragoon regiments, Duboin, XXVIII, 1856 ff. (and *CGP*, I, lxxiv).

⁷¹ Prato, 'Il costo', *CGP*, X, 269.

⁷² Duboin, XXVI, 78 (1688) and VI, 577 (1689).

⁷³ In October 1703, the Turin diarist, Soleri, recorded the release of seventeen prisoners, who subsequently served in the marchese di Cavaglia's cavalry regiment (Piemonte Reale), *CGP*, I, 66. In Nov. 1703 peasants arrested for attacks on feudal property in Savoy were released before trial, to serve in the army, J. Nicolas, *La Savoie au 18e siècle: noblesse et bourgeoisie*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1978), I, 523.

⁷⁴ VDM to States, 1 and 4 Sept. 1706, Genoa, ARAH/EA/VDM/30, 336, 338.

ordered all those who were serving abroad to return home.⁷⁵ The duke might also exploit the local influence of his own subjects, particular the nobility (see Chapter 5). In addition, he could accept the offers of any of his subjects ready to serve in their own more or less independent 'free companies', reflecting the extent to which, again particularly in the crisis years of the War of the Spanish Succession between 1703 and 1706, Victor Amadeus could not (if he wished to survive the military challenge facing him) assert a monopoly of recruitment within his state, though it is by no means clear that he wished to do this anyway. More importantly, since these measures could not provide sufficient numbers of troops, Victor Amadeus was obliged to impose military service on his subjects in a rather new way. The imposition of new military obligations anticipated (or came to fruition in) the post-1713 establishment of provincial militia regiments (see below, p. 68) and represented a striking aspect of Savoyard state formation in these years.

As elsewhere in Europe, there was in Piedmont a general obligation on adult males to serve in time of emergency, in the general militia which had been reformed at various times since the middle of the sixteenth century,⁷⁶ and which was (briefly) called out by Victor Amadeus after his defeats in both 1690 and 1693. (The nobility had its own, distinct military obligation, the feudal levy, see Chapter 5.) However, even before the breach with Louis XIV in 1690, and reflecting the way other states provided models for reorganisation within the Savoyard state in these decades, there was extensive discussion in Turin of reform of the militia, along the lines of that in France in 1688.⁷⁷ Surveys and consultations were undertaken to ascertain the numbers of men each province could provide. Then, in March 1690, no doubt anticipating the need to mobilise men rapidly in the near future – but also wishing to reduce the impact of a massive mobilisation (which would disrupt agriculture and the economy of his states) and to avoid massive evasion – Victor Amadeus overhauled the militia. Henceforth just 6 per cent of those liable constituted the select militia, or *battaglione*, of Piedmont. The duke clarified who was liable

⁷⁵ Duboin, VI, 303 (1690) and 314 (1703); *CGP*, I, 66. In 1694, the inheritance of conte Carlo Amedeo Maurizio Tana, who continued to serve Louis XIV, was, briefly, confiscated: see G. Levi, *L'Eredità immateriale: carriera di un esorcista nel Piemonte del Seicento* (Turin, 1985), 155 ff.; English trans., *Inheriting Power: the story of an exorcist* (Chicago, 1988), 132 ff.

⁷⁶ See Barberis, *Le armi*, 5 ff. and P. Bianchi, 'Guerra e politica nello Stato Sabando (1684–1730). Le riforme militari: di Vittorio Amedeo II tra istituzioni, reclutamento e organizzazione territoriale, Ph.D thesis, University of Turin, 1997, 58 ff.

⁷⁷ See the copy of Louis XIV's order (1688) for the reform of the French militia, in AST/MM/Levate di Milizia, m. 1/10. (This *mazzo* contains projects for the levy and reform of the militia from 1689.)

(and exempt), how they were to be chosen, the privileges they were to enjoy and terms of service (including training, to ensure the militiamen were effective). The system would be monitored by local magistrates and officials.⁷⁸

The select militia was soon in action, being called out by Victor Amadeus after his first defeat, at Staffarda, in 1690, as part of his larger mobilisation of his subjects, to make good his losses and prevent Catinat conquering Piedmont.⁷⁹ More importantly, the militia was increasingly used both in place of, and as a source of recruits for the duke's regular, front-line troops. In the spring of 1691, Victor Amadeus used the militia as an interim source of garrisons, and to plug the gaps in his regular forces.⁸⁰ The following year, too, hard pressed financially, and finding it difficult to complete his infantry (to 10,000 men), the duke resorted to the militia. In February 1692 each village in Piedmont was required to supply a fixed number of men and to have replacements ready in case of loss (by death, desertion and so on). In April of that year the duke ordered the provisional incorporation of a third of the *battaglione* of Piedmont into his regular forces, promising that those involved would enjoy the same conditions.⁸¹ In the summer of 1693, too, no doubt to maximise his forces for the siege of Pinerolo, Victor Amadeus ordered the provincial governors to call out the select militia.⁸² In 1694, too, he demanded recruits from his own subjects, imposing quotas on individual communities and forbidding his captains from accepting recruits from areas outside those assigned them.⁸³ In the spring of 1696, Victor Amadeus again sought to complete his infantry by ordering the villages of Piedmont to levy men.⁸⁴ His use of, even dependence on, the militia was not particularly pleasing to Victor Amadeus. He could not but recognise that it imposed great burdens on his subjects, disrupting agricultural life; and that it meant the use of men who were largely unused to arms and military discipline and who were likely to desert. Use of the militia, particularly as a source of front line troops, was due, above all, to his

⁷⁸ Duboin, XXVI, 892 ff. See, also, the invaluable account in Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, I, 264 ff. For those exempted from service in Turin's distinct urban militia in 1690–1, see F. Rondolino, 'Vita Torinese durante l'assedio (1703–1707)', *CGP*, VII, 194.

⁷⁹ Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, V, 22 ff. Victor Amadeus was thus able to dispense with the general militia, but established a system of signals in each province, to summon it if and when necessary.

⁸⁰ Duboin, XXVI, 118, 910; Rondolino, 'Vita Torinese', *CGP*, VII, 187.

⁸¹ Duboin, XXVI, 913 ff.; Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, I, 266–7; VDM to Fagel, 1 and 17 Mar. 1692, Turin, ARAH/SG/8643/212, 258.

⁸² Duboin, XXVI, 917; AST/Levate di Milizie, m. 15; VDM to Fagel, 8 May 1693, Turin, ARAH/SG/8644/32. ⁸³ Duboin, XXVI, 821, 918 (1694).

⁸⁴ VDM to Fagel, 3 Feb. 1696, Turin, ARAH/SG/8644240.

desperate need for troops and his inability to secure them in any other way.

Victor Amadeus' exit from the Nine Years War in 1696 largely removed this pressure. However, in 1701, as war threatened in north Italy, the duke ordered a general levy of adult males;⁸⁵ and in the crisis following the loss of a large part of his regular forces at San Benedetto, again resorted to the militia to raise seven new regiments, totalling 4,200 men, from among his own subjects.⁸⁶ In the summer of 1705, Victor Amadeus again recruited his regular troops by forced levies from the communities of Piedmont;⁸⁷ and in 1706, he levied another seven militia battalions, which he used to supply garrisons.⁸⁸ In 1707, in what may have been a further formalisation of the system in 'liberated' Piedmont – and perhaps a return to a system which had been evolving in the Nine Years War, but which may have been undermined by the crisis and chaos of 1703–06) – each of Victor Amadeus' 'national' regiments was assigned a distinct province in Piedmont which must supply its recruits, thus preventing overlapping and competition.⁸⁹ By the later stages of the War of the Spanish Succession, it was the norm for the villages of Piedmont to supply recruits as requested for Victor Amadeus' regiments each winter for the forthcoming campaign in what seems an increasingly regularised manner.⁹⁰ This obligation was extended to Victor Amadeus' newly acquired territories in the later stages of the War of the Spanish Succession, representing an important aspect of their inte-

⁸⁵ Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, I, 266–7; Barberis, *Le armi*, 142 ff.

⁸⁶ CGP, I, 60 ff., 239 ff., 260; Barberis, *Le armi*, 146 ff.; Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, I, 267. Initially, it had been hoped to raise twelve provincial battalions (two from Turin and one each from the ten provinces of Piedmont), totalling 10,000 men in this way. Nevertheless, these new militia regiments contributed 25 per cent of the infantry Victor Amadeus hoped to have in 1704. For the Dutch envoy this was an admission that the duke had no other means of raising men, VDM to States, 24 Dec. 1704, Turin, ARAH/EA/VDM/29, 199.

⁸⁷ Duboin, XXVI, 153 ff.; Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, I, 263; VDM to Fagel, 15 July and 5 Aug. 1705, Turin, ARAH/EA/VDM/30, 27, 83, 92. Seven militia companies were sent to defend Asti, same to States, 16 Sept. 1705, ARAH/EA/VDM/30, 119. In 1705 the marchese di Pianezza wrote a *mémoire* on the militia for the duke, Rondolino, 'Vita Torinese', CGP, VII, 187.

⁸⁸ VDM to States, 17 Mar. and 14 Apr. 1706, Turin, ARAH/EA/VDM/30, 218, 235.

⁸⁹ VDM to States, 15 Jan. 1707, Turin ARAH/EA/VDM/31, f. 13. For the receipt by the sindics of Piobesi of circulars of 8 Dec. 1707 from the conte della Trinità and the director of the province ordering all communities to choose men for the Trinità regiment (and the specific demand of three men from Piobesi), and for how this system worked in general, see O. Scarzello, 'Corneliano, Piobesi, Monticello d'Alba e Sommariva Perno negli anni di guerra 1704–1708', CGP, VIII, 514.

⁹⁰ See VDM to States, 15 Feb. 1708, ARAH/EA/VDM/32, 30; and (for 1709) Duboin, XXVI, 161 and Saluces, *Histoire militaire*, I, 263.

gration into the Savoyard state, sometimes in the face of local hostility.⁹¹

Victor Amadeus' growing reliance on his own subjects was thus accompanied by some formalisation and regulation of their military obligation and service. However, although the duke and his officials had laid down criteria for selection, the local choice of men largely rested with the oligarchs who held local office (as syndics and so on) and dominated the communities. Inevitably, they protected their families and friends. They did so in various ways, including the purchase of substitutes, in contravention of ducal orders.⁹² The burden of service, in turn, fell more heavily on poorer, less influential families. Occasionally, Victor Amadeus and his ministers were obliged to intervene to ensure the proper observance of the relevant regulations. In early 1700, Victor Amadeus sent marshal Schulemburg into Savoy following reports that the duke's order of December 1699 for recruitment of his Savoy regiment in the communities was not being properly obeyed and that many young men were fleeing the Duchy. Schulemburg dismissed 75 of the 252 men raised so far on the grounds that their recruitment breached the regulations in some way. (Many had taken money to serve, others were married and/or heads of families.) When the marshal reviewed more than 450 recruits a month or so later, these abuses seemed to have been eradicated.⁹³ The communities sought to find the men demanded by the duke in various ways. These included choosing by lots and the use of inducements of one sort or another.⁹⁴ However, abuse and evasion, which Victor Amadeus' own officials might sometimes abet,⁹⁵ would never be completely eradicated. In addition, the duke himself

⁹¹ In 1709 the conte della Rocca, governor of Alessandria, sent 150 men to Roccavignale, in the recently acquired Monferrato, where the sindics refused to accept the obligation being imposed on Victor Amadeus' subjects to provide recruits, and had abused a recruiting segeant sent for that purpose, VDM to Fagel, 4 May 1709, Turin, ARAH/EA/VDM/33, f. 73.

⁹² In 1690–1, however, many inhabitants of Turin were allowed to buy themselves out of service in the urban militia, Rondolino, 'Vita Torinese', *CGP*, VII, 194.

⁹³ See Schulemburg's account, 24 May 1700, Turin, AST/MM/Levate Truppe nel Paese, m. 2/14.

⁹⁴ Of the 450 or so men reviewed by Schulemburg, 108 had been chosen by lots. In Oct. 1707, the syndics of Fossano promised exemption to anybody otherwise eligible who could denounce two others who were eligible but had not presented themselves, C. Salsotto, 'Fossano e la battaglia di Torino (1706). Contributo alla storia della guerra di Spagna', *CGP*, VIII, 435.

⁹⁵ In 1702 the conte di Rivera, governor of the province of Alba, his secretary, and an official of the Ufficio del Soldo were accused of taking money to exempt many who should have been taken when the duke had recently ordered recruitment in the province for the 3rd battalion of his Guards, provoking local resentment: see AST/MC, m. 10/8.