

 Reviewed by Dennis M. Rempe, Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, University of Calgary

Some thirty years after the departure of U.S. troops from Southeast Asia, a new group of U.S. soldiers and policymakers find themselves embroiled in a series of nasty little wars across the globe. In Afghanistan, U.S. and allied forces battle Taliban fighters and al Qaeda remnants, while in Iraq U.S. soldiers continue to face sectarian guerrillas and foreign jihadists. With the insurgency-counterinsurgency dialectic firmly back on America’s strategic agenda, nothing could be better timed than this dual offering from Anthony James Joes, a professor of political science at St. Joseph’s University in Philadelphia, who seeks to investigate the complexities of conducting—and countering—irregular warfare.

Joes offers no overarching theoretical framework in the first of these books, *America and Guerrilla Warfare*, and relies instead on a historical “lessons learned” format to explore America’s past small-war successes and failures. Unfortunately, this softcover edition is unchanged from its earlier (2000) cloth release, and numerous technical problems, including cursory chapter introductions, a near-exclusive reliance on secondary and sometimes dated sources, and problematic endnotes that often do not follow first-use conventions, all remain unaddressed.

Still, the basic premise of the book remains sound: “Americans need to deepen and sharpen their understanding of what guerrilla war has meant and will mean” (p. 3). This issue, as Joes points out, will remain critical because the United States and other Western countries will continue to face enemies adept at irregular warfare and because the U.S. armed forces and the “political class(es), the electorate, and the media” in the United States are still not well-prepared “psychologically or organizationally” for this kind of conflict (p. 2). The recent warfare in Afghanistan and Iraq and the ongoing struggle against radical Islamicists—a new *hostis humani generis*—have highlighted America’s “big war culture” and shown that Joes was disquietingly prescient.

Joes offers nine case studies broken into four specific groupings: (1) Americans as guerrillas (in the Revolutionary and Civil wars); (2) Americans as counter-guerrillas/
counterinsurgents (in the Philippines against Emilio Aguinaldo’s forces, Nicaragua against Augusto Sandino’s fighters, and Vietnam); (3) U.S. support of counterinsurgent regimes (Greece during its civil war, the Philippines during the Huk rebellion, and El Salvador in the 1980s); and (4) U.S. support of the mujahideen in Afghanistan against the Soviet Army. Joes begins with two rather unpropitious segments in which Americans found themselves in the role of guerrillas. In chapters totaling nearly 100 pages, almost one-third of the book’s entire narrative, less than a dozen pages are devoted to examining—and even then only superficially—guerrilla leadership, operations, and impact.

When discussing the War of Independence, Joes offers only brief vignettes of Francis Marion, Thomas Sumter, and, to a much lesser degree, Nathanael Greene, providing only incidental understanding of the pivotal role played by Greene and the southern guerrillas in the Revolutionary War. A far more compelling analysis of this issue can be found in John Morgan Dederer’s Making Bricks without Straw: Nathanael Greene’s Southern Campaign and Mao Tse-Tung’s Mobile War (Manhattan, KS: Sunflower University Press, 1983), a sharply argued monograph that compares Greene’s southern campaign to the unconventional warfare strategies of Mao Zedong and Vo Nguyen Giap. Dederer convincingly argues in his book (p. 57) that, “operating in coordination with local guerrillas and revolutionary civilian leadership, Greene liberated North and South Carolina and Georgia, except for British coastal enclaves, using a style of warfare Mao would call mobile and Greene described as ‘making bricks without straw.’” Yet Joes only hints at this critical relationship, offering no more than a few brief paragraphs on how this “symbiotic cooperation between regular forces and guerrillas can generate tremendous power” (p. 42).

Even less convincing is Joes’s treatment of the Civil War era, concentrating as he does on conventional strategies, resources, slavery, and secession. Critical topics all, but again, a very meager offering for a book on guerrilla warfare. This is especially disconcerting in light of the best new scholarship on the topic, including an entire book by Robert R. Mackey, The Uncivil War: Irregular Warfare in the Upper South, 1861–1865 (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), which shows that irregular warfare was an integral component of Confederate strategy, forcing the Union army to adopt an “extensive counterirregular program” that ultimately defeated the South’s unconventional forces.

Joes then moves hastily into the fin-de-siècle period of the nineteenth century, missing a critical opportunity to analyze what is essentially the connective tissue of early American small-wars history: the often violent struggle between settlers and Native Americans. From Plymouth Rock to Wounded Knee, America’s Indian wars encompassed all aspects of guerrilla/counter-guerrilla conflict that ostensibly is the central focus of Joes’s book. One need only recall that less than a decade separated the final death of the Great Sioux Nation in 1890 from the destruction of the Spanish Empire in 1898, an event that sparked the rise of the United States to become the world’s most highly industrialized country during the Progressive Era. Apart from the Civil War, Joes’s book skips over the period between the time when America was a rebellious colony and when it emerged as a great power, leaving behind in the process
the country’s formative “small war culture” and embracing as its foremost arbiter the twentieth-century notion of “total war.” This is truly an unfortunate oversight.

That said, Joes is at his most engaging when he examines low-intensity conflict during the twentieth century. From the Philippines to El Salvador, Joes provides a very readable account of several of the most important small wars of the past century. Yet even here the relationship between the case studies offered and America’s particular involvement in them is often tenuous. The segments on Greece and Afghanistan, for instance, are intriguing and well-written, but in both instances the extent of Joes’s analysis of the U.S. role is limited. In the case of Greece, his analysis of the U.S. role is limited to discussing the Truman Doctrine and U.S. aid; and in the case of Afghanistan he focuses only on the provision of Stinger missiles. Also, most of these chapters tread well-worn ground for Joes, who covered the same cases in a more cogent fashion in his earlier works, notably Modern Guerrilla Insurgency (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1992) and Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical, Biographical, and Bibliographical Sourcebook (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996).

Although Joes is absolutely correct in identifying the critical need to inform and educate much of America’s electorate, political classes, and media to the country’s small-wars history, the critical “lessons” that he seeks to illuminate are only partially elucidated by this work. An unconventional tale of U.S. involvement in irregular wars not only would trace America’s rise from fledgling state to megapower but would also provide current policymakers with an extensive analysis of past failures and accomplishments. In America and Guerrilla Warfare, Joes articulates elements of this tale, but fails to capture its whole.

Joes returns to better form in the second book reviewed here, Resisting Rebellion: The History and Politics of Counterinsurgency, which is free of most of the stylistic problems found in the earlier book. Most of the chapters in Resisting Rebellion offer concise introductions and end with summaries or reflections, and most of the endnote problems are resolved, though his continued reliance on secondary sources—albeit well deployed—points to his lack of fieldwork on the subject. The book’s “central concept” is that “guerrilla insurgency is quintessentially a political phenomenon, and therefore any effective response to it must be primarily political as well” (p. 7). What follows from this theoretical concept is a discussion centered on guerrilla strategy and tactics; the role of legitimate grievances in producing insurgencies; and a plethora of historical case studies that range over two centuries of irregular warfare.

Joes then seeks to explicate the basic elements of a workable counterinsurgency strategy that proceeds in two main stages: First, the counterinsurgent forces must create a favorable strategic environment by providing a peaceful path to change, committing sufficient resources, and isolating the conflict area. Second, they must defeat the insurgents through a variety of steps, including displaying rectitude, emphasizing intelligence, dividing insurgent leaders from their followers, offering amnesty, draining disturbed areas of firearms, disrupting insurgent food supplies, and keeping constant military pressure on the guerrillas. In a larger sense these are “classical” approaches, echoed in many ways in the newly developed U.S. Army-Marine Corps Counterinsur-
ergency Field Manual (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007) and other, older works on this subject.

The sheer number of historical cases Joes covers will exasperate experts who are looking for depth, but undergraduates will find it a readable introduction to the subject. Missing, however, is a taxonomy of irregular warfare. Joes conflates rebellion, resistance, and guerrilla war with revolutionary warfare. As with so much else in this field, we can turn to Bernard Fall—in this case his essay "The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency," published in the Naval War College Review in April 1965 (pp. 21–38)—for a parsimonious yet elegant definition of revolutionary warfare:

\[ RW = G + P, \text{ or, "revolutionary warfare equals guerrilla warfare plus political action." } \]

This formula for revolutionary warfare is the result of the application of guerrilla methods to the furtherance of an ideology or a political system. This is the real difference between partisan warfare, guerrilla warfare, and everything else. . . . Everybody, of course, by definition, will seek a military solution to the insurgency problem, whereas by its nature, the insurgency problem is military only in a secondary sense, and political, ideological, and administrative in a primary sense.

In other words, counterinsurgency is not a military strategy; it is a political strategy with a derivative military component. Joes privileges the political as his "central concept," yet many of his prescriptions are tactical-military in nature.

Moreover, even though one of Joes's stronger chapters ("The Myth of Maoist People's War") offers an interesting overview of the Chinese Revolution, he fails to grasp the basic premise of the Maoist model. The point is not that the revolution succeeded because of the particular conditions under which it took place but that it provided an exceptional template for other groups to use when embarking on revolutionary action in the future. Joes is correct to puncture the "myth of guerrilla invincibility" (p. 191)—his examples of failed revolutions in Thailand (Maoist) and Venezuela (Castroite) make this point—but even today one can see that the Maoist tripartite approach of mass line, united front, and military action—leavened with the Vietnamese "war of interlocking" strategy—remains a critically important methodology for revolutionary movements.

Finally, perhaps the most unusual section of Resisting Rebellion is Joes's attempt at counterfactual history in his appendix to Chapter 17—"A Strategy for a Viable South Vietnam" (pp. 246–255). Joes offers the following elements to this hypothetical "demographic frontier": neutralize the Ho Chi Minh Trail by withdrawing forces from South Vietnam's northern and central provinces while maintaining defensible enclaves in Hue and Da Nang; subsequently contain the population within a "viable state" roughly equivalent to that of "historic Cochin China"; redeploy South Vietnamese army and smaller numbers of U.S. forces to defend this rump state along some 375 miles of border, including that with Cambodia; and rely on South Vietnamese army and territorial troops to deal with in-situ Viet Cong units (p. 251). "Ranging
over all these forces,” he writes, “would be the mighty air power of the allied state” (ibid.).

What to make of a strategy that violates Clausewitz’s basic principle of war? Joes himself notes: “Clausewitz wrote: ‘The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature’” (p. 248). To return to first principles: What kind of war did first France and then the United States face in Vietnam? Truong Chinh, the éminence grise of the Vietnamese Revolution (as Bernard Fall describes him), understood this first principle clearly. Writing in his classic work *Primer for Revolt: The Communist Takeover in Vietnam* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963), pp. 111, 139, he declared: “Our resistance war is a people’s war: regular army, militia, guerrilla forces combine and fight together. . . . The guiding principle of the strategy of our whole resistance must be to prolong the war.” By proposing a veritable Vietnamese Maginot Line, Joes in essence seeks to conventionalize something that, by its very nature, is unconventional. One suspects that Hanoi’s ruthlessly determined revolutionaries would have been disciplined to fight the war as Joes proposes.

At the beginning of *Resisting Rebellion*, Joes posits a number of important questions: Why do guerrilla insurgencies arise? Who participates in them? Who leads them? Do insurgent leaders and followers differ in their motivations and expectations? Can a study of successful or unsuccessful insurgencies and counterinsurgencies reveal common patterns? By the end of the book, Joes provides many sound answers to these key lines of inquiry. The book offers useful historical background for analysts and policymakers who are grappling with these same questions as they seek to counter globalized Islamist insurgencies in far-flung places ranging from the ungoverned spaces of the Sahel to the archipelagoes of Indonesia and the Philippines. Welcome to hell in a very large place.


*Reviewed by Ira Chernus, University of Colorado at Boulder*

Chris Tudda is a welcome addition to the ranks of historians of foreign policy who take public rhetoric seriously. He argues that Dwight Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles, throughout their eight years in office, used belligerent rhetoric that was at odds with their privately held, more conciliatory Cold War aims. The result was a contradictory foreign policy that hindered the Eisenhower administration from achieving its aims. Although Eisenhower and Dulles wanted to move the world toward the safety of peaceful coexistence, their “reliance upon rhetorical diplomacy ac-
Tudda is surely right that Eisenhower and his administration pursued their aims in contradictory ways. He documents this with three detailed, well-researched case studies: the drive for a European Defense Community, the rhetorical encouragement of the “rollback” of Soviet power in Eastern Europe, and the struggle over Berlin and German reunification. For each case, Tudda gives numerous examples of the bellicose rhetoric used by the president and his secretary of state. But Tudda gives us a rhetorical Eisenhower rather different from the familiar one. He omits the presidential rhetoric that most historians have focused on: the endless assertions of America’s desire for peace and an easing of Cold War tensions. The treatment therefore seems a bit unbalanced.

The same problem arises with Tudda’s assessment of the private intentions of Eisenhower and Dulles. The Eisenhower administration was among those that left behind copious documentation of private conversations. Indeed, so many documents are available that historians can find almost any pattern they want. Tudda generally finds a private intention of easing Cold War tensions and pursuing peaceful coexistence. To make his case, he overlooks the copious documentary evidence indicating that the belligerent public rhetoric quite accurately reflected the speakers’ private views, which were all rooted in a hardline ideological anti-Communism. Peaceful coexistence was more a tactical move than the guiding ideal that Tudda makes it out to be.

Tudda’s thesis will probably be persuasive to readers who are already inclined to see the evidence as he does. His presentation of the evidence is not compelling enough to persuade others who see it differently. However, he does make a powerful case that the Eisenhower administration was frequently (perhaps constantly) contradicting itself, in terms of both means and ends. He also reminds us, quite helpfully, that public rhetoric is not mere window dressing. It does make a difference. The interaction between rhetoric and policy, and between public and private language, deserves ongoing scholarly study.

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Reviewed by David J. Snyder, University of South Carolina

With his latest book, a biography of the noted Communist writer John Howard Lawson, Gerald Horne makes another successful bid for a more nuanced approach to the story of American Communism. Horne reveals Lawson as an almost protean figure on the literary left, venerated both on Broadway and in Hollywood, whose career was interrupted—but not quite destroyed—by the Red Scare blacklist of the 1940s and 1950s. Lawson had been a darling of New York’s theater scene, with no less than nine
plays staged by eminent production companies including the Theatre Guild and the Group Theater. In the late 1920s Lawson trekked to Hollywood, where he helped to define the cinematic architecture of the then-novel talkies, becoming a close associate of Hollywood eminences such as Cecil B. DeMille and Irving Thalberg. He counted among his friends such luminaries as Theodore Dreiser, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Charlie Chaplin, Paul Robeson, Humphrey Bogart, and V. J. Jerome.

Yet for all that, Lawson has received little scholarly discussion. He earns only cursory mention in Daniel Aaron's *Writers on the Left: Episodes in Literary Communism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961), the book that helped spark interest in the literary left. Lawson is more extensively treated in Larry Ceplair and Steven Englund's still-indispensable *The Inquisition in Hollywood: Politics in the Film Community, 1930–1960* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980), though even there his story is fragmentary. The general indifference toward Lawson is both a product and a cause of the caustic labels attached to him. The Federal Bureau of Investigation's assessment of Lawson as a "notorious Communist" and "California's outstanding Communist" seems to have fixed Lawson as the great icon of Communist Party conformity, the "Hollywood Commissar" who readily subsumed his art to politics. (See Memorandum from Director FBI to Special Agent in Charge, Los Angeles, 3 June 1957, No. 100-21198; and FBI Case Report, 31 August 1949, No. 100–21198, John Howard Lawson file, both in Record Group 65, National Archives II.) "What is striking," Horne observes, "is the ominous atmosphere said to surround Lawson, as if he were some kind of evil force of nature." Burrowing deeply in the archives and Lawson's voluminous papers, Horne has uncovered a more complicated subject. Despite Lawson's reputation for critical ferocity, he was a contemplative, if committed, thinker who came around, belatedly to be sure, to the realities of Josif Stalin's depredations and whose artistic views, if always forcefully expressed, were nevertheless genuinely felt and earned.

The son of a prominent Jewish newspaperman, Lawson enjoyed a privileged youth. He grew up and remained, as he said in his old age, "a bourgeois intellectual." Lawson's World War I service as an ambulance driver (a part of the story Horne truncates) is what made him, along with his friends John Dos Passos and e. e. cummings, a "charter member of the lost generation," setting him on his path toward avant-garde art and political commitment. (Quoted from Gerald Rabkin, *Drama and Commitment: Politics in the American Theatre of the Thirties*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964, p. 129.) Having decided years earlier to become a playwright, Lawson set out after the war, as he recalled in his reliable unpublished memoir, "A Calendar of Commitment: Another View of the Twenties and Thirties," to write plays that would "defeat the forces that crush the spirit and mutilate the body of man." He presented his first serious piece in 1923, the path-breaking Freudian/Expressionist drama *Roger Bloomer*, followed two years later by the daring *Processional: A Jazz Symphony of American Life*.

Although neither of these plays achieved clear commercial success, Lawson was fast becoming the toast of certain segments of Broadway, finding himself, Horne writes, "consorting with those against whom he was supposedly rebelling." His next
important project, from 1926 to 1928, was the New Playwrights Theater, established in collaboration with Dos Passos, Michael Gold, Emjo Bashe, and Francis Faragoh. Horne recognizes Lawson’s artistic conundrum—the desire for both a radical aesthetic breakthrough and commercial success—but the narrative of the book lapses when discussing the New Playwrights. Horne does not sufficiently explore either Lawson’s artistic vision (what Lawson called “the New Showmanship”) or the merits of individual productions. (On the New Playwrights, see George A. Knox and Herbert M. Stahl, *Dos Passos and the “Revolting Playwrights”* Copenhagen: American Enterprise Press, 1964.) Horne’s interest lies elsewhere, in Lawson’s flight to Hollywood after the New Playwrights’ failure. Horne is probably correct that Lawson enjoyed a greater impact on cinema than on the stage, but Lawson’s hope that the New Playwrights would showcase his artistic ideals deserves greater treatment.

Lawson arrived in Hollywood as the film community was making the arduous transition to talkies. The dramatic challenge of cinematic speech spurred him, and he became an important figure in establishing what he later called the new “audiovisual language” of talking cinema. It was also during this early Hollywood period that Lawson parlayed his stage work and screen successes into a durable reputation as a writer’s writer, one from whom younger Hollywood writers took their cues, and who strove for the proper recognition of screenwriters’ contributions. Even as Lawson began to develop a mastery of the new form, he was beginning to organize writers into a political force within the film industry. Thus, well before Lawson became committed to Communism, he was making himself an obstacle to the moralistic and commercial forces that battled for control of Hollywood in the 1930s and 1940s. At the same time, Lawson remained the product of a New York literary milieu that had regularly featured the kind of excoriating criticism for which Lawson was later reviled in Hollywood. Although some younger West Coast writers did not react well to the harsh exchanges, Lawson himself was long accustomed to them, and throughout his career he regularly invited and responded to such criticism of his own work.

Trailing about in leftist literary precincts in the 1920s did not lead to membership in the Communist Party, and at no point from the late 1920s through the early 1930s did Lawson join the party. Although he, like many others, was becoming radicalized by events such as the Sacco and Vanzetti saga, his early career in Hollywood was occupied with work and more than a little carousing. His embrace of Communism, probably in 1935, was prompted by a number of factors: his continuing inability to achieve a theatrical breakthrough (his 1932 *Success Story* was only moderately successful, though it did help the Group Theatre survive its early financial hardships); a dissolute political discussion with Edmund Wilson in 1932 that saw a drunken Lawson tumble off a table; his reporting from Alabama on the infamous Scottsboro Boys trial; and his continuing struggle with the studios to gain proper recognition for writers.

After the commercial and critical failures of Lawson’s two simultaneously offered plays, *Gentlewoman* and *The Pure in Heart*, in 1934, perhaps the most important encounter in Lawson’s early life occurred in the form of a scathing exchange with his erstwhile collaborator Mike Gold. Gold accused Lawson of wanting it both ways, of
desiring both commercial success and a revolutionary aesthetic that condemned the very circles from whom Lawson craved approval. Labeling Lawson a “bourgeois Hamlet,” Gold demanded to know where Lawson stood “in the warring world of two classes.” Lawson’s response was characteristically self-abnegating. Admitting the “truth of 70%” of Gold’s charges, Lawson nevertheless demanded time to develop his political and artistic commitments. (The exchange—Michael Gold, “A Bourgeois Hamlet of Our Time,” New Masses, 10 April 1934; and John Howard Lawson, “‘Inner Conflict’ and Proletarian Art: A Reply to Michael Gold,” New Masses, 17 April 1934—is reproduced in Joseph North, ed. New Masses: An Anthology of the Rebel Thirties, New York: International Publishers, 1969, pp. 219–229.)

Unfortunately, Horne only sketches the quarrel with Gold and thus fails to explain fully the linkage between art and politics that was driving Lawson toward Communism. In the same vein, Horne completely ignores Lawson’s involvement in the League of American Writers. Horne’s narrative nearly commits the chief sin of Lawson’s accusers, assuming that Lawson’s art became subsumed to his politics. Horne subsumes through omission, offering plot synopses and mentioning the critical reception of Lawson’s plays and films, but never attempting any sustained analysis. Moreover, Horne focuses too much on Lawson’s marital and sexual peccadilloes, and almost certainly too much on Lawson’s Jewishness, confusing anti-Semitism as an artistic motivator with Jewish identity itself. (The former was a persistent part of Lawson’s art, but the latter was much less salient—only one major character, Sol Ginsberg of Success Story, addresses the subject of Jewishness.) The same complaint goes for the several books that Lawson wrote, including his important Theory and Technique of Playwriting and Screenwriting (1936, 1949); The Hidden Heritage (1950); Film: The Creative Process (1964); and Film in the Battle of Ideas (1953), his most strident work, all of which Horne mentions but none of which he subjects to any form of critical analysis. For critical studies of Lawson, readers will need to turn to Jonathan Chambers, Messiah of the New Technique: John Howard Lawson, Communism, and American Theatre, 1923–1937 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2006); Kshamanidhi Mishra, American Leftist Playwrights of the 1930’s: A Study of Ideology and Technique in the Plays of Odets, Lawson and Sherwood (New Delhi: Classical Publishing Co., 1991); Bernard F. Dick, Radical Innocence: A Critical Study of the Hollywood Ten (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1989); Gary Carr, The Left Side of Paradise: The Screenwriting of John Howard Lawson (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1988); and other published and unpublished works.

The lack of critical scrutiny of Lawson’s output is a troubling shortcoming in an otherwise fine biography. Horne’s failure to place Lawson’s political commitment in the context of his aesthetic struggle leaves perhaps the most essential part of Lawson’s commitment underdeveloped. His embrace of Communism did not stem solely from his developing sense of social justice or from his battle with the studios—that is, from political factors. Rather, Lawson saw his commitment to Communism, rightly or not, as the key to unlocking the artistic breakthrough he had never quite achieved. As Lawson saw it, full commitment to Communism would reconcile his aesthetic travails and bring him the acceptance he craved, as he exchanged half-hearted acceptance by the
mainstream bourgeoisie for full-throated embrace by the revolutionary left. One cannot ascertain the sincerity of that commitment without seeing how Lawson perceived it as solving the great riddle of his career. Thus we never get a full answer to what being a Communist meant for Lawson, what parts of official doctrine he embraced and what parts he rejected, what precisely the nature of his relationship to V. J. Jerome was. Horne's flat dramatization of Lawson's commitment fizzes where it should crackle, leaving intact the central myth about Lawson's life—that he supposedly abandoned his aesthetic struggle to become an uncomplicated Stalinist.

More successfully, Horne demonstrates how Lawson's commitment to the Communist Party coincided with his deep involvement on behalf of screenwriters, seeking to win for this much-abused cohort greater studio recognition. Horne provides a valuable recounting of Lawson's tireless efforts for the Screen Writers' Guild (SWG) as well as the internecine struggles that marked the union's establishment. In the process, Horne undermines the old canard that the Communist Party used Red writers such as Lawson to capture the SWG and thereby exercise control of Hollywood cinema. Horne provides great insight into the linkages between Lawson's work on behalf of screenwriters and the subsequent political persecution that resulted in the blacklist. Joined by conservative Catholics alarmed by onscreen immorality, and later by a resurgent chorus of conservative (especially Californian) politicians, the studio moguls made Lawson a lightning rod for forces with a stake in the political control of Hollywood. Standing at the epicenter of Red Hollywood, Jewish Hollywood, and literary Hollywood, Lawson symbolized all of the threats to the agenda of these conservative allies. Talented writers such as Lawson, whom his enemies believed could manipulate the screen's political potential, and whose organizing skills were deemed a threat to studio hegemony, became targets both of industry and of anti-modernist forces seeking to claim those potentials for themselves. Although the book by Ceplair and Englund remains the indispensable survey of the history of left-wing Hollywood, Horne's account of Lawson's battle with the studio heads provides a necessary amplification.

If Horne never quite develops a sustained aesthetic analysis of Lawson, he does help us peer beyond the myths and reestablish Lawson's place in theater and film history. Lawson was a widely respected dramatist with at least three important productions to his credit (Roger Bloomer, Processional, and Success Story) as well as a number of other notable, if flawed, theatrical productions. He helped chart the new grammar of talking pictures, and he wrote a number of later hits including Sahara, Action in the North Atlantic, and, notably, Susan Hayward's first starring vehicle, Smash-Up, the Story of a Woman. Even under the cloak of the blacklist Lawson wrote at least one important political drama for an increasingly sterile American cinema, Cry, the Beloved Country. Horne's biography helps to clarify how the blacklist worked within both film and national politics, as part of a battle over control of the production process, a battle that involved anti-labor, anti-Semitic, and even anti-intellectual forces. Horne shows how the prosecution and persecution of John Howard Lawson symbolized the larger anxieties animating the anti-Communist fire directed against him, as postwar anti-Communism became an acceptable proxy for fears of Jews, of experimental art, of
radical politics, of the telecommunicated word, even of modernity itself. It is a curious phenomenon how, after years of struggle to win a politically significant aesthetic breakthrough, John Howard Lawson suddenly should come to be regarded by his enemies as one of the omnipotent sorcerers of screen magic.


*Reviewed by Saki Ruth Dockrill, King’s College, London*

Britain’s relationship with the European Economic Community (EEC) remains an area of intense interest for British scholars. The subject is of particular interest at a time when British political elites and ordinary citizens are weighing the pros and cons of joining the Eurozone.

During the years under Clement Attlee, the Labour governments appreciated the importance of working closely with the British Commonwealth, the United States, and Western Europe. When Winston Churchill became prime minister for the second time in the autumn of 1951, Europe was pushed aside in favor of Britain’s link to the British Commonwealth and then to the English-speaking world. But the 1956 Suez crisis underscored the limits of Britain’s power and influence, and the growing economic burden of Britain’s overseas commitments was beginning to be felt in Whitehall with the coming of the post-imperial age. Meanwhile, the Cold War, which had begun as a British-Soviet power struggle in Europe, had increasingly become monopolized by the superpowers, which were chiefly responsible for intensifying the East-West confrontation, as demonstrated by the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. At the same time, the development of the Cold War brought Britain closer to the United States and Western Europe in an alliance against the Soviet Union and its satellite empire in Eastern Europe, and the economic and political importance of the British Commonwealth was receding. As a result, the government led by Harold Macmillan began to reappraise the importance of the EEC and in 1961 decided to apply for membership. However Britain’s trade links with the British Commonwealth (albeit declining rapidly in recent years) and its close relationship with the United States continued to hinder Britain’s entry into the EEC. French President Charles de Gaulle was not convinced that British membership would be beneficial to the Community, and in January 1963 France vetoed Britain’s admission. Britain’s relationship with the EEC was, however, largely unaffected by de Gaulle’s impetuous rejection. By 1964 Britain’s economic relations with Europe had increased substantially. The Community was no longer living in a fantasy world, and Britain’s political and economic interests demanded its entry into the organization in the near future.

This was the context in which Harold Wilson formed his first government in the autumn of 1964. But when Britain applied for membership again in 1967, it was rejected again by de Gaulle for much the same reasons. Wilson was widely known for
his support of Britain’s East of Suez role and of Britain’s close relationship with the
United States, and how and why he decided to propel Britain into Europe is a story
that deserves to be told. With the growing number of new studies of the Wilson gov-
ernments, scholars have begun to reappraise his premiership rather more sympatheti-
cally. Helen Parr, in a revised version of her Ph.D. dissertation, has also produced a
sympathetic study of Wilson and his European policies. She explains how and why
Wilson’s attitude toward Europe shifted from skepticism to a serious commitment.
She shows that Wilson had a more coherent policy toward Europe than has hitherto
been appreciated, although she admits that a number of incidental factors (the 1966
economic crisis, Britain’s decision to curtail its world role east of Suez, and the devel-
opment of the EEC itself) helped to increase Wilson’s interest in British membership.
Despite the second failure in 1967, the initiative, as Parr argues, augured well for Brit-
ain’s third and successful attempt in 1973, when the Community made the first major
step toward enlargement by including Denmark and Ireland along with Britain.

The book is really about Wilson and his policy toward the EEC, and the subtitle,
“Harold Wilson and Britain’s World Role,” tends to give an unfocused impression
when combined with the more accurate title, “Britain’s Policy towards the European
Community.” The book is based on extensive research in primary sources in Britain
(including numerous private papers and Labour Party archives) and describes the per-
ceptions of British political elites about Europe in the 1960s rather well. Parr has done
a fine job of turning her Ph.D. thesis into an informative book that will be of interest
to students and scholars of British foreign policy and Britain’s relations with Europe.


Reviewed by Kosta Tsipis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

When most Americans hear the name Albert Einstein, they think of an iconic scientist
in his academic ivory tower, blithely uninvolved with the world around him. No im-
age was further from the truth. In this valuable and thoughtfully structured book, the
editors, David Rowe and Robert Schulmann, present the real Einstein: a scientist who
was committed and combative, deeply and persistently involved with the moral im-
peratives of human dignity, freedom, and peace, a scientist who detested coercion, vi-
olence, war, and therefore the military, which he loathed because of its authoritarian
nature. “The man who enjoys marching in line and file to the strains of music falls be-
low my contempt,” he wrote (p. 229). A consistent agnostic, devoid of nationalism
with the exception of Zionism, and eschewing ideology but not idealism, he empha-
sized morality over politics or patriotism.

This book reflects Einstein’s principles and beliefs—the values and objectives that
guided his life’s experiences. Einstein’s voice can be heard here through numerous let-
ters to friends, adversaries, and the mass media, speeches, and articles in the interna-
tional press, all arranged by the editors into ten chapters, each with a specific thematic focus. The editors preface each Einstein pronouncement or letter with commentary that elucidates the circumstances and the timing of the text. Often they also offer a postscript that explains or elaborates on some of the events and items mentioned by Einstein. The editors thus allow readers to enter Einstein’s world of beliefs and strong feelings. The book is so absorbing that after a while you almost imagine that you are living and conversing with the great physicist.

Most of Einstein’s writings and pronouncements in the book are translations from the original German he spoke and wrote; yet his use of language comes through as graceful, and his lucid prose reveals that he was a literate, articulate, eloquent man, passionately involved in public affairs and vigorous debates, at times quite forceful or contemptuous of attacks on him. His elegant argumentation, almost always flawlessly logical, is uncomplicated and linear and therefore readily convincing to the reader or listener.

Einstein’s profound antipathy toward the military (and such authority figures as his high school teachers!) and his somatic conviction that the optimal way to resolve international conflict is through the courts of law and negotiations, led him early on to renounce nationalism and patriotic sentiments and to advocate a world government and a world court. These institutions, he averred, would limit the sovereignty of states and promote human dignity and respect for individual rights (e.g., letter to Heinrich Zangger, p. 77). Deeply affected by the carnage of World War I and the schisms that nationalist antagonisms had created in the world scientific community during that period, he insisted on internationalism and cooperation without regard for national borders. It is somewhat ironic that it took a second, vastly more destructive war to persuade at least some countries to adopt Einstein’s approach: The United Nations, the World Court, and, much more successfully, the European Union have vindicated Einstein’s belief in internationalism and the abridgement of national sovereignty, all beliefs that during his lifetime were considered naïve.

In his political beliefs Einstein had to reverse himself once, and on two other occasions his principles and actions appeared logically inconsistent. In the first instance he had to reconsider his pacifism—not his belief in the desirability of it but temporarily in its practicality. Einstein believed that if a mere 2 percent of the young in each country refused conscription into their armed forces, military establishments would collapse and wars would be avoided. He thought of it as an act of personal passive resistance that he was promoting for many years. But then Adolf Hitler ascended to power in Germany in 1933, and Einstein as a pragmatist advocated military opposition to Nazi Germany (e.g., letter to Alfred Nahon, p. 283). He insisted that his shift was circumstantial and temporary in order to safeguard “the political and individual freedom of man” (p. 314).

The two other dilemmas confronting him were his passionate Zionism, which was conceptually incompatible with his internationalism, and his role in the development of the nuclear bomb. In the case of Zionism, to which Einstein was deeply committed, he reconciled his devotion to it with his abhorrence for nationalism and for ideologies in general by insisting that the Jews were not a nation but a tribe and by
holding out Zionism as a vision of Jewish unity based on moral traditions antithetical to force (p. 186). The strong anti-Semitism in Germany after the end of World War I, and especially the Nazi anti-Semitic persecutions prior to the Second World War, convinced Einstein that the safety and welfare of Central European Jews would be best served by the return of Jews to their ancestral land, Palestine. His deep political involvement in Palestine started earlier, during the effort in the late 1920s to create a Jewish University in Jerusalem, and at that time he did not aim for the establishment of a Jewish political entity. But by the end of World War II, he insisted, albeit with weak and at times rhetorical and even romantic argumentation (p. 325), on the creation of a Jewish state. He saw Palestine as an agricultural nirvana for the persecuted Jews, a place where they would not display “national greed and self-glorification,” and he stressed that “we want to promote the establishment of a place for refugees” (p. 329). His idealism surfaces here, together with his deep rage against human indignity, of which the ultimate example was the mass slaughter of his fellow Jews during the Holocaust. But as events in Palestine turned violent, Einstein predicted the current impasse there. Even before 1948 his dream of cooperation between Arabs and Jews was evaporating. His imperative that Israel meet the moral test of accommodating its security with local Arab interests was in doubt toward the end of his life, and he therefore declined the presidency of the country (a mostly figurehead post) when he was offered it in 1952 out of fear that he would have to compromise his moral principles.

The lore about Einstein’s role in the development of the nuclear bomb is legendary but mostly wrong. This book sets things straight on that matter but underemphasizes his efforts to achieve nuclear arms control and disarmament. It is indeed true that the famous $e = mc^2$ formula in his theory of special relativity, showing that the “missing mass” that disappears in the fission of a heavy nucleus is actually released into the environment in the form of energy, is the fundamental principle on which nuclear weapons are based. But between his recognition of the equivalence of mass and energy in 1905 and the detonation of the first nuclear weapon in Alamogordo in 1945 a huge technical and scientific effort was needed, and Einstein was not involved in it. His seminal contribution to this effort was the letter he sent in August 1939 to President Franklin Roosevelt, at the urging of his friend the prescient Hungarian physicist Leo Szilard, informing the president that a nuclear weapon was in principle feasible and that the United States should look into the possibility of developing one. Szilard, also a pacifist, was motivated by the fear that German physicists would develop such a weapon first, rendering Hitler unbeatable. Einstein’s moral inhibitions were strong and rooted in his pacifism and abhorrence of violence and death, yet he recommended the development of a weapon that pound for pound would be nearly a million times more destructive than ordinary explosives to human beings and their habitat. As soon as World War II ended, Einstein and other renowned scientists mounted a campaign to do away with nuclear weapons. That effort failed, but it succeeded in highlighting the dangers of nuclear war. In 1953 the eminent philosopher Bertrand Russell convinced Einstein to sign, three weeks before his death, the famous Russell-Einstein manifesto urging scientists irrespective of their nationality to oppose nuclear weapons.
and nuclear war. Pugwash, an international movement of scientists opposed to nuclear weapons, emerged directly from this appeal. The movement proved to be a potent counterweight to the military, especially in the United States—something that would have gratified Einstein. By the early 1950s he had become alarmed at the dominance of the military in U.S. national life. In 1951 he wrote to his close friend Michele Besso that “people in the United States are well on the way to surpassing the Germans in military sentiment” (p. 479).

This book, ingeniously put together by Rowe and Schulmann, provides a thematic and chronological frame of reference that allows a lucid view of Einstein’s political passions, which up to now have been largely unknown even to the interested public. It is a multiply rewarding book, one that all readers are bound to enjoy.


Reviewed by David Ryan, University College Cork (Ireland)

Lesley Gill’s *School of the Americas* (SOA) is a sophisticated work of history, culture, and ethnography. The U.S. Army training center located for most of its existence in Panama from 1946 on was moved to Fort Benning, Georgia in 1984 as Panama prepared to take over sovereignty of the areas occupied by the United States since the early twentieth century. Although the move per se did not fundamentally alter the character and content of the school’s curriculum, the close association of the school with a number of graduates accused of human rights abuses and political repression throughout Latin America inspired a protest movement, a change of name to the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, and near closure at the hands of the U.S. Congress.

Gill’s book combines the methodologies of historical analysis and ethnography. An anthropologist by training, Gill examines the U.S. role in Latin America through the prism of the SOA and traces the process of “empire building” as told and understood by the groups within her study: the military personnel, both U.S. and Latin American, who have taught or been trained at the SOA. She then moves to developments in Colombia and Bolivia, concentrating on the narratives of repression and resistance by local guerrilla groups and the state-sponsored violence that occurs within the context of illegal cocaine trafficking. Although Gill focuses on this conflict, her references are drawn from a wide array of countries in Central and South America across the decades. She traces the consequences of militarization and the interactions between local military forces, U.S. initiatives, and the SOA, highlighting the impact on local peasant families. Finally, the book returns to the United States to the movement intent on achieving the closure of the SOA. Gill discusses the attempts to make superficial alterations in the curriculum, to change the name of the school, and to improve its public relations to ensure continued legitimacy and viability.
The book appears within the series “American Encounters / Global Interactions,” edited by Gilbert Joseph and Emily Rosenberg, whose concern is to examine the history of the “imposing global presence” of the United States. Gill situates the SOA and its instructors and students within the framework of an encompassing American empire represented by military bases, strategic alliances, and local military forces that have been significantly penetrated and manipulated to serve U.S. interests. Her ethnography of the interaction between agents of “empire” and agents of “resistance” in the United States, the SOA, and Latin America lends the book an immediacy that is so frequently lacking elsewhere. Nevertheless, this methodological approach combined with the book’s passionate advocacy will no doubt cause concern for many a skeptical reader—not only those who would offer a less scathing interpretation of U.S. policy but also those who favor more traditional (and they would say rigorous) historical methods.

Cavils aside, the book provides remarkable insights into how the worldviews of the main characters are shaped by their social and institutional attitudes, cultural proclivities, and classroom instruction. The legitimating narratives that inform and “justify” the acts of repression within the militarized culture are developed through the interviews Gill conducted on both continents. In this regard the book might have benefited from an engagement with the writings of Ignacio Martín-Baró (one of the Jesuits who lost his life in November 1989 at the hands of the U.S.-trained Salvadoran military) on violence and the Manichaean outlook, which would seem to be an appropriate lens for understanding some of the graduates implicated in human rights abuses.

The SOA has struggled to maintain its existence in the face of protest movements, human-rights investigations, and opposition within the U.S. Congress. This has been especially the case in the post–Cold War period, when perceptions of the external and internal threat in Latin America have diminished and truth commissions have been set up to investigate death squad activities across the continent, especially in Central America. To overcome the Cold War memories of abuses throughout the continent, the former SOA has had to rely on more sophisticated public relations emphasizing the benefits and benevolent aspects of its work. However, Gill opens the introduction with the parallels of 11 September 2001 and 11 September 1973 (the day of Augusto Pinochet’s coup d’état in Chile), expressing concern that in the post-9/11 context the security forces in Latin America might once again be allowed to act with impunity. Gill concludes with a warning of the importance of vigilance and activism to safeguard human rights and to preserve memories of the abuses committed by Latin American soldiers who passed through the SOA. The book overall is remarkably informative, and the method and breadth of content are impressive.
"Christ, I miss the Cold War," the British spymaster M (played by Dame Judi Dench) sighs near the beginning of a recent James Bond escapade, *Casino Royale* (2006). Her wistfulness is undoubtedly shared by the filmmakers whose predilection for simple moral dichotomies often seemed to coincide with the global conflict that dominated the second half of the twentieth century. The Manichaeanism that has so often been considered indispensable to audience identification and involvement could find no contests outside the movie palaces in which the stakes were higher than the East-West struggle. This theme is traced from *Ninotchka* (1939) to *Red Heat* (1988) in Tony Shaw’s sprightly and very informative volume, which analyzes how Communists and their adversaries were shown on the big screen. Shaw also provides an often intriguing backstory in which particular forces and folks make the artifacts of mass culture that help shape perceptions (though not, the author hastens to add, policies). He finds no evidence that Hollywood had any direct influence on U.S. policymakers. But Shaw does emphasize the intimacy of the American government and the film industry, so that messages could be kept straight. Unlike the Soviet system, which made the craft of filmmaking a signed-sealed-and-delivered expression of foreign and domestic policy, relations in the United States between the federal government and the film capital were often “consensual” (p. 302).

The extent of Shaw’s research in official records and studio files, plus comprehensive trolling of the secondary sources, is bound to satisfy the most exacting standards, but in *Hollywood’s Cold War* he wisely opts for case studies rather than synoptic breadth. His nine chapters provide historical context for the range and variety of the representations of Soviet and American citizens, from the peak of Josif Stalin’s power to the breakup of the USSR. In the form of Nina Ivanovna Yakushova (Greta Garbo) in Ernst Lubitsch’s *Ninotchka* (1939), the Reds are not menacing because she cannot resist the allure of the fetishism of commodities in the West. In the guise of a romantic comedy, Lubitsch’s “picture that kids the commissars” proved to be uncannily prophetic by highlighting the effectiveness of consumerism in defeating the grim state socialism portrayed in the film. Shaw’s chapter on “The Enemy Within” discloses the decisive role of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation in the making of *Walk East on Beacon* (1952), an exposé of the agency’s vigilance. Released when the influence of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy was at its peak, the Columbia Pictures film manages to legitimize fears of Soviet espionage while undermining the urgency of under-every-bed amateurism.

No twentieth-century novelist in the English language combined literary and political talent more impressively than George Orwell, whose two most famous books were readily adapted to—and simplified for—Cold War purposes. His own democratic socialism, which noted the injustices of capitalism, was soft-pedaled when the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) helped bring *Animal Farm* (1945) to the
screen in an animated version in 1954. Two years later the CIA was more subtly in the background (through the American Committee for Cultural Freedom) in bringing *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) to the screen. The box office returns were disappointing, however, leading Shaw to conclude that the government did not get its money’s worth. The atmosphere of the 1950s was especially reverent toward reverence, as exemplified by the blockbuster status of *The Ten Commandments* (1956). The fiercely right-wing Cecil B. DeMille devised a Cold War parable that pitted a despotic, top-down economic system based on slavery against a yearning for national liberation led by Moses, a hero to the three main monotheistic faiths. But by the end of the decade, cracks in Cold War orthodoxy had begun to appear amid popular fears that nuclear weapons were increasingly threatening all of humanity. Tapping into this mood, Stanley Kramer made *On the Beach* (1959) into a warning of nuclear apocalypse. Shaw quotes the conjecture of Nobel laureate Linus Pauling that humanity might some day “look back and say that *On the Beach* is the movie that saved the world” (p. 157).

Unquoted is film critic Pauline Kael’s question, six years later, whether anyone remembered *On the Beach* “as anything more than a lousy movie.”

“Turning a Negative into a Positive” is the title of a chapter devoted to the documentary efforts of the U.S. Information Agency, which confronted the embarrassment of race relations by showing progress in overcoming the glaring inequalities that were handicapping U.S. propaganda abroad. Perhaps no film about the war in Vietnam—or about the East-West conflict itself—ever earned more derision than *The Green Berets* (1968). Its stupidity and falsity are not challenged in Hollywood’s Cold War. But Shaw also blames the Department of Defense. As early as 1965, John Wayne was ready to film novelist Robin Moore’s glorification of the Special Forces in Vietnam. But by the time the bureaucratic delays at the Pentagon ceased, the disastrous military and political course of the war had undermined the very premise of *The Green Berets*. By then, even Moore had recognized the folly of an adaptation ill suited to sustain “an unpopular war” (p. 216). One sign of the shift in public opinion was the Oscar-winning documentary released by Columbia Pictures in 1975—Peter Davis’s *Hearts and Minds*. When it was shown that year at the Moscow Film Festival, Shaw reports, Soviet cineastes asked producer Bert Schneider “why he had not been shot” (p. 248).

Summary execution is not a power granted even to veteran Cold Warriors like Ronald Reagan, whose two terms are widely associated with heightened ideological opposition to Communism. But John Milius’s *Red Dawn* (1984) also showed how out of sync Hollywood could be, even though ex-secretary of state Alexander Haig assisted in the script. Preposterously, the film envisions a brutally efficient Soviet military invasion that targets a Colorado town. It can happen here! The cover of Shaw’s book shows a still from *Red Dawn*, with Red Army soldiers shockingly taking over a McDonald’s. Soon thereafter that startling disjunction vanished as Big Macs became available in Moscow itself and Hollywood was compelled to relegate its Cold War stories to a receding past.

**Reviewed by Jorge I. Domínguez, Harvard University**

This book is both a marvelous work of history and an illustration of how excellent scholarship is diminished by unconstrained bias.

The book at its best is a meticulous reconstruction of Guatemala’s experience of decades of political violence, disproportionately caused by state terror. Greg Grandin weaves personal stories at the local level with large-scale national and international processes and events to demonstrate the horror of zealous anti-Communist policies that led to mass killings, displacements, and vast destruction and also the subtleties of Old Left and specifically Communist party actions in Guatemala from approximately 1950 to the mid-1980s. He draws on many archives in Guatemala, both local and national, as well as photocopies of declassified U.S. government documents stored at the non-governmental National Security Archive. In addition, he draws insightfully and with sensitivity from many oral histories, both with elderly participants and with their descendants.

The book provides a splendid history showing why the Communist party (Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo, PGT) mattered in Guatemala. Grandin argues that the PGT “sought to advance national capitalism through the extension of democracy in the countryside” (p. 54). More importantly and persuasively, Grandin repeatedly shows how the PGT made a difference in the lives of individuals. He writes that “the Communist Party helped [individual name] emerge from an exploitative, deeply deadening system, to develop a sharpened sense of himself as a critical being, able to observe, act in, and change the world” (pp. 108–109). In Guatemala’s indigenous heartland, Marxism interacted with the beliefs of local communities to deepen the PGT’s grassroots support through “the party’s ongoing promotion of an ethical society centered in the just distribution and use of land” (p. 123).

Grandin demonstrates that the PGT’s national leaders, with few exceptions, eschewed political violence and sought to restrain extremist armed struggle on the left. The PGT incorporated Guatemalans across ethnic lines, even though the party focused its appeal on social justice and land rather than on the articulation of ethnic grievances as such. By the 1960s the PGT had also developed a strong platform on the role of women in society, helping to change discourse even if party members’ own behavior did not quite live up to the program. In general, Grandin argues that the PGT nurtured and fostered the foundations for a modern, democratic Guatemala.

Grandin also demonstrates in detail the violent horror that the state, the army, and death squads inflicted on the population, especially on rural indigenous peoples, in the name of anti-Communism. Yet he also calls attention to a historical irony. The intensity of the army’s repression in 1981–1983 was associated with an effort to build social support, and the domestic war also bankrupted many planters. The army sought political order through an eventual return to constitutional democracy and implemented a substantial land reform. In that way, “many of the reforms the left long
struggled for were achieved not through victory but by defeat” (p. 132). Merchants, planters, and labor contractors no longer dominated Mayan communities as they once had.

The book is marred, however, by Grandin’s insistence on a thesis that he does not demonstrate: “Cold War terror—either executed, patronized, or excused by the United States—fortified illiberal forces, militarized societies, and broke the link between freedom and equality” (p. xiv). The introduction, a large segment of the conclusion, and passages throughout the book reiterate these themes, and they constitute Grandin’s dominant explanatory framework for the whole of Latin America. Yet his archival and interview research pertains only to Guatemala.

Even with regard to Guatemala, the United States played a “star” role only twice: during the overthrow of the constitutional president Jacobo Arbenz in 1954 and during the counterinsurgency training in the mid-1960s. The United States was clearly counterrevolutionary in 1954, but the terror began in Guatemala a decade later. For the 1960s, Grandin mentions only in passing attempts by U.S. officials to sever links with agents of Guatemalan state terror (pp. 87, 95–96, 190). He never establishes that the U.S. government committed “Cold War terror” in Guatemala. Only in footnotes (p. 248) do we learn that analysts at the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and State Department believed that Guatemalan state terror was counterproductive—the opposite of what Grandin generally implies. Nor does he ever say why Guatemalan state terror increased at the end of the 1970s as the Carter administration firmly and publicly distanced itself from Guatemalan repression.

Grandin would have been better off if he had replaced this Cold War rant with a sound comparative analysis pertinent to his research. For example, he argues that “ideology in Latin America moderated the left’s reaction to political frustration and state terror” (p. 176). He contends that ideological political movements—the Popular Unity coalition in Chile in the early 1970s, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, and the PGT—responded to challenges with moderation, whereas non-ideological Cuban revolutionaries and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) resorted to greater violence. This important hypothesis is not persuasive. Peru’s Shining Path was highly ideological and also the continent’s most violent revolutionary movement. The Sandinistas’ level or intensity of ideology is difficult to distinguish from that of the Cuban revolutionaries.

Both Grandin and his readers would be well advised to focus on this book’s key empirical finding: the moderation of the Communist party, the PGT. The PGT had good company. In Chile within the Popular Unity coalition, in Cuba before the revolution, and in Guatemala in the 1950s and most of the 1960s, the Communist parties were moderating forces within the left and generally opposed the resort to violence. Latin American Communist parties, for the most part, resisted the Fidel Castro government’s embrace of armed struggle. In prerevolutionary Cuba, in pre-Pinochet Chile, and in Guatemala before the state terror, the Communists also stood for large-scale social and economic changes within the context of democratic constitutions.

This would have been a much better book if Grandin had concentrated on what he has done best; namely, to situate the PGT as an entity that potentially could have
been embraced by the democratic rhetoric of U.S. administrations from John F. Kennedy onward but that was defeated in part by the policies of the U.S. government.


Reviewed by David F. Krugler, University of Wisconsin, Platteville

In an article in *Life* magazine in 1952, the soon-to-be secretary of state John Foster Dulles famously proposed a new Cold War strategy for the United States and its allies. “The free world,” he wrote, “[must] develop the will and organize the means to retaliate instantly against open aggression by Red armies, so that, if it occurred anywhere, we could and would strike back where it hurts, by means of our choosing.” (Quoted in Townsend Hoopes, *The Devil and John Foster Dulles* [Boston: Little, Brown, 1973], p. 127.) Known as massive retaliation, this doctrine appeared to be the centerpiece of the so-called New Look of U.S. foreign policy during the presidency of Dwight Eisenhower. Rather than relying on large conventional armies to deter Soviet-bloc aggression, the United States would threaten to use nuclear weapons to end Cold War crises and military confrontations in its favor. In light of the potentially cataclysmic outcome of massive retaliation, it is not surprising that the doctrine has received a great deal of scholarly attention. Perhaps too much attention, suggests historian Kenneth Osgood in *Total Cold War*, his impressive new history of key elements of Eisenhower’s foreign policy. In the book, Dulles’s apparent bellicosity and Eisenhower’s acceptance of massive retaliation are eclipsed by the two men’s shared belief that the real Cold War was being fought off the battlefield. Eisenhower wondered what would happen if the Soviet Union used political methods, as in Czechoslovakia, to advance the spread of Communism. Dulles himself later stated: “There was a great danger that we should so focus our eyes on the military aspects of the struggle that we lose the cold war which is actually being waged, forgetting that an actual military conflict may never be waged” (p. 333).

As Osgood convincingly demonstrates, the Eisenhower administration developed and deployed a striking array of psychological warfare (psywar) and propaganda activities to fulfill U.S. Cold War goals. The cultural, psychological, and ideological struggle to win the allegiance and support of the peoples of the world was just as significant as the economic, military, and political conflict between the Communist and Western blocs. Eisenhower throughout his presidency not only enthusiastically advocated the use of psywar and propaganda, but also directly involved himself in the drafting and execution of many programs and initiatives. The book’s presentation reinforces the “hidden hand” interpretation of Eisenhower, but Osgood parts way with the revisionists on a key issue. Eisenhower, he argues, was not interested in ending the Cold War by reaching a rapprochement with the Soviet Union, as Stephen Ambrose, Robert Divine, and Richard Immerman have contended. Instead, the president, ac-
According to Osgood, wanted to *win* the Cold War through psywar and propaganda. This is a bold thesis, and for the most part Osgood substantiates it. He scoured the Eisenhower Presidential Library and the National Archives and examined records relating to psywar and propaganda campaigns previously unexplored by historians. Furthermore, his wide reading in the field of communication studies enables him to provide interdisciplinary context for his concept of “total cold war.” The result is a profound and important study of U.S. foreign policy during the 1950s.

Osgood organizes his narrative and analysis along several related themes. First, rapid advances in communications technology, most prominently radio and television broadcasting, allowed the great powers to mold global public opinion through propaganda, which some policymakers labeled the “fourth weapon” of U.S. foreign policy (the three others were military, political, and economic programs). Second, propaganda became an essential, though not always visible, component of seemingly unrelated programs such as nuclear energy, the nuclear arms race, and outer space exploration. Third, to understand the totality of propaganda and psywar, it is necessary to examine in detail their implementation, not just the basic policy and aims. Closely related to this point is the nexus between state and private or corporate initiatives, as well as the effects of international propaganda on the American public. Finally, Eisenhower, far from being a detached president, took a hands-on approach in directing propaganda policy and programs.

Osgood’s definition of propaganda is straightforward: any method employed to shape recipients’ emotions and thinking to the benefit of the creator or sponsor. As Osgood correctly points out, the manipulative and coverts aspects of propaganda did not mean that it was always untruthful. Psywar was more amorphous than propaganda. In the minds of Cold War practitioners, psywar referred to any non-military measure aimed at molding public opinion or furthering U.S. foreign policy goals. Although Osgood’s alternating use of the separate terms throughout his narrative might suggest a lack of conceptual clarity, contemporaries themselves used the terms indiscriminately.

The first part of the book explains the antecedents of total cold war. Osgood succinctly describes the communications revolution—the advent of telegraphs, telephones, and radio broadcasting—and its impact on diplomacy. Specifically, propaganda and public relations became integral parts of the interactions between countries, which began using the new media to mold public opinion in hopes of strengthening their negotiating positions. During World War I, Woodrow Wilson recognized the usefulness of propaganda both at home and abroad, and he connected the goal of open global communications to his quest to make the world safe for democracy. World War II brought new levels of psywar and propaganda initiatives for the United States. Although Congress nearly liquidated these programs after the war, the incipient conflict with the Soviet Union justified their continuance. Indeed, as Osgood writes, “the Cold War reversed Clausewitz’s famous dictum that war was an extension of politics.” After 1945, “diplomacy became an extension of warfare, and propaganda became a critical weapon in this new type of international combat” (p. 33). One of the Truman administration’s psywar agencies, the vaguely named...
Office of Policy Coordination, even made the rollback of Communism one of its goals long before the Republican Party put rollback at the center of its foreign policy. However, propaganda and psywar efforts were generally poorly coordinated and erratically implemented during Harry Truman’s presidency.

Enter Eisenhower. His appreciation for propaganda and psywar had matured during World War II, turning him into a committed “hearts and minds” advocate. As president, he wasted no time overseeing ambitious propaganda campaigns. One of the many examples discussed by Osgood is the U.S. response to the death of the Soviet leader Josif Stalin in March 1953. Ever wary of Moscow’s intentions, Eisenhower worried that an ensuing thaw in the Cold War might make Communism more attractive globally. Sure enough, when the Soviet Union began a propaganda campaign to establish the peaceful intentions of its foreign policy, Eisenhower publicly cautioned Americans and the world that the new Soviet leaders’ deeds had to match their words. The president also laid the foundation for total cold war by cleverly turning the conflict on its head. Rather than being an obstacle to peace, the Cold War in Eisenhower’s depiction was actually the way to obtain peace. By diligently ensuring the unity of the free world through propaganda and psywar, Eisenhower surmised, the United States could steadily marginalize and weaken the Soviet Union and its allies.

To achieve this goal, the Eisenhower administration needed an effective, efficient, and occasionally invisible apparatus to carry out propaganda and psywar. Soon after coming to office in 1953, the president dissolved the troubled Psychological Strategy Board (set up by Truman), created the Operations Coordinating Board to provide much-needed oversight and cohesion of efforts, and pulled information activities, including the radio station Voice of America, out of the State Department (much to the approval of John Foster Dulles) and put them under the jurisdiction of a new body, the United States Information Agency (USIA). Although the public face of USIA was news, facts, and information, the agency secretly formulated its own psywar strategy to target people outside the Soviet sphere. As the 1950s drew to a close, USIA operated more than 200 posts in 91 non-Communist countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. The myriad activities of this “Secret Empire” (p. 104) included attempts to win over the Vietnamese through the use of propaganda disparaging the Vietminh, the implementation of an “anti-communist indoctrination program” in Thailand (p. 123), and the pursuit of a multifaceted campaign to convince the dubious residents of Iceland that membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), not to mention the U.S. airbase at Keflavik, was essential and beneficial.

USIA was just one part of the administration’s propaganda machine. In late 1953, in another dramatic reversal of conventional wisdom, Eisenhower unveiled theAtoms for Peace program, contending that the peaceful applications of nuclear energy matched the peril of nuclear weapons. Atoms for Peace provided an opportunity not only to mollify Americans about the arms race and the doctrine of massive retaliation but also to deploy propaganda and psywar at unprecedented levels. USIA made promotion of Atoms for Peace a priority (with 16 million pamphlets and posters distributed worldwide), as did other executive branch agencies and officials not normally
associated with propaganda: the Department of Health, Education and Welfare; the Postal Service; and the U.S. attorney general. Major U.S. companies pitched in, too, showing the nexus between the government and business. Westinghouse, for example, sent pamphlets touting Atoms for Peace to 35,000 influential people, including engineers, in more than 125 countries. In 1954, Eisenhower tightened the state-private relationship by requesting (and receiving) $5 million to start funding cultural exchanges and U.S. presentations at international trade fairs. As Osgood observes: “State-private cooperation in the Cold War’s propaganda battles developed logically from the total war mind-set that called for mobilizing the entire nation to support U.S. objectives” (p. 215). Every man an ambassador, went the thinking. Pets, too, were enlisted in the effort. “Dogs make good ambassadors” (p. 240), enthused one American who had joined a program connecting pet lovers across the world.

In addition to these activities, Osgood details the propaganda and psywar campaigns underpinning the Space Race and the 1955 Open Skies initiative. Open Skies serves as a good example of Osgood’s attempt to reshape historical debate about Eisenhower’s foreign policy and common notions about propaganda. Did the Open Skies proposal (to allow the United States and the Soviet Union to carry out reconnaissance flights in each other’s air space) reveal Eisenhower’s genuine desire to do as much as possible to prevent all-out thermonuclear war (the revisionist position), or was it merely another propaganda ploy (the post-revisionist position)? Osgood contends that both sides are constricted by an overly narrow understanding of propaganda, regarding it as synonymous with insincerity. Instead, Open Skies and Eisenhower’s other peace proposals should be viewed as “both sincere initiatives and propaganda” (p. 185; emphasis in original). This plausible observation underscores Osgood’s thesis that propaganda and psywar were central components of Eisenhower’s foreign policy.

At points, however, Osgood imputes too much significance to propaganda and psywar. Describing the New Look doctrine and Eisenhower’s own convictions, Osgood claims that Eisenhower believed that the Soviet Union probably would not initiate war (because it would destroy both sides) and that the United States therefore had to put the “brunt of the Cold War effort . . . at besting the Soviets in the political and psychological fields” (p. 71). Here Osgood overlooks the central problem as Eisenhower defined it: how to keep the Soviet Union from even considering a first strike. Effective deterrence required a massive nuclear arsenal, extensive defensive and attack warning systems (e.g., Nike antiaircraft missiles and the Distant Early Warning line), and a willingness to wage thermonuclear war. Moreover, the Soviet Union had to know that the United States was willing to draw its then much stronger nuclear sword and do whatever it took to remain more powerful than its archenemy. For all their importance, propaganda and psywar did not consume the brunt of the Cold War effort under Eisenhower—nuclear deterrence and first strike capability did.

Osgood might also have drawn a sharper distinction between public diplomacy and psywar as seen by key officials, especially Eisenhower, who sometimes expressed ambivalence or even disdain when the subject of “open” propaganda came up. As a presidential candidate in 1952, he spoke approvingly of psywar, but in the same speech he seemed to criticize the Voice of America (VOA). In 1953, Eisenhower per-
ceived Stalin’s death as a psywar opportunity, but he turned his back on the VOA as Senator Joseph McCarthy skewered its personnel and operations in televised hearings. Eisenhower also had little to say when McCarthy’s minions Roy Cohn and G. David Schine toured Europe to inspect the libraries attached to U.S. embassies and to rid the shelves of works by Communists (even if those works boosted U.S. anti-Communism efforts).

These are but minor problems. If Osgood occasionally overemphasizes the importance of propaganda and psywar, he nevertheless firmly establishes their centrality; and if he overlooks in a few instances Eisenhower’s ambivalence, he solidly demonstrates Eisenhower’s overall commitment to and oversight of propaganda and psywar efforts. Total Cold War not only offers an original and convincing interpretation of Eisenhower’s foreign policy, it also provides a much-needed synthesis of the literature on Cold War propaganda and psywar. As such, it deserves to be required reading in graduate seminars on the Cold War and modern U.S. foreign policy for a long time to come.


Reviewed by William Burr, National Security Archive, George Washington University

Henry Kissinger, perhaps the most controversial U.S. secretary of state since Dean Acheson, has received critical evaluations from numerous scholars—for example, Jussi Hanhimäki, whose view of Kissinger’s role in U.S. foreign policy is summed in his book’s title, *The Flawed Architect: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004). Jeremi Suri offers a more positive, although somewhat mixed, assessment, treating Kissinger as one of a generation of “good men” whose “good intentions” sometimes had bad consequences (p. 15). Suri has produced a significant book, but readers may not be convinced by some of his arguments—for example, about Kissinger as a “revolutionary” policymaker—or by Suri’s treatment of Kissinger’s anti-democratic leanings.

Asking “why” Kissinger, a Jew in a Protestant-dominated establishment, could become so influential, Suri finds much of the answer in globalization. “Kissinger,” he writes, “was an agent of globalization, but his influence comes from the social margins of a changing world, not from the traditional centers of ‘established’ authority” (p. 5). Emphasizing Kissinger’s German-Jewish upbringing and flight from Nazi Germany in 1938, Suri argues that these experiences were absolutely critical to Kissinger’s intellectual formation. Kissinger’s background, according to Suri, also underlay his ability to act as a “bridge figure” between Western Europe and the post–World War II U.S. foreign policy establishment. Confirming I. F. Stone’s insight about Kissinger’s keen sense of timing, Suri believes that what helped make this “outsider” so successful was
not so much his ideas as his capacity to comprehend, and take advantage of, new circumstances.

When Kissinger went to work for a president whom Suri describes as an anti-Semitic “gangster,” he drew on his personal and intellectual skills to operate as a “revolutionary” statesman remaking the international system by “engaging adversaries” and “pushing for compromise,” calibrating “military power for political purposes,” and “insulating the . . . management of foreign policy from public interference” (pp. 246–247). The convergence of Richard Nixon’s downfall with a crisis and war in the Middle East made it possible for Kissinger to use his “insider-outsider” status to good advantage in negotiations with Arabs and Israelis to prevent the outbreak of another regional war. Yet Suri finds serious flaws in Kissinger’s conduct as a policymaker. Critical of Kissinger’s Vietnam policy and indifference to human-rights concerns, among other failings, Suri sees a “tendency for [Kissinger’s] antidemocratic fears to empower repressive regimes” (p. 274).

Suri’s book is well written, and his research in primary and secondary source material is extensive, including interviews with Kissinger. The book’s most valuable contribution is its account of Kissinger’s pre–White House career, especially Suri’s assessment of Kissinger’s German-Jewish background and its impact on the future leader’s worldview and career. A central point is that Kissinger’s experience with the rise of Nazism and the democracies’ tardy resistance to German aggression made him skeptical about the resilience of democratic institutions. Thus, early in his career Kissinger concluded that an effective national security policy required “heroic politics” to create space for “charismatic, forward-looking, undemocratic decisionmaking in government” (p. 8).

Suri also does a good job of covering Kissinger’s career at Harvard University, showing how his management of the international affairs seminar gave him connections around the world that would later serve him well. Although Suri points out that Kissinger’s rise to influence was based on new Cold War institutions, he misses the crucial role of a well-established source of power in American society—corporate capitalism. The wealth of Nelson Rockefeller and funding from the corporate-oriented Council on Foreign Relations were crucial to facilitating the work that made Kissinger prominent.

Suri’s emphasis on Kissinger’s thinking about federalism in foreign policy is important to the book’s presentation. Kissinger’s “dynamic conservatism,” in Suri’s view, was designed to tackle the limits of containment and of American power by emphasizing the need for less dependence by allies on the United States and for “more centers of decision.” Kissinger supported a transatlantic confederacy as well as an eventual West European nuclear force so that allies, including West Germany, would have more self-reliant defense policies. But Suri’s discussion of Kissinger’s ideas about a European nuclear force overlooks the complex problem of West German participation. Memories of Nazi aggression made other West European governments wary of proposals that gave Bonn an equal voice in managing a nuclear weapons scheme. Kissinger himself understood that West German control over nuclear weapons would have been highly destabilizing, not only within the North Atlantic Treaty Organiza-
tion (NATO) but also in relations with Moscow. Hence, Kissinger undoubtedly would not have shared Suri’s concern that the 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT) denied Italy and West Germany the ability to “experiment with nuclear capabilities” (p. 177).

Suri’s discussion of federalist foreign policy does not touch on a central problem. If Kissinger truly wanted a world with “more centers of decision,” how much independence did he think U.S. allies should have in such a world? Suri in his account of Kissinger in office does not mention such thorny problems as Ostpolitik and U.S.–West European controversies over the Middle East. Certainly Kissinger’s anger toward key NATO allies during and after the October War suggests important limits to his federalism.

The final two chapters of the book, covering the Nixon-Ford White House, inflate Kissinger’s influence and originality. By giving the impression that Kissinger initiated the overtures to Beijing that helped produce the Sino-American rapprochement, Suri disregards evidence that Nixon directed Kissinger to find ways to communicate with the Chinese. Moreover, by treating Nixon mainly as a gangster-political boss, Suri ignores the president’s real conceptual abilities as demonstrated, for example, by his July 1971 speech in Kansas City regarding the emergence of a multipolar world. The areas in which Suri finds Kissinger revolutionary suggest less transformation than is claimed. For example, engagement with adversaries was no less characteristic of Kissinger’s Democratic predecessors, who had agreed to the LTBT and Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Moreover, Kissinger in this respect was merely acting on Nixon’s stated preference for “an era of negotiation.” Although Kissinger outdid his predecessors in trying to insulate diplomacy from public pressure, this, too, was an art that others had practiced before him. In addition, Suri exaggerates when he claims that Kissinger played a significant role in the negotiation of the NPT (p. 225).

Suri’s discussion of Middle East policy in 1973–1975 is stronger, showing how and why Kissinger could mediate successfully between Arab and Israeli leaders and also how Kissinger went astray, as in his neglect of the Palestinians. Nevertheless, it may be premature to generalize about Kissinger’s Middle East diplomacy before anyone has worked through the extensive declassified record. Incidentally, Suri’s account of the October 1973 Mideast War overstates the U.S. threat to the Soviet Union by incorrectly defining Defcon III—a higher state of military readiness in a peacetime situation—as “the state of readiness just short of actual nuclear war” (p. 260).

Suri rightly criticizes Kissinger’s Westphalian realism, noting that Kissinger’s emphasis on nation-states caused him to disregard the rise of non-state actors. A larger problem, however, is realism’s understanding of power. Defining national power mainly in military terms and assuming that great-power rivalries were largely about security issues made it easy for realists like Kissinger to overlook the role of commercial and financial interests in world politics. This omission was crucial because the rapid development of transnational capitalism was precisely one of the most distinctive features of the “American Century.” When Kissinger was in office, he had to deal with many threats to, and opportunities for, U.S. corporate capitalism; yet those problems are barely mentioned in Suri’s book.
Suri is critical of Kissinger on human rights and Vietnam, but he seldom questions Kissinger’s conviction that the fragility of democracy requires protection by undemocratic means. Indeed, although Suri finds the policy of “peace through local strongmen” (p. 274) to be a disturbing part of Kissinger’s legacy, he does not see a better alternative. Suri makes interesting arguments, but he will no doubt encounter strong responses that it is usually better to encourage accountability and democratization. Kissinger’s skepticism about democracy—skepticism shared by the “wise men” of the Cold War era—has one troubling implication that Suri does not discuss. The history of U.S. policy during the Vietnam War shows that unaccountable elites and freewheeling presidents and national security advisers could lead the country into a foreign policy disaster. Suri, oddly, sees Kissinger’s success in insulating himself from “public interference” on this matter as an accomplishment, not a problem.

Throughout the book Suri grapples with the role of morality in Kissinger’s thought and actions. Although some readers will be skeptical, Suri argues that “morality and justice mattered deeply to Kissinger.” But when Suri asked Kissinger about his “core moral principles” (p. 186), Kissinger declined to respond. Kissinger’s Harvard mentor, William Y. Elliot, found in his student a combination of Immanuel Kant and Baruch Spinoza, and perhaps Suri’s question could be answered by looking at Spinoza. As others have noted, Spinoza believed in a concept of necessity and rejected ideas of absolute good and evil. Such thinking may have helped Kissinger find it justifiable to work with dictators and put aside human-rights concerns in the name of foreign policy realism.

As long as major primary sources remain unavailable—Kissinger’s papers, his diaries and records of meetings with Nixon, and Nixon’s own diaries—many judgments about Kissinger’s life and times must remain provisional. That said, Henry Kissinger and the American Century is a provocative and insightful, albeit not fully persuasive, contribution to the literature on Kissinger and the Cold War.

Reviewed by John L. Harper, Johns Hopkins University SAIS Bologna Center

This hefty volume by the distinguished diplomatic historian Robert L. Beisner has received lavish praise from reviewers. Reading it, one sees why. The book vividly evokes Acheson’s unique combination of qualities: his powerful intelligence; peacock-like panache; and awe-inspiring skill, forbearance, and stamina in dealing with America’s growing list of allies. Beisner provides exhaustive (at times, literally day-by-day) coverage of his protagonist’s State Department career. On some topics, such as McCarthyism and the fate of the “China hands,” he surpasses Acheson’s own account (Present at the Creation: My Years at the State Department, New York: Norton, 1969) for color and sheer detail.
The reader cannot fail to be struck by Beisner’s effort to be judicious as well as thorough. Along with approbation, the book contains plenty of penetrating criticism. Beisner shows, for example, how Acheson, though not principally responsible for the debacle of November–December 1950, suffered from a kind of double delusion. He failed to see that crossing the 38th parallel was likely to provoke a Chinese reaction, and he then insisted (rather like those who believe that the Soviet Union was about to attack Germany in 1941) that the Chinese offensive was unconnected to U.S. action and had been planned by Moscow long in advance. Beisner also shows due regard for Acheson’s role at the start of the Vietnam adventure. The French did not (as Acheson later claimed) blackmail the United States into helping them in Indochina. Misreading the stakes, the U.S. government saw reasons of its own to get involved. By the same token, Beisner amply demonstrates how some of Acheson’s shining virtues had their concomitant vices. A well-deserved sense of intellectual superiority reinforced an ideological rigidity and disdain for ordinary mortals. An admirable instinct to seize the nettle and defy his enemies at times (notably during the Alger Hiss affair, when he remained fiercely loyal to Alger’s brother Donald) prompted Acheson to lead with his chin.

Fundamentally, Beisner’s Dean Acheson reads as an apologia for Acheson the man and his approach to foreign policy. The book is about as formidable, disarming, and effective an apologia as a statesman could hope to have. Beisner recounts Acheson’s key role in the launching of the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and he shows that no American did more to foster Franco-German reconciliation and the beginnings of European unity. Acheson’s extraordinarily focused, deft, and considerate handling of the European states constitutes a never-equaled model—the opposite of the contempt-laden, intellectually shallow unilateralism of a later era. Although Acheson’s hopes of splitting Beijing from Moscow were doomed by the China lobby and Mao Zedong’s own preferences, Acheson made a heroic effort to avoid tying the United States to the Guomindang on Taiwan. One of Beisner’s main themes is Acheson’s friendship with Harry Truman. Mutual admiration and (for the most part) matching views of the world made for an unusually productive team.

Engaging, comprehensive, and fair-minded as the book is, one’s basic view of it depends in the end on one’s view of its central argument. Acheson, Beisner observes, “adopted an uncomplicated strategy of amassing countervailing power. . . . The purpose of building positions of strength was to create power rather than to discuss and settle differences” (p. 646). Indeed, the strategy laid out by Acheson and Paul Nitze in NSC 68 in 1950 aimed to “roll back” Communist power and win the Cold War on U.S. terms. Although Beisner criticizes NSC 68 around the edges, he considers the basic strategy both sound and ultimately successful. Not surprisingly, he sees parallels between Acheson and Ronald Reagan (p. 650), observing that the “cold war ended much as he [Acheson] said it would” (p. 654).

This reader is unconvinced. George Kennan (whom Beisner, reflecting Acheson’s own view, finds hard to take seriously as a purveyor of advice) and Charles Bohlen were correct to see that NSC 68 presented a caricature of the Soviet Union (namely, a
regime ready to run serious risks of world war to advance its allegedly limitless aims, 
rather than one on the defensive and far weaker overall than the United States). 
Kennan, who favored negotiations with Moscow, believed that remaining fixated on 
building military strength would induce the other side to do the same. Others (nota-
ably Truman himself, even after the outbreak of the Korean War) doubted that the U.S.
economy could or should undertake the kind of immense military build-up called for 
in NSC 68. Pace Beisner, the sceptics were at least partly right. An offensive approach 
conspicuously failed in Korea. The 1952 Lisbon agreement (much vaunted by 
Acheson at the time) to expand NATO’s conventional forces was a will-o’-the-wisp. As 
Robert Bowie and Richard Immerman have shown in Waging Peace: How Eisenhower 
Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 
p. 40, “the objectives of NSC 68—notably across the board preponderance, less reli-
ance on nuclear weapons, and rollback—[had] proved impractical or illusory” even 
before Eisenhower began to look for budgetary savings in 1953. It is worth noting 
that the German counterpart of Acheson’s “situations of strength” approach, Konrad 
Adenauer’s “policy of strength” (and of non-recognition of the reality of East Ger-
many) also proved impractical and illusory. The building of the Berlin wall in August 
1961 necessitated a new approach to the East.

This is not to argue that a genuine opportunity was missed to conclude a general 
settlement with the Soviet Union during Acheson’s tenure; rather, an American policy 
of strength for strength’s sake was neither indefinitely sustainable nor likely to be 
crowned with success. The Ronald Reagan who contributed to the end of the Cold 
War resembled Acheson in some ways, but in other ways he was markedly different. 
After all, Reagan overruled the anti-negotiation camp in his administration and (like 
Willy Brandt) showed a subversively human face to his Communist interlocutors. 
Irony of ironies, Reagan in the end took a page from Kennan’s book.

Wilfried Loth, ed., La Gouvernance Supranationale dans la Construction Européenne. 

Reviewed by Robert H. Lieshout, Radboud University (The Netherlands)

This book deals with the evolution of the executive and legislative supranational 
organs of the European Communities—the High Authority, the Commission, the 
Parliament, and the Council of Ministers when it decides by majority vote—during 
the construction of Europe and pays special attention to the effects of the lack of dem-
ocratic control and transparency in supranational decision-making on the develop-
ment of the European integration process.

Three major themes may be distinguished. The first is how the founding fathers 
of the European Communities handled the problem of the democratic deficit. In 
chapters on Jean Monnet and Sicco Mansholt respectively, the historians Bernd 
Bühlbäcker and Guido Thiemeyer show that both men were “technocrats” not much
concerned with gaining democratic legitimacy. Indeed, Mansholt believed that the “detrimental influence of pressure groups and electoral strategies would be abolished by transferring the political decisions from the national governments which were dependent on parliaments, to a supranational institution acting only in the common interest” (p. 43). By contrast, Walter Hallstein, the first president of the European Commission, believed that the powers of the Commission could be strengthened only by strengthening the powers of the European Parliament. But Hallstein’s attempt, as Gerhard Mollin shows, ended in failure with the Luxembourg Declaration of January 1966. Too much of a technocrat, Hallstein had badly misjudged the true balance of forces in the European Communities. Gérard Bossuat relates that Hallstein had the full support of Emile Noël, the executive secretary of the Commission, who during the “empty chair” crisis did his utmost to keep good relations with France.

The second theme in the book is that the limited powers of the Parliament and unanimous decision-making in the Council of Ministers seriously weakened Europe’s capacity to act, but that this was partly remedied through initiatives developed by the Franco-German axis. Claudia Hiepel deals with the “couple” of Willy Brandt and Georges Pompidou. Their major achievement was the relance européenne of 1969, which led to the first enlargement of the European Communities, but they did not make progress on economic and monetary integration to supplement the increased political cooperation. Michèle Weinachter discusses the couple of Valéry Giscard d’Estaing and Helmut Schmidt, showing how they managed to launch the intergovernmental European Monetary System. Although Giscard had little room for maneuver in France, he and Schmidt were able to succeed because Schmidt was less federalist than his predecessors. George Saunier’s chapter on François Mitterrand and Helmut Kohl, the architects of the European Central Bank—the one supranational addition to the European construction since the Rome treaties—emphasizes the pedagogic discourse the two men developed with respect to Europe, a discourse that helped in some way to overcome the democratic deficit. In Helen Drake’s view, this leadership by ideas was also Jacques Delors’s major contribution to the integration process during his two terms as president of the Commission.

The book’s third theme concerns the various attempts to increase Europe’s capacity for action and to reduce the democratic deficit. Vincent Dujardin’s chapter on Belgian Foreign Minister Pierre Harmel concentrates on the attempts by a small member-state to strengthen supranationality in the years after the Luxembourg Declaration. Daniliela Preda discusses Altiero Spinelli’s failed initiative to provide Europe with a constitution by way of the Parliament, and Muriel Rambour considers why the member-states at their meetings in Maastricht, Amsterdam, and Nice failed to make real progress on key questions, including majority voting in the Council, the maximum number of Commissioners, and the extension of the powers of the Parliament. Time and again, the member-states sought to protect their own short-term interests over the European common interest. Achim Hurrelmann subsequently analyzes the different German, French, and British conceptions of how to establish a constitutional framework for the European Union, drawing on the debate initiated by German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer in 2000 and the subsequent debates in the European
Convention. In the concluding chapter, Wilfried Loth presents a historical overview of the main features of the various projects and initiatives for a European constitution, starting in September 1948. This leaves the chapter by N. Piers Ludlow, which does not fit within any of the three themes. He briefly presents three case studies—the cereal price decision of December 1964, the May 1966 deal on the financing of the Common Agricultural Policy, and decision-making in the European Economic Community (EEC) during the final stages of the Kennedy Round—to illustrate his point that historians should take account of the full complexity of EEC decision-making.

Most of the contributions amply demonstrate their authors’ mastery of the subject but are rather long and contain much detail. The essays are targeted not at lay readers but at experts. The problem, however, is that experts will already be familiar with most of this material. The authors draw on recently opened archives, oral interviews with key figures, and transcripts of press conferences, but ultimately the book presents little that is new or surprising. Hiepel makes a nice distinction between “harmonious” and “difficult” couples as far as French presidents and German chancellors are concerned. Weinachter subsequently notes that harmony can be achieved only when the chancellor is prepared to settle for second place. This is a clever observation, but again not one that will come as a surprise to the expert.

In The European Rescue of the Nation-State, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 318, Alan Milward argues that “the historiography of European integration is dominated by legends of great men. Most histories emphasize the role of a small band of leading statesmen with a shared vision. . . . The history of the Community was a struggle between the forces of light and darkness.” Loth’s volume stands firmly in this dominant tradition (Ludlow’s chapter again is the exception). Two examples must suffice here. According to Rambour, “the construction of Europe is sustained by a democratic aspiration, it seeks to be a reference in terms of transparency, not only to ensure a more efficient functioning of the community system, but especially to arouse the interest of citizens and to bridge the distance that separates them from the European enterprise” (p. 305). Drake for her part observes that what Delors did was “all in the endless pursuit of a ‘new’ and better international society” (p. 270). Perhaps the authors’ shared conception of the European project is what explains the lack of a chapter on what was arguably the most important harmonious couple of all in the construction of Europe, Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle.


Reviewed by Sumit Ganguly, Indiana University, Bloomington

The British colonial withdrawal from the subcontinent in 1947 is a tale of woeful political judgment, colossal administrative incompetence, and utter moral callousness. In the aftermath of World War II, the British were weary of the burdens of far-flung
colonial commitments in South Asia and were eager to focus on domestic reconstruction to offset the damage inflicted by the war. Having lost the ability to preserve the unity of the subcontinent, the British dispensed with their Indian empire in considerable haste. They were well aware of the acute ethnoreligious polarization that had emerged between the two principal religious communities, Hindus and Muslims, in the twilight of the empire. Yet they failed to make even modest preparations to ensure a peaceful division of the subcontinent into the two nascent states of India and Pakistan.

As a consequence of Britain’s failure to arrange a secure transfer of populations, roughly one million individuals lost their lives and at least another six million were uprooted. Hindus and Sikhs slaughtered Muslims, especially in the state of Punjab, which bore the brunt of the partition. Muslims, in turn, decimated Hindu and Sikh communities in the western part of Punjab and elsewhere. Contrary to partisan accounts, any dispassionate analysis of this period shows that none of the three religious communities demonstrated any particular moral rectitude. Although some members of all three communities engaged in individual acts of courage and decency, collective behavior was altogether another matter.

This calamity, which took place in August 1947, continues to poison the relationship between India and Pakistan. Memories of the horrors of partition have been passed on through biased history textbooks, partisan documentaries, and popular cinema, among other media. Only a handful of Pakistani and Indian writers, most notably Saadat Hasan Manto, Manohar Malgaonkar, and Khuswant Singh, have been able to write about this event with any element of even-handedness. More recently, the expatriate Pakistani novelist, Bapsi Sidhwa, has also written a moderately fair-minded account seen through the eyes of a polio-stricken child in the Zoroastrian Parsi community, on the eve of partition.

Honest intellectual examination of this epic tragedy has been all but impossible, especially in Pakistan, with its long periods of authoritarian military rule. Fortunately, in India, which has a vigorous and lively press and a well-established tradition of historical scholarship, this extremely fraught issue is now increasingly being subjected to both popular and academic scrutiny. In recent years, journalists and scholars alike have sought to document the events that led to this disaster.

Despite the progress in attempts to collect the memoirs of survivors, to bear witness to the times, and to reconstruct oral histories, the bulk of the scholarship remains atheoretic. Neither conventional historians nor empirical social scientists have even attempted to explain why members of the two principal religious communities descended into such unmitigated savagery at the time of colonial withdrawal. Although Hindu-Muslim violence had stalked various parts of the subcontinent both prior to and during British colonial rule, few events in the troubled history of the subcontinent had culminated in such widespread carnage.

Raghuvendra Tanwar’s distillation of press reports from both the English and the vernacular dailies, private papers, governmental minutes, and private correspondence provide a dense account of the terror that befell the state at the time of partition. Tanwar’s scholarship is careful, honest, and prodigious. He has sifted through a vast...
corpus of material to provide a thorough account of how the state came to be partitioned, the role of key players, and the tragic aftermath of partition. He focuses not only on the higher realms of elite politics but also on the conditions that prevailed at the level of districts and their local administrators. It is a tale of colossal human folly, cupidity, and myopia.

Despite many polemical accounts, the larger outlines of the history of the partition of Punjab are reasonably well established. Tanwar’s contribution lies in his ability to provide a more substantive integument to the existing historical scaffolding. His attention to matters of local detail is what makes his book an important piece of historical scholarship.

Even so, one nagging question remains: What social forces triggered such a sanguinary course of events? The answer can only be teased out of this lengthy book. Tanwar, a conventional historian, makes no explicit attempt to theorize. A preliminary theoretical explanation, however, cannot be derived from the field of social and political history alone. Instead it must be sought in some recent scholarship in political science dealing with ethnic conflict. Political scientists, notably Barry Posen, James Fearon, and Jack Snyder, have all provided important clues about the possibilities of violent ethnic conflicts in plural societies at times of great political upheaval. Posen and Fearon have drawn attention to the role of fear and commitment problems, and Snyder has highlighted the role of unscrupulous political entrepreneurs in fomenting ethnic violence in conditions of political transition and institutional breakdown. Many of these features were present in Punjab at the time of partition. Political authority collapsed, ethnic identities crystallized, and the norms of responsible political reporting were flouted, prompting individuals and communities to fear the worst from members of other communities. Any theoretical explanation for the gruesome events of the partition of Punjab must start with an engagement of this incipient literature. Tanwar’s impressive work provides much useful grist for this mill.


Reviewed by Tan Tai Yong, National University of Singapore

With the advent of autonomy for India’s provinces in October 1936, the British viceroy of India prevailed on his provincial governors “to supply . . . confidential appreciation of local developments . . . at possibly monthly intervals.” The viceroy indicated that he wanted up-to-date political information and analyses that would be useful for policymaking. After constitutional reforms were adopted and the tempo of political activities in India began to increase, the British secretary of state also felt the need for systematic and regular reporting. In a cable in March 1937, he asked governors “to send him at short intervals, reports of the more important events . . . with an
expression of the Governor’s personal views upon them.” (The two quotations are from an earlier volume edited by Lionel Carter, Punjab Politics, 1936–1939: The Start of Provincial Autonomy—Governors’ Fortnightly Reports and Other Key Documents. New Delhi, Manohar: 2004, p. 7, 8, respectively)

These requests evoked a series of provincial reports that came to be known as “The Governor’s Fortnightly Reports.” Although provincial chief secretaries had regularly sent reports to New Delhi before the 1930s, these earlier reports had been too unfocused to meet the requirements of policymaking. A new form of report—shorter and of a more political nature—was what the viceroy and secretary of state were looking for. As a result, the fortnightly reports that were sent to New Delhi provided fairly detailed and insightful accounts of political, economic, and administrative developments in the provinces during the critical decade leading to decolonization and independence. In the case of Punjab, the reports explained why partition happened.

The volume under review is the third in a series of four compendia of fortnightly reports and other documents sent by the governor of Punjab to the viceroy of India from 1936 to 1947. The Punjab fortnightly reports contained detailed analysis and penetrating insights into economic, social, and political affairs during the final decade of colonial rule. This was a period of war, constitutional change, deteriorating communal conditions, and mounting political tensions among the Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs as they maneuvered to secure an adequate share of political power in anticipation of the end of British rule. Lionel Carter’s first volume, published in 2004, covered a three-year period beginning with the onset of provincial autonomy in the Punjab in 1936. The second volume, covering the period from 1940 to 1943, was published in 2005.

The third volume contains the texts of 126 fortnightly reports and other documents sent from Punjab to New Delhi from January 1944 to March 1947. The reports cover critical events that foreshadowed the partition of the province: the economic disruption brought about by World War II; the erosion and eventual breakdown of Unionist authority, the activities of the Indian National Congress and the Sikhs, and the growing power of the Muslim League in Punjab. The main trend during these critical years was the breakdown of a political arrangement that had been in operation since the 1920s and that, if it had persisted, could have prevented the partition of the province. The documents in this volume vividly capture the economic and political conditions, personalities, and events that eventually put paid to any hopes that the province could continue to be governed by a coalition of landed interests represented by Muslims, Hindu Jats, and Sikhs, an arrangement that had worked well in the past. The climax of the story in this volume comes with the electoral victory of the Muslim League in the 1946 elections and the resignation of the final Unionist premier, Khizar Hayat Khan, in March 1947, setting the stage for the partition of Punjab a few months later.

By publishing these important documents, most of which have hitherto been accessible only in the India Office Library in London and the National Archives of India in New Delhi, Lionel Carter, the former librarian at Cambridge University’s South Asian Studies Centre, has performed a tremendous service for students and historians.
interested in the study of late colonial Punjab. Carter is an old hand at this, having been a key member of the team that worked with Nicholas Mansergh in the 1970s and 1980s to produce the monumental, 12-volume collection documenting the transfer of power to India, *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power, 1942–47* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1970–1982). Carter’s volumes on Punjab bear all the trademarks of his meticulous skills as compiler and editor: a useful introduction that sets the context, a judicious selection of documents, and careful and clear referencing of the documents. The volume is replete with the necessary scholarly apparatus, including annotations, a table of abbreviations, a glossary, a dramatis personae, and summaries of documents.

This volume, together with the initial two and the fourth that takes the series to August 1947, provides historians and students who want a better understanding of the critical final years of British rule in Punjab with an indispensable collection of primary documents. More importantly, these volumes of documents serve to explain the breakdown of coalition politics (involving Muslims, Sikhs, and Hindus) in Punjab and the inexorable rise of polarized communal politics that eventually led to the partition of the province.

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Reviewed by Richard Breitman, American University

Operation Safehaven, a now largely forgotten Anglo-American program, was directed against a postwar German problem. As Nazi influence dissipated and Allied attitudes toward Germany changed substantially during the early Cold War, Safehaven focused on a search for German assets abroad and on efforts to persuade or force neutral countries to surrender these assets to the United States, Britain, and suitable humanitarian organizations.

Safehaven activities and records are exceedingly difficult to follow, and some records have been declassified only in very recent years. In this intensively researched book (using American, British, and German archives and a wide range of published literature), Martin Lorenz-Meyer convincingly shows that Safehaven was inevitably entangled with other policies, programs, and forces in the transition from war to peace: German reparations, integration of neutral countries and then West Germany into the postwar economic order, and restitution of stolen or “Aryanized” property.

The U.S. Treasury’s Foreign Funds Control Division and key Treasury officials were the prime sponsors of Safehaven. Some of the American discussions and debates about it were shaped by familiar polarities—Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau’s “plan” to reduce German industrial potential, and the State Department’s opposition to it. The wartime Foreign Economic Administration and even the Office of Strate-
gic Services (OSS), for its own reasons, also championed strong measures. General Dwight Eisenhower was sympathetic to the hawks. An interdepartmental committee in Washington never functioned adequately, and interagency relationships in key field stations such as Stockholm were little better.

At the Potsdam Conference, Safehaven programs became a critical part of a grand bargain whereby the Soviet Union gained approval of most of its reparations demands for the time being, including Germany’s external assets in the East. The Western powers contented themselves with shares of Germany’s external assets in Western Europe and the United States. Legal issues were smoothed over by making the Allied Control Council (ACC) the legal successor to the German government, a step that did not forestall West German objections after 1949. The failure and ultimate dissolution of the ACC during the Cold War did not change the bargain.

The long, slow process of negotiating with neutral countries was marked by different views of what was really German, different conceptions of what was appropriate behavior during the war, and different standards about international law. In the end, the Western allies received only a share of what they claimed, and neutral governments and private interests there earned some benefits. This description oversimplifies a much more complicated process that is covered by Lorenz-Meyer in painstaking detail with respect to Sweden and Switzerland.

Lorenz-Meyer is not unsympathetic to the State Department, which after Potsdam took the lead on Safehaven, pursued obvious targets, and, after interminable delays, obtained much of what it sought. Britain was far more concerned about resuming or stimulating its own foreign trade with the continent than about the efficiency of Safehaven collection, which it had never much liked.

Lorenz-Meyer presents an extensive cast of characters in many countries. He makes occasional slips, such as the spelling of Hermann Göring’s first name and the surname of the president of the Bank for International Settlements (which should be McKittrick). Some gaps also arise. Lorenz-Meyer covers the aggressive Safehaven efforts of U.S. Treasury official Josiah DuBois but neglects to mention DuBois’s role in the Treasury’s effort in late 1943 to show that the State Department had mishandled U.S. responses to the Holocaust. Another Treasury official, Iver Olsen, was a key participant in Safehaven activities in Stockholm and an advocate of a strong line there, but Lorenz-Meyer does not point out that Olsen was also representative of the American War Refugee Board in Sweden and a sponsor of Raoul Wallenberg’s humanitarian mission to Budapest in June 1944. (The busy Olsen also worked for OSS). These non-Safehaven activities of DuBois and Olsen involved serious clashes with State Department policies and probably helped to spur both men’s support of tough policies to capture German assets.

Noting that the quality of intelligence about Nazi/German assets secreted abroad was often unreliable or out of date, Lorenz-Meyer spends little time on detailed Safehaven reports. But some items still invite examination. An OSS intelligence report about the Swiss firm Interkommerz (p. 179) as a repository for Adolf Hitler’s assets serves to illustrate Lorenz-Meyer’s point that it was difficult to distinguish fact from fiction. Subsequent research has shown, however, that Interkommerz was a conduit
for German intelligence funds in Switzerland and probably also a repository for some looted Jewish property from Hungary. (On this point, see Richard Breitman et al., *U.S. Intelligence and the Nazis*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 129–130.) Safehaven reports about specific works of looted art and intermediaries in the sale of looted art have attracted interest down to the present day. A large number of Nazis and Germans stole and sent assets abroad for reasons other than preparing for a future war. How some Nazi officials managed to escape the country and take along their funds is also a topic of enduring interest.

State Department officials focused on obvious targets such as gold, foreign exchange, tangible property, and German corporate assets abroad. They hesitated to press the neutrals too hard when the latter claimed the prerogatives of national sovereignty. As Lorenz-Meyer notes in his conclusion, an indefinite continuation of economic controls and blacklisting of specific neutral companies after the war would have undercut U.S. advocacy of an economic system based on free trade.

The United States, Switzerland, Sweden, and later West Germany all disputed how to apply international law. However, to assess the legitimacy of Allied economic claims, one needs broader context. Nazi Germany financed the war in part through confiscations, distorted rates of exchange, and other forms of exploitation. Some of the latest research on this topic appears in Götz Aly’s book *Hitler’s Beneficiaries: Plunder, Racial War, and the Nazi Welfare State* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007). One does not have to agree with Aly’s statistics or interpretation, both of which have been controversial, to recognize that Nazi Germany engaged in plunder and financial exploitation on an unprecedented scale. It would be hard to argue today that official German transactions with neutral countries during the war were uncontaminated. Money is fungible.

There is room for additional work on Safehaven and for interpretations with different nuances. But scholars with an interest in Safehaven or the reparations question in general will benefit greatly from this fine, well-written book.

Reviewed by Bernd Schaefer, German Historical Institute, Washington, DC

German academic publishers are indefatigable in providing paradise-like environments for conference volumes. Almost no major academic conference or workshop held in Germany is left unprinted. As long as conveners of academic events are successful in obtaining funds to cover the entrepreneurial risks, academic publishers willingly serve as mere printing presses. Although this situation is advantageous in disseminating the fruits of academic discourse, it leads on the other hand to constant inundation with volumes irrespective of selective criteria. This pertains not only to volumes as a whole but also to almost any individual presentation at conferences or...
workshops. Participation in such gatherings entitles authors to be represented in the subsequent volume. As a result, the German-language market of academic publications is flooded with conference volumes, most of which are mixed bags in the truest sense of the word.

_Massenmedien im Kalten Krieg_ (Mass Media in the Cold War) is anything but an exception to these general rules. The book includes papers from a workshop held in May 2003 at the Center for Contemporary History Research (known under its German acronym ZZF) as the culmination of a project on “Mass Media during the Cold War,” which was funded by a multiyear grant. Contributors to the volume include the main participants in the project and other scholars who were invited to take part in the 2003 workshop. As a result, the reader is confronted with eight diverse and sometimes narrow case studies set in East or West Germany from the late 1940s through the mid-1960s. At least three of the essays extend their focus to German-German comparisons or intersections between East and West Germany.

With no barrier of language and the absence of a physical border in divided Berlin until August 1961, vigorous media efforts to win the hearts and minds of the population both at home and in the rival German state emerged naturally from the situation on the ground. Yet the building of the Berlin Wall sealed Germany’s division for an indefinite period and also signaled the limited relevance of media for the Cold War. Hearts and minds hardly mattered when interests of realpolitik and power from the guns carried the day in an age of mutually assured nuclear destruction. Although the editor, Thomas Lindenberger, convincingly explains in his introduction why the mass media played a role in Cold War history and attempts to sketch in the “big picture,” many of the essays that follow do no more than outline their respective subjects in great detail. Otherwise they make no contribution to any volume coherence or overarching questions, and neither do they claim to prove the relevance of their topics to the development of the Cold War or its historiography.

Individual preferences will determine what each reader gets out of the “mixed bag” on offer. For those who may want to avoid excessively narrow German discourses, the essays that will likely be of greatest interest are those by Ulrike Weckel on German film director Wolfgang Staudte, by Bernd Stöver on one of East Germany’s most successful propaganda films (_For Eyes Only_), by Lars Karl on the reaction in East Germany to Soviet war movies, and by Thomas Heimann on the foreign programs shown on East German television. Of more specialized interest are essays by Marcus Payk on the extremely radical (and thus marginal) West German anti-Communist publicists William S. Schlamm and Winfried Martini, and by Christine Bartlitz on Walter Adolph, a hapless Catholic “media prelate” from West Berlin. In addition, Uta C. Schmidt delivers a cogent treatise on neglected children (_Schlüsselkinder_) as a feature of debate for intra-German gender politics during the Cold War, and Uta Schwarz compares representations of ideology and gender in East German and West German newsreels (_Wochenschau_) in the 1950s.

During the first postwar decade, Wolfgang Staudte was a quintessential German film director, living in West Berlin but producing his work with the Deutsche Film-Aktiengesellschaft in Potsdam. His political pieces (_Der Untertan_, _Rotation_, _Rosen für
den Staatsanwalt) were hardly acclaimed in West Germany before the 1970s. East German propaganda organs used him against the West German state, and West German politicians and media suspected him of helping the cause of the East as a “useful idiot.” Staudte thus was living proof that no all-German artistic space existed (or could exist) in the 1950s, when pressure to take sides with one of the two antagonistic blocs was predominant. Weckel convincingly demonstrates the narrow-mindedness of both East German propaganda and an unreconstructed West German public that still had to come to terms with the Nazi past. Each German state used stereotypes to delegitimize the other, and each of them unwittingly lived up to those stereotypes. Staudte was caught between the two states but thus created some of the best German-language films of the early postwar period.

Rather accidentally, the film For Eyes Only came out in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in 1963, just a year after the first James Bond production appeared in the West. The two releases were unconnected, but some features of this spy and action movie genre were strikingly similar. For Eyes Only drew comparatively large audiences in East Germany and became a socialist export hit from Moscow to Hanoi and Pyongyang, in much the same way that Sean Connery’s Dr. No drew crowds throughout Europe, North America, and Oceania. But unlike the James Bond movies, which made no attempt to hide their fictional nature, For Eyes Only purported to be depicting the “truth” about Western invasion plans to destroy an East Germany ultimately saved from the “imperialists” by the 1961 building of the Berlin Wall. Rather than dwelling on the artistic aspects of the film and its genre, Stöver thoroughly examines the political background and provides factual accuracy checks of the East German films’ portrayal of real or alleged Western “liberation” schemes directed against the Communist regime in the GDR. Stöver’s essay makes for highly informative reading based on prodigious research but sometimes takes productions like For Eyes Only a bit too seriously within the political context of the times: Propagandistic messages were easily transparent for East German audiences, who still liked this particular film because, by East-bloc standards, it was extremely well made and had a great script. The screenwriter was Harry Thürk, who later wrote ideologically correct political fiction for the mass market and became one of East Germany’s bestselling authors. This happened despite his obvious propagandistic intentions. By any standard, he was an extremely skilled writer of captivating plots.

Lars Karl describes how East German citizens reacted to several Soviet documentaries and movies about World War II produced between 1945 and 1965. His essay focuses on the impact of the post-1956 “thaw” productions, including Mikhail Kalatozov’s The Cranes Are Flying (1957) and Andrei Tarkovskii’s first official movie, Ivan’s Childhood (1962). Until the thaw, Soviet war films glorified Stalinist heroism and collectivism as well as “the leader” himself, creating resentment among East German cinemagoers. But the post-1956 films portrayed their human characters in a manner that transcended ideological and national boundaries. Slightly non-conformist artworks from the USSR created one of the few imaginary bonds between the East German and Soviet populations, a phenomenon that also applied to German
translations of certain Soviet literary works (e.g., the writings of Chingiz Aitmatov) and gained renewed vigor after 1986.

The final contribution is by Thomas Heimann, one of Germany’s leading specialists on the history of East German television. He provides an insightful essay discussing the foreign programs shown on East German television in the 1960s. Broadcasting daily on one channel until 1969 and on two thereafter, East German television managers could not fill their programming schedule exclusively with East German productions. They had to rely to a substantial degree on imports from socialist “fraternal” countries (Intervision) and West European productions (Eurovision), including West German programs. In the 1960s, West Germany accounted for roughly one-third of East Germany’s imported programs. (In the 1970s this “Westernizing” tendency was partly replaced by “Sovietization” but eventually returned to the earlier patterns.) Heimann’s findings, combined with the fact that more than 70 percent of East German households with television were also able to receive West German programs, underscore the limits of political mass communications in East Germany.


Reviewed by Torsten Diedrich, Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt (Germany)

“Tell the King that after the battle my head belongs to him. During the battle I still need it to serve him.” (Quoted in Walther von Seydlitz, Stalingrad, Konflikt und Konsequenz: Erinnerungen, Hamburg: Oldenburg, 1977, p. 16.) Those words, uttered by the famous cavalry leader Friedrich Wilhelm von Seydlitz-Kurzbach (1721–1773) under Prussian King Frederick II during the battle of Zorndorf in 1758, probably reveal a character trait of the von Seydlitz family. In addition to courage, bravery, and loyalty, they had a distinctive self-confidence and were able to take independent and responsible action. In the case of Zorndorf, the cavalry general delayed the time of his attack despite an urgent order from the king and thus contributed to the victory of the Prussian forces.

Not surprisingly, Friedrich Wilhelm von Seydlitz-Kurzbach enjoys a glorious reputation in German history, but another famous son of that dynasty, the Wehrmacht commander General of the Artillery Walther von Seydlitz-Kurzbach is a controversial figure. His loyalty to the Wehrmacht as the commander of the 12th Infantry Division in the western campaign of 1940 and during the war of annihilation against the Soviet Union in 1941 is not what has subjected him to criticism. Seydlitz, the celebrated hero of Demjansk—who together with his “Group Seydlitz” liberated some 100,000 soldiers of the Sixteenth Army from encirclement in the spring of 1942—was at the same time involved in the implementation of the Commissar Order to kill Soviet po-
political officers and in the brutal warfare against the civilian population. Until the encirclement of Stalingrad and his capture by Soviet forces, he was a loyally serving general to Adolf Hitler.

Yet Seydlitz was criticized even more for the determined struggle he waged against Hitler from captivity and under Soviet influence. Not only was Seydlitz the cofounder of the Bund Deutscher Offiziere (BDO—Federation of German Officers), he even developed plans to have a German army of some 40,000 prisoners of war (POWs) march against Germany. In light of these controversies, one might think that it would be difficult to examine both his life and his reception in history from a detached perspective.

Those who browse this book by the young historian Julia Warth will be pleased by the meticulousness, the critical yet benevolent distance, and the well-balanced judgment she displays on these complicated matters. She succeeds in understanding Seydlitz as a typical officer of his generation who had been raised with the engrained values of loyalty, obedience to orders, and hierarchical thinking. She explains that he, like many of his fellow soldiers, much preferred the authoritarian state to the Weimar Republic and its instability. As a soldier, Seydlitz was eager to reestablish the outstanding position of the military in society and to reintroduce Germany to the concert of the great powers. The thinking of a whole generation of officers is thus neatly embodied in Walther von Seydlitz, a way of thinking that accounted for the harmonization and partial identity of interests between the German military and National Socialism (NS).

Decorated with the “oak leaves” and as General of the Artillery commanding the LI Army Corps of the Sixth Army under Armor General (General der Panzertruppe) Friedrich Paulus, Seydlitz remained an obedient officer of the Führer for a long while, although—as Warth shows—after the Sponeck trial and the conduct of the relief offensive that went against the soldiers’ lives, Seydlitz entertained nagging doubts (p. 101).

The decisive turning point in his life came with his experience during the battle of encirclement at Stalingrad. When the entire Sixth Army was encircled by Soviet troops in late November 1942, Seydlitz immediately and more wholeheartedly than any other commanding general called for an independent breakout contrary to Hitler’s orders. Seydlitz’s memorandum was an unparalleled act of disobedience, but he felt obliged to do it in the interest not only of German warfare but also of his soldiers. According to Warth, Seydlitz understood the request for a “refusal to obey orders within the scope of a generally loyal attitude toward the NS regime” (p. 109). He backed down only after Hitler—who did not know about Seydlitz’s memorandum—gave Seydlitz responsibility for the north front of the encirclement, and Armor General Paulus left it to Seydlitz to break out at his own discretion. Even Paulus could not disobey a direct order from the commander-in-chief of the Wehrmacht. Warth tries to explain why Paulus and Seydlitz stuck with Hitler’s insistence on a disastrous approach, citing their natures and the situation. However, in trying to understand the plight of the army commanders, she probably does not devote enough attention to the military aspects.
The outcome of the battle proved Seydlitz right and led him to understand that Hitler was waging the war without respect for his soldiers or his people. Seydlitz was firm in his renunciation of National Socialism. Warth’s sixth chapter is titled “Weg in den Widerstand” (Road to Resistance), and her findings bear out other research showing that the Nationalkomitee Freies Deutschland (National Committee of Free Germany—NKFD) and the BDO, despite being under strong Soviet influence, were resistance movements against National Socialism.

Sooner than most other generals in Soviet captivity, Seydlitz realized that the war could not be won and that they had to do all they could to prevent a total defeat of Germany. He made himself available to the NKFD in 1943 and became its vice president. Soon thereafter he cofounded the BDO and became its president. Warth rightly shows that Seydlitz did not become a mere accomplice of the Soviet Union. Instead, he worked hard to transform the NKFD and BDO into a German movement with German interests and objectives. He was committed to preventing a recurrence of the events of 1918, when Germany lost the war and was forced to accept the conditions for peace dictated by others. His efforts were devoted to a new “strong” Germany that was to gain its strength by getting rid of the National Socialist dictatorship on its own. Not least, this was backed by the promises of high-ranking Soviet officials to facilitate the withdrawal of the Wehrmacht to the borders of the Reich and to support the necessary political changes using resistance fighters who were currently in the USSR (even an exile government was considered). Only in this context can Seydlitz’s intentions to contribute to the overthrow of National Socialism with a volunteer army of German POWs be understood. In proposing this idea, he was well aware that the National Socialists would never forgive him. His family was held liable for his actions, and he was sentenced to death in absentia by the Reichskriegsgericht (Reich Court-Martial).

When Seydlitz later surmised that the NKFD and BDO were unnecessary Soviet appendages that could not alter a decision about the future of Germany that had already been finalized by the Allies, he renounced the Soviet system with equal determination. Seydlitz remained the national patriot he had always been. He paid for his loyalty to his beliefs with a conviction for war crimes and was repatriated from the USSR only in 1955.

Although Seydlitz throughout his career had sought to uphold his personal convictions, his release from captivity in 1955 and his return to his family in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) brought him face-to-face with an uncomprehending society. To Warth’s great credit, she does not end her book with the almost complete withdrawal of Seydlitz from public life. Although he succeeded in gaining commutation of the death sentence levied against him by the National Socialists, his attitude and activities were hardly met with understanding and tolerance in the FRG in the 1950s and 1960s. As a result, his autobiographical reminiscences, which explained the thinking and actions of an honest German officer, could not be published during his lifetime (when they might have been construed as a form of exculpation) but only after his death.

Warth devotes two chapters to a critical analysis of how the FRG dealt with
Seydlitz after he returned to his native country and lived there for another twenty years without ever feeling completely at home. In her conclusion, she studies the image of Seydlitz against the backdrop of the way the resistance against National Socialism was treated in both the FRG and the German Democratic Republic.

Warth has written a thoroughly researched book with well-founded judgments about Walther von Seydlitz. She goes beyond the strictly biographical approach and includes an exemplary analysis of his reception in history. The book is an impressive achievement in research, and it is eminently readable despite some theoretical insertions. Above all, Warth paints a complex albeit critical picture of her protagonist that is thoroughly convincing.


Reviewed by Richard Drake, University of Montana

François Furet’s wide-ranging analysis of left-wing European intellectuals, *The Passing of an Illusion: The Idea of Communism in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), condemned Marxism-Leninism as an unparalleled scourge on the world. As an ex-Marxist, Furet could point to the power of Marxism’s ideals in his own coming of age on the French Left in the late 1940s, but the hideous practical consequences that ensued wherever Communists took power underscored the ideology’s fatal errors. Salvatore Sechi’s *Compagno e cittadino: Il PCI tra via parlamentare e lotta armata* is, in effect, a gigantic blowup of the Italian illusion concerning Communism.

Sechi, like Furet, went through a youthful Communist phase. This highly personal collection of essays begins with a long autobiographical introduction. An ambitious and talented intellectual, Sechi became a regular contributor to many of the leading journals of the left. For a time in the 1960s he entered the orbit of Raniero Panzieri’s legendary *Quaderni rossi*, the major early publication of Italy’s extra-parliamentary left, which viewed the Italian Communist Party (PCI) as insufficiently revolutionary. To gain a basic understanding of Sechi’s state of mind during his Communist period, it is enough to know that in 1972 he exulted in the terrorist assassination of the police official Luigi Calabresi. The left had denounced Calabresi for supposedly causing the death of Giuseppe Pinelli, an anarchist suspected of perpetrating the Piazza Fontana bank bombing three years earlier that inaugurated Italy’s savage reign of right-wing and left-wing terror. The accusation against Calabresi is now known to have been groundless. Sechi censures his ideologically infatuated young self, and he describes the process by which the scales of Communism fell from his eyes.

Heroes and villains crowd the pages of Sechi’s anthology of essays, which he wrote mainly in the 1990s. Among the heroes, Rosario Romeo stands out as the histo-
rian whose example inspired Sechi to think about history not in the Communist manner as a means of advancing a political cause, but as an academic discipline devoted to the pursuit of truth, no matter where the evidence might lead. Sechi draws a telling comparison between Antonio Gramsci, the guru of the Communist left, who was slavishly devoted to totalitarian Leninism, and Romeo, who was notable for his intellectual rigor and honesty. Having been persuaded by Romeo’s traditionalist principles of research and writing, Sechi became an uncomfortable presence at PCI section meetings. He began to ask awkward questions about the party line and to press for truthful answers based on evidence and facts. Amid fierce mutual recriminations, he soon ceased to be a member of the party.

Of the villains, none can compare with Palmiro Togliatti, the long-time leader of the PCI. For Sechi, Togliatti embodied all of the party’s political, intellectual, and moral failings. Relying to a significant extent on research in the Russian archives by Elena Aga-Rossi and Victor Zaslavsky, Sechi accuses Togliatti of having been little more than a front man in Italy for Soviet interests. Sechi asserts that after the publication of Aga-Rossi’s and Zaslavsky’s *Togliatti e Stalin: Il PCI e la politica estera staliniana negli archivi di Mosca* (Bologna: Il mulino, 1997), the verdict against “Il Migliore” (The Best), as the Communist faithful called Togliatti, cannot be disputed. (An expanded edition of *Togliatti e Stalin* appeared in 2007.) Nonetheless, with unflagging imperturbability, Communist and semi-Communist historians go on publishing vindications of “that Stalinist functionary implicated in the horrors of Communism who was Togliatti” (p. 243).

Sechi has compiled much research of his own, primarily from U.S. government archives. In general, he praises the U.S. diplomatic personnel based in post-1945 Italy for their pragmatic style and their accuracy in describing the turmoil and dangers facing the country. James C. Dunn, the Truman administration’s ambassador to Italy, quickly realized that despite the PCI’s professions of democracy the party remained a tool of the Soviet Union. Sechi quotes at length from Dunn’s reports to Secretary of State George C. Marshall, who had the acumen to tell the difference between politically motivated intelligence and the real kind. Marshall also understood the crucial difference that hunger and poverty can make in the advance of extremist ideologies. The introduction of the Marshall Plan marked the beginning of a new era of democratic prosperity in Italy.

Even so, the PCI long remained a powerful force in Italian political and cultural life. Sechi sees its influence as almost entirely baleful. For twenty years, the party’s secret paramilitary organization, numbering at one point as many as 200,000 armed men, posed a constant threat to Italian democracy. In the culture of the PCI, he finds the origins of the Red Brigades, which came to the fore in the early 1970s touting the old-time religion of Marxism-Leninism just as Togliatti’s political heir, Enrico Berlinguer, was beginning to desert the faith while claiming to be doing no such thing. Amid much mystification about the PCI’s intentions under the banner of Berlinguer’s putatively democratic yet still, according to him, authentically Marxist-Leninist Eurocommunism, the party became increasingly reformist in outlook and practice. Sechi denounces Eurocommunism as a complete fraud. Marxism-Leninism
could not be made democratic, he contends, thereby illuminating the real meaning of his title, “Comrade Citizen,” which he intends to be understood as a contradiction in terms. No room could be found in the Marxist-Leninist ideology for an honest acceptance of opposing parties, on whose existence democracy depends absolutely.

Unlike Furet, Sechi does not see Communism as an illusion that has passed. Although it is greatly reduced in potency and extent, it remains alive in Italy both politically and intellectually. Unlike fascism, Communism has survived Italy’s experience with it. The immense physical destruction of fascism’s lost war put an effective end to that ideology as a serious force in Italian life, but the political consequences in Italy of far-off velvet revolutions that almost bloodlessly brought the Cold War to an end have not had a comparable effect on the left.


Reviewed by Anar Valiyev, Masaryk University (Brno, Czech Republic)

Russian historians and their Western colleagues often disagree about the dates and events that triggered the Cold War. Many Russian historians (like their Soviet predecessors) date the beginning of the conflict to Winston Churchill’s famous speech at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri on 5 March 1946. By contrast, many Western historians see the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, or the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia as the real starting point. Neither of these timelines is accepted by Jamil Hasanli, a professor of modern history at Baku State University in Azerbaijan, whose new book, *At the Dawn of the Cold War*, brings to the fore the early postwar confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States in southwest Asia, one of the most complicated and important regions in the 1940s. Hasanli provides a valuable, thoroughly researched account of one of the least studied topics in Cold War history—the tense U.S.-Soviet crisis over Iranian Azerbaijan, the establishment of the short-lived Azerbaijan People’s Republic under Soviet auspices, and the liquidation of that puppet regime by the U.S.-backed Iranian army. Based on top-secret archival materials from Soviet and Azerbaijani archives as well as documents from U.S., British, and Iranian sources, the book details Iranian Azerbaijan’s independence movement, the Soviet struggle for oil concessions in Iran, and the U.S. and British reactions to these events.

*At the Dawn of the Cold War* brings to light a great deal of important information about Soviet actions and plans in southern Azerbaijan. The Soviet occupation and annexation of western Belarus and western Ukraine inspired leaders in Moscow to try to use the same model in Azerbaijan. Newly released documents show, however, that the Soviet dictator Josif Stalin did not have a clear-cut strategy in that region. Hasanli demonstrates that during the early stages of Soviet involvement in Iran (1941–1942) Soviet leader could not decide on specific steps to take. One of the possible ways to ex-
pand Soviet influence in Iran was by playing the “Kurdish card”—that is, by instigating a Kurdish separatist movement in Iran. Later on, however, Soviet leaders settled on the use of Azerbaijan as a wedge against both the Iranian government and the West.

The book shows that in the midst of war with Germany, when generals Erwin Rommel (from Northern Africa) and Friedrich Paulus (from Stalingrad) were rushing to link up in Beirut, the Soviet Union and Great Britain were struggling against each other for influence in southern Azerbaijan. The book contains many examples of how each side tried to neutralize the other’s agents of influence and to spy on the other. Hasanli does a wonderful job of documenting the Soviet-U.S.-British struggle over the rich oil reserves in Iran and the policies adopted by each side. It is interesting to see how the great powers manipulated the people of Iran, including Azerbaijanis, to obtain oil concessions. The denial of oil concessions rights to the Soviet Union prompted Moscow to instigate protests and demonstrations that successfully toppled the Iranian government headed by Muhammad Sa’ed Maraghei. Hasanli skillfully shows how the Soviet authorities exploited Azerbaijani national aspirations for their own ends. For Moscow, what mattered was not the Azerbaijani national independence movement per se but the securing of oil concessions. The Soviet Union used the Azerbaijani’s struggle to push forward its own oil interests. Many Azerbaijanis, for their part, saw the struggle between Soviet Union and the West as a good opportunity to gain independence.

The book provides extensive new information about political figures such as Mir-Jafar Baghirov, the autocratic leader of the Soviet Azerbaijani Communist Party; Sayyed Ja’far Pishevari, the founder and chairman of the Azerbaijani People’s Government; and many others. Baghirov’s persona has long been a mystery. Scholars have generally regarded him as an eager accomplice in the Stalinist terror, responsible for many crimes. Hasanli’s book gives a much more positive depiction of Baghirov, presenting him as an intelligent man and genuine patriot of Azerbaijan. According to Hasanli, Baghirov’s aim of uniting southern and northern Azerbaijan cannot be explained solely as an attempt to establish Communism over the new territories. Baghirov was a sincere Stalinist, but Hasanli argues that Baghirov’s promotion of southern Azerbaijan’s agenda was also intended to fulfill the Azerbaijanis’ goal of unification after many centuries of having been separated by the Persian and the Russian empires.

Hasanli contends that Baghirov and Pishchevarv were the main figures in the Soviet establishment who were pushing the idea of independence. In many instances, Baghirov was able to persuade Moscow to alter its policy in southern Azerbaijan. Pishchevarv has long been regarded as a servile Stalinist, but, as with Baghirov, Hasanli offers a more positive image by tracing Pishchevarv’s political views and expectations about the future of southern Azerbaijan. Pishchevarv, as presented here, was an idealistic official who was aware of the precariousness of his government, which depended on Soviet backing that was not guaranteed to last if the incipient Cold War forced a reconsideration in Moscow. Pishchevarv’s views were much more radical than Baghirov’s and Stalin’s. Whereas the Soviet authorities wanted only autonomy for southern
Azerbaijan, Pishevari was championing independence for southern Azerbaijan and seeking unification with the north.

Hasanli tries to determine why the Soviet Union withdrew its support for the loyal, pro-Moscow regime in southern Azerbaijan. He rightly concludes that Stalin did not want a military conflict with the United States at a time when the Soviet Union was still recovering from the enormous destruction of World War II. Nuclear weapons, according to Hasanli, also played a role. Whether this last point is accurate is unclear. President Truman claimed in his memoirs that in early March 1946 he secretly warned Soviet Ambassador Andrei Gromyko that the United States might use force, including nuclear weapons, if the Soviet Union did not withdraw, but no solid evidence has emerged to support Truman’s retrospective assertion. Secretary of State James F. Byrnes did warn in general terms on 28 February 1946 that “the United States intends to defend the [United Nations] Charter,” but this was well short of an overt threat of nuclear war.

The reoccupation of southern Azerbaijan by Iranian troops in the latter part of 1946 resulted in numerous arrests and executions. Most previous accounts of the crisis, such as Gary Hess’s “The Iranian Crisis of 1945–46 and the Cold War,” Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 89, No. 1 (March 1974), pp. 117–146, contend that the population of southern Azerbaijan welcomed the Iranian troops, but Hasanli shows that the situation was more complicated. He points out that some Azerbaijanis took up arms against the Iranian forces.

Counterfactuals are inherently impossible to judge. We cannot know today what would have happened if Stalin had proceeded with the unification of northern and southern Azerbaijan. If Azerbaijan had also become independent (rather than simply being reannexed by the Soviet Union), the map of the Middle East undoubtedly would have been much different, and Azerbaijan likely would have become a country of significant strategic importance and a major regional actor.

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Reviewed by Warren I. Cohen, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

The 1971–1972 negotiations between Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon and their Chinese interlocutors have been analyzed in great detail by James Mann, Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, and Margaret McMillan, among others. Since 1999, when William Burr published the transcripts of Kissinger’s conversations with the Chinese, few if any scholars have continued to give much credence to the notoriously self-serving memoirs written by the principal U.S. participants. At this point, the benefits from further study of the American side of those meetings are likely minimal. By contrast, there is always value to adding texture to the Chinese side. Yafeng Xia, a former Chinese foreign service officer, is uniquely positioned to shed greater light on the aims...
and methods of Zhou Enlai, Mao Zedong, and their subordinates—and he does not
disappoint. He offers no great surprises, no extraordinary documents, and no provoc-
ative interpretations, but _Negotiating with the Enemy_ is the most thorough study to
date of Beijing’s perception of the talks with Americans from 1949 to 1972.

Xia’s central contention is that the largely fruitless Chinese-American meetings
from 1955 to 1968 actually paved the way for Kissinger and Nixon to meet with
Zhou and Mao. Each side, he writes, learned something about the other’s priorities
and negotiating style, enabling them to achieve success at the high-level talks of 1971
and 1972. Given the continuity in Beijing throughout the years covered in the book,
with Mao and Zhou in charge of foreign policy, it is certainly plausible that the Chi-
nese leaders gained insight into the American approach. Students of the American side
have reason to be skeptical, especially because of the disdain both Kissinger and Nixon
displayed toward the efforts of their diplomatic corps and their doubts that the past
work of foreign service officers could teach them much.

Consistent with what other Chinese scholars and officials have been telling us for
some time, Xia insists that Mao was the “decider” and that Zhou’s primary responsi-
ability was to manage day-to-day operations. Xia concedes that Zhou had the opportu-
nity to influence Mao subtly by controlling most of what Mao read. Xia clearly has a
highly favorable view of Zhou and excludes the portrait of Zhou as a sycophant that
has emerged in recent years. In the Chinese effort to achieve rapprochement with the
United States, Zhou as depicted here was the man who had to persuade the ultra-
leftists of the need to reverse policy.

Xia understands the importance of the relationship between domestic politics
and decisions about foreign policy. He passes lightly over the familiar American con-
text and tries to see what was going on in the corridors of power in Beijing. In this ef-
fort he is less successful than Li Jie in his valuable essay published in William Kirby,
Robert Ross, and Gong Li, eds., _Normalization of U.S. China Relations: An Interna-
tional History_ (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005). Li Jie traced
the factions within the Chinese leadership and the role they played from 1969 to
1979. Nonetheless, Xia transcends the frequent Chinese insistence that no differences
or conflicts existed between the men who attempted to influence policy toward the
United States.

Why were the Chinese so receptive to rapprochement with Washington in 1971?
Xia rightly stresses security concerns and provides ample evidence of Mao’s and Zhou’s
realization that playing the American card was their best bet for deterring a major
Soviet attack. Xia also demonstrates the salience of Chinese pride: Mao and Zhou per-
ceived Nixon’s desire to fly to Beijing as an act of homage and evidence that the
United States was at last according China its rightful place in the universe. The leader
of the “free world” had asked to be allowed to meet with them, to seek their assistance
in checking Soviet power. China had indeed “stood up”—and Nixon’s visit signaled
China’s great-power stature to the rest of the world. Xia might have added that the
preliminary concessions made by Kissinger and Nixon on the Taiwan issue indicated
that the United States was removing what had been the major obstacle to progress in
previous negotiations, but—incredibly—he seems to think that the Chinese side conceded at least as much.

Xia appears to have a less firm grasp of American policy from 1949 to 1969 and an excessively benign view of Mao’s antics in the 1940s. Xia’s discussion of Mao’s approach to the United States during the 1946 mission of George Marshall omits mention of the anti-American campaign that Mao ordered in June of that year. When Xia analyzes Mao’s decision to seize the American barracks in Beijing in January 1950, he neglects to note that the United States had already signaled its intent to move its embassy from Nanjing to that property—in preparation for recognition of the People’s Republic. Xia leaves no doubt, however, that Mao had decided he did not want normal diplomatic relations with the United States at that time and was determined to drive all Americans out of China.

Xia also understates Dwight Eisenhower’s interest in dealing with China and may be unaware of the revisionist historiography that persuasively shows that Eisenhower and not his more belligerent secretary of state controlled U.S. policy. Xia does, however, offer the most persuasive account to date of Mao’s shifting goals and rationalizations during the 1958 Taiwan Strait crisis.

In sum, Xia has written a valuable book that adds considerably to our understanding of Chinese negotiating style and aims from 1949 to 1972.

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Reviewed by Sabrina P. Ramet, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

This engaging volume focuses on the politics of orchestral and chamber music in the early years of the Cold War. The starting point for Mark Carroll is a concert of chamber music presented in Paris in 1952, which was apparently intended to showcase “Western”—as opposed to Communist-bloc—musical achievements. As the Cold War heated up, Carroll notes, the tendency in both East and West was to read musical styles as either “Western” or “Soviet,” with socialist realist music as the classic embodiment of the latter. But serial music was ostentatiously independent, and its practitioners refused to identify with either bloc.

Soviet leaders ultimately spent more time than the Americans worrying about the messages carried by music. During the era of Josif Stalin, the charge of “formalism,” levied at such symphonic works as Dmitrii Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 8 and Igor Stravinsky’s Symphony in C, was tantamount to an ecclesiastical anathema. Of course, some composers such as Charles Koechlin (1867–1950) resisted being classified as either Western or Soviet and insisted on artistic liberty. Koechlin maintained that there was no necessary contradiction between art for art’s sake and a constructive role for art or music produced in that spirit.

Stalin famously declared himself in favor of lively tunes that one could hum or
Whistle. Twelve-tone music, which had its origins during World War I, was relatively inaccessible and openly elitist, and it therefore was incapable of winning Stalin's favor. No surprise, then, that Sidney Finkelstein, a New York Marxist, would criticize twelve-tone music for having “failed to represent the [concerns] of the workers and peasants,” indeed as a genre that “actually signified the abandonment by intellectuals of the desire to portray the real world” (p. 53).

To be sure, Stalin was not the one who coined the term “socialist realism.” The term was first used by the novelist Maksim Gorky in his address to the first Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934. Carroll argues, quite reasonably, that if the socialist realist genre had been developed as Gorky intended, perhaps socialist realism would have been seen as “a perfectly defensible theory of art,” as Jean-Paul Sartre once put it (p. 103). The notion that political purpose could be expressed in prose went unchallenged, but some intellectuals—Sartre included—doubted that music was capable of conveying clear and intelligible political meanings. Even painting was not as perspicuous as prose, and Sartre averred that Picasso’s famous painting Guernica, depicting the suffering of Spaniards whose city was bombed by Nazi Germany during the Spanish Civil War, could be interpreted in various ways. In a polemic directed at René Leibowitz, Sartre went further in contending that the same music, wedded to different texts, could sing the praises of a variety of political figures and political systems. Having watched a film many years ago in which the bacchanalian strains of the Witches’ Sabbath movement of Hector Berlioz’s Symphonie Fantastique were used as musical backdrop for a patriotic American film, I am inclined to agree. Change the text or change the visual images, and the meaning we read into music can indeed bend.

Also discussed in this volume are the Prague Manifesto of 1948 (which forced composers and critics to confront the dilemma of musical meaning), the story of serialism (a technique for arranging musical composition) in France, and debates about serialism in postwar France.

Carroll, a lecturer in music at the Elder Conservatorium of the University of Adelaide, has written a fascinating book in which arguments about the meanings of music are shown to have political dimensions and in which the interests of political establishments in exploiting music for their own purposes are revealed to be never entirely successful. This is, in short, a brilliant book, wonderful to read!


Reviewed by Vladimir Pechatnov, Moscow State Institute of International Relations

It is very difficult to break new ground in a vast scholarly and popular history of Josif Stalin’s policies. Yet Geoffrey Roberts—a well-known authority on Soviet military operations and diplomacy during World War II—has managed to do just that in his new book. The book is innovative in treating World War II and the early Cold War as
a continuum, linked by historical context and Stalin’s leadership. One advantage of this perspective is that it allows Roberts to trace the whole arc of Stalin’s strategy toward the West during the critical decade of the 1940s. Another advantage is that World War II and the early Cold War, despite the many differences, were alike in being periods of constant crises and extreme mobilization for the Soviet Union, thus providing an ideal setting for analyzing Stalin as a warlord and crisis manager. Roberts enhances this structural advantage by integrating military and diplomatic history into a thorough analysis of Stalin’s grand strategy while paying due attention to the Soviet domestic scene.

Another of Roberts’s achievements is his unsurpassed (among his colleagues in the West) use of the relevant Russian-language publications and archival material. He has unearthed everything worthwhile written on this subject in Russian from both the Soviet and the post-Soviet periods. He thereby expands the data base otherwise unavailable to most foreign historians of the period and gives a lot of credit to his Russian colleagues, treating them as equal partners in a common endeavor—something that this reviewer, for one, finds refreshing.

Roberts is straightforward about the main conclusions of his book, laying them out at the start. He depicts Stalin as “the greatest of war leaders, as a man who preferred peace to Cold War, and as a politician who presided over a process of postwar domestic reform” (p. xii). Each of those postulates is bound to be highly controversial. Roberts fully anticipates this and seems to enjoy it. He is not in the business of rehabilitating Stalin, for he clearly sees Stalin’s many crimes and blunders and occasional madness. But Roberts’s depiction of a great dictator goes against much of the recent, especially Western, historiography that treats Stalin as little more than a cruel tyrant (which he was) or inept bungler who was his own worst enemy.

The bulk of the book is devoted to Stalin’s role in World War II and is the most convincing and best-documented part. Documents from the Russian archives fully confirm the dictator’s central role in Soviet decision-making. Stalin, to a much greater degree than his Western counterparts, was the organizer-in-chief of the Soviet war effort, overseeing military strategy, defense production, diplomacy, intelligence, propaganda, and nearly everything else. In these tasks he showed great power of concentration, mastery of both grand strategy and small detail, remarkable industriousness, and organizational skills. War proved to be his milieu, and one does not have to be an admirer of Stalin to give him his due as an able and effective wartime leader who, despite some serious mistakes, performed reasonably well under life-and-death circumstances. Whether Stalin was “the most indispensable” of the Big Three, as Roberts claims, is a different question that has no definite answer, but Roberts is right in emphasizing the critical importance of Stalin’s leadership, which, after all, is only natural for any dictatorship.

Roberts’s related conclusion that Stalin’s dictatorship “was the only system that could have won the titanic struggle against Hitler” (p. 29) requires more detailed evidence and additional in-depth research to measure that system’s performance during the war more precisely. The obvious advantages of central planning and totalitarian controls for mobilizing and concentrating resources were often outweighed by the
lack of individual initiative, of flexibility, and of capacity for self-correction that are typical for democratic systems. Roberts’s main point, though, deals with the system’s cruelty and harshness in forcing people to do their utmost regardless of human cost and sacrifice. His conclusion that the war of national survival could not have been won without such methods is a sad but plausible observation on human nature and the grim reality of total war.

Roberts is on somewhat shakier ground in describing Stalin as a statesman of good will who really wanted to avoid the Cold War and who tried exceedingly hard and failed only because of the West’s refusal to accommodate Soviet security interests and national self-esteem. Roberts, to his credit, shows a rare empathy for Soviet sensibilities, rightly emphasizing the importance of national pride and patriotism enhanced by the great victory over Nazi Germany. But he provides little new documentary evidence to support his case and instead just offers a benign interpretation of Soviet postwar policies, taking Stalin’s rhetoric at face value. There is little doubt that Western countries made a sizable contribution to the origins of the Cold War and that the breakdown of cooperation was not Stalin’s first choice, but the fact is that Stalin almost immediately accommodated himself to the Cold War and found it useful for his purposes. The Cold War with its imperatives of iron discipline, vigilance, and mobilization became a functional equivalent of real war (though without the latter’s destructiveness and bloodshed) and helped to sustain the Stalinist system that was hardly compatible with détente.

Roberts is well aware of this domestic linkage dilemma and tries to solve it by his third main proposition, claiming that Stalin in his final years was initiating a series of reforms aimed at mellowing his own system (pp. xii, 344). But Roberts does not substantiate this claim, which goes against the evidence cited by other scholars such as Elena Zubkova. Although Stalin was apparently trying to make the system more rational and institutionalized, his motives were purely domestic, and he was not intent on making it more compatible with peaceful coexistence. Yet even though Roberts overstates his case on this issue, he performs the useful task of posing new questions and challenging conventional wisdom.

Overall, Robert’s book is the most impressive English-language source on Stalin’s wartime leadership and will remain a definitive account that is bound to stimulate professional debate on both sides of the Atlantic.

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Reviewed by Evan Mawdsley, University of Glasgow

This impressive book is one of the latest volumes in Yale University Press’s remarkable *Annals of Communism* series. The volume provides a history of the penal system in the Soviet Union run by the Main Administration of Labor Camps, Labor Colonies, and
Places of Confinement under the People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs. The acronym for this agency, GULag, is now widely used as the designation for the camp network itself.

_The History of the Gulag_ is more than just a collection of primary sources. The 106 documents are embedded within a longer descriptive and analytical text, and the reader is skillfully guided through them by one of the leading experts on the Stalin era. In contrast to Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s _Gulag Archipelago_, this collection is based not on the testimony of prisoners but on the internal correspondence and reports of the officials of the system. Few of the documents come from the top of the political system; the main exceptions are reports commissioned by Nikita Khrushchev in the mid-1950s to quantify the excesses of the Stalinist gulag. Occasionally the book strays from the subject of the gulag proper, notably with an extended treatment of the origins of the Great Terror. However, from a historian of Oleg Khlevniuk’s stature this additional material is a positive rather than negative feature.

The gulag officially existed from 1934 until 1956, so the main title of the book is somewhat misleading. The story of the wartime and postwar situation in the gulag is also very important, as are the revolts and dismantling after Josif Stalin’s death in 1953. Fuller coverage would, however, have led either to an impractically long volume or to superficial treatment. Khlevniuk begins by taking us back before the formal creation of the gulag to the mass expulsion of kulaks (more prosperous peasants) starting in 1929. This is the event that made a massive penal apparatus necessary, so it surely is an essential part of the story. The subtitle is also slightly inaccurate insofar as the treatment extends beyond the Great Terror of 1937–1938 to deal with the 1938–1941 mass deportations of border nationalities.

In general, the documents are clearly presented and annotated. Some of the larger tables could have been laid out more clearly, and the map of gulag sites unfortunately gives few details. The book would have been improved by fuller maps, making it possible for the reader to locate the various camp complexes discussed in the text. These are, however, only minor flaws.

The documents are fascinating. What particularly emerges is the abuse of power by lower-level officials coupled with the top leaders’ willful ignorance of reality. Although some attempts were made to punish officials and guards who exceeded their authority, such excesses were nothing compared to the brutal social engineering organized from above. Moscow’s plans sometimes went badly wrong, for example in the abortive attempts in 1932–1933 to create labor settlements in Western Siberia and Kazakhstan. The volume also makes clear the practical problems of accommodating hundreds of thousands of prisoners, let alone finding productive work for them to do. The lack of infrastructure in labor camps transformed them into “provisional death camps,” and the book contains a vivid report of the horror of Nazino Island in 1933. The documents demonstrate the physical limits of the gulag, and Khlevniuk suggests that one of the reasons for the mass shootings in 1937–1938 was that the camp system could not be expanded to accommodate the growing number of “class enemies.” Of special interest is the chapter on numbers of inmates and their characteristics, with re-
ports prepared in the 1950s. Precise numbers of deaths will never be known, but Khlevniuk argues that the official statistics must represent a minimum.

Khlevniuk convincingly argues that the policy of repression was orchestrated from above, in particular by Stalin himself (rather than his chief of secret police, Nikolai Ezhov). The aims of the system were political rather than economic. The huge expansion of the gulag made it function less effectively as an economic organ. The gulag’s contribution to industry was limited, even in forestry and mining, especially in proportion to the number of prisoners. Forced labor was more important on building sites, especially in the climatically inhospitable parts of the USSR. But even some construction projects, such as the infamous White Sea Canal, were undertaken not because they were needed for economic or strategic purposes but because they provided a plausible use for the convict labor and increased the leverage of the secret police in bureaucratic infighting in Moscow. More broadly, as Khlevniuk aptly points out, Stalinist repression was self-perpetuating. The large number of arrests and deportations in the early 1930s created in the minds of the top leaders a sense that vast numbers of “enemies” and “wreckers” must still be present in the country, albeit in internal exile. The new round of arrests and mass killings in 1937–1938 was in part an attempt to deal with that residue. It took the war and the death of Stalin to break that ominous cycle.


Reviewed by Gary Bruce, University of Waterloo (Canada)

Nowadays, when incoming undergraduate students have no memory of a divided Germany, it is worth remembering that politicians as well as grassroots activists both inside and outside Germany made many efforts to reunite Germany from the 1940s on. Most of these individuals believed that unification would have to go hand-in-hand with neutrality.

The three main parts of this volume, edited by Dominik Geppert and Udo Wengst, deal with the interplay of neutrality and unification in the German question after 1945. The essays in the first part discuss German supporters of neutrality in both East and West Germany, the contributors in the second part provide a comparative dimension by analyzing the experiences of four countries that did become neutral, and the essays in the concluding section return to the main subject by examining how the Soviet Union, the United States, France, and Great Britain viewed German neutrality.

The volume begins with Anthony Nicholls’s sweeping historical overview of the concept of neutrality in nineteenth- and twentieth-century German history. This carefully thought-out essay puts in context complex terms like “neutrality,” “Third Way,” “non-alignment,” and “independence” which have often—and erroneously—
been used interchangeably. Nicholls argues, for example, that the alternative to the policies pursued by West Germany in the 1950s and after was not so much “neutrality” as a “third way,” which would see West Germany less tied to U.S.-led power structures but still firmly ensoenced in the Western camp (p. 22). He is also right to emphasize that proponents of neutrality in post-1945 Germany had no real historical antecedents to which to turn. Despite what some historians sometimes have argued, the foreign policies of Otto von Bismarck and Gustav Stresemann were never aimed at “neutrality.” Rather, Germany during their tenure was independent in a shifting alliance framework.

The next essays in the first section discuss how West German politicians, East German intellectuals, and the West German public viewed the idea of German neutrality in the postwar era. What emerges from these essays is a clear picture of the diversity of motives for neutrality among these groups. Whereas a member of Konrad Adenauer’s own party, Jakob Kaiser, supported neutrality because of his concern that Adenauer’s policy of integration into the West would leave Germany permanently divided, an East German intellectual dissident like Wolfgang Harich advocated neutrality in the hope that it would lead to a united, humane, socialist Germany. One cannot talk, then, of “the” Third Way that many Germans desired. The proposals for what a neutral Germany would look like were, in practice, as varied as the groups that promoted them.

The authors in the second section turn their attention to comparative history, examining countries that were at least nominally neutral during the Cold War (Finland, Yugoslavia, Austria, and—a welcome addition—India). As a group, these essays help to put the question of German neutrality into context. The four cases show that neutrality did not automatically have to lead to Bolshevism, as was long the argument of West German anti-neutralists. But this section also illuminates, in the best tradition of comparative history, the crucial differences between these neutral countries and Germany rather than their potential similarities. Why, many historians ask, could the vexing German question not have been solved by granting Germany neutrality akin to that of Austria or Finland? The answer, quite simply, is that Germany was not Austria or Finland. Germany had been intricately tied in to the rival Cold War blocs from an early stage, and Allied governments harbored greater distrust of Germany than they did of other countries, a position that was not without grounding in history.

This underlying distrust of Germany is a theme in the book’s third section, which deals with how the occupying powers approached the idea of German neutrality. During the Cold War, the United States was worried that a united, neutral Germany might drift into the Soviet orbit or become once again a danger to European and world security, and hence U.S. officials almost always were averse to the idea of German neutrality. U.S. Secretary of State James Byrnes’s failed plan for a united, neutral Germany was the only notable exception to this rule. France and Britain were even more wary of Germany’s dependability, as Margaret Thatcher made so gracelessly clear in 1989.

To return to the main question of this book, was there ever a real chance that Germany could have been united and neutral during the Cold War? For the most
part, German neutrality was a chimera. The Germans themselves had no clear idea of what neutrality would look like in practice, and any prospect of German neutrality would have required the approval of the occupying powers, all of whom viewed Germany with varying levels of suspicion. Until the late 1980s the Soviet Union, France, Britain and the United States all believed that a divided Germany was the best guarantee for peace against Germany itself. The only slight chance for German neutrality may have come as the Cold War was ending in 1989–1990 when, perhaps, the German people might have gone along with neutrality if Mikhail Gorbachev had insisted on it as a condition for unification. But Gorbachev’s big push for German neutrality came too late in the process, after the Germans had already accepted that a united Germany must be firmly rooted in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

All told, the uniformly outstanding essays in this book, based on both primary and secondary sources, provide the necessary framework to deal with the question of German neutrality in the postwar era. Historians who wonder why the “Third Way” in Germany proved so elusive after 1945 need not wonder anymore.


Reviewed by Tony Shaw, University of Hertfordshire (UK)

David Seed, a professor of American literature based at the University of Liverpool, is one of Great Britain’s leading authorities on U.S. Cold War culture. In 1999, Seed produced American Science Fiction and the Cold War: Literature and Film (London: Routledge, 1999), one of the best single-volume accounts to date of American Cold War science fiction, his chief area of expertise. He has now followed up with a fascinating exploration of the literary and cinematic representations of brainwashing during the Cold War. His focus is mainly on American material, sprinkled with analysis of important novels written in Europe.

Seed begins where we might expect, by looking at George Orwell’s Nineteen Eighty-Four. Written in the aftermath of the Second World War and published in 1949, Orwell’s final novel has long been regarded as the West’s classic Cold War text. Borrowing from the recent work of Frances Stonor Saunders and others on the support given by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to writers on the non-Communist left during the early Cold War, Seed shows how Nineteen Eighty-Four was quickly adopted and adapted by official propagandists keen to emphasize the Soviet regime’s Big Brother–like qualities. What really interests Seed, however, are the novel’s torture sections, in which an incarcerated Winston Smith imagines, witnesses, and finally experiences politically-motivated brutality. These harrowing scenes, according to Seed, anticipated the paradigm of brainwashing that emerged in the 1950s and beyond—a pattern of physical and psychological duress resulting in the victim’s “confession” of his ideological guilt.
Fiction and fact blurred dramatically a few years after Orwell’s death in 1950. During the Korean War, the first direct military clash between East and West, Americans were shocked and appalled by reports that U.S. prisoners were collaborating with their captors, “confessing” that they had used germ warfare against the enemy, and, in a few cases, even refusing repatriation. The term “brainwashing” was coined to explain all of this and soon took hold in the American psyche. Innocent U.S. soldiers, it seemed, had fallen victim to secret Communist techniques of psychological manipulation, thereby confirming White House warnings that the Cold War was nothing less than “a battle for men’s minds.” Seed shows how journalists like Edward Hunter, who worked part-time for the CIA, played a significant role in popularizing this theory through such books as Brain-Washing in Red China: The Calculated Destruction of Men’s Minds (New York: Vanguard Press, 1951) and The Black Book on Red China: The Continuing Revolt (New York: The Bookmailer, 1958). Seed then traces the assimilation of the notion of brainwashing into other areas of political commentary and into science fiction and conspiracy narratives at the height of the Cold War in the 1950s and 1960s.

Seed devotes a whole chapter to the most famous novel/film to emerge from the brainwashing scare in the wake of the Korean War, The Manchurian Candidate. Richard Condon’s 1958 novel, with its story of a Communist-programmed assassin called Raymond Shaw who guns down an American politician, fused several important political and cultural themes of the early Cold War era: alien Communist conspiracies, “Momism,” political assassinations, red-baiting, mind control, and espionage. By the time Hollywood’s version of the book appeared in 1962, directed by John Frankenheimer and starring Laurence Harvey and Frank Sinatra, Condon had become a widely acknowledged “expert” on brainwashing. When the American U2 reconnaissance pilot Gary Powers was shot down by Soviet air defense forces and brought to trial in the USSR in 1960, Condon was invited by one magazine to write an article about the sort of conditioning Powers might expect from his Soviet captors. (Condon declined, insisting that it was far more important to examine the effects of national advertising, McCarthyite demagoguery, and the whole ethos of the “Age of Communications.”) Three years later, when a journalist asked Condon whether he felt responsible for the assassination of President John F. Kennedy (on a copycat logic), he dispersed the blame through American society as a whole, noting many similarities between Raymond Shaw and Lee Harvey Oswald. Seed’s studied consideration of this key narrative, with its melodramatic embedding of the roles of hero and traitor within a single character and its conspiracy plot-line in which political appearances are totally untrustworthy, leads Seed on to a chapter discussing William Burroughs, whose works, such as Soft Machine (Paris: Olympia Press, 1961) and Ah Pook Is Here and Other Texts: The Book of Breathing Electronic Revolution (London: John Calder, 1979), according to Seed, “make up a positive encyclopedia of conspiracy, covert action, and mind-altering technology.” Ah Pook Is Here begins its meditation on death with the Hiroshima bomb blast and speculates about the “secrets of fear and death,” wondering: “Is this terrible knowledge even now computerized and vested in the hands of far-sighted Americans in the State Department and CIA?”
What Seed's book does, therefore, is illuminate the shifting viewpoints of how brainwashing is represented in American culture, changing from an external, Communist-inspired threat to American values in the 1950s to an internal threat posed by the U.S. government itself against individual liberties during the later stages of the Cold War. This shift in itself is not altogether surprising. It fits in with well-known Hollywood movies from the 1970s, such as Sydney Pollack’s *Three Days of the Condor* (1975), which also reflected the public’s growing distrust of America’s Cold War state security apparatus. Nonetheless, Seed does an excellent job pinning down the social and political contexts in which the “fictions of mind control” were crafted and received. This is helped by the fact that his book is genuinely interdisciplinary, blending content analysis of novels and films with historical research in National Security Council documents and writers’ private papers. Perhaps the insertion of a few movie stills would have enlivened the text a little and helped Seed’s readers to (re)capture more powerfully some of the images and plots he discusses.

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Reviewed by David Chandler, Monash University

In the 1950s and early 1960s, Edward Lansdale had an almost mythical reputation among journalists and some U.S. officials for his nation-building achievements in the Philippines and South Vietnam. Ostensibly a career officer in the U.S. Air Force (he retired in 1963 with the rank of major general), Lansdale worked for many years for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and became the CIA’s best known operative in the world. For most of his life he denied the CIA connection, but the smoke and mirrors fooled no one and probably enhanced his reputation as a salesman and magician. As Jonathan Nashel’s assiduous, absorbing book reveals, Lansdale was a bundle of contradictions: furtive and flamboyant, shrewd and naïve, conspiratorial and idealistic, a charlatan and (almost) an innocent abroad.

Born into a comfortable, middle-class family in Detroit in 1908, Lansdale attended the University of California, Los Angeles, in the early 1930s. Before World War II, he had a successful carrier in advertising, and Nashel suggests that this background helped Lansdale to spend the rest of his career marketing America as a commodity and a product. After working for Army intelligence in World War II, Lansdale served as a psychological warfare expert in the Philippines during the Huk rebellion, and in 1953 he helped Ramon Magsaysay win a presidential election there. Soon thereafter, in Neal Sheehan’s phrase, Lansdale “created South Vietnam” by outmaneuvering both the French and the local enemies of America’s protégé, Ngo Dinh Diem. Lansdale left Vietnam in 1956. By the time he returned nine years later, he had lost some of his cachet, and his upbeat, populist ideas had lost much of their luster. In 1966, President Lyndon Johnson told a journalist that “I put Lansdale over there [in
South Vietnam] and nothing happened.” Perhaps Lansdale had induced the president and others to expect a miracle.

Lansdale always claimed that he was the model for Alden Pyle, the loose cannon in Graham Greene’s caustic novel *The Quiet American*, even though Greene, who knew Lansdale slightly, vigorously denied it. Lansdale certainly was the inspiration for “Edwin Hillandale” in *The Ugly American*, the 1958 bestseller by William Lederer and Eugene Burdick about Southeast Asia. Lansdale knew the authors and basked in their attention. The book’s “ugly” hero had a magic touch with Asians, and, unlike the more “beautiful” Americans who were too frightened or too effete to mingle with local people, he possessed keen insights into the “Asian mind.” Working in the shadows, Lansdale frequently strolled into the limelight, which, like the far more tortured figure T. E. Lawrence, he needed and enjoyed.

Lansdale was displeased with Greene’s bleak neutralism and with Greene’s view of Lansdale/ Pyle. From Saigon in 1956, Lansdale worked behind the scenes with people in Hollywood to ensure that the film of the book was an anti-Communist tract and that Audie Murphy, who played Pyle, would be the hero rather than the villain of the piece.

Lansdale emerges from Nashel’s book as a shrewd political animal who often acted as what the French call a *faux naif*. He was a seasoned bureaucratic infighter, adroit at realpolitik, and believed that the American Revolution could be successfully marketed to everyone in Asia, provided that the sellers and buyers were sincere enough. He believed in the redemptive power of (American) history. Because he spoke no foreign languages, selling “1776” was easier for him in the largely pro-American Philippines, where many people spoke English, than in Vietnam, where almost no one spoke English. In Vietnam Lansdale tried to sell his “product” to people interested in gaining power, rather than in imitating 1776. In fairness it should be noted that Lansdale traveled all over Vietnam in the years before the second Indochina War broke out, and many Vietnamese found his tireless, amiable missionizing a pleasant contrast to the cynical indifference of the French and the top-down style of the Diem regime. But Lansdale went too far when he called on Filipino friends to draft the South Vietnamese Constitution.


Time has not been kind to Lansdale or to U.S. missions in Southeast Asia. Aside from Nashel’s elegantly written book, perhaps the best description of Lansdale can be found in Norman Mailer’s 1991 novel about the CIA, *Harlot’s Ghost*, which Nashel quotes (p. 187). Mailer’s narrator is describing an emblematic agent, referred to only as “the general,” who is clearly modeled on Lansdale: “In his fifties, he is mild, peasant, soft spoken and not bad looking but he has hollow eyes. I don’t know what I want to say here. They are not weak eyes, but they do not have any light in them. It’s as if he’s inviting you to enter some private hollow. I suppose I wish to say that he is the next thing to a hypnotist and seems to suck you right into the center of his concentra-
tion. Yet he is full of contradictions. He has to be sophisticated, but it doesn’t show. He seems innocent.”

Many of the themes of Nashel’s enlightening book, regarding Lansdales’s life and the increasingly far-off times in which he thrived, are embedded in these hollow, hypnotic eyes.


Reviewed by Jonathan Zeitlin, University of Wisconsin, Madison

Victoria de Grazia’s *Irresistible Empire* is a bravura performance. Based on prodigious research in archival and published sources on both sides of the Atlantic, the book is beautifully written, with epic sweep and the eye of a novelist—or perhaps better a filmmaker—for the significant detail that simultaneously limns a character and advances the story line. Fascinating empirical discoveries await the reader in every chapter, from Thomas Mann as a Rotarian at the beginning to the Eurocommunist origins of the Slow Food movement at the end. But *Irresistible Empire* is no mere cabinet of archival curiosities or album of microhistorical vignettes. Animated by a bold thesis about the triumph of American mass consumer culture, with its stratified, status-conscious worlds of goods, over European bourgeois civilization, this book offers nothing less than a grand macro-synthesis of twentieth-century Western history, integrating cultural, economic, and diplomatic themes on a transatlantic scale.

In light of this abundance of riches, it may seem churlish to probe beneath the shimmering surface of de Grazia’s book by raising questions of evidence and interpretation, the scholarly equivalent (to shift metaphors) of looking a gift horse in the mouth. With this particular horse, however, we do need to examine it carefully before jumping in the saddle and riding it away. Here we can focus first on problems of method and then on problems of message, though the two are clearly closely intertwined.

A first major methodological problem, which will be obvious to any attentive reader, is that the vast body of empirical material in *Irresistible Empire* is marshaled to illustrate rather than demonstrate the validity of its overarching thesis. This is partly because of the book’s kaleidoscopic shifts in geographical and thematic focus, together with its declared Foucauldian strategy of cutting across societies on a series of diagonals. But it also reflects de Grazia’s strategy of constructing her narrative argument through the artful juxtaposition of historical voices, whose selection and representativeness are never explicitly discussed or defended. The book features hundreds of talking heads, but readers are apt to suspect that behind them stands a single ventriloquist, whose voice can be periodically detected in tell-tale adverbial cues such as “presciently.” Even in the case of Edward A. Filene, the closest the book comes to a central
protagonist, we cannot readily tell how much weight to attach to his views. De Grazia herself notes that the reason Filene was able to spend so much time proselytizing Europeans about the benefits of mass distribution and standardized retailing was that he had been forced out of active management of the family department store business by his partners (including his own brother).

A second and closely related problem is the nature of the author's sources, which, as in much cultural and consumption history, are overwhelmingly drawn from prescriptive, hortatory, publicity, and predictive discourses and images. Such sources inevitably reveal more about the aims and assumptions of the author than about their reception by and influence on the audience. This problem is exacerbated by the book's inverted chronological focus that devotes more than two-thirds of the space to the years before 1945, while nonetheless arguing that the crucial period of American material influence on European consumption patterns came after World War II.

Perhaps the deepest methodological problem with the book is the sheer capaciousness of its thesis. In almost Freudian fashion, rejection and resistance, as well as creative adaptation and selective modification to suit local circumstances, are all treated as confirmatory signs of the emerging hegemony of the U.S. mass consumption model. This leads us to wonder what kind of evidence, if any, could count as a disconfirmation of the book's thesis, especially because de Grazia rarely engages directly with alternative interpretations of her material.

These methodological objections augment a set of substantive reservations about the book's message. Is it really helpful to talk about twentieth-century America as a “market empire,” conflating military and political power with economic and cultural influence? And is it correct to portray U.S.–West European interactions in terms of a transatlantic clash of civilizations that ended in American global hegemony through the export of mass consumer culture and the “passive revolution” of Europe's differentiated consumption patterns?

One danger in such formulations, which Irresistible Empire does not entirely avoid, is that of caricature: exaggerating the differences between the United States and Western Europe while underestimating the variations across different European countries. One might question, for example, how far interwar Britain, with its large urbanized middle class and burgeoning chain stores, can really be encompassed by de Grazia's European bourgeois consumption model. Similarly, many of the features de Grazia portrays as characteristic of European consumer attitudes and consumption patterns were also present (at least to some degree) in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century, including anti-chain store movements, restrictive legislation, and working-class housewives' attachment to small neighborhood retailers based on the economics of locality and credit provision. Nor did trade fairs and wholesale emporia like that of Leipzig disappear in the United States with the advent of branded goods; indeed they continue to play a vital part today in the marketing of both capital and consumer goods, as can be seen, for example, by visiting McCormick Place or the Merchandise Mart in Chicago. Many other examples of this sort could be cited.
A second and still more fundamental problem with the book’s message is that it overstates the triumph of the U.S. mass consumption model in postwar Europe. Powerful counterevidence can be drawn from within de Grazia’s own narrative. Her chapter on postwar supermarketing (one of the most interesting chapters in the book) can hardly be said to demonstrate “how big-time merchandisers leapfrogged over local grocers,” at least in the key case of Italy. Not only did the U.S. model of “Supermarkets Italiani” have to be substantially modified to succeed under local conditions, but by 1971, as de Grazia herself reports, Italians still spent only 2 percent of their food budgets in supermarkets, compared to 14 percent for the French, 32 percent for West Germans, and 70 percent for Americans. The persistence of these differentiated consumption patterns, observable in other fields such as clothing, shoes, jewelry, furniture, lighting, and ceramic tiles, in turn supported the growth and technological modernization of specialized production in these sectors, which still account for a disproportionate share of Italian exports. European companies more generally dominate the international market for luxury goods, which has become a big business indeed.

As this final example shows, one need not embrace the overarching thesis of Irresistible Empire to benefit from the empirical riches within. Like mid–twentieth century Europeans confronting the American model of mass production and mass consumption, we can deconstruct the overarching framework of this book and recombine its constituent elements to support alternative interpretations—a key virtue of any deeply researched historical study.


Reviewed by Gergana Yankova, Harvard University

The Politics of Past Evil sheds light on an important question: How do newly established democratic governments—in countries that previously lived under Communism, military dictatorship, or apartheid—address the crimes and injustices committed by the previous regime? The state can grant amnesty to the former dictators and organize public hearings before truth-and-reconciliation commissions, or it can imprison and ostracize the erstwhile rulers. The tradeoff between what is morally right and politically expedient poses one basic quandary: If the state forgives the wrongdoers, political stability will not be threatened, but the victims’ dignity will be tarnished. If, instead, the state opts to punish the offenders, the victims will win redress, but society might become polarized and the scarce resources for building democracy might be exhausted. The contributors to this volume ask under what conditions the political benefits of exonerating the offenders outweigh the moral losses to the victims.
In dealing with this complex puzzle, the book brings together theological, philosophical, and political approaches that in combination are rich in insights and exhaustive in their treatment. A true testimony to the methodological achievement of the book is the compatibility of views offered across disciplines.

The first chapter, by Daniel Philpott (who also provides a useful introduction), and the third chapter, by Nicholas Wolterstorff, offer philosophical rationales. Philpott argues that the liberal tradition of political philosophy, with its emphasis on personal rights and individual freedom, is fundamentally at odds with institutionalized reconciliatory practices. Wolterstorff advocates conditional forgiveness. Although he acknowledges that reconciliation effectively allows criminals to go unpunished for grave offenses, he outlines a philosophical warrant for amnesty when the perpetrator repents.

The fifth chapter, by A. James McAdams, and the sixth chapter, by Mark R. Amstutz, introduce political perspectives. Reviewing the debate about opening the secret police files of public officials in Germany in the 1990s, McAdams argues that the decision to administer transitional justice was neither rational nor informed. Rather, the opening of the files was simply the least costly compromise between the groups calling for justice and those demanding exoneration. Amstutz compares the public trials of political offenders in South Africa and Argentina and convincingly argues that forgiveness helps to foster strong democratic institutions and national unity.

The remaining three chapters make the case for forgiveness from a theological viewpoint. Alan J. Torrance avers that unconditional “evangelical” forgiveness is preferable to political amnesty because the former triggers true remorse, whereas the latter only alleviates the perpetrator’s sense of guilt. David B. Burrell advocates forgiveness because it fosters a conversation between conflicting religions. He rightly notes that religions are inherently open to many interpretations and that the understanding gained from respecting other religions can reveal the best way to interpret one’s own faith. This awareness in turn holds the key to political peace. In a chapter focusing on Northern Ireland, Ronald A. Wells traces the connection between mutual understanding and political peace in showing that political reconciliation in Northern Ireland spawned strong personal friendships between Catholics and Protestants.

The book as a whole is both innovative and provocative. It enriches the literature on democratization by introducing theological as well as political and philosophical reasoning into the transitional logic. On a fundamental level, democracy is about choosing accountable representatives, and elections are repeated acts of imposing responsibility and accountability. Nonetheless, contributors to the book convincingly argue that forgiveness in politics can be conducive to democracy in the long term even though it begins by removing responsibility from the offender. The proposition that one can successfully build a regime of accountability premised on an act of arguably denying it is truly fascinating.

At the same time, this idea provokes many questions. Philpott and his fellow contributors should clarify whether the logic of reconciliation applies only to periods of democratic transition. The book professes to discuss issues of transitional justice,
but of the cases covered only those of Germany, Argentina, and South Africa are strictly ones of democratic transition. The rest of the chapters refer to disputes in Israel and Northern Ireland or discuss retaliation in principle. Alternatively, if the logic of exoneration applies to non-transitional periods as well, we need to know why theological rationales are sometimes lacking in states in which the church is powerful but are present in secular states. Philpott in his introduction briefly refers to this intriguing paradox (p. 5), but he needs to expound on it at greater length.

Despite the book’s methodological variety, it posits a rather limited sociological account of reconciliation. The contributors argue that forgiveness instantiates deliberative democracy (p. 12) and can start a “therapeutic process” (p. 141), but they fail to consider that punishment can deter future misbehavior and thus have a positive effect on political life. For example, Emile Durkheim in his *The Division of Labor in Society* argued that public retribution against those who transgress social norms solidifies the public order. Michel Foucault in his classic *Discipline and Punish* underscores the importance of punishment for the maintenance of social order. Inclusion of this perspective in *The Politics of Past Evil* would have been worthwhile.

Two minor queries arise. How does the issue of “what constitutes injustice” relate to the question “who is to account for it”? Most of the chapters assume that a society will have a uniform definition of crime, but such may not always exist. Although mass murder is clearly unjust, people may be inclined to overlook lesser atrocities and to yearn for the stability of Communist or military dictatorships rather than branding them as inherently unjust. Another interesting question is whether the rationale of theological justice on a state level (e.g., the truth commissions in South Africa) applies on a supranational scale (e.g., the International Tribunal of Justice).

The fact that the book raises so many interesting issues testifies to the power and originality of the essays and the fruitfulness of the book’s methodological crossover. *The Politics of Past Evil* deserves a large audience and should inspire important scholarly debates about the place of moral justice in the calculating world of politics.


Reviewed by Christoph Neidhart, Tokyo Bureau Chief, Süddeutsche Zeitung (Munich)

The October Revolution makes a great story, but the problem is that it is only a story, more fiction than fact, the lavishly constructed founding legend of the Soviet Union.

Late at night on 25 October 1917 (by the old Julian calendar), with the Russian Provisional Government in shambles, armed groups occupied strategic buildings across Petrograd. In the early morning hours, Vladimir Lenin declared the overthrow of Aleksandr Kerensky’s government and the formation of a new Bolshevik government under the Petrograd Soviet.
No mass demonstrations occurred in support of the Bolsheviks, and no military assault was launched on the Winter Palace. The streetcars kept running, the shops remained open, and the inhabitants of Russia’s capital barely noticed this “South American–style military junta . . . ‘pronunciamiento’ by the Bolsheviks” (p. 25), as the daily *Rabochaya gazeta* characterized it.

The Winter Palace was not captured until the following night (after the defenders had laid down their arms) and was not seized through a military attack, as alleged by Soviet historiography. Instead, the building was overrun by a mob: “Soldiers, ‘under the influence of drunks in the crowd,’ broke the windows to the wine cellars, allowing the mob to begin a ‘drunken orgy’” (p. 34), the writer Aleksandr Amfiteatrov noted in his diary. That “drunken orgy lasted all day, leaving Palace Square littered with the bodies of inebriated soldiers and sailors. The military units that were sent from Smolny to stop the looting and destruction ended up joining it” (p. 34).

What happened on Palace Square in 1917 was of no significance to the Bolsheviks. They did not regard the Winter Palace as a focus of their coup. Instead, history was made in the Smolny Institute. In November 1918, when the Bolsheviks commemorated the first anniversary of “October,” Palace Square was not even on the route of their celebratory processions.

How, then, did the purported storming of the Winter Palace become the Bolsheviks’ Bastille, their “transcendent ‘total event’” (p. 10), an event that transformed the date of a lesser uprising into an iconic date of history, on a par with 1776 and 1789? This question is at the heart of Frederick Corney’s *Telling October*, arguably one of the most important books to appear on the rise of totalitarian power in Soviet Russia.

Corney convincingly shows that October, as it entered the collective Soviet memory and the history books, was a thoroughly crafted narrative, laboriously constructed over the first decade of Soviet power. It started to take shape with the third anniversary in 1920, when the Winter Palace became the improbable focus of the story of October. The mythical event reached its climax with Eisenstein’s film *Oktyabr*’ (1928). Corney writes: “It was in the telling that [October] would acquire the coherence, dramatic flow, and explanatory power of a good story” (p. 9).

Corney’s book is based on a wide range of sources, including contemporary Russian newspapers, memoirs, unpublished diaries, archives, and major films, and he uses the tools of historical anthropology, sociology, psychology, and literary theory. His groundbreaking interdisciplinary study shows how the Bolsheviks slowly transformed the chaotic polyphonic memory of October 1917 by turning contradictory descriptions of what happened into an orchestrated, alluring drama of revolution. They recast themselves as the sole revolutionaries, unified in their mission to fight a heroic battle against the reactionary forces both inside and outside Russia, including their former allies. However, their fabrication of history was by no means a linear process. Initially, the party did not claim any leading role in October. Ironically, the opposition press was the first to accord the Bolsheviks a major part in the coup narrative. Not until 1919, “perhaps surprised by their survival in power and emboldened by
their successes in the Civil War” (p. 69) did the Bolsheviks begin blatantly falsifying history and systematically repressing any counternarrative. In 1921 the Bolshevik leaders appointed a special commission (known as Istpart) to commemorate October and construct a narrative. This commission was to collect protocols and personal memoirs, including from its local branches. In some cases, the materials collected by local Istpart-branches later became the basis of the local museum of the revolution.

The collected reminiscences were molded into a single epic tale of progress toward a socialist future, overcoming enormous suffering and loss. That intimacy helped to make October an almost personal experience for its contemporaries and even for subsequent Soviet generations.

However, many Istpart offices in the provinces failed to come up with any stories of local Bolshevik party cells. Some even asserted that no such organizations had existed. The cells therefore had to be conjured up out of the few reminiscences available. Corney shows how Nikolai Podvoiskii, a military commander on Palace Square in 1917, gradually embellished his recollections of October.

The turning point in the construction of the narrative of October was 1920, the year of mass dramatic spectacles. This technique was not uniquely Soviet. Mass spectacles were used all over Europe as a unifier of the nation and as a potent tool of social manipulation. Neither radio nor television was yet available to Soviet citizens, many of whom were illiterate. The mass performances provided audiences with information and disinformation at the same time. The final spectacle in the series of theatrical festivals in 1920 was the “Storming of the Winter Palace.” It was staged on Palace Square, with the buildings asserting authenticity. Directed by Nikolai Evreinov, some 8,000 participants, including many soldiers who had been present three years earlier, “reenacted” the mythical Storming of the Winter Palace as it would become known to the world.

Corney quotes the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs to explain how a reconstruction of past events can induce the members of groups to harmonize their memory. Actually, Corney could have cited Evreinov himself, who claimed to have invented what he called autobiographical reconstruction, or theater therapy. He argued that repeating an experience is impossible, and if the event is replayed, our memories will confuse the two. We will end up accepting the more recent and more impressive staged version as the “real one.” (See N. K Evreinov, “Voprosy o peredelakh teatral’noi illyuzii,” in Teatr’ kak takovoi, rev. ed., Berlin, Academia, 1923.)

Lenin understood that to stay in power, the Bolsheviks had to win the battle of representation. That victory, in turn, would win over people’s memories. In this sophisticated, well-written book, Frederick Corney explores the hitherto unknown depths of this battle and the force, magnitude, and recklessness with which the Bolsheviks fabricated their revolutionary narrative.
This book is a major contribution to the historiography of the Allied occupation of Austria in 1945–1955, especially to our understanding of Soviet goals, policies, and behavior in the immediate aftermath of World War II and during the initial decade of the Cold War. Until recently, scholars interested in this fascinating period of twentieth-century history had to depend almost entirely on Western sources to gain insights into the Soviet Union’s erratic behavior in Austria. This limitation made it nearly impossible to acquire any deep sense of the interactions between Soviet officials and the leaders of the Austrian Communist Party (KPÖ) or of the exchanges between the Soviet occupation authorities and Moscow. Until the 1990s, the Soviet archives remained closed to ordinary researchers. Even now, some of the most important archives pertaining to Soviet foreign policy—the Russian Presidential Archive, the foreign intelligence archive, and the Federal Security Service archive—are off-limits. Nonetheless, sizable collections of declassified documents were made available at other archives in Moscow in recent years, and these materials have enabled Wolfgang Mueller to shed valuable light on important aspects of the Soviet occupation of Austria.

Mueller began his research in Russia in 2001 while working on his Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Vienna. From then until he finished the dissertation in 2004, he spent three to four months each year in Moscow working in the archives. The specific archives in which he unearthed useful material were the Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVPRF), the Central Archive of the Ministry of Defense (TsAMO), the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI), the Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (RGANI), and the Russian State Archive for Social and Political History (RGASPI).

With the help of file-level finding aids in RGASPI, Mueller was able to locate declassified documents on Austrian affairs from senior Communist Party officials, including Vyacheslav Molotov, Andrei Zhdanov, Georgi Dimitrov, Mikhail Suslov, and even Josif Stalin. With these new sources, Mueller has considerably enriched the historiography by recounting heretofore unknown events and filling in some gaps in our knowledge. The book deepens our understanding of how the Soviet Union and the KPÖ interacted in their continuing attempts to weaken the West and establish a Soviet-friendly “People’s Front.” Mueller provides useful examples of how Moscow and the KPÖ collaborated to strengthen the Communist movement and to discredit non-Communist political parties and other influential segments of Austrian society (p. 70).

The book consists of an introduction, four chapters, and a conclusion. Although the book regretfully has no index, the comprehensive bibliography demonstrates the thoroughness with which Mueller has pursued his work. In an appendix, he includes the translation of several interesting documents, including a summary blueprint out-
lining the immediate objectives of the Political Group for Austrian Affairs. Another document summarizes the 1952 decisions by the Soviet Council of Ministers setting forth the role and functions of the Soviet Element to the Allied Council. The composition of the Soviet Element is detailed in another document, dated November 1948, supplementing a list of key officials and a chart laying out the organizational structure and key staff members. Another document provides a list of Soviet High Commissioners and political commissars during the entire period of the occupation, 1945–1955.

The questions posed in the introduction alert the reader to Mueller’s interest in the political goals of the Soviet occupation forces when they first entered Vienna in 1945, and in the political motivations that governed Soviet behavior over the ensuing decade of tense ties with the Western powers. He is quick to warn readers that many of the most important and revealing documents pertaining to the Soviet occupation are still not available and that some important questions can still not be answered in full. For example, nearly all of Stalin's personal files concerning foreign policy, military affairs, and foreign intelligence are still sealed in the Russian Presidential Archive, as are the files from the Office of the Soviet High Commissioner in Austria (p. 12).

Mueller’s book is full of heretofore unknown anecdotes, transcripts of conversations, and accounts of important exchanges between Soviet officials and between Soviet and Austrian Communist leaders, mostly during the immediate postwar years. They reveal more clearly than ever before the plans devised by Soviet officials to establish control in Vienna, form a provisional government, and rig national elections in favor of the KPÖ before the Western powers would be allowed in.

Mueller confirms that Soviet officials were shocked when the KPÖ won only about 5 percent of this initial vote, despite massive Soviet and KPÖ political activity throughout the time they enjoyed sole control over the capital. Mueller also adds to the evidence of active Soviet support for the KPÖ during the violent strikes in 1950 (p. 180), and he documents the Soviet warnings to Austria’s political leaders not to take action against Communists who participated in these riots. The book also meticulously recounts the Soviet Union’s attempts to dominate the police, to maintain control over the actions and statements of leading KPÖ members, and to undermine non-Communist parties and strengthen the KPÖ (p. 167).

Mueller’s archival research reveals how careful Moscow was throughout the occupation, especially in the wake of the Korean War, not to challenge the West too far and not to risk a violent confrontation in Austria. For example, a RGASPI document describes a 1948 meeting between KPÖ leaders and one of Stalin’s chief deputies, Andrei Zhdanov, who flatly refused an impassioned KPÖ plea to divide the country, leaving eastern Austria under Soviet and KPÖ control. Indeed, Mueller convincingly shows that, from the very beginning of the occupation the Soviet Union opposed suggestions that Austria be partitioned.

Mueller’s book contains so much new and important information that a brief review cannot do it justice. Even the most knowledgeable readers will learn a great deal. The book is a “must-read” for anybody who is even peripherally interested in learning how and why the Soviet occupation forces behaved as they did in and about Austria.
before the Austrian State Treaty was signed in 1955. The only readers who will be disappointed are those hoping to find evidence that the Soviet Union really did not support the KPÖ to any large extent and that Soviet motives in Austria were benign.

Mueller is now a research fellow at the Vienna Academy of Sciences, where he continues his study of Soviet foreign policy. He has left me eagerly awaiting his next book.

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Reviewed by Celeste A. Wallander, Georgetown University

Early in this thoughtful and evidence-rich volume, the editors consider and put aside the temptation to reify the strategic triangle in question as a variable with independent or mediating causal effects in the foreign relations of its three constituent members. The triangle is not an institution, for it lacks rules and norms to shape expectations and define roles. Nor is it a pluralistic security community, inasmuch as it lacks shared norms or conceptions of security. The triangle is an analytical construct created by and rooted in the objectives, concepts, perceptions, and policies of the three countries (pp. 7–8); it is something more than the diplomatic interactions of three important states, yet something less than the formal institutions familiar in studies of transatlantic relations—the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU).

What makes the strategic triangle interesting and worthy of closer examination, the editors make clear, are two of its important dimensions that shaped Cold War history. First, the objectives and perceptions of France, the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), and the United States were remarkably consistent for more than 30 years (the period 1965–1995, covered by the volume). Second, the policies of each member of the triangle were constrained and shaped by the nature of the relationship between the two other members. French objectives and perceptions focused on Franco-German cooperation and leadership to make Europe strong in order to balance the United States and enhance French autonomy on the global stage. The FRG sought European unity and capacity through partnership with France so that Europe would be a reliable partner for the United States in a venue that safeguarded Germany’s security and interests in a multilateral context without threatening its neighbors. The United States sought a stronger and thus more unified Europe, but a Europe that would reliably follow American leadership in containing the primary Soviet threat without challenging American global primacy.

These are commonly understood parameters of transatlantic relations during the Cold War. The contribution made by the authors of this volume is their effort to highlight the degree of constraint on interactions among the important players that
arose from their three-sided mix of competing and overlapping objectives and perceptions. They convincingly show that the history of the Cold War cannot be understood without an appreciation of how the resultant compromises bent and stressed the triangle—but never tore it apart. Through sets of parallel case studies of key crises or tuning points in Cold War history (the debate on the political institutionalization of Europe in 1958–1963, the NATO crisis of 1966–1967, the collapse of Bretton Woods, the emergence and impact of Ostpolitik and détente, the breakdown of détente and transatlantic tensions in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and NATO’s post–Cold War evolution) with separate chapters addressing each case from the American, French, and German perspectives, the authors provide not only a rich and focused diplomatic history, but also a basis for evaluating comparative causal assessments of transatlantic relations and the Cold War. Despite dramatic changes—French withdrawal from NATO’s military structures, the U.S. abandonment of the Bretton Woods system, West Germany’s quiet yet potent initiative in Ostpolitik—what is most striking is how even the United States and France, both of which wanted to limit the constraints on their autonomy and assertions of power, ultimately sought compromise in reaching agreements that resolved each of the transatlantic crises. The editors note that the United States generally was the least affected throughout this history by the strategic triangle, but even U.S. presidents felt compelled to seek acceptable modes for pursuing U.S. objectives in the face of the consistent importance of France and Germany to one another and their ability to work on European alternatives when the Americans were stretching too far away from European requirements.

This recurring theme from the Cold War—that all three parties would competitively stretch the triangle but not allow any of its sides to break—finally came to an end during the transatlantic crisis over Iraq in 2002–2003. Although the volume does not include a set of comparative case studies on this recent crisis to match the earlier historical cases (the original papers for the volume were first presented at a conference in 2000), the editors take a close look in the conclusion at the Iraq case, which can only be described as a breaking of the triangle after it had been stretched and reshaped through even more dangerous and tumultuous times. This development provides the editors and readers with the tools to think through the causal importance of the strategic triangle and to extend this analytical construct beyond the Cold War. The editors attribute the break to a number of key changes in the triangle: French-German reconciliation is no longer in question and does not need to be overseen by American power; the end of the Soviet threat has eliminated the basis for a common threat assessment that made breaking the triangle too costly during the Cold War; and Germany no longer rules out having to choose between the United States and France in the midst of a crisis. The editors in conclusion point to developments that might allow a new transatlantic geometry to develop as a support for fundamentally cooperative diplomacy, but they clearly believe that the U.S.-French-German strategic triangle is now useful to scholars and policymakers for what it tells us about strategic diplomacy in general, rather than as a blueprint for future transatlantic relations.
Reviewed by Dale R. Herspring, Kansas State University

Rudolf Schlaffer’s Der Wehrbeauftragte 1951 bis 1985, a revised version of his doctoral dissertation, is an excellent book. Its content is indispensable for anyone hoping to understand the role of civil-military relations in a modern democratic polity such as the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). The book is equally valuable for those interested in the elusive concept known as Innere Führung. To many outside Germany this concept seems at times to be more mystical than empirical.

For many readers, including Americans, the notion that a member of parliament would have the power to deal directly with soldiers who complain about the way they are being treated sounds strange. To be sure, soldiers in the U.S. military have the option of writing to their congressional representative if they believe they are not being treated properly. The likely result is that the Congress member or senator will then contact the relevant armed service and ask for an investigation. By contrast, in the FRG, parliamentarians are authorized to intervene directly in individual cases of soldiers or sailors, something that is unheard of in the American system.

Why do the Germans (and earlier the West Germans) have this institution? The primary reason is to forestall any repetition of the brutality against soldiers that was so common in the Wehrmacht during World War II—a situation in which even a non-commissioned officer (NCO), let alone a senior officer, held almost total power over Wehrmacht soldiers. The current system provides more direct civilian control over the actions of NCOs than is the case in the United States. Schlaffer notes that the primary impetus for the adoption of this institution in the FRG came from Sweden, and he maintains that one form or another of it exists in a wide variety of countries around the world.

The book is divided into four main sections and an appendix. The first major section focuses on the situation in Germany immediately after World War II. The German population and government (and the Allied populations and governments) were extremely wary of setting up any form of German armed force. After all, it was the German military that obeyed Adolf Hitler’s orders and led Germany into a disastrous war that cost tens of millions of lives. The West Germans decided that if they were going to have a new military, it had to be genuinely new—and democratic. But how to create such a force?

The second section of the book, which discusses this topic in the period from 1951 to 1959, is of special interest. Schlaffer not only deals with the Swedish model and how the FRG modified it, but also focuses on the issue of Innere Führung. In the process he does an excellent job of tying the two concepts together.

Schlaffer’s discussion of the 1950s is the most interesting part of the book, but the next section, dealing with the period from 1960 to 1985, is likewise very helpful. Schlaffer not only delves into the evolution of this governmental institution but also
looks at the military itself. As one might expect, NCOs did not particularly welcome having civilians look over their shoulders when the time came to issue orders and discipline soldiers. Schlaffer’s account of how the two clashed and how a modus vivendi was worked out is fascinating. He has done an excellent job of capturing the dynamics of the process.

Reading this book convinced me that a comparative study of military institutions around the world, either by a single author or by a group of writers, would be invaluable. Those who work on civil-military relations—even those who study politics that have no formal military institutions—need to understand how such institutions work in a variety of countries. A comparative study not only would give scholars a better understanding of specific political systems but would also be useful to the Russians, who are toying with the idea of creating a post for an army ombudsman—although not one who is a member of the Duma. This kind of structure could help tie the Russian parliament more closely to the military and could help with some of the many problems the army faces, in particular with the issue of dedovschina (severe physical bullying of junior recruits by older servicemen and officers).

Even if a broad comparative study is eventually produced, this reviewer would encourage the Germans to continue the sort of work done by Schlaffer, specifically by looking at the role of the Wehrbeauftragte in the process of integrating former members of the East German Nationale Volksarmee (NVA) into the Bundeswehr. Such a study would be of special interest both in Germany and abroad. Having done considerable work on that topic myself, I can attest that some major problems arose—fears of disloyalty by former Communist officers, a lack of initiative on the part of former NVA officers, and a tendency among Bundeswehr officers to treat former NVA officers as second-class citizens. How useful was the Wehrbeauftragte in dealing with these issues? The absorption of NVA personnel was one of the most difficult tasks in postwar German history, one that needs to be discussed more openly than has been the case in the past.

The only shortcoming of this study is that it is written in German and therefore accessible only to those who read the language. Although a translation of the book into a more widely used language such as English would be expensive, it would allow many more readers to benefit from Schlaffer’s deft account of this fascinating period in German military history—one that needs to be understood by anyone studying the field of civil-military relations.

Schlaffer is to be commended for having written a very incisive and useful book, and the Militärgeschichtlichen Forschungsamt is likewise to be praised for supporting such valuable research.
In the continuous process of “coming to terms with the past,” German intellectuals and the media have increasingly turned their attention to the question of the expulsion of the German populations from the East in the closing years of the Second World War and the immediate postwar period. In the 1950s and 1960s public concern over the fate of the expellees and their place in West German society was muted and ambivalent when it existed at all. As Manfred Kittel points out in his comprehensive monograph, the situation changed in 1969 as a result of the coming to power of the Grand Coalition of parties and the somewhat delayed effects of détente. The structure of the book, divided into roughly two parts, reflects his thesis. The first part focuses on the period from the second Berlin crisis to Willy Brandt’s opening to the East; the second part ends with the era of Helmut Kohl. Kittel analyzes the roles of the press, television, film, national and local politicians, and, to a lesser extent, the historical profession in shaping what he calls a “culture of memory.” Although he refers in the introduction to the work of Maurice Halbwachs and Pierre Nora as theorists of collective memory, his book does not show much evidence of their influence. Despite occasional references to symbols and monuments commemorating the East in West Germany, Vertreibung der Vertriebenen? is largely a study of elite opinion.

At the height of the Cold War a broad consensus existed among the parties, exemplified by the view of Konrad Adenauer that although the East was lost to the Soviet sphere, this could not be stated publicly. Not only did the millions of expellees in the West constitute an influential voting bloc, but the lost territories could also be used as leverage in dealing with the Soviet bloc. Even in the intellectual milieu the forced expulsions were widely regarded as a form of expiation for the crimes of the Hitler period. But the condition of the expellees and the place of the East in German history were kept alive in the so-called Knowledge of the East Studies (Ostkunde) in local schools and in the mass media. The gradual shift in opinion in the 1960s, albeit contested, ran parallel to the growing sense of guilt over the crimes of the Nazi period and the uneven progress of détente. Brandt’s Ostpolitik led to a sharp break between the Social Democrats and the Association of Expellees and a polarization of opinion. The government cut funding for the expellees. But by this time many expellees and their children had become integrated into West German society. The younger generation, which had formed the German Youth of the East in the early postwar years, changed its name in 1974 to the German Youth in Europe. New perspectives came out of this group. For example, Günter Grass was more interested in embracing East German history and culture than redeeming the lost territories.

Kittel endorses the view that the policy of realism rightly brought to an end the empty Symbolpolitik of the late 1960s. But he deplores the repressive and distorting effect that it had on the place in memory of the terror and suffering that accompanied
the flight and expulsions of the German populations from the East. He concludes that
the German East has nearly disappeared from the political and social consciousness of
the united Germany. He attributes the continuous “repression of memory” to the
complete integration of Germany into the West. This conclusion appears somewhat
exaggerated, considering the extensive literature on the topic, such as the recent book
by Michael Schwartz, *Vertriebene und ‘Umsiedlerpolitik’: Integrationskonflikte in den
deutschen Nachkriegs-Gesellschaften und die Assimilationsstrategien in der SBZ/DDR
1945–1961* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2004), as well as works by Sylvia Schraut and
Susanne Spulbeck not included in Kittel’s bibliography. Given Kittel’s concerns, it is
curious that his book omits any discussion of the Historikerstreit, even though it falls
outside the chronological dimensions of his study. It was during these debates, as he
surely knows, that conservative German historians raised the controversial compari-
son between the Holocaust and the massive loss of life and property suffered by Ger-
mans during the advance of the Red Army into the Reich and the forced expulsion of
Germans from Silesia, Pomerania, the Sudetenland, and Vojvodina.

Kittel has based his research on a wide range of fresh sources, including local ar-
chives, the publications of the various organizations of expellees (items that up to now
have rarely been used), documentary television programs, and films. Because of the
importance of the theme of forced population transfers for the history not only of
Germany but of much of Europe in the twentieth century, this reader missed a com-
parative dimension that would have added considerably to the value of the book.
Kittel, however, raises important questions about the relationship of the treatment of
the past in Germany to the changing nature of the Cold War.

Stefan Creuzberger and Manfred Görtemaker, eds., *Gleichschaltung unter Stalin? Die
Entwicklung der Parteien in östlichen Europa, 1944–1949*. Paderborn, Germany:

*Reviewed by Norman M. Naimark, Stanford University*

This is a very useful and interesting compendium of essays on the Soviet takeover of
Eastern Europe after the Second World War. The authors are a mix of German and
East European specialists who are well-versed in the historiography of the period and
in the newly available documents. Central to many of the contributions are the re-
cently published Georgi Dimitrov diaries and the multivolume document collections
edited by Jochen Laufer and G. P. Kynin on the German question from 1944 to 1949
and by T. V. Volokotina and her associates on Soviet policy in Eastern Europe from
1944 to 1953. The use of these and other newly available materials ensures that the
quality of the contributions is generally very high. At a time when American scholars
are feeling the pinch of the financial costs of scholarly publication, they may be a bit
envious of the two German editors, who were able to put out an elaborately footnoted
and carefully edited compendium of this size (468 pages), including an excellent bibliography and an index.

The book leads off with two fine conceptual pieces, one by the senior German scholar Gerhard Wettig and the other by a junior colleague, Donal O’Sullivan. Wettig focuses on the German question in the postwar period but keeps the rest of Eastern Europe clearly in view. O’Sullivan looks at Soviet plans for Eastern Europe as a whole, including the German question. Both authors make clear that no single “master plan,” cooked up in Moscow, existed for the region. The issue of “Sovietization” was essentially not a predetermined one; it was instead the product of the lopsided competition between, on the one hand, pressure from the Soviet Union and its Communist helpers in Eastern Europe (including Germany) to control political developments in the region and, on the other hand, the resistance of non-Communist forces in the region itself, with intermittent backing from the West. Both essays usefully review the plans devised by Maksim Litvinov and Ivan Maiskii for postwar European development, emphasizing once again the important connections made by Soviet policy planners between the German question and the fate of Eastern Europe as a whole.

The central theme of the book is Gleichschaltung, a concept of political leveling and the elimination of opposition that comes out of the study of Nazism. However, the editors and authors do little by way of comparing Eastern Europe with the Nazi case. Instead, they emphasize that the Soviet Union’s policy of promoting a National Front in each of the “People’s Democracies” (in German they pedantically refer to them as the “so-called” People’s Democracies) was no more than an effort to grind down political opposition and promote the fortunes of the Communists. This is clear from the book’s contributions on Poland (Harald Moldenhauer), Romania (Ulrich Burger), Bulgaria (Marietta Stankova), Yugoslavia (Jerca Vodušek Starič), Albania (Peter Danylow), the Soviet Occupation Zone of Germany, SBZ (Monika Kaiser), Czechoslovakia (Jiří Kocian), and Hungary (János M. Rainer). When one examines the strategies and tactics of the Communist seizure of power in each of these countries, the conclusion is clear: every case has a different and “special” quality; yet every case ends up with pretty much the same results—a Communist-led “new democracy” and an indigenous form of the “dictatorship of the proletariat.” Stefan Creuzberger and Manfred Görtemaker correctly conclude: “The conversion of this strategy [of the National Front] into practice took place in a genuinely heterogeneous fashion” (p. 423). If, however, the strategy was as obvious and transparent as the editors indicate, why did so many “bourgeois” politicians and Social Democrats participate in it? Why did the West play along for so long?

The most innovative aspect of the volume is its inclusion of excellent essays about Finland (Ruth Buttner) and Austria (Oliver Rathkolb). The cases of Finland and Austria are important in understanding the historically contingent origins of the Soviet bloc. After all, these were countries directly under Soviet influence. A large zone of Austria (including a zone of Vienna) was occupied by Soviet troops, and Finland, though not occupied, was directly subordinated to Soviet control. Why were Hungary and Czechoslovakia subjected to area-wide techniques of Sovietization, whereas Finland and Austria were not? Rathkolb carefully notes—as do too few of the other con-
tributors to the volume—that there remains a great deal we do not know about the answer to this question. Yet he offers the plausible explanation that Moscow’s reluctance to provide greater support for the Austrian Communists was based on the overwhelming Soviet priority to keep Austria separate from Germany and thus insignificant in the European balance, as was the case under the First Republic.

For Buttner, the Finnish case depended in part on the Soviet Union’s perception of Finland as only a peripheral arena of great-power competition. But Finland resembled the Austrian case in that the Finnish parliament, bureaucracy, and political structure held firm for the most part against Soviet inroads, especially in the form of Communist party influence. The Soviet plenipotentiary in Finland, Andrei Zhdanov, was remarkably restrained when faced with Finnish solidarity. In both the Austrian and Finnish cases, the firmness and unity of a strong social democratic party gave the Soviet Union little space to impose a “People’s Democracy.” But in Finland, as in Austria, geopolitical issues also influenced the outcome. As Buttner argues, “the joining of neutral Sweden to a Western defense pact, which [Moscow] feared would happen if Soviet pressure on Finland became too great, would be . . . extremely unpropitious for the Soviet Union and therefore should be avoided under any circumstances” (p. 406). Stalin’s decision not to occupy Finland was also presumably influenced in part by Finland’s autonomous status under the Russian Empire, as well as by the Finns’ fierce resistance during the “Winter War.”

The highly successful inclusion of the Austrian, German, and Finnish cases in this analysis of the Sovietization of Eastern Europe in the immediate postwar period brings one to the question of why the volume did not also include chapters on Italy and France, both of which, like Czechoslovakia, had extremely large and influential Communist parties, and which, like Finland, were not occupied by Soviet troops, and which, like Austria, resisted long-term Soviet influence. In these two cases the calculus of understanding postwar developments is no doubt changed by the political actions and military potential of the United States and Great Britain. But there is much to be learned about the connections between Soviet intentions and policies, on the one hand, and the Sovietization of parts of Europe, on the other, by examining continent-wide developments.


Archie Brown’s *Seven Years That Changed the World* provides a thorough, balanced, and insightful analysis of Mikhail Gorbachev’s perestroika. The book is not a straight narrative of events and changing concepts; instead, it discusses the final seven years of Soviet history from several different vantage points. Part I offers a short introduction
to Brown’s approach; Part II reproduces four articles on Gorbachev’s policy that were first published as the events were unfolding; Part III, which makes up more than half of the book, contains five essays on the various aspects of Gorbachev’s domestic and foreign policy, written from the vantage point of a historian who has absorbed the evidence of archives, memoirs, and interviews with participants.

The discussion of archival sources in the preface will be valuable for any researcher of the Gorbachev period of Soviet history. The book as a whole is essential reading for any person who wishes to understand the turbulent, and in many ways contradictory, period it describes.

Many previous books on perestroika have approached it by, in effect, taking a snapshot of how the process and policy looked at a given moment. For example, the late Martin Malia, extrapolating from an early analysis, declared that Gorbachev wanted to achieve a “soft” version of the Communist system he inherited. Brown, in contrast, points out, from the first page of his preface, that “perestroika meant not only different things to different people, but also different things at different times between its launch and its demise.” By 1991, Gorbachev’s thinking, pace Malia, was much closer to that of European social democrats than to any variant of Leninism, even though Gorbachev still quoted Vladimir Lenin approvingly—a seeming paradox that Brown discusses with great insight.

The inclusion, in Part II, of four essays written as perestroika unfolded helps us understand the fluid and dynamic nature of a policy in evolution. Often when I am asked, “What did Gorbachev think about x or y?” I counter with, “What year, what month, and, if you really want me to be precise, what day?” My answer is an exaggeration, no doubt, and may give the unfounded impression that I could offer an accurate answer if only the questioner would be more precise. Nevertheless, for those of us observing Gorbachev at close quarters in those days, his policy seemed like a moving train—a train that could shift, not always predictably, to different tracks, that never moved at a constant speed, and that from time to time backed up.

Among the myths that Brown seeks to demolish are: (1) that the Soviet system was doomed to imminent collapse in the 1980s; (2) that the end of the Cold War and the break-up of the Soviet Union were brought about mainly by the Reagan administration; (3) that Boris Yeltsin was primarily responsible for dismantling the Soviet system; and (4) that Yeltsin’s rule was a continuation of perestroika in a more democratic form (p. 3). These judgments are indeed unfounded, and they have induced mistaken policies in the West and unjustified resentments in present-day Russia.

The facts are:

- The Soviet Union could have hobbled on, probably for decades, if its leader had not attempted to transform the system.
- The Cold War ended as the result of negotiations between Gorbachev and Western leaders, first of all Ronald Reagan, and was not a defeat for the Soviet Union. In fact, the end of the arms race promised to alleviate one of the burdens on the Soviet economy and opened the possibility of fundamental economic reform.
• The Communist system was forced out of power by Gorbachev, the CPSU General Secretary, not by any foreign leader.

• The Soviet Union collapsed as a result of internal contradictions, not external pressure (indeed, the United States did not favor the break-up of the Soviet Union, as President George H. W. Bush made clear in his speech in Kyiv on 1 August 1991).

• Most of Yeltsin’s rule was, in some respects, less “democratic” than Gorbachev’s was in 1990 and 1991. Among other things, Yeltsin was more inclined to use force—whether against the Russian parliament in 1993 or in Chechnya subsequently—to keep himself in power. As Brown puts it, “Gorbachev played the more crucial role in the democratization of the Soviet Union and Yeltsin the more decisive role in its dissolution” (p. 313).

The analytical chapters in Part III discuss such fundamental questions as the origins and development of perestroika; the differences between “dismantling the [Communist] system” and the “disintegration of the [Soviet] state”; transnational influences; and the end of the Cold War. Each provides important insights into Gorbachev’s historical legacy. Brown’s final chapter, “Gorbachev and His Era in Perspective,” should be required reading in any course concerned with this period of Russian history or with international relations at the end of the Cold War. Even though scholars may not agree with every judgment the author makes (this reviewer does agree, with only minor caveats), the clarity of his presentation of contentious questions provides an excellent basis for class discussion.

For a long time, it will be impossible to have an informed discussion of Gorbachev’s legacy without reference to Brown’s volume, which represents the current state of research and informed judgment on that watershed period of Russian history and of international relations.


Reviewed by Adrienne Edgar, University of California, Santa Barbara

In the 1920s and 1930s, the Stalinist regime waged a tireless campaign for the radical transformation of Soviet society. In few places was this drive carried out with greater intensity than in Central Asia, a predominantly Muslim region along the Soviet Union’s southern borders. One of the most controversial aspects of this campaign was the Soviet effort to “emancipate” Muslim women, whom the Bolsheviks viewed as victims of a cruel, patriarchal society. Communist Party activists in the region urged women to throw off their veils, attend Soviet schools, and become party members. The regime in Moscow outlawed customs deemed oppressive to women, such as polygamy and the payment of brideprice. In Veiled Empire: Gender and Power in Stalinist Central
Asia, Douglas Northrop argues that gender policy in Central Asia was central to the Bolsheviks’ strategy in the region. “In Uzbekistan,” he writes, women’s emancipation came to “exemplify the entire Bolshevik revolution” (p. 9). At the same time, he contends that indigenous resistance to the Soviet campaign was critical to the formation of an Uzbek national identity.

Northrop subscribes to the argument, first made by Gregory Massell more than thirty years ago, that Soviet officials viewed Muslim women as a “surrogate proletariat” in a region that lacked a true proletariat. Because of the absence of an indigenous working class in Central Asia, newly emancipated women were expected to become a major pillar of support for the Soviet regime. Like Massell, Northrop stresses the importance of gender policy and family life in Soviet strategy toward Central Asia, and he finds that profound native resistance hampered Soviet efforts to transform Uzbek society. Northrop’s research confirms some of Massell’s earlier conclusions, but Veiled Empire also makes important new contributions that deepen our understanding of Stalinism in the Soviet periphery.

Northrop is able to provide a much more textured and nuanced account of the unveiling campaign because he uses archival and indigenous-language sources that were for the most part unavailable to Western scholars before 1991. He conveys the concerns and aspirations not just of the activists from the zhenotdel (the Communist Party’s women’s division) but also of the ordinary Uzbek women who were the presumed beneficiaries of Soviet policies. Native women were trapped, Northrop shows, between the demands of their own patriarchal society and those of the new Soviet rulers. Whether they were veiled or unveiled, they faced criticism and coercion (although the Soviet regime, perhaps reluctant to impose “emancipation” by force, never formally outlawed the veil). Northrop’s argument about the role of Soviet gender policy in developing an Uzbek national identity is perhaps the most intriguing aspect of his study. He maintains that the encounter with colonial rule solidified cultural practices—most notably veiling—that had previously been fluid and variable and thereby transformed them into symbols of the emerging Uzbek nation.

Northrop situates Soviet Uzbekistan firmly within the broader history of European empires and sees the unveiling campaign as typical of the “civilizing missions” of imperial rulers. Unlike historians who maintain that the Soviet Union was a modernizing state that treated all its peoples equally (and often equally badly), Northrop argues that Moscow’s rule in Central Asia was fundamentally different from its approach to the Russian population. He contends that the desire to transform private life was all-pervasive in Uzbekistan, where Soviet officials saw their task as more challenging because of essential ethnic and cultural differences between Uzbeks and Russians. In Uzbekistan, a wife’s veiled or unveiled status was taken as a key indicator of an Uzbek Communist’s loyalty to the Soviet regime—a litmus test that had no direct equivalent in European Russia. Thus, despite Soviet promises of national equality, Moscow’s perception of Uzbek “backwardness” and the hierarchical relationship between center and periphery justify the label “empire.”

Veiled Empire is an exceedingly valuable contribution to the little-studied social
and cultural history of Soviet Central Asia. Northrop does a splendid job of amplifying the long-lost voices of Uzbek women, who faced both new pressures and new opportunities under Soviet rule. His argument about the importance of the veil in the formation of an Uzbek identity is compelling and underscores the similarities between Uzbekistan and other colonized Muslim societies, particularly within the Arab world. Some historians, however, are bound to question his claim about the imperial nature of the Soviet Union. The acknowledgment of cultural difference and the adoption of policies specifically aimed at Uzbek practices are not necessarily signs of inequality and hierarchy. Moscow’s aim, after all, was not to subordinate the Uzbeks permanently and to underscore their inferiority (which would have been a typical imperial goal), but to make them the equals of Russians and of other, “more advanced” Soviet peoples. Northrop himself acknowledges the complexity of this issue, noting that the Soviet Union was a “veiled empire” in the sense that it vocally opposed imperialism and shared many features of the typical modernizing state.

In addition to questioning Northrop’s use of the term “empire,” some historians may dispute his emphasis on the centrality of gender policy in Soviet strategy vis-à-vis Central Asia. The unveiling campaign was highly visible, but it may have been more important to the activists of the zhenotdel than to the Communist Party as a whole. The Communist leaders in Central Asia were arguably under greater pressure to produce results on land reform, rooting out kulaks, and fulfilling cotton quotas than on gender issues. Moreover, the evidence suggests that poor peasants, not women, were expected to be the regime’s mainstays in the absence of a proletariat. These issues are ripe for further debate and research. By identifying them, I do not mean to detract from the value of Northrop’s stimulating and well-researched book, but merely to suggest that the questions he is addressing are absolutely central to a deeper understanding of the Stalinist period.


Reviewed by Marcia S. Smith, Space Policy Analyst, Washington, DC

Into that Silent Sea offers personal histories of astronauts, cosmonauts, and other spaceflight professionals who participated in the earliest years of the human spaceflight program. Many of the stories have been well told by other authors, as the extensive list of references at the end of the book demonstrates. Francis French and Colin Burgess supplement their own interviews with some of these historic personalities by synthesizing the stories into an entertaining and easy-to-absorb set of personal histories that readers are likely to enjoy, especially those who are experiencing their first foray into the lives of these spacefarers.

The authors explicitly tell their readers in the introduction what the book is not
intended to be—and there are many things it is not. It is not a history of the early era of the space age. Although the individual stories are interesting and remind us of the heady days of early human spaceflight, the authors make no attempt to weave those lives into a complete historical account of the years 1961–1965. They also make clear that they are not attempting to enlighten readers either about what we have learned from human journeys into space or about the geopolitical role the space program played during the Cold War.

Instead, the book is composed of biographies—tales, really—of the lives and careers of a number of individuals who were important during the early days of human spaceflight. Among them are many who are household names to space-program aficionados, including the first Soviet cosmonauts (Yuri Gagarin, German Titov, Andrian Nikolaev, Pavel Popovich, Valentina Tereshkova) and the first American astronauts—Alan Shepard, Gus Grissom, Scott Carpenter, John Glenn, Deke Slayton, Wally Schirra, and Gordon Cooper.

The book also contains stories of some who are not as well known: Dee O’Hara, who served as a nurse to the astronauts; and Jim Lewis, a helicopter pilot who tried unsuccessfully to prevent Gus Grissom’s Liberty Bell 7 spacecraft from sinking to the bottom of the ocean. Particularly enjoyable is the story of the salvage of Liberty Bell 7 from the depths of the Atlantic 38 years later, in which Jim Lewis also participated.

The years covered in this book, 1961–1965, were relatively good ones for the space program. Although astronauts and cosmonauts were injured or killed in accidents during that period, the first spaceflight tragedies—of Soyuz 1 and Apollo 204—did not occur until 1967, past the timeframe of the book. Nonetheless, the fear of catastrophic loss was always present, and the authors’ storytelling skills keep the reader ever aware of the risks. Human spaceflight may have become routine to some who follow the space program, but others of us still get knots in our stomachs each time the space shuttle’s solid rocket boosters ignite, or the orbital maneuvering engines fire to trigger descent. The authors of this book remind us why.

For those who have heard the tales of Gagarin and Shepard and other early spacefarers too many times already, the book contains enough new stories to make it worth reading. The authors dedicate the better part of a chapter to the “Mercury 13” women who were part of “astronaut selection” tests at the Lovelace Clinic. Part of the story is told through the eyes of Mary Wallace (“Wally”) Funk II, one of the Mercury 13, who participated in the tests believing that she had a chance to be selected as an astronaut. The authors go to great lengths to explain that such beliefs were misplaced at a time when the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) was not yet interested in female astronaut candidates. Funk has not given up her dream of flying in space, perhaps as a “commercial” astronaut. The authors also extensively discuss the Soviet women who trained as cosmonauts during that era. Although only one of that initial group, Tereshkova, actually flew in space, she was not the only one selected. French and Burgess do a good job of describing the other women who were chosen for that elite corps.

Readers should not overlook the excellent forward by Paul Haney, once the
“voice of Mission Control.” His personal account of joining NASA, of coming to know the first astronauts, and of an interesting encounter he had with Queen Elizabeth II provides a view of the early space program through a journalist’s eyes that is definitely worth reading.

All in all, the book is well written and entertaining, if sometimes a little too detailed. Readers will come away knowing more about the people who were present at the beginning of humanity’s foray into space, or, as the title bespeaks, as we moved out into that Silent Sea.