

# Review of: "The soft power of neutrality Dutch humanitarianism in World War I, 1914-1918"

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-This is an interesting article associating humanitarian actions with diplomatic positioning. Delineations on the children, refugees, POWs and deserters as the "neutral" population is equally interesting and perplexing at the same time. The confusion arises when discerning the "neutral population". It is understood that the Dutch philanthropists took initiative to help and protect the war victims who were impartial by definition. Let aside the religious and emotional motivations, one can say that the Dutch philanthropists turned to a "neutral" population to support their government's diplomatic neutrality. Nevertheless, this understandable match between the "diplomatic neutrals" and the "war neutrals" does not necessarily have to be evaluated as the "hospitality" of the Dutch people from a normative point of view. It seems that the author sways between a normative and a realistically analytical position on this point.

-The role of bankers and entrepreneurs that appear occasionally in text deserves more attention. The religious motivations behind humanitarian actions have been studied more or less so far. But the role of business in this field still awaits to be unraveled in detail.

-The children war victims is a good point to scrutinize on the inherently or genuinely "neutral" character of humanitarian actions. If the question is to test "neutrality", a distinction can be made between the children and the other groups saved and protected. As observed in many other similar occasions, the refugees, deserters or POWs can be criticized by the public on the grounds of their previous violent actions in war or supposed spying activities. However, it is not possible to approach children with such accusations. Therefore, I suggest to evaluate the children case in a separate analytical category in the context of a public discussion about the "deserving victim".

-Lastly, the reference to Abbenhuis in the very last sentence of the conclusion part is very unusual. According to academic writing standards, this reference should have been placed at the beginning in the literature review part.

-Above of all, I am glad to read this article for the valuable insights that it provides. Thanks.