
The Manly Sacrifice: Martial Manliness and Patriotic Martyrdom in Nordic Propaganda during the Great Northern War

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The battle of Narva on 20 November 1700 stirred up an abundant flurry of Swedish war propaganda. The furious, blizzard-swept battle, in which the army of King Charles XII managed to defeat a numerically superior Russian adversary, was celebrated in a plethora of poems, war ballads and pictorial representations. Central and local authorities throughout the Swedish empire organised processions and religious ceremonies to spread the word of the military victory to the King's subjects.¹

Yet the battle of Narva also took a heavy death toll, on both the Swedish and the Russian sides. A few weeks after the battle, the royal printer *Salig Wankifs Enka* in Stockholm published a written memorial for the fallen Swedish soldiers: *Memorial in Honour of the Brave Swedish Killed and Wounded under His Royal Majesty's own Venerated Command . . .*² The publication was flowery and somewhat muddled. At its core was a list of Swedish casualties: 667 dead and 1,247 wounded. The private soldiers appeared as anonymous numbers, whereas officers were listed with their names and detailed descriptions of their wounds.

Apart from the listed casualties, the publication was made up of bombastic lyrical passages celebrating the sacrifice of the fallen soldiers. Here was an explicit dimension of *ars moriendi* – guidance in the principles of the Good Death. It was emphasised that the dead Swedes, unlike the Russians, had 'gained their lives, led their lives and lost their lives' as 'Evangelical Christians'. As the Swedes had in this way been properly prepared, there could be no doubt that 'their souls live(d) with God'.

According to the anonymous writer, the memorial was intended to console the bereaved families. However, as in the funeral sermons of the same period, the dead soldiers were simultaneously used as *exempla*, moral role-models for the living.³ In the same way as the martyred Swedish warrior king Gustavus Adolphus, whose 'blood-stained shirt' was invoked in veneration, the soldiers had sacrificed their lives for a higher purpose. They had died for their fatherland and were therefore blessed with immortality. Thus, they addressed their grieving kin with a direct message: 'If you ever loved us, do not deny us the honour that is our due'.

This article examines the conceptualisation of state violence in government propaganda for domestic consumption in Sweden and Denmark during the period of the

Great Northern War (1700–1721). The interconnected notions of martial manliness and patriotic martyrdom are at the centre of the analysis. Early modern war propaganda was produced by men who primarily addressed other men – and state violence was primarily, although not exclusively, conceptualised through the male gender. Using a broad repertoire of rhetorical themes, religious, marital and historico-mythical, the advocates of the belligerent state promoted male identities which were based on the willingness to use and endure violence. Culturally constructed ‘truths’ about the meaning of masculinity were continuously reproduced through the propaganda; these are labelled in this article as *concepts of manliness*.

The second theme of the analysis is the notion of dying for the fatherland. In his highly influential *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memories of the World Wars*, the American historian George Mosse describes the glorification of soldierly martyrdom as a modern phenomenon. He links it to the development of citizen-based armies during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, when large numbers of volunteers joined the ranks to fight for higher causes such as ‘the nation’ or the revolutionary ideals of *liberté, égalité* and *fraternité*.⁴ This connection has been elaborated by many later scholars. For instance, both historian John Hutchinson and influential sociologist Anthony D. Smith follow Mosse’s chronology in their works on national identities. In fact, the glorification of soldierly sacrifice is essential to their understanding of modern nationalism. According to these authors, the fallen soldiers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were venerated as martyrs of the nation, representing a ‘contract between the living and the dead’.⁵ Both scholars recognise that older conflicts like the Hundred Years’ War may have had indirect consequences on the modern period, by creating ‘a memory of struggles’, but they highlight the French introduction of mass conscription in 1793 as the historical turning-point in the trend towards glorification of fallen soldiers.⁶

However, the above-mentioned *Memorial in Honour of the Brave Swedish Killed and Wounded* precedes the famous French *Levée en masse* by nearly a full century. The Swedish text certainly did not invoke any revolutionary ideals, but the glorification of soldierly martyrdom was at its very core, emphasised through references to martyred kings, fearless Spartans, God Almighty and the glory of the fatherland. The references to antiquity and to the Christian religion were not coincidental. As medievalist Ernst Kantorowicz has demonstrated in a classic essay, the glorification of death for the fatherland has a long and bloodstained history in western tradition, starting with the citizen-soldiers of ancient Greece, who were urged to sacrifice their lives for the glory of their city-states.⁷ The cult of *pro patria mori* fell into oblivion with the fall of the Roman Empire, but it gradually returned to European politics during the course of the high Middle Ages. To begin with, the papacy promised absolution for crusaders who died for Christ and their celestial fatherland. Moreover, royal propaganda in England and France appropriated the terminology of the crusader movement and started to link the notion of soldierly martyrdom to the defence of the royal *patria* – the king’s temporal realm.⁸ Yet religion was still in this context a crucial feature of martyrdom, as the medieval royal fatherland had an explicitly sacred status, connected to the mystical body of Christ. Against this background, the British historian Norman Housley talks about a wave of ‘sanctified patriotism’ that swept throughout western Europe from the thirteenth century onwards.⁹ The warrior’s role took on a sacred character in the world of the Spanish, French and English nobilities. To die on the battlefield for king

and *patria* was a godly deed that blessed the fallen warrior with the right to partake eternally of the ‘conversation and company of the angels in heaven’.¹⁰

This interlinking of the spiritual and temporal *patria* is essential for our understanding of patriotic martyrdom in the early modern Nordic countries. Inspired by the groundbreaking research of the British church historian Adrian Hastings, recent scholarship highlights the significance of the Bible for the conceptualisation of ‘imagined communities’ during the period of Nordic state-building.¹¹ Every Sunday from the thousands of pulpits across the realms, the Lutheran priesthood of Sweden and Denmark drew extensive parallels between the royal *patria* and the Israel of the Old Testament. Members of the congregation were compared to the biblical Israelites and told that they enjoyed a privileged relation to God, as His chosen people on earth.¹² This element of ‘chosenness’ may have been particularly strong in the Swedish self-image, especially during the period scrutinised here, due to the country’s seventeenth-century history of conquest and imperial expansion.¹³

A crucial aspect that will be considered in the analysis is the connection between patriotic martyrdom and the dominant ideals of masculinity. As the German historian Karen Hagemann has pointed out in her research on martial manliness in early nineteenth-century Prussia, notions of national and military heroism are always intertwined with hegemonic masculinity.¹⁴ Military heroes have often been fêted as ‘the manliest of men’ in their respective societies. Consequently, they have been made to represent ‘the norms of masculinity to which the state, the military and society aspired’.¹⁵ The gendered dimension of *pro patria mori* or *dying for the fatherland*, is indicated by the very concepts of *patria* and *fatherland*, pointing to a *land* that was ruled, conceived and defended by *fathers*. The chief aim of the present article is thus to investigate the conceptions of masculinity and national belonging that this kind of war glorifying propaganda engendered in the early modern Nordic countries.

A network of propaganda

The source material consists of various kinds of written propaganda: royal decrees, printed sermons, triumphalist poems and broadside ballads (*skillingtryck*). The connection between the state and the royal decrees is relatively unproblematic, but the rest of the material calls for a closer examination. Is it reasonable to define this heterogeneous sample of documents as state propaganda?

To answer this in the affirmative, it is necessary to historicise the concept of ‘propaganda’ and disentangle it from any associations with Joseph Goebbels and twentieth-century totalitarianism.¹⁶ Neither Charles XII nor his Danish counterpart Frederick IV possessed a ‘ministry of propaganda’ with the power to coordinate the flow of information within their respective realms. As the Swedish art historian Mårten Snickare concludes in his doctoral dissertation *Enväldets riter* (Rites of Absolutism), early modern state propaganda should rather be perceived as a network of ‘personal initiatives’, operating within centrally defined frameworks. The religious ceremonies of thanksgiving, organised in connection with military victories, may serve as an example. These ceremonies were prescribed through royal decrees, often with references to appropriate psalms and biblical passages, but the actual content as well as the performance were, by and large, delegated to the local authorities.¹⁷

Snickare's observation is crucial to the present article. Artistic endeavour in the age of absolutism was often a matter of state-oriented career strategies. Successful artists opted for themes which made them appear as good patriots, in order to gain access to patrons or prestigious positions within the growing state apparatus.¹⁸ A closer look at the propaganda from the Great Northern War reveals the great majority of writers as members of the new elite of civil servants, for instance land surveyors, university lecturers and chancellery clerks.

Furthermore, according to the dominant artistic ideals of the Baroque period, the personages and apparatus of the state and the political establishment constituted brilliant material for artistic endeavours. To celebrate the glory of the prince and the *patria* represented the peak of creativity to many of the poets and painters of the period.¹⁹ Consequently, although 'personal initiatives' of individual writers were crucial, there were no deeper conflicts between personal artistic and public political interests in the production of absolutist propaganda. Furthermore, many broadsides and poems were given a semi-official status by virtue of being printed by royal publishers such as *Salig Wankifs Enka*. It is therefore legitimate to identify this loose network of texts as state propaganda and its authors as early modern propagandists. This definition does not imply that any publication of private origin should be perceived as state propaganda. Yet the making and dissemination of early modern state propaganda was a complex and multi-voiced process, where central authorities provided a conceptual framework, but depended on the input of individual actors – aspiring to a career in the military or the expanding civil service – for much of the actual content.

As in many other parts of Europe, the broadside ballads of early modern Scandinavia were directed toward a relatively wide audience.²⁰ They were, to a large extent, commercial products, intended for market consumption and public dissemination. Both the Swedish and Danish specimens from the period under scrutiny are characterised by a candid tone and simplistic imagery that indicates a popular form of address. There are many animal metaphors, sexual innuendos and references to manual labour on the farm and in the fields, often blended in a motley concoction with characters and place names from the Bible.

Moreover, the consumers or receivers of the broadside literature were not limited to literate subjects. This is a feature that makes the genre particularly appealing as historical source material. The broadsides were nearly always fashioned as songs or ballads, with tunes based on chorals from the book of psalms or other well known melodies. In this way they were perfectly adapted for the preferences of a primarily oral popular culture. In towns they were distributed by tobacconists and various kinds of street vendors, whereas rural areas were covered by pedlars and specialised book hawkers.²¹

But what about the royal decrees? These made up the backbone of domestic state propaganda, but how were they disseminated to the population at large? The key was the parish church pulpit. In fact, the pulpit constituted the dominant mass medium for ordinary people in the early modern period, as the Swedish historian Elisabeth Reuterswård has elucidated.²² Due to the limited extent of literacy amongst the populace, the authorities were dependent on the local priesthood for the public reading and recital of important messages. Central authorities in the Nordic countries made extensive use of Lutheran parish priests in order to reach out with various kinds of information and propaganda to the people.²³

In spite of the many similarities between the countries under scrutiny, the source material nevertheless hints at a number of national differences. The bottom line is quantity. Swedish propaganda was quite simply much more extensive than its Danish counterpart, at least during the period of the Great Northern War. Swedish state authorities published a nearly endless stream of decrees and proclamations for public recital during the dark and tumultuous years 1700–1721, regarding anything from the passing of new laws and taxes to war intercessions, thanksgiving ceremonies and official communiqués about battles and other dramatic events. The Danish decrees were shorter and fewer and more concerned with practical administrative matters.²⁴ The broadsides present a similar picture. No major national differences are discernible in their thematic composition, but the Swedish corpus of broadside ballads from the Great Northern War is by far the larger and most varied.

Obviously, to account fully for these differences it would be necessary to conduct a study with a much longer time perspective than the one at hand. Nevertheless, two possible explanations are suggested here. The first is based on the immediate historical context. Sweden was fully committed militarily throughout the Great Northern War, whereas Denmark played a relatively peripheral role until 1709. Not even after that, however, did the war effort affect the Danish population in a way that was comparable to the Swedish case, where twenty-one years of nearly total war – combined with famine, plague and all sorts of collateral hardships – made this period into a tribulation of nearly apocalyptic proportions. Thus, it appears only reasonable that the Swedish central authorities would have to make more effort with public propaganda than their Danish counterparts in order to maintain public morale and civic order.

The second explanation regards the fiscal organisation of the military state in each realm. The Swedish war effort was, to a large extent, sustained by the country's tax-paying peasantry, both in terms of manpower and economic resources. The Danish system, on the other hand, depended on the landed nobility and their willingness to contribute with men and means from their rural estates.²⁵ Accordingly, the incentive must have been stronger for the Swedish state authorities to justify the war to the population at large, that is, the peasantry.²⁶ This is also suggested by the military historian Anna Maria Forsberg in her recent dissertation on seventeenth-century Swedish war propaganda, bearing the highly suitable title 'Keeping the People in a Good Mood'.²⁷

The suffering maiden

The metaphor of the suffering maiden was a common image in early modern war propaganda. Important fortresses, besieged towns and war-ravaged regions were frequently represented as endangered women. Suffering maidens were staple ingredients of Protestant as well as Catholic propaganda during the Thirty Years' War, but the roots of the motif stretch back to the medieval ballad tradition.²⁸ For instance, 'suffering ladies in snow-white robes' had been used as embodiments of France in anti-English ballads from the period of the Hundred Years' War three centuries previously.²⁹

During the Great Northern War, the motif was particularly common in Swedish propaganda. The movements of Sweden's armed forces were repeatedly characterised as chivalrous expeditions aimed at rescuing defenceless women.³⁰ The Common Swedish War Intercession, disseminated on the eve of the conflict to all the churches of the realm, declared that the King had gone to war to face his 'faithless and remorseless

neighbours', who haunted 'people and fortresses, not even sparing defenceless women and children'.³¹

An example from the world of the broadsides is the popular and constantly reprinted 'Gothia Battle Song' (*Göta Kämpavisa*), by the poet and land surveyor Gunno Eurelius Dahlstierna.³² The opening passage introduces the Russian czar, *Herr Päder* (Peter the Great), who is having a wet dream about an exceptionally beautiful woman. When his seers identify the woman as 'Narva' – the name of an important Swedish border fortress – the czar decides to go courting. An old witch warns him about Narva's steadfastness, but the Russian leader is unstoppable: 'If a maiden is unwilling, I shall be able to take her by force'.

True to his word, the Czar rapes Narva's little sister Ivangorod – another Swedish fortress on the eastern border – but his violent courtship is halted at 'the door of the fair maiden'. Proud Narva 'tightens her belt' – she fears neither Russians nor overheated suitors. Infuriated by the rejection, the czar initiates a fierce siege. However, when somebody informs him about the arrival of Narva's betrothed – the Swedish warrior king Charles – the czar gets cold feet and hastily leaves the area. His army is crushed by the Swedish rescue force, whereupon Narva greets her beloved, who risked his 'precious life' for her honour, with tears streaming down her cheeks. Accordingly, the young warrior king gets to spend the night in Narva's grateful embrace.

These suffering maidens served two important functions in the propaganda. The first was to compromise the enemy's intentions. References to defenceless women and the associated narratives of rape made the Russian czar and his men into ugly examples of a debauched and dishonourable masculinity.³³ The other function was a call to manly deeds. The cries of the suffering women were crafted to stir up aggressive and combative forms of manliness among the Swedish populace.

This carefully gendered imagery played upon the duty of any married male to protect his dependants against the aggression of other men. Such duties were certainly not exclusive to the early modern period. There are numerous examples of hegemonic masculinities, from preceding as well as subsequent periods, based on similarly gendered obligations.³⁴ Yet in the early modern Nordic countries, the notion was embedded in a specific ideological framework. Orthodox Lutheran state propaganda divided society into three interlinked estates: the state, the church and the house. Each estate was governed by a 'father', a paternal male authority – the state by the king, the church by the priest and the house by the husband.³⁵ The motif of the suffering maiden was projected through the last of these estates, the Lutheran house, when the commoners of Sweden and Denmark were exposed to this kind of war propaganda.

Male protection was in fact an integral part of Lutheran marriage ideology. The leading Protestant reformer in Sweden, Olaus Petri, wrote in a vernacular marriage manual, published in 1528, that:

... the husband has to work and trouble himself for the good and welfare of his wife and children, and whenever enemies are at hand, or other dangerous situations evolve, he must be prepared to die for their sake, to allow them to bide in peace and quiet, and to persist in their well-being ...³⁶

The primary task of the Lutheran husband was to guarantee the safety and well-being of his wife and children. In case of war and other dangerous situations, he had to be ready to give his life for his dependants.³⁷ In other words: the notion of a manly sacrifice for the benefit of endangered women was supported and even promoted

by official definitions of marriage and marital masculinity. By utilising this notion in domestic war propaganda, the central authorities of Sweden in particular could represent the country's military campaigns as a protective male defence of a female home front. Viewed in this light, the metaphor of the suffering maiden appears as an early modern precursor to the female embodiments of national identity which became so prominent in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century nationalism, for instance *Mor Danmark* (Mother Denmark), the Swedish *Moder Svea* and the famous French *Marianne*.³⁸

The 'age of the fathers'

A significant feature of Nordic broadside propaganda was the constant comparison between the fighting soldiers and their heroic predecessors from previous wars.³⁹ An illustrative example is a triumphal Danish victory song from 1711, entitled 'A Small Felicitation to the Danish Sailor who Started up a Dance with Swedish Sophie, on May 5th 1711, and Took the Very Same as his Prize'.⁴⁰ The broadside's protagonist was a certain 'Captain Sivvers', who had won a naval battle against a Swedish warship. Sivvers' bravery was underlined through references to 'the honest Danish Juel' – a warrior from the past who had taught the Swedes to 'bow' as well as to 'duck under water from a cannon's blow'. This praiseworthy role model was Niels Juel, the Danish admiral and naval hero from the Scanian War of 1675–79.

The rhetorical *exempla* represented by Niels Juel and similar heroes lent an aura of historical continuity to the violent forms of masculinity endorsed by the wartime propaganda. The subjects who fought for Frederick IV and Charles XII were thereby tied to a compelling – but very much invented – tradition of masculine heroism. Symptomatically, the historical dimension was not fixed to a specific period. The propaganda played upon an unspecified 'age of the fathers', a long lost golden age, when heroes had been proper heroes and men still behaved like real men. Either in the guise of Danish Cimbrians, Swedish Goths, biblical heroes, martyred kings or just 'the old ones', the manly forefathers – who had sacrificed their blood, sweat and tears for the sake of the fatherland – urged their successors to follow in their footsteps. Some Swedish propaganda also made use of *exempla* from classical antiquity, for instance the above-mentioned memorial to the war dead at Narva, where the fallen Swedes were compared to King Leonidas and his legendary 300 Spartans in the battle of Thermopylae.

However, the great majority of the heroes evoked were of royal blood. The Swedish propaganda-makers were particularly prone to conjure up the memory of the country's seventeenth-century warrior kings, but they also referred to various mythical kings from sagas and legend.⁴¹ Moreover, there were many parallels to prominent military leaders from the Old Testament, such as Joshua, Samson and Gideon. The famous Swedish commander Magnus Stenbock, for instance, was compared to Joshua, while Stenbock's victory over the Danes at Helsingborg, 28 February 1710, was highlighted as a direct analogue to Joshua's destruction of Jericho.⁴²

Through this web of historical and biblical analogies, the propaganda-makers created a myth of communal destiny, which linked the royal subjects to a proud but blood-soaked chain of martial forefathers – a genealogy of heroes which stretched into the dim and distant past. This male pantheon constituted an important (but by

historians largely neglected) dimension of the concept of the fatherland – a key trope of early modern propaganda and political discourse.⁴³

However, the pantheon had a contemporaneous dimension as well, linked to the propagandistic representations both of God and of the absolute king, fashioned alike as mighty and immortal warriors. The divine was primarily represented by the Lord Saebaoth – the Lord of Hosts of the Old Testament, a thundering war god and avenger, who intervened in a partisan manner in mundane affairs in order to assist or punish His chosen people. The Common Swedish War Intercession of 1700 called upon the Lord to ‘be a firewall around our beloved fatherland’.⁴⁴ The God of the Swedes was also asked to put ‘a ring in the nose and a bridle in the mouth of our presumptuous enemies, to make them return in shame from whence they came’.

These warrior-like features were even more visible in representations of the king himself. As the Danish historian Gunner Lind observes in an article on patriotism in seventeenth-century Denmark, the king became ‘the manifest expression of the fatherland’ in times of war.⁴⁵ Through paintings, speeches, decrees and broadsides, the king was highlighted as the ultimate of the country’s mighty fathers – he was *pater patriae*, the father of the fatherland, the physical incarnation of present grandeur as well as of the manliness of former ages. He protected his subjects and cared for their well-being, in the same way as the Lutheran husband took care of his domestic dependants. Thus the king functioned as the masculine role model par excellence.⁴⁶ For a country at war, he became the living example of the forceful manliness his subjects were expected to aspire to in their daily deeds. Royal decrees, declarations of war and other kinds of official proclamations emphasised the efforts of the kings – and in Sweden also of the Council of the Realm – to secure the safety of their subjects. A telling example is the Danish proclamation on the establishment of the so-called Country Militia, dated 1701, which started with the following litany:

We, Frederick the Fourth, by the Grace of God, King of Denmark and Norway, etc, hereby make it publicly known, that We, out of the Royal care that We tirelessly carry for the preservation and security of Our dear and faithful subjects . . .⁴⁷

The monarch who spoke through this text was ruling by the grace of God. Yet the proclamation equally emphasised his unwavering efforts on behalf of his ‘dear and faithful subjects’. This paternalistic formula was a common feature of early modern state propaganda in the Nordic countries. It played upon the unwritten social contract which propped up the legitimacy of the early modern European state – the subjects paid their taxes and swore their allegiance to the king in return for protection against foreign enemies, food shortages and other hazards.⁴⁸

In the broadsides, the protective duties of the early modern state were embodied in dramatic depictions of the king in various military situations. A soldierly appearance was particularly elaborated in the case of Charles XII. Earlier research has demonstrated how King Charles deliberately played up to the image of himself as a simple but courageous soldier king. In paintings, engravings and other kinds of pictorial propaganda, the king of Sweden was portrayed, against all conventions, without wig or any kind of royal regalia, dressed in nothing but a simple military uniform in the yellow and blue colours of his country.⁴⁹ The broadsides spun their stories along the same lines. The above-mentioned ‘Gothia Battle Song’, where Charles XII swung his rapier in the first line of battle, is the paradigm of how the legend of the fearless Swedish soldier

king was fashioned and reproduced in written propaganda during the Great Northern War.

Representations of Frederick IV were more in tune with the conventions for royal portraiture in the Baroque period, with ermine robes, impressive wigs and classic royal regalia.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, the king of Denmark fully understood the value of making himself visible in the vicinity of battle. Visits to the front were amply utilised in Danish propaganda, both written and pictorial versions. In the broadside ‘“ The Residual Old Danish Hearts” Song of Joy after King Frederick the Fourth’s Successful Landing in Raa, between Helsingborg and Landskrona, November 11th anno 1709’, for instance, King Frederick was made to personify the whole Danish army.⁵¹ Through these kinds of representations of the king’s persona, the propaganda proved that the father of the fatherland lived up to his part of the unwritten contract and honoured the legacy of his manly forefathers.

Honour and immortality

The concept of honour was a crucial component of Nordic war propaganda in the early modern period. Moreover, it was a highly multifaceted concept. Historical notions of honour are notoriously difficult to decipher, as many historians have demonstrated. One of the obstacles is the vagueness of the terminology. In fact, the equivalent of ‘honour’ in early modern Scandinavia was covered by a cluster of interrelated concepts, of which *hederlhæder* and *äralære* appear to have been the most important. Both concepts referred to a social feature that connected an individual to a larger community and granted him a certain standing in society. However, *heder* was also related to ‘truth-telling’ and ‘honesty’, whereas *ära* was closer to ‘fame’ and ‘glory’.⁵²

At first glance, however, the propagandistic usage of honour appears rather straightforward. Honour – most often expressed through the word *ära* – was the reward for manly behaviour in battle. Where the forefathers propped up martial masculinity with a dimension of historical continuity, honour pointed to the future. It represented the soldier’s connection to everything that awaited him after the battle, the war and the present misery. The Swedish broadside and enlistment song ‘The Faithfulness and Manhood of the Man from Mark’, published in the critical winter months of 1709–10, proclaimed that the body turned ‘to dust’ irrespective of lifestyle, whereas ‘honour’ (*ära*) lasted forever.⁵³ It was not eroded by the passing of time, but bestowed an immortal name upon its bearer. Through honour, the soldier could gain a form of life eternal.

Yet although honour was highlighted as the ultimate pay-off for the hardships of soldiering, a certain ambivalence is discernible in the propaganda. In an open letter written in January 1710 the governor of Scania, General Magnus Stenbock, called upon all Swedish subjects to support him in a grand offensive against the Danish invaders; he repeatedly emphasised that he merely strove for ‘the Honour (*ära*) of God, the Good of our Most Gracious King and the Unviolated Well-Being of the Entire Fatherland’.⁵⁴ The famous Swedish commander thereby made it clear that it was not his personal quest for martial honour – his *ärelystnad* (ambition) – that animated the campaign. In the same breath, however, Stenbock appealed to the citizens’ thirst for honour and glory, for instance through a very inclusive usage of the expression *redlig man* (‘honest man’). Being addressed as a *redlig man* in early modern Sweden could

simply mean that the person in question was recognised as just and righteous, yet in situations involving the nobility, the description was normally reserved to them, in order to emphasise their elevated position in society as *ärans stånd* ('the honourable estate').⁵⁵ General Stenbock, himself a member of the upper echelons of the Swedish nobility, set all of this aside in his desperate letter. Even though he was addressing the common Swedish peasantry at the same time as the nobility, he included all of the king's subjects in the 'honourable' category:

Under the firm assumption that every Honest (*redlig*) Man – of both the Nobility, the Burghers and other Persons of Rank and the Honourable (*ärbara*) and Common Peasantry – who is familiar with the usage of Weapons, will turn up here, as soon as possible, under the leadership of the Noble Estate.⁵⁶

The noblemen were addressed as the designated leaders, but the impending honour was not presented as an exclusively noble privilege. Anyone who answered the call to arms was to be considered a man of honour. However, Stenbock did not mention personal 'honour' as an official incentive of the campaign. It was something bigger, purer and far more unselfish which motivated the general and his troops: 'The Love of Your Beloved Fatherland, the Honour of God's Name and the Benefit of our Most Gracious King'.

Stenbock's letter demonstrates the importance for the royal propaganda-makers of embedding the concept of martial honour in a larger context of associated incentives. Fighting for honour alone was not considered suitable. Such behaviour could easily degenerate into *ärelystnad* (ambition) – a trait with a very bad connotation in the early modern period, whether regarding individuals, countries or royal houses.

To grasp this ambivalence fully, the concept of honour must be related to the duelling culture of the early modern nobility. Honour was, in fact, the conceptual basis of the entire duelling tradition. Simply put, a duelling nobleman took up arms in order to gain 'satisfaction' after an attack on his honour. This ritualised form of single combat had deep roots in the Nordic countries, but it was increasingly contested during the course of the seventeenth century, due to the consolidation of centralised power at the level of the state. As in many other European countries, the violent behaviour of the old elites collided with the establishment of increasingly efficient state monopolies of the use of violence. By the turn of the seventeenth century, duelling was officially forbidden in both Sweden and Denmark.⁵⁷ However, recent research highlights the setbacks to its abolition and the ambiguities which persisted. One important obstacle was the simple fact that the kings themselves, as well as the state officials, to a large extent shared the ideals and cultural values of the duelling nobility.⁵⁸

The propagandistic employment of honour during the Great Northern War mirrors the ambiguity of the campaign against duelling. The propaganda-makers continuously praised the honour of fighting men, officers as well as privates, and especially the ones who perished in the field of battle. The reason was quite simple: the war-ridden states of Sweden and Denmark needed men who were ready to kill for their honour. Men in enormous quantities. As Gunner Lind argues in his analysis of Danish nobility ballads in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, 'the armed man' was a general ideal in early modern society. Bearing arms was thus in itself a source of honour and respect.⁵⁹ To put it bluntly, military violence was a defining feature of hegemonic masculinity, as the Swedish historian Kekke Stadin emphasises in her research on early modern

gender relations.⁶⁰ However, military violence as an ideal of masculinity was strongly connected to the old Nordic warrior nobility, along with the ownership of land and property. This gender construct was increasingly challenged by other male identities during the course of the seventeenth century, in Sweden by the emerging elite of the civil service. Yet the warrior role remained the dominant ideal of masculinity throughout the so-called Swedish Age of Greatness, that is, until the collapse of the country's Baltic empire in 1721.⁶¹ This was the cultural undercurrent that the propaganda-makers played upon. Through a deliberately inclusive definition of military honour, all the men of the realm were given the chance to shine in the glory of the traditional knightly elite. Commoners and nobility could thus be united in a nationwide military community in which everyone bearing arms for the king had the right to claim respect, at least for as long as the war lasted.

However, it must be underlined that the propagandistic conception of martial honour was firmly attached to the interests of the state. General Stenbock's letter did not talk about honour alone, but related it to God, the king and the fatherland. In other words, honour was embedded by representations of the state and central authorities. Many historians have emphasised the fundamental shift that took place within the public codes of honour during the early modern period, as a part of the state-building process. The nobility's traditional focus on lineage and family name was increasingly replaced by loyalty to the state and pride in one's office, especially after the establishment of absolute monarchies in Denmark (1660) and Sweden (1680).⁶² As indicated above in the discussion about duelling, this process was far from straightforward, but serving the king gradually appeared as the main road to social recognition, overshadowing the merits of noble birth.⁶³ This development is highly relevant to our understanding of martial honour in the wartime propaganda of the time. The honour hailed by the propaganda-makers was not pointing backwards to something already established; rather it had the form of a 'trophy' that could be acquired through active state service.

This conception of honour is particularly evident in the Swedish material – a fact that should be related to the previously mentioned differences between Sweden and Denmark as military powers. The Swedish war effort was dependent on the cooperation of legally free peasants. It was the peasantry who bore the brunt of the skyrocketing war taxes and it was they who sent their sons to die on faraway battlefields. The Danish system, by contrast, was financed by the landed nobility, and the ranks of the armed forces were traditionally made up largely of foreign mercenaries. The establishment of the Country Militia in 1701 brought Denmark closer to the Swedish situation, as significant numbers of the rural population were then integrated into the army as militiamen.⁶⁴ However, these militiamen had a different status from that of the Swedish peasant soldiers, since they were legally bound to their noble landlords as tenant farmers or farmhands. Still, the royal decree on the establishment of the Militia declared that a person serving in the new units should be 'more respected [*agtes*] and honoured [*æres*] than other young farmhands [*unge Karle*], in all social gatherings, as long as his name remains on the muster roll'.⁶⁵

Another example of the inclusiveness of this martial male community is the Swedish enlistment song 'Daily Encouragement Ode for God-fearing Soldiers and Faithful Subjects During the Present Time of War and Harsh Deprivations...' (1716).⁶⁶ The song praised a group of 'Swedish Amazons' from the mythical Bråvalla Hed:

Their young husbands
had died like heroes in battle.
To gain peace and quiet,
all of them took a male heart.
It came to life in their breasts,
thus they went to fight the country's enemy.
And since he had given them all a kiss,
they squeezed his blood out with bliss.

These courageous young widows had achieved honour as well as heroic immortality through their transgressive behaviour. The imaginative lines above were addressed to the prime demographic of the Swedish enlistment campaigns: landless men and sons of the peasantry between twenty and thirty years of age. To these groups of men, the widows from Bråvalla probably functioned both as warning bells and role models. The Amazons of the song were basically a kind of suffering maiden. However, due to the distress and desperation of their war-ravaged country – especially the aggravating deficiency of men – these endangered women had been forced to take ‘a male heart’, that is, to take up arms themselves and confront the approaching enemy, in defence of the country as well as their female virtue.

Yet the audience of the ‘Daily Encouragement Ode’ can be further qualified. There is a fascinating possibility that its author’s audience, both intended and fortuitous, included an unknown number of women in men’s clothing. Judging by current international research on early modern gender history, female transvestism was not an entirely uncommon phenomenon during this period.⁶⁷ This holds especially true for the case of the early modern army, where the road to recognition and social advancement was primarily a question of adapting to uniform codes of behaviour.⁶⁸ A recent study by the Swedish historian Maria Sjöberg demonstrates that the armies could actually contain quite significant numbers of women, both soldiers’ wives and various kinds of camp followers such as cooks, laundresses and prostitutes.⁶⁹ Regarding the specific song under scrutiny, the year of publication (1716) is an important factor: sixteen years of war and loss of population could definitely have made the concepts of martial manliness unusually flexible in Sweden. It may therefore have been in the interests of the country’s propaganda-makers to fashion songs which – within the limits of decorum – made it easier for war widows and female camp followers to join the ranks of the fighting soldiers.

The argument is thus that martial manliness was chiefly a matter of behaving in the right way, fighting in the right way and – as the next section demonstrates – dying in the right way. Especially in the Swedish propaganda, the social backgrounds and even the physical sex of the people who did the actual fighting were downplayed. When the king and the fatherland called for help, all subjects of the realm – including women and day-labourers – could lay claim to the immortal military honour which normally was reserved for the knights and commanders of the high nobility.

Die like a man

A crucial component of the propaganda’s conceptual repertoire was the word *blood*. At the most basic level, it provided a simple but powerful imagery in the dramatisation of the various skirmishes and battles. However, the symbolic value of blood was

primarily used to emphasise the myth of the good sacrifice, not least through the recurrent formula 'life and blood'. Martial manliness required sacrifices of the king's soldiers, preferably sacrifices in blood. And one isolated sacrifice was not enough. To live up to the requirements of wartime propaganda, a soldier was expected continuously to risk his life and his blood for the higher cause.

An important element in the mythologisation of the manly sacrifice was the statistical lists of fallen soldiers which often garnished the Swedish narratives. Often these figures referred to casualties on the enemy side – figures that should in fact be perceived as a form of trophy-taking, just like the lists of captured enemy field banners and artillery pieces.⁷⁰ At the same time, however, some of the material shows a willingness to highlight and commemorate casualties on one's own side, as in the memorial to fallen Swedish soldiers in Narva, discussed at the beginning of this article.

In Sweden, the battle of Helsingborg resulted in two official rolls, published a few months after the battle in the state gazette *Post-och inrikes tidningar*. The first one presented 2,677 Danish prisoners of war, while the other listed the Swedish casualties. The casualty list was organised in the same way as the Narva memorial: officers were listed by name, whereas non-commissioned officers and private soldiers were presented anonymously as numbers. For instance, the roll shows that the Uppland Infantry Regiment lost its colonel Johan Brahm, a Major Alexander Farbees, the quartermaster Michael Kock and thirty-five 'corporals and commoners'.⁷¹ In all, the regiment lost thirty-eight soldiers. It should be noted that the list was based on named county regiments: the Uppland Infantry Regiment, the Östergötland Cavalry Regiment and so on. This to some extent made the sacrifice of the nameless privates more concrete. By connecting the fallen soldier to a collective of comprehensible dimensions, the propaganda-makers elevated his dead body from the anonymity of the soldier's grave. And since his sacrifice thereby became more tangible, it also turned into a clearer target for veneration, sorrow and other emotions likely to reinforce community identity.⁷²

The glorification of manly sacrifice should be related to the specific demands of early modern warfare. A good example is the Danish broadside 'True Narration about Stralsund, surrendered to the Danish on December 23rd 1715'.⁷³ Obviously, this kind of source material does not provide evidence of actual events, but it can be used to elucidate how the ideal behaviour in battle was perceived. This particular broadside portrays Danish infantrymen who fearlessly advance towards the Swedish entrenchments around Stralsund, in spite of heavy fire. They charge the enemy 'strenuously with flint-lock and bayonets', break a hole in the outer defences and continue over the frozen trenches. Here, by the inner circle of the Swedish fortifications, attackers and defenders clash in a blood-drenched close combat that results in a great number of Danish casualties:

Here fell many a man;
the grave concealed the numerous dead,
who in this manly stand,
throughout the attack had fought and bled.

Through their fearless and uncompromising self-sacrifice, these dead Danish soldiers had proven themselves to be in full possession of martial manliness. Their status could therefore be commemorated as a timeless and indisputable 'manly stand'. The fallen

by the walls of Stralsund had nothing left to prove: their manhood stretched from there to eternity.

To be sure, all kinds of warfare have demanded painful sacrifices of the combatants. Death and loss are inherent to the nature of war. Nevertheless, it seems plausible that the characteristic tactics of early modern warfare, not least the peculiar mixture of close combat and firefights, fostered a specific focus on sacrificial death. The previously quoted broadside points at a central element: battalions of infantrymen in line, steadily moving towards the enemy under constant shelling, for a final showdown with cold steel.⁷⁴ According to the so-called 'New Manner' of the Swedish Army, the advancing infantrymen were expected to hold their fire and endure the enemy shelling until they had reached a distance of thirty paces from the intended target. Here, with 'the white of the enemy's eyes' in sight, the musketeers were supposed to discharge their firearms once, then charge what remained of the foe with bayonets, rapiers and pikes. As the Swedish military historian Gunnar Artéus has pointed out, this kind of fighting called for an 'ironclad discipline' among the soldiers.⁷⁵ The glorification of death on the battlefield, thus, was a way to engender the high morale which rulers and commanders required of their hapless foot soldiers.

As demonstrated above, the broadside about the fall of Stralsund highlighted the bayonet-attacks of the Danish infantrymen as 'strenuous'. These kind of references to the grim reality of close combat were omnipresent in the Great Northern War propaganda. Furthermore, the references to firearms were greatly overshadowed by the vocabulary of cold weapons. These consisted of bayonets as well as pikes, but the stock items were swords and rapiers, along with the verb *fäkta* ('fencing'), which was the standard expression for any kind of combat action.

The detailed accounts of ideal combat behaviour need to be related to the concept of honour, especially with regard to the Swedish material. Ferocious fighting and courage in battle were closely connected to honourable conduct in the army of Charles XII.⁷⁶ The willingness to 'fight till the last drop of blood' was the criterion that distinguished the good soldiers from the bad. Withdrawal from situations of close combat was condemned as deeply shameful, and it was punishable, according to the Swedish Articles of War, with the loss of both honour and life.⁷⁷ These connections between honour, courage and a willingness to die for higher causes were clearly expressed in the army field manual which General Magnus Stenbock penned during the dramatic winter months of 1709–10:

When struggle is at hand, the officers in charge must encourage and convince their subordinates to valiant courage for their king, their fatherland and their own immortal fame, being as it is *better to die than to fight poorly*.⁷⁸

These lines point to the core of martial masculinity. Giving everything – including one's own life – for the King, the fatherland and glory everlasting was hailed by the servants of the absolute state as the manliest thing a patriotic subject could do in times of war.

Manly sacrifice and patriotic martyrdom – concluding discussion

The domestic propaganda of the Great Northern War made use of various concepts of manliness, which taken all together pointed towards self-sacrificial death on the

battlefield. It should be noted that *manliness* in early modern Swedish and Danish – *manlighet* and *mandighed* respectively – was the name of a specific virtue which designated courage in battle. According to previous research, based on material from the seventeenth century, it was chiefly connected to military officers of noble birth.⁷⁹ Yet, as this article has demonstrated, during the Great Northern War the language of manliness could be extended to include combatants of humble origin as well, especially in Sweden, where the domestic burden of the long-term war effort reached nearly Napoleonic proportions.

By means of royal decrees, broadside ballads and religious ceremonies such as prayer days and thanksgiving, the subjects of the warring Nordic kings were woven into nationwide communities in which wartime sacrifice was the common thread which bound them all together under the aegis of the fatherland. The defining feature of a manly patriot was the willingness to sacrifice ‘life and blood’ for the greater good.⁸⁰ In practical terms, this meant a person who paid the ever rising taxes without objection and willingly sent off his children and farmhands to distant battlefields, whenever the king deemed it necessary. Furthermore, true patriots were always ready to die for their fatherland in fierce and fearless combat. Social background and even physical sex were of secondary importance for membership of this ‘imaginary community’ of war and sacrifice – an aspect that is particularly evident in the Swedish material. Two decades of incessant warfare turned the country into a ‘land of war widows’, and it was largely women who tilled the earth, ran the farms and made the daily sacrifices at home.⁸¹ This wide-ranging mobilisation of people and resources prompted a relatively high level of flexibility in the official definitions of manliness and patriotic behaviour. The propaganda-makers drew upon concepts of hegemonic masculinity that had traditionally been associated with the knightly elite, yet in the calamitous times of the Great Northern War, the same masculine attributes were made available to anyone who suffered and died for the benefit of the all-important war effort.

Women could therefore be used in Swedish propaganda as *exempla* of manly battle behaviour, in the shape of Amazons and war widows, suffering but not defeated. But the notion of patriotic martyrdom was still primarily linked to the male gender. This is indicated by the very term *patriot*, which is derived etymologically from *pater/father*. And the duty to obey the *pater patriae* – the royal father of the fatherland – was certainly highlighted in wartime propaganda. However, it would be a mistake to reduce the content of early modern patriotism to the vertical relationship between ruler and subjects. The present article has unearthed a number of equally important dimensions to patriotism, one of which was based on the precepts of manly forefathers, whom the subjects were urged to emulate in their deeds and general behaviour. Another theme which featured prominently was the call to defend a feminised home front from the dishonourable intentions of advancing enemies. A third element was the concept of martial honour, which was appropriated from the age-old warrior nobility and instead associated with active state service. By fighting and dying in manly battle, any soldier could gain honour and immortal fame, as he would posthumously become one of the martyred forefathers, who in wartime propaganda were construed as the very backbone of the fatherland.

The glorification of soldierly martyrdom is highlighted by many prominent scholars as part and parcel of modern nationalism. George Mosse has traced the phenomenon

to the introduction of mass conscription during the French Revolutionary Wars, while Anthony D. Smith asserts in a recent study that ‘it was only in the age of nationalism that the ideal of achieving national destiny through individual or collective sacrifice took root and was widely disseminated, becoming a vital cultural resource of national identity’.⁸² This standpoint rests on the assumption that European armies before the French Revolution were dominated by mercenaries, who fought for money and professional reasons rather than national or patriotic causes. Yet although this assumption certainly holds true for France and many other states on the European continent, it does not apply to the Nordic territories during the Great Northern War. Due to a chronic discrepancy between economic resources and political ambitions, Swedish rulers had a long tradition of using the peasants as the basis of their armies. Peasant conscription was formalised in Sweden during the course of the seventeenth century, with the establishment of the so-called *indelningsverket* (‘allotment system’) and the *ständiga knektehållet* (‘standing peasant army’).⁸³ The wealthier Danish rulers had followed the continental pattern of hiring foreign mercenaries, especially German *Landsknechte*, for many centuries. Yet this changed in 1701, when Frederick IV established the Country Militia, which introduced a large number of peasants into the Danish armed forces.

It must be emphasised, however, that these men were neither free citizens nor volunteers; they were conscripted peasants, bound to the state and its martial enterprises through various degrees of compulsion and violence. The Swedish allotment system maintained a permanent trained army by rewarding soldiers with smallholdings or tenements. Furthermore, Danish militiamen and Swedish tenement soldiers came from different backgrounds, both in social and juridical terms. The former were tenants of the Danish nobility, legally subjected to the will of their landlords, whereas the tax-paying Swedish peasantry was legally free and enjoyed political representation as the fourth estate of the Diet. Still, the Nordic peasant soldiers had one important feature in common – they were not mercenaries. Consequently, those who fell on the battlefields of Narva, Stralsund and Helsingborg were to a large extent made up of ordinary subjects from the rulers’ own countries. This would help to explain why the propagandistic usage of *pro patria mori* – an ideal inherited from classical antiquity – seems to have taken root at an earlier stage in the Nordic countries than elsewhere in Europe.

The uniqueness of the Swedish case needs to be emphasised once again. During the country’s imperial era between 1560 and 1721, Sweden was in a nearly permanent state of war. Imperial expansion laid the ground for an extremely high degree of militarisation, even by early modern standards. The development culminated in the reign of Charles XII (1697–1718), when the overwhelming pressure of constant warfare seriously started to level out the differences between nobility and peasantry, and to some extent also between women and men.⁸⁴ It seems only reasonable, then, that the omnipresence of war in early modern Swedish history should have paved the way for a rather peculiar trajectory in the construction of both gender and national identities. The broader content and exact chronology of how this development would play out are questions for future research, but the present article has drawn attention to the high value placed on personal sacrifice for the common good, as defined by a fatherly ruler on top of it all.

Notes

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1. See Anna Maria Forsberg, 'Gläd tigh nu o Swea-rike! Segervisorna från slaget vid Narva 1700: propaganda eller spontana kungahyllningar', *Karolinska Förbundets Årsbok* (Stockholm: Karolinska Förbundets, 1998), pp. 105–44.
2. *De under Kongl. Mayts eget högst. commando, wid den med Guds hielp i manna minne oförligelige SEGERN emot the trolöse RYSSAR, tå den trogne staden Narva lyckeligen undsattes, tappre Swänske Döde och Blesserades Åhre-skrifter och Åhre-siångar* (Stockholm, 1700).
3. For Swedish funeral sermons of this period, see Göran Stenberg, *Döden diktar: En studie i likpredikningar och gravtal från 1600- och 1700-talen*. (Stockholm: Atlantis, 1998).
4. George Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 3–33.
5. John Hutchinson, 'Warfare, Remembrance and National Identity', in Athena S. Leoussi and Stephen Grosby (eds), *Nationalism and Ethnosymbolism: History, Culture and Ethnicity in the Formation of Nations* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), pp. 42–52, here p. 44.
6. Hutchinson, 'Warfare, Remembrance and National Identity', pp. 42–4. For an updated discussion by Anthony D. Smith, see for instance his previous monograph, *The Cultural Foundations of Nations: Hierarchy, Covenant, and Republic* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), pp. 45–7.
7. Ernst Kantorowicz, 'Pro Patria Mori in Medieval Political Thought', *The American Historical Review* 56 (1951), pp. 473–80.
8. Kantorowicz, 'Pro Patria Mori', pp. 480–84.
9. Norman Housley, "'Pro deo et patria mori': Sanctified Patriotism in Europe 1400–1600", in Phillip Contamine (ed.), *War and Competition between States: The Origins of the Modern State in Europe, 13th – 18th Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), pp. 221–48, here p. 221.
10. Housley, "'Pro deo et patria mori'", p. 245.
11. See most notably Nils Ekedahl, *Det svenska Israel: Myt och retorik i Haquin Spegels predikokost* (Uppsala: Gidlund, 1999), but also the critical discussion in Hanne Sanders, 'Religiöst eller nationalt verdensbillede? Skåne efter overgangen til Sverige i 1658', in Hanne Sanders (ed.), *Mellem Gud og Djæveln: Religiøse og magiske verdensbilleder i Norden 1500–1800* (Copenhagen: Nordisk Ministeråd, 2001), pp. 242–52.
12. The propagandistic usage of the biblical Israel is analysed in Jonas Nordin, *Ett fattigt men fritt folk: Nationell och politisk självbild i Sverige från sen stormaktstid till slutet av frihetstiden* (Eslöv/Stockholm: Brutus Östlings Förlag, 2000), pp. 151–78. See also Peter Ericsson, *Stora nordiska kriget förklarar: Karl XII och det ideologiska tilltalet* (Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2002), p. 125.
13. For a discussion about the imperial self-image in Swedish propaganda during the so-called Age of Greatness, see Bengt Ankarloo, 'Europe and the Glory of Sweden: The Emergence of a Swedish Self-Image in the Early 17th Century', in Göran Rystad (ed.), *Europe and Scandinavia: Aspects of the Process of Integration in the 17th Century* (Solna: Esselte Studium, 1983), pp. 237–43.
14. Karen Hagemann, 'German Heroes: the Cult of Death for the Fatherland in Nineteenth-century Germany', in Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann and John Tosh (eds), *Masculinities in Politics and War: Gendering Modern History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), pp. 116–36, here p. 116.
15. Hagemann, 'German Heroes', pp. 116–17.
16. A helpful introduction to early modern propaganda can be found in Allan Ellenius (ed.), *Iconography, Propaganda and Legitimation: The Origins of the Modern State in Europe, 13th – 18th Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998). Swedish conditions are elucidated in Anna Maria Forsberg, *Att hålla folket på gott humör. Informationsspridning, krigspropaganda och mobilisering i Sverige 1655–1680* (Stockholm: Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, 2005), especially pp. 30–43.
17. Märten Snickare, *Enväldets riter: Kungliga fester och ceremonier i gestaltning av Nicodemus Tessin den yngre* (Stockholm: Raster, 1999), pp. 175–6.
18. Bernt Olsson, 'De tre Karlarna i samtidslitteraturens spegel', in *Tre Karlar: Karl X Gustav, Karl XI, Karl XII* (Stockholm: Livrustkammaren, 1984), pp. 97–112. For the Danish case, see Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen,

- Poesi og politik: Lejlighedsdigtningen ved enevældens indførelse 1660* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanums Forlag, 1996), pp. 17–21.
19. Kurt Johannesson, *I polstjärnans tecken; Studier i svensk barock* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1968), p. 129.
 20. Margareta Jersild, *Skillingtryck: Studier i svensk folklig vissång före 1800*. (Stockholm: Svenskt visarkivs handlingar, 1975), pp. 11–13.
 21. For a broader European perspective, see Dianne Dugaw, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry 1650–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 16–21.
 22. Elisabeth Reuterswärd, *Ett massmedium för folket: Studier i de allmänna kungörelsernas funktion i 1700-talets samhälle* (Lund: Historiska Media/Nordic Academic Press, 2001), pp. 33–7.
 23. See in particular Forssberg, *Att hålla folket på gott humör*, pp. 55–64.
 24. My main entry to the Danish material is *Kong Friedrich 4.s allernaadigste Forordninger og aabne Breve fra den 26. Aug. 1699 til 1730. Bind I: 1699–1713* (Royal Library of Denmark, Copenhagen), supplemented with bibliographical excavations in *Biblioteca Danica* at the Royal Library of Denmark. The Swedish material is easier to access, as royal decrees and proclamations from the period under scrutiny have been collected in more or less comprehensive annual compilations.
 25. For instance, Jan Lindegren, 'Men, Money and Means', in Contamine (ed.), *War and Competition Between States*, pp. 152–7.
 26. Ericsson, *Stora nordiska kriget förklarar*, p. 273.
 27. Forssberg, *Att hålla folket på gott humör*. For an English summary, see pp. 302–10.
 28. Ulinka Rublack, 'Wench and Maiden: Women, War and the Pictorial Function of the Feminine in German Cities in the Early Modern Period', *History Workshop Journal* 44 (1997), pp. 1–22, here pp. 2–7.
 29. Laurent Vissière, 'L'urgence de l'identité nationale', *Historia* 759 (2009), pp. 39–44.
 30. This theme is further investigated in Andreas Marklund, 'Bocken, räven och dygdiga damen: Könsmetaforer i svensk-dansk propaganda under Stora nordiska kriget', *Historisk Tidskrift* [Denmark] 105 (2005), pp. 97–125.
 31. *Böön wid närwarande swåre Krigs-Tijder, uti alla Församlingar Öfwer Swerige och dess underliggiande Hertigdömer och Länder, att uppläsas* (Stockholm, 12 March 1700).
 32. The full Swedish title of the first edition is *Giöta Kjömpa-Wisa, Om Koningen å Herr Pädar, den 17 november 1700* (The first edition does not state where the broadside was printed, but it was published during the final weeks of 1700)
 33. The debauched masculinity attributed to the enemy resembles the conceptions of 'the violent soldier' that Karin Hassan Jansson has observed in her dissertation on attitudes to rape in early modern Sweden. See Karin Hassan Jansson, *Kvinnofrid: Synen på våldtäkt och konstruktionen av kön i Sverige 1600–1800* (unpublished doctoral thesis, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2002), in particular pp. 296–302.
 34. For instance, see the three introductory chapters in Dudink, Hagemann and Tosh (eds), *Masculinities in Politics and War*.
 35. Andreas Marklund, *In the Shadows of his House: Masculinity and Marriage in Sweden, c.1760 to the 1830s* (unpublished doctoral thesis, European University Institute, 2002).
 36. Olaus Petri, 'Een liten vunderuisning om Ectheskapet', in *Samlade Skrifter af Olaus Petri: Första bandet* (1528, repr., Uppsala: Sveriges kristliga studentrörelses förlag, 1914), p. 448.
 37. The ideological connection between the male's two roles as husband and soldier is also noted in Anders Jarlert, 'Fostran till man. Positionsförändringar i svensk katekesundervisning från 1600-tal till 1800-tal i möte med verkligheten. Ett forskningsuppslag', in Anne-Marie Berggren (ed.), *Manligt och omanligt i ett historiskt perspektiv* (Stockholm: Forskningsrådsnämnden, 1999), pp. 59–72.
 38. See for instance the chapter on Mor Denmark in Inge Adriansen, *Nationale symboler i Det danske rige 1830–2000. Bind II: Fra undersätter til nation* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanums Forlag, 2003), pp. 443–79.
 39. This theme is further investigated in Andreas Marklund, 'På fädernas axlar. Faderssymboler, manlighet och patriotisk gemenskap under Stora Nordiska kriget', *Scandia* 72 (2006), pp. 22–38.
 40. *29 Viser angående Krigen 1709–1720. Samlingsbind*. Copenhagen, 1720. (Royal Library of Denmark, Copenhagen.)
 41. A certain King Humble features in the published sermon, *Thet af Danmark oskyldigt angripne Swerige, uti en Christellig Predikan Öfweer Evangelium Dom. III Advent., Matth. XI. V2. Seqq. För Kongl. Hofwet i Stockholm Förestält och vindicerat af Hennes Mayts Hoffpredikant Gustaf Adolph Humble. Åhr 1710. Stockholm, Hos Joh. Henr. Werner. Kongl. Booktr* (Stockholm, 1710).
 42. *Wälmente Tanckar Öfwer den glorieusa SEGER som den Swenska Armeen, igenom Gudz Nåd, erhöit Emot den Danske, Wid Helsingborg den 28 Februarii 1710, Framtedde Af den som til at see Swenska Hieltar bära*

- Lager, Til Swea Landz bästa, Mycken Längtan Hafwer. O Moellibee Deus nobis haec otia fecit. Stockholm, uti Kongl. Boktryckeriet hos Joh. Hen. Werner 1710* (Stockholm, 1710).
43. For a general discussion on a European level, see Housley, “‘Pro deo et patria mori’”. Swedish invocations of the fatherland are analysed in Nordin, *Ett fattigt men fritt folk*. For a Danish discussion, see Harald Ilsøe, ‘Danskerne og deres fædreland. Holdninger og opfattelser ca. 1550–1700’, in Ole Feldbæk (ed.), *Dansk identitetshistorie I: Fædreland og modersmål 1536–1789* (Copenhagen: CA Reitzels Forlag, 1991), pp. 27–88. Neither of these are concerned with the masculinity dimension, however. A gender analysis of ‘the fatherland’, although set in a slightly more modern period, is Joan B. Landes, ‘Republican Citizenship and Heterosocial Desire: Concepts of Masculinity in Revolutionary France’, in Dudink, Hagemann and Tosh (eds), *Masculinities in Politics and War*, pp. 96–115.
 44. *Böön wid närwarande swåre Krigs-Tijder 1700*.
 45. Gunner Lind, ‘Gamle patrioter. Om kærlighed til fædrelandet i 1600-tallets Danmark’, in Hans Jeppesen et al. (eds), *Søfart, politik, identitet – tilegnet Ole Feldbæk* (Viborg: Falcon & Handels- og Søfartsmuseet på Kronborg, 1996), pp. 91–115, here p. 112.
 46. There is a good discussion about the King’s masculinity in Kekke Stadin, ‘The Prince, the Hero and the Swedish Empire’, in Kekke Stadin (ed.), *Society, Towns and Masculinity* (Huddinge: Södertörns Högskola, 2001), pp. 84–126.
 47. *Kong Friedrich 4.s allernaadigste Forordninger og aabne Breve fra den 26. Aug. 1699 til 1730. Bind I, 22 October 1701*.
 48. Regarding Swedish conditions, see for instance Joachim Östlund, *Lyckolandet: Maktens legitimering i officiell retorik från stormaktstid till demokratis genombrott* (Lund: Sekel Bokförlag, 2007).
 49. Peter Ericsson ‘Bildn av suveränen’, in Stellan Dahlgren, Anders Florén and Åsa Karlsson (eds), *Makt och vardag: Hur man styrde, levde och tänkte under svensk stormaktstid* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 1993), pp. 148–74.
 50. See Marie Hvidt, *Frederik IV. En letsindig alvorsmand* (Copenhagen: Gads Forlag, 2004).
 51. *29 Viser angående Kriegen 1709–1720, 1720*.
 52. I am very grateful to the anonymous reviewer at *Gender & History* who made this point. For an updated discussion about *heder* and *ära* in early modern Sweden, see Cristopher Collstedt; *Duellanten och rättvisan: Duellbrott och synen på manlighet i stormaktsväldets slutskede* (Lund: Sekel Bokförlag, 2007), pp. 76–110.
 53. *Marboens trohet och mandom, beprijad vthi en wisa, honom och androm til vpmuntring, alfwarligen at tiena Gud och konungen: sig och fäderneslandet medh modh och blodh mot fiendens bäfwande spetzar och lod, redeligen at förswara*, (Stockholm, 1710). The word ‘Marbo’ is an old local name for a person coming from Mark in the Swedish county of Västergötland.
 54. *Ett BREF, skrifwit af Kongl. Mayts högtbetrodde Mann, General och Gouverneur, Högwälborne Herr Grefwe MAGNUS Stenbock, till alla Sweriges Rijkets Undersåtare den 17 Jan. 1710* (Stockholm, 1710).
 55. Cristopher Collstedt, “‘Som en adlig vederlike’: Duellbrottet i det svenska stormaktsväldet’, in Marie Lindstedt-Cronberg and Eva Österberg (eds), *Väldets mening: Makt, minne, myt* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2004), pp. 176–80.
 56. *Ett BREF . . .*, 1710.
 57. Collstedt, *Duellanten och rättvisan*, pp. 47–63. For Danish conditions, see Sune Christian Pedersen, *På liv og død. Duellens historie i Danmark* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 2003).
 58. Pedersen, *På liv og død*, pp. 76–80; Collstedt, ‘Som en adlig vederlike’, pp. 189–92.
 59. Gunner Lind, ‘Våbnenes tale. Våben, drab og krig i de adelige visebøger set i forhold til drabets og krigens historie i Danmark 1536–1660’, in Flemming Lundgreen-Nielsen and Hanne Ruus (eds), *Svøbt i Mår: Dansk folkevisekultur 1550–1700* (Copenhagen: Rietzel, 1999), vol 1: *Adelskultur og visebøger*, pp. 251–80, here p. 258.
 60. Kekke Stadin, *Stånd och genus i stormaktstidens Sverige* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2004), p. 303.
 61. Stadin, *Stånd och genus i stormaktstidens Sverige*, pp. 107–42.
 62. Peter Englund, *Det hotade huset: Adliga föreställningar om samhället under stormaktstiden* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 1989), pp. 221–44; Pedersen, *På liv og død*, pp. 59–79; Collstedt, *Duellanten och rättvisan*, pp. 92–110.
 63. Åsa Karlsson, ‘En man i statens tjänst. Den politiska elitens manlighetsideal under det karolinska enväldet 1680–1718’, in Berggren (ed.), *Manligt och omanligt i ett historiskt perspektiv*, pp. 116–19.
 64. Kurt Villads Jensen, Knud J. V. Jespersen and Gunner Lind, *Danmarks krigshistorie I: 700–1814* (Copenhagen: Gads Forlag, 2008), pp. 334–5.
 65. Quotation taken from the Danish decree on the establishment of the Country Militia, *Kong Frederik 4.s allernaadigste Forordninger, 22 October 1701*.

66. *Gudfruktige Soldaters och Trogne Undersåtars Dageliga Upmuntrings-Qwäde wid Närwarande Krigs-och Swära hemsökelses-tijder. Under then Melodie: Lyckan kommer, lyckan går etc etc. Den Gud fruktar Lyckan får* (No location stated, but printed in 1716).
67. The classic study on women in male clothing during the early modern period is Rudolf Dekker and Lotte van de Pol, *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989). An interesting perspective on Swedish conditions is Eva Österberg, “Förbjuden kärlek och förtigandets strategi: När Ulrika Eleonora gifte sig med Maria”, in Eva Österberg (ed.), *Jämmerdal och fröjdesal: Kvinnor i stormaktstidens Sverige* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 1997), pp. 267–83.
68. A good discussion about popular conceptions of masquerading women in military contexts can be found in Dugaw, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry*.
69. Maria Sjöberg, *Kvinnor i fält, 1550–1850* (Möklinta: Gidlunds, 2008).
70. See for instance Nordin, *Ett fattigt men fritt folk*, p. 151.
71. *LISTA på de Officerare och Gemene som i den genom Guds Råd, lyckelige Bataillen wid Helsingborg under Hans Excell: Generalens och Gouverneurens Högwällborne Grefwe Hr. Magnus Stenbocks högerömmelige Commando Fångne, Slagne och Blesserade blifwit* (Stockholm, 1710).
72. This is also noted by Nordin, *Ett fattigt men fritt folk*, p. 156.
73. *29 Viser angående Krigen 1709–1720, 1720*.
74. John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (London: Pimlico, 1994 [1993]), pp. 328–47.
75. Gunnar Artéus, ‘Svenskt och europeiskt i karolinsk arméstridsteknik’, in Ekstrand, *Tre Karlar*, pp. 53–66, here p. 60.
76. For instance, Collstedt, *Duellanten och rättvisan*, p. 168.
77. Magnus Perlestam, “‘Fienden hade doch intet det hiertat att attackera mig’: Den karolinske krigarens syn på ett modigt beteende”, in Stig Wellinder (ed.), *Män och manligheter från vikingar till Kalle Anka* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2003), pp. 49–80, here p. 60.
78. *Generalen och Gouverneuren herr Grefwe Magnus Stenbocks Reglemente, För den ny-wärfda Swenska Armeen. Gifwit Wexjö den 29 Januari 1710* (Stockholm, 1772). My emphasis.
79. Lind, ‘Våbnes tale’, pp. 260–61; Stadin, *Stånd och genus i stormaktstidens Sverige*, p. 141.
80. For a similar interpretation of early modern patriotism, based on seventeenth-century Denmark, see Lind, ‘Gamle patrioter’.
81. Lindegren, ‘Men, Money and Means’, pp. 156–7.
82. Smith, *The Cultural Foundations of Nations*, p. 45.
83. See Lindegren, ‘Men, Money and Means’.
84. Ericsson, *Stora nordiska kriget förklarad* and Lindegren, ‘Men, Money and Means’. See also Åsa Karlsson, *Den jämlike undersåten: Karl XII:s förmögenhetsbeskattning 1713* (Uppsala: Studia historica Upsaliensia, 1994).