Robert A. Jacobs, *The Dragon’s Tail: Americans Face the Atomic Age*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010. 143 + xii pp. $80.00 cloth, $24.95 paper.

Reviewed by Paul Boyer, University of Wisconsin—Madison

The cultural impact of the nuclear bomb still grips our attention. Tim O’Brien’s 1985 novel *The Atomic Age* includes memories of a boyhood “fallout shelter”: a card table covered with “lead” pencils. The bomb looms large in Don DeLillo’s novel of Cold War America, *Underworld* (2007), beginning with the juxtaposition of a Soviet nuclear bomb test and Bobby Thompson’s “shot heard round the world” in the 1951 Giants-Dodgers playoff game. The website Conelrad.com offers a potpourri of nuclear memorabilia, including a recent interview with the woman who in 1964 portrayed the girl plucking daisy petals in the Democrats’ memorable campaign commercial attacking Barry Goldwater. Clearly many Americans remain fascinated by, and still struggle to understand, the culture of the nuclear age.

*The Dragon’s Tail* contributes helpfully to the scholarly literature on this topic. (The title echoes Richard Feynman’s description of the wartime Los Alamos tests to determine the level of fissionable material needed to trigger a nuclear explosion as “tickling the tail of a sleeping dragon.”) In this slim volume, Robert Jacobs, an associate professor at Hiroshima City University’s Peace Institute, offers six chapters (several previously published) exploring nuclear themes in American public discourse and mass culture in the years 1945 to 1963—an era that encompassed the shock of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, early Cold War alarms, and atmospheric nuclear tests with their mushroom clouds and radioactive fallout. As Jacobs observes, popular nuclear awareness during this period had an immediacy that faded once the 1963 Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty pushed the tests underground.

Jacobs ranges across the political/cultural spectrum, from pronouncements by academics, social thinkers, government strategists, and propagandists to the vast trove of mass-culture material. His research is impressive, from obscure pop-culture sources to long-classified Pentagon documents. His interpretive framework, laid out in the introduction, is that Americans experienced the nuclear reality through a cacophony of competing narratives and visual imagery—mythic, propagandistic, fictional, and chillingly realistic.

Chapters 1 and 2, dealing with nuclear testing, address the cultural resonance of the mannequins deployed at the Nevada test site, and of animals, imagined and real: Bert the Turtle, star of *Duck and Cover*, the government’s 1951 civil-defense film; the phlegmatic horses in an Atomic Energy Commission booklet distributed to citizens...
downwind of the Nevada test site; and the 5,554 animal subjects at the 1946 Bikini test. (A post-blast pig found swimming in Bikini lagoon later figured in an upbeat 1951 Collier’s story, “Polly, the Atomic Pig.”) These animals, Jacobs argues, were supposed to exemplify the fortitude and resourcefulness expected of citizens facing nuclear dangers. He also discusses the fiction and film genre featuring mutant creatures spawned by nuclear tests, such as the giant ants of Them! (1954) and the rampaging monster Godzilla (1956), based on the Japanese Godzira (1954). Such sci-fi works, he suggests, offered a way of confronting real-world fears.

Jacobs’s third chapter discusses the early postwar sociologists and psychologists who opportunistically saw themselves as crucial to tracing humanity’s war-making impulses and devising social-science strategies to avoid nuclear annihilation. The chapter concludes on an ironic note, referring to Pentagon contracts with university-based social scientists to study how civilians and soldiers could be conditioned to function efficiently after a nuclear attack.

In chapter 4, Jacobs examines the U.S. government’s civil-defense booklets and counter-narratives such as the novel and film On the Beach and a now forgotten 1955 episode of the TV series Medic. He also revisits the 1961 debate over the ethics of defending one’s fallout shelter from intruding neighbors—a discourse that attracted Time magazine and numerous religious leaders. Jacobs finds a total disconnect between what was actually known about nuclear warfare from government studies and such works as John Hersey’s Hiroshima (1946), on the one hand, and civil defense propaganda on the other. The latter, drawing on national myths of self-reliance, postulated a mythic world of calm and courageous individuals coping with a nuclear attack.

Chapter 5, “Good Bomb/Bad Bomb,” considers the thousands of soldiers and civilians exposed to nuclear testing in the South Pacific and Nevada. Jacobs examines the government propaganda booklet distributed to civilians in the downwind areas and highlights the military magazines’ jokey, macho treatment of G.I. test subjects in nuclear tests. Jacobs concludes by noting the contradiction between the dismissive treatment of radioactivity in propaganda related to U.S. nuclear tests and cold-blooded Pentagon studies of radiation’s deadly effects in war-planning scenarios.

Jacobs’s final chapter, exploring the effects on children of nuclear tests, civil defense drills, and fears of nuclear war, moves beyond anecdotal evidence (familiar to anyone who has lectured on this topic) to explore the limited but suggestive research data. He also offers a close analysis of the film Duck and Cover, now known mainly through snicker-inducing snippets in the 1982 documentary The Atomic Café. This deadly serious government-sponsored film, he reminds us, was shown to millions of school children. Most striking in the film and accompanying pamphlet, he finds, is the absence of adults. Children are on their own as the bombs begin to fall. In a variant of this theme, in the 1958 mutant film The Blob, it is teenagers who alert skeptical adults to the danger.

One would welcome more attention to gender, racial, geographic, religious, and social class differences in shaping responses to the bomb, as well as more background information on the governmental research contracts with universities and the inner
history of the nuclear-themed movies, television shows, and science-fiction stories. A cross-cultural perspective would be helpful. How unique was all this to the United States? But these are lacunae not only in Jacobs’s book, but in most such studies (my own included).

Jacobs rejects the conventional post-Hiroshima view that the problem lay in an innate human propensity for violence. Rather, he insists, the issue was “the pathology of militarism” (p. 60), promoted by specific groups pursuing their own institutional, economic, or ideological agendas. He argues that the baby boomers’ attacks on “militarism,” as expressed, for example, in the 1962 Port Huron statement issued by the Students for a Democratic Society, arose directly from their nuclear-haunted early years: “A childhood in which these Americans were told that this might be the end of the world, that the future might not be there, was a very important factor that led activist baby boomers to try to change the world” (p. 116). Is this is a sufficient explanation? Can an entire generation be summed up so tidily? Such intriguing questions bring to a thought-provoking conclusion a stimulating and useful book.


Reviewed by Loch K. Johnson, University of Georgia

Since the creation of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in 1947, few of its officers have become more famous—some would say notorious—than William K. Harvey. Despite a pear-shaped physique during most of his adult life, Harvey was often referred to as the James Bond of the CIA, probably because he did his best to foster an image of himself as a swashbuckling operative. The pearl-handled pistols he wore on each hip and a smaller caliber revolver tucked in his waistband, the steady flow of martinis he consumed, and the romantic escapades he claimed to have had (the seduction of a different woman every day of his adult life), were all part of a derring-do persona that he did his best to project.

Not all of it was a myth. He began his intelligence career at the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on the eve of the Second World War and chalked up some successful counterespionage operations, first against the Germans and then after the war against the Soviet Union. By 1947, however, he had upset the FBI director, J. Edgar Hoover, one too many times. The first instance was when he approved an operation in New York against a German target without proper authority from Hoover, an early illustration of Harvey’s disdain for bureaucratic procedures that got in the way of quick action. The second instance—the straw that broke the camel’s back—arose when Harvey had an automobile mishap. He slid off the road in Washington, DC on a rainy night after too much drinking at a party. He fell asleep in the car on the side of the road, and when his wife reported him missing late at night, the news made its way to
the FBI’s top floor. Within a month, Harvey was gone from the bureau, despite mostly high marks on his efficiency ratings.

Without missing a beat, Harvey found employment at the newly established CIA, where he made his disdain for the FBI widely known, thus provoking Hoover’s unwavering enmity. Inside the agency (as the CIA is called by its officers), Harvey drew mixed reviews, just as he had at the FBI. Colleagues ridiculed his efforts at machismo, as when he flipped the lid of his Zippo lighter in the style of a film noir detective, spun the cylinder of his pistol, or cleaned his fingernails with a hunting knife. He seemed to enjoy trying to shock the CIA’s cultured Ivy Leaguers with his Midwestern rough edges—espionage’s answer to Ernest Hemingway.

Yet he also had a knack (again, as at the FBI) for placing himself in the middle of important CIA operations and, at least in these early years, drew praise from colleagues and superiors. During his early years at the agency, Harvey had an intuitive suspicion of the British intelligence officer Harold A. R. “Kim” Philby, based temporarily in Washington, DC as a liaison between the CIA and its British counterpart, MI-6. Harvey sent warnings to the agency’s managers; but, charmed by Philby’s amiability and sophisticated Cambridge style, they initially ignored the red flags. As the circumstantial evidence of Philby’s treachery mounted, however, the CIA’s highest officials began to take Harvey’s reservations more seriously. When the British double-agent was finally exposed, Harvey’s reputation inside the agency took a leap upward.

Harvey’s reputation surged again in the 1950s when he led a CIA effort to wiretap Soviet military communications that passed through Berlin. The agency dug a tunnel to gain access to the transmission lines, a difficult feat at the time. The collection operation, even though compromised from the beginning by the presence of another British agent who was spying for the Soviet Union, George Blake, was able to gather useful information because Soviet intelligence officials wanted to keep Blake’s cover intact and therefore let the tunnel project proceed. However, the Soviet intelligence agencies avoided using these lines for their own communications.

At the apogee of his career, Harvey played a central role in Operation Mongoose, aimed at ridding the world of Fidel Castro. As Harvey was wont to do with his brusque personality and bibulous ways, he managed once again to anger an organizational superior, this time the president’s brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, who was also deeply involved in Mongoose. Harvey had a series of conflicts with the attorney general and ended up directly insulting him at a meeting. Harvey soon found himself reassigned to Rome, where his alcoholism worsened to the point that he was forced to retire. With questionable judgment, he maintained close ties in retirement with an organized crime boss, Johnny Roselli, who had worked with Harvey on Mongoose (because the Mafia knew Cuba well from gambling interests there in the 1950s).

The story of William Harvey, told with thoroughness in Bayard Stockton’s book, is a sad tale. Harvey was clearly a talented individual but was cursed by a need to bluster and a fondness for the bottle. His role in warning about Philby and in the Berlin tunnel project has secured his place in the pantheon of CIA legends, but his flaws were glaring enough to prevent him from making the agency’s own recently disclosed internal list of its fifty greatest officers.
This biography is a solid effort at surveying Harvey’s colorful history, chiefly by drawing on a large number of interviews with his associates and on Stockton’s own recollections of his brief time in the CIA with Harvey during the Berlin tunnel days. The book suffers from redundancies and the stringing together of quotations from interviews—an odd inelegance for an author who spent most of his career writing for Newsweek. Stockton died before the book was published, and perhaps the prose would have been smoothed had he been given the chance to edit it further. Regardless of stylistic inadequacies, this study is likely to be the best we will have on Harvey for some time and merits the attention of those interested in the evolution of the CIA.


Reviewed by Andrew L. Johns, Brigham Young University

From the earliest years of the Cold War, U.S. efforts to contain the spread of Soviet Communism, to protect Western access to oil, and to support Israel led to unprecedented U.S. involvement in the Middle East, a region previously dominated by the British. Although scholars have devoted a great deal of attention to the changing geopolitical interests and influence of the United States and the United Kingdom in recent years, the Anglo-American relationship in and diplomacy toward the Persian Gulf has generally been overlooked. In American Ascendance and British Retreat in the Persian Gulf Region, W. Taylor Fain examines the transition from British imperial interest in the Middle East to the preponderant power exercised by the United States, a transformation that began in 1951 with Iran’s nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and culminated under the Nixon administration in the 1970s following Britain’s withdrawal from the region in 1968.

Based on exhaustive research in a multitude of archives on both sides of the Atlantic, Fain argues that U.S. and British interests coincided during this period but “were rooted in different interpretations of the Gulf region’s ultimate value to their larger foreign policies” (p. 202). Fain recognizes that London and Washington approached the region from two divergent perspectives: the British showed more interest in protecting their investments and clinging to great-power status, whereas the United States focused on “assessing the Persian Gulf’s and Arabia’s value in terms primarily of its global Cold War strategy” (p. 203). As a result, the foreign policies pursued by the British and Americans—described as “parallel, for the most part, but not identical” (p. 11)—tended to come into conflict on many occasions during this period. In making this argument, Fain joins a growing cohort of scholars who contend that the vaunted Anglo-American “special relationship” described by Winston Churchill existed more in rhetoric than in reality. Yet Fain does not accept the revisionists’ argument completely. Instead, he characterizes this as a “story of two close allies struggling
mightily to overcome mutual suspicions and to cooperate in a critically important region of the world” (p. 206).

The decline of British influence and the concomitant rise of U.S. interest in the region created tensions between the allies in the 1950s. According to Fain, Anglo-American relations reached a low point during Anthony Eden’s tenure as British prime minister in the wake of the coup against Muhammad Mossadeq in Iran, and the situation deteriorated further during the Suez crisis in 1956. After Suez, Fain suggests, “a new period of relative harmony” (p. 84) developed between London and Washington, although subsequent intra-alliance strife repeatedly disrupted the relationship over the next several years. Complicating the situation further was the fact that policy divisions within the U.S. and British governments and between government officials and business executives made Anglo-American diplomacy more challenging.

Moreover, domestic political considerations in both countries factored into policymaking and served to constrain available options for both sides. In fact, as Fain cogently describes, the British decision to withdraw from the Persian Gulf resulted from the financial crisis facing the government of Harold Wilson. London’s desire to maintain a role in the region was palpably demonstrated by Edward Heath’s efforts to reverse the withdrawal decision after he took power. Although the attempt failed for a variety of reasons, British influence in the region continued into the 1970s with the tacit support of the Nixon administration.

Fain does a good job of placing the events in the Persian Gulf into a broader context, both regionally and in terms of the broader Cold War paradigm. For example, he demonstrates that the embroilment of U.S. forces in the Indochina war spurred Washington first to subsidize and later to seek proxies for British power in the Persian Gulf as U.S. policymakers attempted to balance Cold War considerations, Arab nationalism, and support of a continued British presence in the region. In addition, Fain explains British decisions and actions during this period in a wider strategic context, taking into consideration both economic and geopolitical factors such as the importance of Persian Gulf oil and the rise of Arab nationalism under Gamal Abdel Nasser’s regime in Egypt.

Although the book’s value is undisputed, the reader is left wanting to know more about this compelling relationship in a strategically and economically critical region. The book is only 208 pages of text (and nearly 60 pages of notes), which means that Fain could have expanded his analysis on several points to clarify his laundry-list of arguments. Indeed, although he mentions ten themes in the introduction, several get subsumed by the narrative, and many issues receive only superficial treatment. In contrast, Fain spends perhaps too much time focusing on the degree to which Anglo-American interests and policies coincided or conflicted at the expense of deeper analysis of other intriguing issues.

These reservations aside, Fain has produced an important contribution to the literature on the origins and evolution of U.S. foreign policy in a critical geopolitical area that continues to resonate with contemporary relevance. His book should become standard reading for scholars in the field.

Reviewed by Dwight N. Mason, Center for Strategic and International Studies

Joseph Jockel, professor of Canadian studies at St. Lawrence University, is the leading U.S. academic authority on U.S.-Canadian defense relations since World War II and, in particular, North American continental air defense.

This book is the second volume of his study of the origins and history of the North American Air (now Aerospace) Defense Agreement and the organization created by that agreement now known as the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). His first volume on this subject, *No Boundaries Upstairs: Canada, the United States and the Origins of North American Air Defense 1945–1958*, was published by the same press in 1987. This will likely be the final volume because, as Jockel notes in his final chapter, NORAD may have reached the end of its useful life.

The book focuses on three aspects of NORAD: the history of U.S. cooperation in continental air defense as the threat changed from Soviet bombers to Soviet intercontinental-range ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and in the post–Cold War world to international terrorism; NORAD as a U.S.-Canadian binational command, with particular emphasis on the concept of operational control; and the evolution of the agreement itself as circumstances changed.

NORAD was created to manage the threat posed to North America by Soviet bombers. National security officials believed that the speed at which the bombers could arrive combined with the lethality of their nuclear payloads necessitated a rapid and coordinated response—one that did not require a separate negotiation as each incident developed. As Jockel points out, what made NORAD politically possible was the concept of “operational control.” This concept has never been well understood in either the United States or Canada. Jockel’s description is excellent: The commander of NORAD (always a U.S. officer with a Canadian deputy commander) would “have the power to direct, coordinate and control the operational activities of forces assigned” to it even though command in peacetime—including administration, discipline, training, pay, promotion and the right to assign or remove forces—would remain in national hands (p. 35). The resulting NORAD “command” was an integrated (binational) organization of U.S. and Canadian personnel who shared operational decision-making and financial responsibilities. For example, the director of operations was traditionally a Canadian officer (including on 11 September 2001). One result was that the Canadian deputy commander was often the acting commander because the U.S. commander was also the commander of at least one other U.S. command and was frequently away from NORAD headquarters. It is interesting to read about the trouble the U.S. commander took to ensure that his Canadian deputy would be able to deploy NORAD’s nuclear weapons should it be necessary (pp. 27–29).

Support for NORAD has been strong, especially within the U.S. military (or,
more precisely, the U.S. Air Force). Until very recently, the U.S. position was generally that NORAD should be the primary vehicle for North American air defense with other commands supporting it. As an example, of this attitude, Jockel cites a statement by the U.S. commander of NORAD in 1967: “[A]ir and missile defense must be directed by a single individual and this individual must be CINCNORAD.” The commander also cited the basic principle then almost a decade old that “NORAD should be the primary command” (p. 75). U.S. officials had expected that NORAD would have operational control of the National Missile Defense (NMD) system (p. 149) proposed in the post–Cold War era. In 1999 the two sides discussed giving NORAD an expanded homeland defense function (p. 161), a notion that gained impetus after September 2001 (p. 178). However, Canada hesitated, and the United States moved ahead on a different track (p. 178).

This was not the first time that Canada had hesitated at a critical moment in U.S.-Canadian defense relations. As far back as 1958, when President Eisenhower was prepared to transfer to Canada the nuclear weapons needed for effective air defense, with no requirement for continued U.S. control—a unique offer (pp. 49–50, 197)—Canada demurred. The consequences were serious because the Canadian decision not to possess the weapons but to use them if necessary led to a long and frustrating negotiation over how this would be done, a negotiation that poisoned relations between Prime Minister John Diefenbaker and President John F. Kennedy and ultimately led to the dramatic fall of the Diefenbaker government when the United States (on the advice of the U.S. Embassy) finally decided to make public his dissembling on this matter (pp. 61–62).

A second important decision that had large effects on the U.S.-Canadian defense relationship was Canada’s decision not to participate in the defense of North America from missile attack. Canadian officials dealt with this matter twice: first in 1967 when Prime Minister Lester Pearson decided not to participate in active missile defense (p. 70), and more recently with Canada’s surprising and maladroitly communicated decision not to take part in the NMD (pp. 172–174). The effects of these two decisions were far-reaching: they caused the United States to plan and to proceed with this aspect of continental defense without Canada.

A final, important thread running through the book is the declining importance of Canada to the defense of the United States. Initially Canada was supremely important because of its geography. U.S. officials wanted to intercept Soviet bombers as far north as possible, and use of Canadian air space was essential for this purpose. Similarly Canada was an essential location for various radar warning systems.

However as the threat shifted to ICBMs and as warning sensors moved to satellites, Canadian geography and cooperation became progressively less important to the United States. One can now imagine North American air and space warning and defense without NORAD or Canada. The Canadian decisions not to participate in missile defense or to welcome the preliminary idea that NORAD might be expanded in a homeland defense sense have increased such thinking. In fact, they have made it necessary.

Added to this situation are the new military command structures both countries
have adopted in response to 9/11, with unified commands to manage the defense of the United States on the one hand (U.S. Northern Command) and Canada on the other (Canada Command). These developments mark a shift from a binational to a bilateral approach to defense cooperation in North America. This change is not compatible with NORAD as it now exists and leaves NORAD in an awkward and difficult position (p. 196). Indeed, some U.S. and Canadian officers see NORAD as a hindrance (p. 197) to future cooperation.

This is an excellent book. It is well sourced, and its use of Canadian sources is particularly strong. The book is very well written and a pleasure to read.


Reviewed by Marcia S. Smith, President, Space and Technology Policy Group, LLC

Five decades after Sputnik I gave birth to the Space Age and the U.S.-Soviet space race, the story of that era has been told and retold countless times. In Epic Rivalry: The Inside Story of the Soviet and American Space Race, Von Hardesty and Gene Eisman tell it once more. Although the book does not break new ground, the authors weave an entertaining tale with the right blend of personalities, politics, and technospeak. The foreword by Sergei Khrushchev, the son of Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev and himself an engineer who worked in the Soviet space program, is of particular note with its first-hand stories of Soviet politics and the personal rivalries among the leaders of the key space design bureaus. Published in 2007, the book is just as timely in 2011, reminding us of the superpower status once associated with the ability to launch people into space at the very time that the United States is abandoning that capability for an indefinite number of years.

Many who read the book will be too young to remember the Cold War and the fear and distrust between the world’s two superpowers that characterized the early days of space exploration. Today, terrorist groups have replaced superpowers in fomenting fear, and the ranks of the superpowers have shrunk to only one—the United States. In the two decades since the Soviet Union collapsed, relations between the United States and Russia have remained relatively good. Despite significant tension on some issues, the two sides cooperate extensively on space exploration and many other issues. Russia has proven itself a reliable partner in the International Space Station (ISS), to such an extent that the U.S. government decided to become completely dependent on Russia to launch U.S. astronauts to the ISS for at least several years starting in 2011, when the U.S. space shuttle flew for the final time. U.S. astronauts, and those from the other non-Russian ISS partners who years ago thought they could rely on the U.S. National Aeronautic and Space Administration (NASA) to take their astronauts to space, will henceforth be dependent on Russia for ferry services to and from Earth orbit—as long as Russia agrees to provide them at a cost other countries
are willing to pay. NASA began work on a new crew transportation system, Constellation, but the Obama administration cancelled it in favor of turning crew transportation to low Earth orbit over to the private sector instead of NASA. That decision provoked a fight with Congress, and the compromise reflected in the 2010 NASA Authorization Act is for NASA to build a system as well as help the private sector create a “commercial crew” capability. In reality, Congress and the administration remain at odds, and the future of the U.S. human space flight program is murky at best.

How far we have come from the “Epic Rivalry” of the 1950s and 1960s to total dependence on former adversaries for what was once the crown jewel of technological supremacy. Do Americans care?

They did in 1957. Hardesty and Eisman offer a rich array of reactions by politicians, reporters, and scientists to the launches of Sputnik 1 on 4 October 1957 and Sputnik 2 a month later. “The popular response . . . is best described as an awkward mix of incredulity, a curiosity about Soviet intentions, and a growing anxiety over the unprecedented national humiliation” (p. 80). As Sergei Khrushchev recounts in his foreword, what made Sputnik a household word was the U.S. press, not the Soviet press. He tells the story of listening with his father, the Soviet Communist Party leader, to the sounds of the satellite passing overhead: “My father and I turned on the radio to listen to Sputnik beeping as it flew over Europe. Neither Khrushchev nor [Soviet Chief Designer] Korolev—and I even less—realized the immensity of what was happening during those hours. . . . Moscow realized a day later that the satellite had caused quite a furor all over the world, especially in the United States, and the Russian word “sputnik” for “satellite” soon entered the language of all nations. Ironically, it was the American press, not the Soviet press, which gave the Sputnik launch such immense coverage, allowing it to become one of the most powerful weapons of propaganda the Soviet Union had” (pp. xiii–xiv).

Hardesty and Eisman describe their book as an examination of “the historic role of the key political leaders who shaped the course of space exploration” (p. xxiv). The book is actually a reader-friendly recapitulation of the story of the early days of space exploration. The first chapters review in perhaps more detail than necessary the German rocket developments during World War II and the influence (or not) of German rocket engineers on the Soviet and U.S. space programs. The book then goes on to recount the well-known history of the Soviet and U.S. space programs with a strong focus on human space flight, which was the key element at the time. Veteran space aficionados may find themselves skipping many of the pages, but the legions of readers who were not yet born or have simply forgotten the history will find the book one of the most enjoyable and digestible accounts available. As one would expect from a work published by National Geographic, the volume is also nicely illustrated.

Reviewed by Michael J. Neufeld, National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution

As the author of a recent biography of Wernher von Braun (*Von Braun: Dreamer of Space, Engineer of War*, 2007), and as someone who has known Wayne Biddle since he was a fellow at my museum in the mid-1990s, I cannot review this book without explaining from the outset my somewhat complicated relationship with its author. I am thanked in the acknowledgments for assisting him during his fellowship, when he began working on the book. He also cites some of my work in his endnotes and bibliography. But after he left the museum in 1995 and I began working on a biography again in 1997 (I started for the first time in 1987 and then decided to write a book on the German rocket program), we ended up in something of an undeclared race to publish our von Braun books. Although both of us were and are critical of von Braun for his involvement with the Nazis and the crimes related to the V-2 rocket program, I knew that he took a harsher view than my own. I always figured, however, that there was room for a book on that end of the spectrum, which until recently was dominated by hero-worship.

*Dark Side of the Moon* does not pretend to offer a full-length biography. It is essentially an essay with only 152 pages of actual text, focusing on the Nazi question and Biddle’s views of von Braun’s culpability and moral inadequacy. Biddle explains in his introduction that he stops in the late 1950s because von Braun after the launch of *Sputnik I* “became all about hardware so to speak. Other writers have brought him almost day-by-day through Project Apollo in the 1970s, but I find that the story gets fetishistic then and of interest mostly to buffs” (p. xii)—which has the effect of eliminating some of the rocket engineer’s most important technical accomplishments. In fact, everything after 1945 seems to be an afterthought, reduced to an epilogue largely about von Braun’s immigration to the United States under Projects Overcast and Paperclip and the attendant whitewashing or suppression of his record as a Nazi Party member and SS officer involved in concentration-camp labor.

Given the relatively few pages Biddle devotes to his subject, he makes an interesting choice to spend nearly thirty of them on family history, notably the career of von Braun’s father. Biddle makes extensive and intriguing use of the father’s primarily political memoir (Magnus von Braun, Sr. briefly held high German government posts during World War I and at the end of the Weimar Republic). However, this has the effect of making Wernher’s appearance seem belated in the narrative, although it does provide context for the ease with which he moved into working for the Reichswehr and the Nazi regime. Because Biddle focuses on von Braun’s work for the Nazis, the book treats German technical accomplishments superficially and with a slightly snide undertone. Biddle tries to find ways to chip away at the rocket engineer’s reputation as a spaceflight obsessive and as a brilliant manager and to make him into a pure opportunist, but this effort is ultimately unpersuasive. Although Biddle scores some hits on
von Braun’s willing collaboration with the Nazis, his handling of the evidence surrounding the engineer’s responsibility for the murderous use of concentration-camp labor in the V-2 production program is selective. He quotes at length two French survivor testimonials that are dubious as evidence (both may be cases of mistaken identity, confusing Wernher with his younger brother Magnus, Jr.) and consigns to a passing mention in a footnote the one prisoner testimonial favorable to von Braun. He lists my own detailed article on these questions in the bibliography but fails to argue with my positions in the text or the endnotes, depriving readers of a complete and fair discussion of the book’s central question: von Braun’s guilt. Biddle waits until the epilogue to discuss the rocket engineer’s ten-day imprisonment by the Gestapo in 1944, rather than treating it in context. This arrest has always been inconvenient to hardcore von Braun critics, just as his Nazi record has been inconvenient to his hero-worshippers.

Biddle’s book is smoothly written for the wider public for whom it is primarily intended. Scholars may find Dark Side of the Moon a stimulating alternative view of von Braun’s relationship with Nazism. But Biddle’s research reflects little originality; almost everything in this book has already appeared elsewhere. And for readers of this journal, it is noteworthy that the Cold War American half of von Braun’s life is scarcely treated at all.

✣✣✣


This book is a contribution to the Library of Presidential Rhetoric. It reprints in numbered paragraphs (52 in all) the speech of President Ronald Reagan on 8 June 1982 to members of the British parliament at the Royal Gallery in Westminster. As background it provides a chapter on the evolution of U.S. Cold War policy and rhetoric, followed by a detailed exposition of the drafting of the speech, including the parts done by Reagan himself (15 percent of the speech). The authors analyze the speech as a matter of “ultimate definition and dialectical engagement,” describe the reactions to it at the time, and end with comments on its importance.

The contribution of the book lies first in its presentation of the speech itself and then in its account of the drafting process—which, for students of how senior U.S. officials and their staffs produce high-level statements of U.S. policy, is exemplary in its details. The most senior officials, and especially the president, rely heavily on their staffs to gauge their thoughts, reflect the consensus of their administration, and provide them with sufficient opportunities to massage the near-final drafts. The process can be difficult, as the authors scrupulously report. Competition rages to get favored
views included. The book gives due credit to Tony Dolan, Reagan’s principal speechwriter, for bringing it all together coherently. For all those involved, the actual delivery of the speech may have been something of an anticlimax, but in reality much solidarity within the administration must have been created in the drafting, guided by the long-established views of Reagan himself.

The authors’ subtitle is “Foreshadowing the End of the Cold War,” and they imply that the speech at Westminster was somehow instrumental in bringing that end about. They assert that the language of the speech was somehow new. Their main analysis of the speech’s rhetoric, in chapter 3, and particularly their assertion that it “revers[ed] the Communist claim to superiority over the West,” may be appropriate for professors of communications, but to the casual reader who lived through the Cold War the language is not at all exceptional. The speech is rather a quite good capturing of the rhetoric that characterized discussions within the United States about the nature of the Soviet regime and its ideology—discussions dating back to George Kennan’s “X” article in Foreign Affairs in 1947. Perhaps the accomplishment of Reagan and his staff was finally to catch up to and summarize that standard rhetoric. The reactions to the speech, as the authors report them, were tepid. That is, its impact might have been more in consolidating views within the Reagan administration itself than in affecting the views of U.S. and British observers.

The authors devote only two pages to reactions in the Soviet Union, reporting only the commentaries by the TASS news agency and the newspaper Izvestiya (which were negative). Given the materials that have come to light since the fall of the Soviet Union and the numerous former Soviet officials who have written memoirs about the last decade of the Soviet Union, including Mikhail Gorbachev, it would have been useful if the authors had done deeper research on the Soviet reactions at the time and in retrospect. The speech does allude to economic troubles in the Soviet Union that perhaps were not fully recognized at the time, but most experts in the West by 1982 were well aware that both the Soviet economy and its political coherence were in decline. The Solidarity demonstrations in Poland in 1980–1981 and the resulting imposition of martial law there already had had two effects: (1) martial law meant the eclipse of Communist Party rule in Poland, regardless of the institutional formalities the Polish government might have followed; and (2) the Soviet Union had to take on the further economic burden of keeping Poland from economic collapse. Leonid Brezhnev was in his dotage by that time (he died in November 1982), and most of the other Soviet leaders were also elderly, even though they were beginning to replace old Communist ideologues with industrial managers in ministerial positions. Most importantly, as the late Egor Gaidar points out in his book on the economic roots of the Soviet Union’s collapse, the USSR could no longer feed itself and had long been dependent on foreign grain, especially from the United States. Such purchases required hard currency that had been coming in from oil sales, but within a few years of Reagan’s speech the price per barrel sank as low as $10. As the 1980s went by, the Soviet Union could not buy enough grain and meet other domestic needs without incurring destabilizing fiscal imbalances. Moreover, all reports from the time were that relatively
few in the Soviet Union believed the Communist ideology anymore, no matter how much lip service they might have given to it.

The authors fail to note Reagan’s continued observance of the terms of the second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II), which was signed during the Carter administration but never ratified. They merely say on page 25 that SALT II was “not successful.” I would also note that, whatever was said in the Westminster speech, those of us who were working in the U.S. government at the time were still under the spell of the Team B report led by Richard Pipes and commissioned by George H. W. Bush when he was director of central intelligence. Pipes was on the National Security Council staff handling Soviet and East European affairs when Reagan’s Westminster speech was being prepared. Team B had said the Soviet Union was eternal and had no limits on its ability to expand its military power.

Altogether, one does not look at this book as a substantive contribution to Cold War history. Rather, it is an excellent contribution to the Reagan historical archives, describing how the president came up to speed in using the critical American rhetoric that had evolved across the Cold War—rhetoric that recognized the limits of Soviet power, no matter how many technologically advanced military systems the Soviet armed forces were still deploying.


Reviewed by Rita P. Peters, University of Massachusetts, Boston, and Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University

The crossed hammer-and-sickle emblem, covered with a patina of rust, lies on a worn gray stone surface. This image on the cover of A Dictionary of 20th-Century Communism evokes the vision of a tombstone. Although remnants of Communism are still in power on the periphery of what had been the core of the Communist world, the Soviet Union, the Communist regimes in China and Vietnam have been substantially redefined, and even the regime in Cuba is on the verge of change. North Korea remains a pervasively tyrannical regime, but it is of greater interest for its nuclear weapons than for its Stalinist trappings. Today’s reality on the whole suggests that Communism is indeed dead. But as a source of scholarly controversy or a part of world history, Communism deserves continuing study and reassessment. Scrutiny of various aspects of Communist regimes has been reinvigorated by the opening of some archives after the Soviet and other Communist regimes disintegrated.

A Dictionary of 20th-Century Communism, edited by Silvio Pons, a professor at the University of Rome Tor Vergata and director of the Gramsci Institute Foundation in Rome, and Robert Service, a senior research fellow at Oxford University, is the English edition of a previously published Italian version. This origin is reflected in the roster of contributors to the nearly 900-page dictionary. Of the 160 authors, 46 are
affiliated with Italian academic institutions (no affiliation is indicated for three contributors), and the U.S. and British numbers are 29 and 25, respectively. Five experts from Australia, three from Canada, thirteen from France, and twelve from Russia have also contributed entries. This linguistic distribution seems to account for the single most salient flaw of the book: Most of the bibliographical references for the entries written by Italian or French experts are to Italian or French sources. They are useless for English-language readers, particularly undergraduate students. Even when an English edition is available, the entries by non-English-speaking contributors cite their own preferred language. Ragnheidur Kristjansdottir refers to G. von Rauch’s *Geschichte der baltischen Staaten* (with the publication date given as 1977 rather than the correct 1970) even though an English edition was published in 1974 under the title *The Baltic States*. Editorial neglect is also evident in some entries with unclear passages and awkward phrasing as well as overuse of jargon and clichés (e.g., the use of “mixed marriage” in Carlo Spagnolo’s “Citizenship” entry without clarifying a mixed marriage of what). The inadequate references are but slightly compensated for by the cross-references that follow individual entries.

Beginning with the “Afghan War” (Elena Dudova) and ending with “Zionism” (Laurent Rucker) as an ideology competing with Communism for a similar audience, the 400 entries of the dictionary, including events, concepts, figures, organizations, and movements, provide an overview of what defines the history of Communism. Some entries, notably Francesco Benvenuti’s “Nationalism,” are included because of the policy challenge the ideology posed for Communist leaders from Vladimir Lenin and Iosif Stalin to Leonid Brezhnev and Mikhail Gorbachev. The entry for “Nonalignment” (Giampolo Calchi Novati), however, is not linked to Communism in any sense. Novati’s essay also undervalues the role of Josip Broz Tito and Gamal Abdel Nasser in forging the movement into an influential grouping and mischaracterizes the essence of nonalignment. The aim was not to remain equidistant from East and West, but to play a role in international relations by avoiding advance commitment to one side or the other. The fact that only two of the seven references given are English-language sources—even though most of the important studies of the Nonaligned Movement are available in English—makes the relevance of this entry unclear.

Most entries are predictable and appropriate for a dictionary on this topic, notably the 41 entries for Communist parties from Albania (Ana Lalaj) to Yugoslavia (Leonid Gibianskii). Some entries, however, are surprising and unexpected: “Citizenship” (Carlo Spagnolo), “Borders” (Sabine Dullin), “Festivals” (Richard Sites), and, most interestingly, “Architecture and Urban Planning” (Alessandro deMagistrus). These offer insightful descriptions of less commonly addressed aspects of Communist-state systems and are all the more useful.

The selection of entries for the dictionary betrays a pronounced Soviet-centric bias. Numerous entries address the Soviet case but not others: “Peasants in the USSR” (Lynne Viola) but not those of Eastern Europe, for example; and the “Dissolution of the USSR” (Mark Kramer) but not of Yugoslavia. The entries on cinema, literature,
television, and central planning cover only the Soviet case. Discussion of these topics in other countries would have yielded a different profile of each.

Some entries reflect an ideological bias, especially a tendency to gloss over the more damaging effects of certain Communist policies. For example, Luigi Tomba in his essay on the Communist Party of China makes a remarkable understatement. He writes that the failure of Mao Zedong’s Great Leap Forward “upset political stability.” But this leaves out the fact that the Great Leap did far more than “upset political stability”; it caused catastrophic devastation and the deaths of some 35 million people. The 1989 massacre near Tiananmen Square not only lacks its own entry, but is mentioned in only four entries. Ideological bias is also evident in the characterization of events. Spagnolo in his entry on the Marshall Plan writes of the Communist regime as having been “established” in Czechoslovakia. The use of such an anodyne description is misleading. The takeover in Czechoslovakia, following the Communists’ relentless pressure against non-Communist parties, was a Soviet-backed coup. Similarly, Odd Arne Westad in his entry on the Cold War explains Soviet domestic repression as due to international threats and characterizes Stalin’s policies in Eastern Europe as “defensive.” Some mention of Iran and Turkey would have highlighted the difficulty of sorting out defensive from expansionist motives in Stalin’s post–World War II policies, including his policies in Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, and the rest of Eastern Europe. Westad’s concluding observation that “the moment when alternatives began replacing the Soviet and American [sic!] models of social systems marked the end of the Cold War world order” is an inexplicable mystification.

Contributions from American and other English-speaking scholars stand out for their clear and unambiguous writing, their absence of overt ideological biases, and their useful bibliographies. Archie Brown (“Gorbachev, Mikhail”) assesses Gorbachev’s role in the redefinition of Soviet foreign policy and in the democratization of the Soviet system, but he also views as a failure Gorbachev’s inability to resolve the nationality problem. Brown shows why Gorbachev continues to be highly regarded in the West but not in Russia. Mark Kramer’s “Bipolarity” is a model of a reference-work entry. He identifies the significance of the concept, refers to the core controversies relating to the link between distribution of power and international stability, and concludes with a characterization of bipolarity as ideological antagonism as much as of military power. Similarly, in his “Dissolution of the USSR,” Kramer begins with a background of the dissolution before addressing the process itself. His analytical synthesis of the factors that coalesced in the dissolution of the Soviet Union clearly shows the relationship between Gorbachev’s reforms and the dissolution process. Norman M. Naimark in his “Berlin Wall” entry makes clear both the symbolic significance and the political reality of the Wall. Lynne Viola (“Collectivization of the Countryside”) analyses the ideological issues as well as the problems of implementing agricultural collectivization (violence, repression, food shortages, starvation) that were a part of the history of collectivization in the Soviet Union and other Communist countries.

The dictionary is redeemed by the contributions of these and other English-language experts. Now that Communism is receding into the past in most parts of the
world, a reference work on the topic is timely, and the Dictionary overall has much that is useful.


Reviewed by Hiroaki Kuromiya, Indiana University

The term and the concept of the Gulag came to be accepted in the anglophone world through *The Gulag Archipelago*, published in the West in 1973–1975 by Nobel Prize laureate Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. The editor of *Gulag Voices*, Anne Applebaum, received a Pulitzer prize for her book *Gulag: A History* (New York: Doubleday, 2003). In that sense, the Gulag should be widely known. Yet Applebaum is rightly concerned that “living memories of the society which created the gulag are beginning to disappear, along with the generation of people who still remember Stalin’s Soviet Union” (p. xiv). Hence this anthology of memoirs about the Gulag.

Although specialists will be familiar with most of the memoirs excerpted here, this volume presents them in a more accessible and readable way. The book contains thirteen excerpts from various publications, including five that are translated for the first time into English. Many were written by relatively famous people such as Dmitry Likhachev, Anatoly Zhigulin, Gustav Herling, Lev Kopelev, and Anatolii Marchenko. Applebaum emphasizes that even though the Soviet forced-labor camps may seem uniform and alike, the Gulag in fact was an “extraordinarily varied place” (p. viii). She selects thirteen themes to accompany the excerpts: arrests, interrogations, rapes, daily life, work, faith, abject submission, children, meetings with spouses, informers, jailers, punishment cells, and liberation (release). Each excerpt is prefaced by the editor’s helpful introduction to the author and theme. Some formerly taboo subjects are included here: gang rapes tolerated by authorities, children born in the Gulag, conjugal relations with spouses authorized by the Gulag administration, and the like.

By widely accepted definition the Gulag represents hell. Indeed, these accounts movingly relate the hellishness of life from arrest to liberation. Torture was common; hunger, cold, illness, and hard labor were the norm; and death was an everyday phenomenon. Survival in the Gulag was a daunting challenge, yet the majority of the Gulag inmates did somehow survive. The Gulag was not an extermination camp. As Applebaum aptly notes, however, we can no longer hear the voices of those who did not survive. But even if the survivors’ accounts are inevitably skewed, they are useful and revealing. Through them one can hear the voices of the millions who left no record of their own suffering.

Chapter 6 on faith is of particular interest. Nina Gagen-Torn describes how in the 1930s Trotskyists loyal to their beliefs staged a hunger strike in Kolyma demanding certain rights worthy of political prisoners (the right to correspond, for instance).
New charges were brought against them. They went willingly to their execution. Similarly, many inmates held to their belief in nationalism (Ukrainian and Lithuanian, for example). Gagen-Torn’s description of religious believers is fascinating. In the Gulag the subbotniki, who observed the Sabbath on Saturday, were accused of being opponents of the Soviet government, but they “regarded all tsars with contempt,” believing that “the monarchy had conspired with the church to distort the word of God, had deceived the common folk by various designs, had renounced the only book given by God himself—the Old testament” (p. 77). One sister in Lagpunkt No. 6, very ill and about to be released, openly challenged Gulag overseers: “I do not recognize your authority. Your state is unholy, your passport bears the stamp of the Antichrist. I want none of it. Once I am freed you will just jail me again. Why should I leave?” (p. 74). This appears to have been in Mordovia after World War II.

Applebaum is well aware that memoirs have both strengths and weaknesses. She states that the memoirs selected here are “essentially truthful” (p. xiii). One account, however, may not be, although I do not question the part excerpted here about work in camps. This is the piece by Anatolii Zhigulin. Applebaum states that he and his friends “really had engaged in what might be called anti-Stalinist activities” (p. 58) in post-1945 Voronezh. But in fact Zhigulin’s claim about his and his friends’ “anti-Stalinist activities” has been seriously challenged. Unfortunately, Applebaum does not discuss the controversial nature of his memoirs (which have undergone significant revision over time).

Nevertheless, this anthology is the perfect companion for college courses on Soviet history. Applebaum writes that the Gulag memoirs “continue to provide insights into human nature which are as fresh and relevant as on the day they were written. I hope they will enlighten a new generation” (p. xiv). One certainly hopes so. This book, along with several similar books more or less simultaneously published, should be read widely.

✣✣✣


Reviewed by Peter Rutland, Wesleyan University

Timothy J. Colton’s authoritative biography, based on extensive research including three interviews with Boris Yeltsin himself, is the first published since Leon Aron’s Yeltsin: A Revolutionary Life (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2000) and Herbert Ellison’s Boris Yeltsin and Russia’s Democratic Transformation (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006). Yeltsin is a polarizing figure who draws both admiration and contempt. For Aron and Ellison, Yeltsin is the gravedigger of Soviet socialism and the “first president” of a sovereign, democratic Russia. For others, he was a power-hungry politician who destroyed one country in order to rule another and who built a Russia that was scarcely more democratic than the system it replaced. Academics are equally divided over whether Yeltsin was a maker of history or merely its hapless instrument.
Colton goes a long way toward reconciling these conflicting images by focusing on the man himself, warts and all, and tracking Yeltsin's reactions to events beyond his—and anyone else's—control. Neither hagiography nor debunking, Colton sees both strengths and flaws in Yeltsin's complex character. The central paradox is that of an insider dismantling the very system of power that had elevated him to a privileged position.

Colton provides a vivid portrayal of Yeltsin's family background and his upbringing in the Urals, amid the grim chemical factories of Bereniki. It is curious that Yeltsin later denied, or mentally suppressed, the fact that both sets of grandparents had been deported to labor colonies. Even though Boris was beaten by his father, his family—despite their privations—insisted that he come back from school with perfect scores. Colton steers clear of a Freudian reading, though chapter 12 makes clear that depression was part of Yeltsin's complex psychology. Yeltsin established a pattern of getting himself into a tight corner and then making a heroic escape, only to retreat from public view just days later.

One consistent theme is Yeltsin the outsider: making a speech in elementary school in which he challenged the competence of his teacher (p. 47), and avoiding joining the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) until the age of 30 (nine years later than his contemporary, Mikhail Gorbachev). Still, Yeltsin learned to play by the rules of the game and prospered within the Communist Party's bureaucratic structures.

Yeltsin was brought to Moscow in April 1985 and appointed head of the CPSU Construction Department. By December he was head of the Moscow municipal party committee. Gorbachev used him “to knock down” the corrupt team of the long-time Moscow party chief Viktor Grishin (p. 117). Yeltsin was not Gorbachev's man, and he also soon came to be seen as a rival by the newly appointed prime minister, Nikolai Ryzhkov, who had formerly been head of the giant Uralmash factory in Yeltsin's hometown of Sverdlovsk, and by Egor Ligachev, second secretary of the Communist Party. Yeltsin clashed repeatedly with these colleagues and chafed at Gorbachev's complacency (p. 136). By September 1987 Yeltsin was threatening to resign, and the next month he was forced to step down after delivering a seven-minute speech in which he condemned the “adulation of the General Secretary.” Contrary to published reports at the time, the speech did not include any personal attacks on Gorbachev's wife, Raisa (p. 499 n. 7).

Yeltsin was able to use the broader opportunities of Gorbachev's perestroika to mount a remarkable political comeback. This began in party venues with a speech at the 19th CPSU Conference in mid-1988 followed by a November 1988 speech to the Higher Komsomol School, which was circulated to sympathetic journalists (pp. 157, 161). Only with Gorbachev's introduction of competitive elections in March 1989 did Yeltsin see a possibility for political advancement outside the CPSU. Yeltsin's career trajectory as an insider-turned-outsider made him uniquely qualified as someone who could serve, in Vitalii Tret’yakov's words, as a “boss for the bosses” (p. 167). Once elected to the newly established Congress of People's Deputies, Yeltsin found himself “playing with the kind of ideas it had once been his duty as a CP boss to suffocate”
(p. 171). He made his first trip to the West in September 1989 and, when visiting a Houston supermarket, experienced the culture shock familiar to all Soviet travelers (p. 172).

In mounting chaos, Yeltsin upped the ante, talking about Russians being “slaves” in a “Marxist experiment” as he ran for the newly formed presidency of the Russian Republic in June 1991 (p. 193). The famous picture of Yeltsin standing atop a tank during the August 1991 coup tells only part of the story: he first had to stop the tank by standing in front of it (p. 200). Yeltsin came around to the idea of a break with the past as a unifying principle for his presidency (p. 208). Colton does not spend much time speculating about alternative paths that Russian history could have taken, though he does note that if Yeltsin had reconciled with Gorbachev and become prime minister, things could have been very different (p. 209).

Colton pulls few punches in his depiction of Gorbachev. Even as Yeltsin was learning new tricks, Gorbachev’s insistence on being appointed as Soviet president (a post created in March 1990) instead of running in a competitive election was, as Colton puts it, “a blunder of biblical proportions” (p. 180). Other mistakes followed, such as his October 1990 rejection of the 500 Days economic reform plan as giving inadequate powers to the federal center. “Tone deaf to the end, [Gorbachev] spoke of being an adherent of socialism” on his return to Moscow after the failure of the August 1991 coup (p. 202).

Yeltsin’s career after 1991 seems almost anticlimactic. Yeltsin had no clear vision for Russia’s future, no encompassing ideology. The Russians, as Gennadii Burbulis said, picked a “savior” not a reform plan—with predictable results (p. 213). He assembled a governing team and a program from disparate sources in what Colton calls “political bricolage” (p. 257). The Russian public quickly turned against Yeltsin in the early 1990s because of the economic chaos blamed (somewhat unfairly) on his reforms. During Yeltsin’s rise to power, he displayed judgment and initiative but also a proclivity for self-destruction and a willingness to step over people (p. 448). His wariness about his colleagues contributed to his inability to govern effectively. In his first term he went through seven finance ministers and six economics ministers. Overall, ministers lasted an average of 23 months in his first term and 15 months in his second term (p. 398). Yeltsin could be a micromanager: Plans for restoration work on the Kremlin went through 21 drafts before he was satisfied (p. 254). Pavel Borodin’s Presidential Business Department quickly became a vast “ministry of privileges”—this under the man who had humbly signed up for the local medical clinic when he came to Moscow in 1985 (p. 327). After Yeltsin’s fourth heart attack in June 1996, he was limited to 30 minutes of work per day, though Colton downplays the idea that the “Family” (Yeltsin’s immediate family and closest associates) exerted a Rasputin-like grip over the Kremlin (pp. 422–424).

Colton’s Yeltsin is a populist but not a democrat. Even so, Yeltsin systematically dispersed power from the center—to regional leaders, to the press, and to the new businessmen who were granted ownership of vast swaths of Soviet industrial assets. Yeltsin had a grudging respect for press freedom, but not for the rule of law. Despite his desire to break with the past, evidenced by the reburial of the Romanovs in 1998,
he left Vladimir Lenin’s body in the tomb on Red Square (p. 392). Historians will be debating the Yeltsin phenomenon for many years to come.


Reviewed by Stephen J. Whitfield, Brandeis University

Studies of cultural diplomacy continue to grow exponentially—or does it only seem that way? The number of historians who have been explaining the triumph of West over East in terms of the fine arts, the popular arts, and the black arts of propaganda threatens to exceed the number of pianists, painters, and trumpeters who were showcased in the “soft power” programs that may have accelerated the end of the Cold War. Andrew J. Falk’s entry into this expanding field of historical scholarship offers a thoughtful overall schema that helps to make more intelligible the transition from the Second World War, when the alliance with the USSR did not blunt hopes for a pacific and multilateralist era thereafter, to the frozen postures of Republican foreign policy.

Unlike some students of the cultural Cold War, who have emphasized the formation of a stifling narrowness and an anti-Communist absolutism, Falk highlights the ways that progressives and cosmopolitans played possum with the super-patriots. He discovers enclaves in which social criticism could be expressed until the pall of McCarthyism was lifted. The achievement of *Upstaging the Cold War* is to push back earlier the ways that dissent could keep alive the dream of international reconciliation that the birth of the United Nations had fostered. That belief had seemed illusory when Soviet tanks were crushing rebels in East Berlin and Budapest and when John Foster Dulles dominated the Department of State. Falk’s revisionism therefore helps to locate and elucidate the antecedents to the thaw in U.S.-Soviet relations ushered in by the nuclear test ban treaty of 1963.

What complicates Falk’s story are the disparate origins of the American style of promoting national ideals and interests. The tendency of Washington to think in terms of power could not easily be made compatible with Hollywood’s desire to earn a hefty profit. Policymakers wanted to connect with or challenge their counterparts abroad. Moviemakers wanted to seize the huge commercial opportunities that international audiences offered. The impressive growth of the U.S. government’s executive branch during and after the Second World War promoted a yearning to coordinate the various facets of foreign policy, which conflicted with the autonomy to which the studios were accustomed in seeking to satisfy popular taste. *Upstaging the Cold War* offers an account that ends, like a family romance, in reconciliation, when the leading sources of political and cultural authority realize the mutual benefits of penetrating the Iron Curtain with proof of the dynamism of the country’s dream life.

Surprises lurk within the book. Its readers might expect the incarnation of the 1940s vision of progressivism to be Henry A. Wallace, the editor-in-chief of *The New
Republic who had been vice president during Franklin Roosevelt’s third term and was a believer in the “century of the common man.” Instead, the pivotal figure here turns out to be a Republican, Wendell L. Willkie, author of the wartime bestseller One World (1943), and coincidentally a paladin for the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America. Falk portrays Willkie as the chief object of expectations that a more democratic America might conduct an internationalist statecraft. Who could have foreseen that Dalton Trumbo, a onetime ghostwriter for Secretary of State Edward Stettinius in 1945, would become, a mere two years later, the most ornery member of the Hollywood Ten? With the Waldorf Statement in 1947, as the studio heads agreed to impose a blacklist, Communists and fellow-travelers (and others on the left) migrated to the medium that is most associated with political timidity and is even regulated by the federal government: television.

Here Falk springs another surprise on his readers. The incessant need for drama in live television compelled the networks to hire writers and directors who might not be employable in filmdom, talents who were not then serving prison sentences for contempt of Congress. This sometimes meant bringing on board forthright liberals such as Rod Serling and Gore Vidal. Anthology dramas often meant evoking the anomic of the common man stuck in a dead-end job like working as a butcher. Upstaging the Cold War is nowhere more effective in advancing its argument than in citing the example of Paddy Chayefsky’s Marty (1953). Neither on the small screen nor on the wide screen two years later was Marty political. Yet its gritty black-and-white realism, which contrasted so conspicuously with the religiosity and bombast of the spear-and-sandal epics that Hollywood was producing, suggested in a vaguely progressive way that attention must be paid to the lives of the little people. Thus the suspicions of the House Committee on Un-American Activities were aroused, which did not prevent Marty from winning a 1956 Oscar for Best Picture. The film got a further boost toward the end of Dwight Eisenhower’s administration, when cultural diplomacy became more pluralistic in its aesthetic and political tastes. Because signs of openness would be helpful to the reputation of the republic, Marty was included among the movies shown in the USSR in 1959 under the auspices of the U.S. Department of State. The impact on audiences was palpable. Under capitalist exploitation, occupying a lowly niche on the social scale, Marty (Ernest Borgnine) nevertheless earned enough to own his own house, to provide a separate room for his mother and aunt, and even to have a private telephone that functioned. Soviet citizens’ faith in the prospect of “catching up” to the Americans was thus shaken.

Upstaging the Cold War also reinforces the upward revision of Eisenhower’s stature. Having come to realize that an America comfortable with differences of opinion would be favorably regarded abroad, Eisenhower was a more supple and canny Cold Warrior than liberals believed half a century ago. Acknowledgment of the contributions of leftist artists to the kaleidoscope of American creativity would gain the admiration of peoples chafing under the rigidities and cruelties of Communist regimes. Thus the momentum was established that would lead to 1991.

The danger of a thesis like Falk’s is that, if pushed too far, the significant vestiges of McCarthyism are given too little emphasis. Domestic debate after all continued to
be muzzled and foreign policy distorted. *Upstaging the Cold War* nevertheless presents an intriguing thesis, one with which specialists on the Red Scare and its geopolitical implications must reckon.

✣✣✣


Reviewed by Robert Teigrob, Ryerson University

By the mid-1950s, the U.S. foreign policy establishment arrived at the conclusion that the “race problem” in the United States had so tarnished America’s image abroad that international objectives were being impeded. In response, the State Department began to sponsor tours of integrated jazz ensembles—purveyors of a music then considered primitive and degenerate by many American elites—to strategically important foreign locales. Many white and black jazz musicians responded enthusiastically to the opportunity, even though they were sent to endorse a “color-blind” America tainted by Jim Crow, lynching, and discrimination in voting, housing, and employment. Penny Von Eschen’s book provides an overview of these tours, revealing why this seemingly incompatible bureaucracy-musician relationship managed to survive and even thrive for more than two decades before collapsing under the weight of its inherent contradictions.

Despite U.S. officials’ misgivings about jazz, they believed that the music could serve important propaganda functions. Many of the leading jazz players were African-American, suggesting that talent and hard work, rather than skin color, determined individual success in the United States. The complexity and artistry of jazz (acknowledged around the globe though still contested at home) belied Soviet claims that a market-driven society could produce neither original nor great culture; the jazz ensemble, which encouraged individual expression within the parameters established by the group and which often included performers of different racial identities, rendered the music an apt, if somewhat optimistic, metaphor for liberal democracy itself. Jazz musicians, too, found much benefit in state-sponsored tours. Many simply needed the work in an era of increased competition from rhythm-and-blues and rock-and-roll. Moreover, they viewed the government’s endorsement of their music as a belated but welcome recognition of black capability and achievement. Participating musicians such as Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, and Randy Weston also spoke fondly of the opportunity to travel to Africa in order to forge musical and social contacts with local inhabitants.

As Von Eschen makes clear, the agendas of the State Department and the performers did not always sit well together. Musicians championed jazz as a model of racial equity that they aspired to achieve, not as a faithful reflection of the freedom and equality offered by U.S. society. Government officials spoke of the music’s universalism and its broadly American roots, whereas African American artists insisted that the
particularisms of the black experience had created jazz. Although the State Department sought to engender pro-American sympathies among the ruling elites of a given region, musicians frequently democratized the tours, playing impromptu gigs for ordinary citizens and jamming with local musicians. Likewise, tour participants often articulated ideas more attuned to pan-African and broadly Third World concerns than to those of U.S. leaders. This inability to maintain a tight focus on national identities and priorities points to one of the reasons for the termination of the program in 1978. Though always a hybridized art form, jazz by that date had become so thoroughly internationalized, both influencing and adopting styles from around the globe, that it could no longer be clearly identified with one country. That State Department sponsorship had done much to abet this very process—that the department had, in Von Eschen’s words, “facilitated the music’s transnational routes of innovation and improvisation” (p. 250)—adds another irony to a thoroughly paradoxical relationship.

Scholars familiar with Von Eschen’s previous work on the subject, first sketched out in her 1997 monograph, *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937–1957* (Cornell University Press), and developed more fully in essays she has contributed to anthologies on Cold War culture, will find a great deal that is familiar here. As in her earlier efforts, she makes perhaps too much of the State Department’s apparent astonishment over musicians’ penchant for straying from the authorized script. Officials “never dreamed,” she writes, “that the musicians would bring their own agendas” (p. 24). Even if officials underestimated the degree of musicians’ politicization and interest in international matters, Von Eschen’s own evidence points to a bureaucracy that is well aware that domestic civil rights militancy could spill over to the tours. From the beginning, performers were carefully selected, continually briefed on appropriate discourse and conduct, and kept under near-constant supervision while abroad. One of the earliest proposed tours, planned for the “apolitical” Louis Armstrong, was cancelled after the trumpeter expressed outrage over Dwight Eisenhower’s handling of the 1957 Little Rock crisis involving desegregation of U.S. schools. Von Eschen has a tendency throughout the book to portray government officials as naïfs and “squares” who, even in the realm of international diplomacy, lack the discernment and sophistication exhibited by musicians—that is, until these same bureaucrats extol jazz artists and their productive impact on foreign audiences.

Readers interested in the tours from a musicological perspective may wonder why the jazz world was scandalized—on the basis that his music was dated—by the selection of Benny Goodman to tour the Soviet Union in 1962. Apparently, no similar concerns were raised over contemporaneous tours by Louis Armstrong or Duke Ellington, artists who could hardly be considered on the cutting edge by the 1960s. In general, the book should have offered a more thorough discussion about the politics of various jazz styles and how well they meshed with government objectives. Readers most interested in the geopolitical contours of this story will be grateful for the detailed explanation of regional political contexts and specific U.S. foreign policy goals in those areas. Two central points here are (1) the government’s audacity in injecting musicians into highly unstable foreign regions, often as unsuspecting outriders for covert U.S. actions in the area; and (2) U.S. officials’ unduly optimistic belief that jazz
troupes would ameliorate international outrage toward such matters as Central Intelligence Agency–sponsored coups and U.S. carpet-bombing in Southeast Asia. If State Department officials doubted the political sophistication of jazz musicians, they held foreign audiences in even greater disregard. Ultimately, this failure to manufacture lasting pro-American sentiments through jazz, an unattainable goal alongside the material expressions of U.S. power, suggests that the musicians rather than the government were the ones who achieved a greater measure of their objectives from this relationship.


Reviewed by David S. Meyer, University of California, Irvine

The simplest narratives about the Cold War tell a story of high politics in which the leaders of two great powers, with the support—or over the opposition—of the leaders of smaller powers, managed a bipolar confrontation that dominated the second half of the twentieth century. From the earliest stages of the Cold War, however, activists formed peace movements to prevent future wars in general and to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Like the leaders they often criticized, these peace movements shaped the contours of Cold War politics. A great deal of work remains to be done in making sense of the origins, development, and impact of these peace movements, and Benjamin Ziemann has done all of us a service in soliciting thirteen high-quality essays offering different perspectives on peace movements in the United States, Western Europe, and Japan.

Peace movements during the Cold War were hardly unitary actors, and campaigns for peace or against particular wars and weapons systems took different forms at different times and in different places. Sometimes activists made relatively marginal claims about how to conduct the Cold War more safely or effectively, but in other cases they offered broad political criticisms and demanded the remaking of the liberal democracies in which they sometimes flourished. This broad and diverse reality, narrowed by the volume’s vision to fifty years across three continents, affords scholars a great deal of latitude in addressing the topic. Most of the authors here are historians, and they have delved into all kinds of original sources to provide compelling analytical narratives of (often) narrow topics. For some readers, the value of this volume may be the sum total of these compelling chapters.

To make sense of the larger project, Ziemann contributes a thoughtful introduction laying out a broad range of issues that come to play in the analysis of peace movements during this long and critical time. He lays out at least three general categories of topics. First is the wide range of influences on the ebbs and flows of activism and the development of political claims and tactics. On these issues, the book provides fascinating insights into the importance of political context. Dieter Rucht’s sociological
overview, at the end of the book, provides evidence of the timing and size of large demonstrations and an overview of the demonstrators. Each chapter gives a different picture of activists confronting the distinct politics and cultures of the states in which they operated. In seeking to forestall mass unrest, Western democracies often punished their own dissidents, who sometimes faced taunts, blacklists, and political marginalization. In Greece, however, activists risked their own lives—and sometimes lost because the authoritarian government saw criticism of Cold War politics as a threat to its own legitimacy and survival.

The second main topic is who these peace activists were, what they wanted, and what they did. Each chapter provides a distinct snapshot providing a sense of the diverse claims and people that animated peace protest. Michael Foley’s portrayal of U.S. draft resisters during the Vietnam War offers a compelling portrait of young people seeking to escalate their efforts to stop the war and bring their lives in line with their values. The second section of the book explicitly considers the iconography and symbolism employed by peace movements. In creating symbols to define themselves and their opponents, the peace movements challenged dominant cultures and put new symbols and claims into mainstream culture. Jeremy Vacon’s account of the U.S. anti-war movement’s use in its campaign of the flag of the Vietnamese National Liberation Front (NLF) shows the potential consequences of symbolic choices. Displaying the NLF flag provoked divisions within the antiwar movement and gave opponents a target to use in discrediting the movement as naive, unpatriotic, or Communist-allied. Peace movements consistently received all of these criticisms in a wide variety of contexts, but the NLF flag provided a convenient shorthand.

The third main topic is the impact of the peace movements. In all cases, the peace movements intertwined with other social movements, providing a legacy for local citizen action, environmentalism, and feminism, among other causes. The peace movements trained activists who entered conventional politics. These relations also were often conflict-ridden. The U.S. civil rights movement’s relationship with the peace movement is instructive. In the early 1950s, peace movement organizations animated civil rights protest. College chapters of the anti-nuclear SANE movement provided the infrastructure for student activism on free speech and civil rights in the early 1960s. The U.S. civil rights leader Martin Luther King later faced criticism from both the Johnson administration and many of his movement allies when he considered, and later took, a strong stand against the Vietnam War. Movement dynamics are complicated, filled with conflict and often irony, and these chapters offer telling insights.

On matters of policy, the book raises important questions, and we want to know more about the answers. We learn, for example, that larger and more frequent demonstrations generally came during heated political debates about Cold War policy initiatives, including the successful effort by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to deploy intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Western Europe in the early 1980s. The campaigns against the so-called Euromissiles represented the last great mobilization of the peace movements during the Cold War. In seeking to quell the movements, the Reagan administration reopened arms control negotiations with a
zero-zero option (no Soviet or Western missiles in Europe) borrowed from the peace movements. Mikhail Gorbachev's surprising decision to accept this asymmetric proposal (the Soviets traded away far more missiles than NATO did) facilitated a process that led to the end of the Cold War and the unraveling of the Eastern bloc and the Soviet Union itself.

Like the peace movements themselves, the answers to the questions raised in this volume are going to be controversial and contested. Readers can be grateful to Ziemann and his collaborators for raising them.


Reviewed by Beth A. Griech-Polelle, Bowling Green State University

Charles R. Gallagher has written a superb work about a little-known key figure in twentieth century U.S.-Vatican diplomatic relations: the Irish-American Joseph P. Hurley. Hurley began life in near poverty in Cleveland, Ohio but rose to become a cosmopolitan archbishop-bishop. His motto, “Virtus in arduis,” reveals a deep insight into this behind-the-scenes diplomat-churchman. Generally translated as “Virtue in the midst of difficulty,” the motto holds a deeper meaning that Gallagher illuminates as “martial steadfastness in the midst of poor leadership” (p. 107). This second translation embodies Hurley’s adult life.

Gallagher introduces Hurley by first exploring his upbringing and the role that his early education played in forming his character. As Hurley matured, he set his sights on attending the Military Academy at West Point, but because of a misunderstanding with a letter of recommendation he was not able to attend. Hurley entered the priesthood and made a lifelong friend and mentor in the eventual cardinal-archbishop of Detroit, Edward Mooney. When describing Hurley’s early life experiences, Gallagher stresses the young man’s physical fitness and his developing belief in what could be called a “muscular Christianity” that combined active faith, determination, and American patriotism. For Hurley, balancing his love of the United States with his duties to his church would prove to be a major challenge over the years.

By the late 1920s, Hurley had embarked on a series of new adventures. First he accompanied an older priest on a cruise that took them to India. After this extensive trip, Mooney convinced Hurley to return to India to work as his secretary. In India, Mooney began teaching Hurley how to handle diplomatic crises, emphasizing the need for inflexibility and diplomatic ultimatums. This coincided nicely with Hurley’s developing philosophy of a muscular Catholicism. After some time in India, Hurley and Mooney were sent to Japan, a posting that was extremely significant for Hurley because apostolic delegates there moved freely in diplomatic circles. The situation changed dramatically in May 1932 when Japan’s new military leaders demanded that
Japanese citizens honor “state Shinto” and practice social conversion. By the summer of 1933, Mooney had been appointed bishop of Rochester, New York, leaving Hurley in charge of the Japan mission.

On his own in Japan, Hurley followed his established pattern: when a diplomatic crisis erupted with the authoritarian Japanese government, Hurley flexed his muscles and refused to back down. He was successful, and this reinforced his “conviction that diplomacy of inflexibility was the diplomacy of success” (p. 39). Time and again, Hurley’s tough stance on diplomacy protected Catholics in Japan from persecution and saved the Vatican’s mission to Japan. In recognition of these achievements, Hurley was sent to Rome to ascend the next step on the diplomatic ladder.

Arriving in Rome in May 1934, Hurley was nominated to work in the Vatican Secretariat of State, an amazing assignment in several respects. Most notably, Hurley was the only American attached to the Vatican’s Secretariat of State during the time of the dictators. From his position there, Hurley gained a view of the U.S. Catholic scene, acting as a liaison officer to clergy in the United States. Within two years of his arrival, Hurley was promoted again to the position of ministrante, where he analyzed and offered recommendations concerning policy for the American church to the Vatican secretariat of state.

As time progressed, Hurley’s conception of world events and policies forced him to side with the pro-democratic faction within the Vatican hierarchy. He came into contact with William Phillips, who had been the U.S. ambassador to Rome since 1936. In the 1930s, the United States had no official mission to the Vatican, but U.S. officials hoped that Phillips would be able to convince the Vatican to keep Italy from joining with the Axis powers. The relationship between Phillips and Hurley over the next years would prove to be extremely valuable to the United States. Hurley’s patriotism drove him to engage in risky strategies in order to support the Allied powers’ policies in Rome.

In 1939 Hurley’s position as a Vatican insider allowed him to attend a critical meeting with British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and Viscount Halifax. The two British leaders sat with the ill Pope Pius XI, and Hurley acted as interpreter for his beloved pope. Gallagher shows how both Hurley and the pope revised their thinking during this conversation. No longer was Communism seen as the gravest threat to Catholicism; instead, the men now believed that the most challenging and immediate threat to Catholicism was Nazism. As U.S. policymakers noted the change in the Vatican’s attitude, Phillips and Hurley escalated their pro-democracy information campaign with Phillips smuggling secret documents to Hurley, who then made sure that the U.S. position on world affairs made it into the pages of L’Osservatore Romano. These editorials incensed Italy’s Fascist government and earned for the patriotic Hurley a message of personal thanks from President Franklin Roosevelt.

Pius XI had been the epitome of Hurley’s idea of muscular Christianity, but upon Pius’s death in 1939, Eugenio Pacelli became Pope Pius XII. No two men could have been more temperamentally different. Hurley found Pius XII’s obsessive fear of Communism and his refusal to engage in diplomatic confrontation infuriating. After serving under the more direct style of Pius XI, Hurley could not adjust to Pius XII’s con-
ciliatory style. Hurley wanted a diplomacy that was full of fight and strength, whereas Pius wanted to remain an impartial neutral. Their relationship was strained and continued to deteriorate. Each time Pius took the path of generalities, Hurley went on the offensive, condemning Nazi policies publicly. Hurley’s open support of the Allied war plans was noted by Pius XII, and in August 1940 Hurley found himself suddenly appointed bishop of St. Augustine, Florida. Pius XII had no intention of keeping this pugnacious priest around Rome for long.

Although Hurley was now located in a backwater of the church, he had no intention of disappearing. From the time of his arrival in Florida in 1940 until the war’s end in 1945, Hurley became the “most outspoken critic of American Catholic non-interventionism and arguably the most ardent Catholic supporter of Roosevelt’s wartime foreign policy” (p. 112). Placing himself at the disposal of his country was in keeping with Hurley’s idea of blunt, direct confrontation with evil. “We will call things by their real names” (p. 122), Hurley announced in one of his radio addresses. This was precisely what Pius XII refused to do. The belief that Nazism was the greatest threat to Christian civilization led Hurley to transmit specific atrocity information to the U.S. public, including denunciations of the German invasion of Poland, the conditions of the Dachau concentration camp, and an exhortation to Catholics to defend Jews from “orgies of extermination” (p. 149). How did a bishop in Florida obtain such detailed, sensitive information about Nazi killing squads and death camps? Hurley received top secret documents from Sumner Welles, Myron Taylor, and Harold Tittman, all of whom trusted Hurley to serve his country patriotically and to encourage Catholics to support the U.S. war effort. Hurley did not let these men down.

In the aftermath of World War II, the great specter that had haunted Pius XII suddenly became a reality. The rise of the Soviet Union as a rival superpower to the United States led the pope to appoint Hurley to the embattled state of Yugoslavia, giving Hurley the full diplomatic authority of a nuncio. To U.S. policymakers, Hurley was a ready-made asset in a country now under Communist control. To Hurley, serving in Yugoslavia as a representative of both the church and the state would be a continuation of the work he had performed during the war. Once in Yugoslavia, Hurley forgot the strident anti-Nazism of the war years and identified with Croatian nationalism and Croatian Catholicism. This led him to deny the murderous role Ante Pavelić’s Ustaše forces had played in the country. He identified Croatian anti-Communism as the hallmark of Croatian Catholicism.

To Hurley, the United States and the Catholic Church were working for the same goal in Yugoslavia: to fight the spread of Communism. While serving there, Hurley again engaged in espionage and pursued his policy of unbending diplomacy with the Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito. Living in Yugoslavia at this time meant Hurley could not avoid the publicity surrounding the figure of Aloysius Stepinac, archbishop (and later cardinal) of Zagreb. To Hurley, Stepinac was a martyr for the Catholic faithful, and Hurley refused to acknowledge any misdeeds on the part of the archbishop.

As the years passed, Hurley failed to recognize that U.S. interests were diverging from Vatican policy. As Tito drifted away from Josif Stalin, U.S. policymakers sought to encourage the rift, channeling financial aid to Tito. To Hurley, this was unthink-
able. Communism of any stripe was enemy number one; it was to be engaged in battle and defeated, not financially rewarded. By 1950, despite Hurley’s successful efforts to keep Catholic institutions functioning under Tito’s regime, the Vatican removed him from Yugoslavia. As Hurley traveled back to St. Augustine, Florida, he felt the double betrayal of an unappreciative Vatican and a now suspect U.S. foreign policy regarding Communism.

From the time that Hurley arrived back in the United States, he continued to fight what he saw as flaws in U.S. policy regarding the spread of Communism. For the rest of his life, he was the Cold Warrior bishop from Florida castigating his own country when he believed it had erred in policy decisions. As a leader in the U.S. Catholic Church, he continued to swim against the tide, denouncing some of the monumental changes taking place during the councils of Vatican II. Until his death in October 1967, Archbishop-Bishop Hurley continued to live his motto, “Virtus in arduis.”

Gallagher’s study is engaging, well-written, and well researched. The life of Joseph Hurley illuminates Vatican-U.S. relations and reveals the struggle to serve both church and state faithfully and patriotically. The story is fascinating, and Gallagher delivers a first-rate book.


Reviewed by Holger Nehring, University of Sheffield

European integration is one of the key puzzles for political scientists and historians interested in the international relations of post-1945 Western Europe. How was it possible that within a mere decade after the end of World War II the former enemies joined forces to embark on a project of an “ever closer union” that has culminated in the European Union of today? Wolfram Kaiser’s important book offers a new perspective for answering this question. He argues that we should take more seriously the importance of “transnational networks of political and social groups that engaged with, and influenced, European integration while remaining embedded in national political and cultural contexts” (p. 8). Kaiser’s research in archives in Austria, Belgium, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and the United States, as well as his mastery of the various national historiographies, puts most of the linguistically impoverished Anglo-American research on European integration to shame.

Kaiser’s book explores the Christian Democratic—that is, Catholic—roots of the European integration project. Through a detailed and nuanced analysis of Catholic cross-border networks since the middle of the nineteenth century, he also advances our understanding of the processes through which Christian Democrats were able to assert their influence. Kaiser’s account is structured chronologically. Its defining characteristic is its long-term perspective, spanning more than a century of European history but eschewing any kind of teleology. The book’s core chapters cover the period
until the Treaty of Rome (1957), with the last chapter lucidly covering the development of cross-border cooperation among Christian Democratic parties until the Maastricht Treaty of 1992. Kaiser’s story begins with transnational connections in Catholic Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century. He emphasizes Pope Pius IX’s role in centralizing the church as an institution and thus creating an organizational umbrella that might have allowed for greater networking across borders. As Kaiser shows, however, the level of organized cooperation among Catholic parties in Europe before the First World War was low. He is extremely good at discussing why formalized transnational cooperation failed to develop and why, even when it emerged, cooperation was often plagued by conflict. During the interwar years, Kaiser argues, the slowly emerging cooperation of Catholic parties from various countries only rarely overlapped with the nascent European movement. Catholic parties found agreeing on shared objectives difficult, and their agendas continued to be shaped nationally.

This changed after the Second World War. Although many of these networks remained in place, Kaiser stresses important discontinuities with earlier forms of cooperation. Even though Catholic parties had often endorsed either narrowly nationalist or overly universalist policies before, “Europe” now became a key reference point in Christian Democratic thought and action. At the same time, the regional scope of the networks shrank to the size of the later European Economic Community (EEC), as the Iron Curtain cut off links to Catholics in Eastern and Central Europe. Protestant Britain remained excluded from these networks, and their internal cohesion grew significantly. Kaiser is extremely good at demonstrating how the practice of transnational exchange bolstered trust across borders and thus worked toward strengthening cross-border ties even further.

By focusing on transnational networks in the longue durée, Kaiser’s account opens up a new vista in the literature on European integration. He rejects Walter Lipgens’s argument from the 1970s that European integration emerged as a response to the dysfunctional nation-state system of the interwar years. He is also dissatisfied with what he calls Alan Milward’s “cynical” argument (p. 6) from the 1980s and early 1990s that Europe witnessed the rebirth of the nation-state rather than the emergence of an ever-growing integration process. Likewise, he dismisses political science accounts such as Andrew Moravcsik’s path-breaking book The Choice for Europe: Social Purpose and State Power from Messina to Maastricht (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998) because of their lack of historical sensitivity and their state-centric focus.

Although Kaiser’s book has many interesting things to contribute to the debate about European integration, it is, nevertheless, not quite as novel and conceptually fresh as the author claims in his polemical asides directed against political scientists’ “historical innocence” (p. 2) and other historians’ “conceptually underdeveloped” and “boring to read” accounts (p. 8). Kaiser himself has published numerous articles showing the importance of transnational links between European Christian Democratic parties for the European integration process, and there has been significant research on transnational networks of social democratic party activists before and after 1945. But he also does not really discuss the importance of the Christian Democratic party
networks vis-à-vis other networks in governments and societies at the time. It is especially surprising that Kaiser has not taken more thorough account of recent studies that engage with the importance of ideas of a Christian West or Abendland, such as Vanessa Conze’s and Dagmar Pöpping’s pioneering studies. Perhaps indicative of this conceptual void is the fact that the otherwise excellent index lists only one reference to Abendland (on p. 42), whereas this reviewer found at least two more (on pp. 244 and 258). And what about the networks of industrialists around Jean Monnet? Cold War historians will miss at least some hints about how U.S. policies intersected with the policies and politics of the Christian Democratic networks. All these points taken together somewhat weaken Kaiser’s claim for the importance of such networks in the European integration process.

Moreover, Kaiser’s conceptualization of transnational history is not as thoroughly developed as one might have wished. As Patricia Clavin has recently argued, the shape of what “transnational” has meant to historical actors has itself been in flux—and it might well be that the shape of cross-border networks changed significantly in the wake of the economic and financial turmoil of the 1970s, as Paul Hirst and others have claimed. Kaiser also does not explain why the Christian Democrats—rather than other parties—were able to reap the rewards of their pre-1945 cooperation after World War II. If he had confronted this issue, he might have examined even more thoroughly the social bases of politics in Cold War Western Europe that undergirded the efficacy of the networks.

These critical observations do not alter the fact that this book is a landmark contribution to contemporary European history. Christian Democracy and the Origins of European Union should find a secure place on reading lists for advanced undergraduate and graduate courses on the history of Cold War Europe. Kaiser makes a valuable contribution to recent literature showing that European integration processes did not start in 1945. He therefore establishes a new and refreshing conceptual footing for the longue durée of integration that John Gillingham, Carl Strikwerda, and others discussed in their research on networks among European steel industrialists. Historians of the Cold War will read this book with great interest, for it presents an important and imaginatively construed way of transcending the differences between diplomatic and domestic social and political history. Kaiser’s book powerfully demonstrates that the history of the Cold War, like that of European integration, is embedded in a much richer trajectory than historicist assumptions about historical epochs suggest.

 CRA


Reviewed by Ian Talbot, University of Southampton

Scholarship on the 1947 division of the Indian subcontinent and its aftermath has largely focused on the Punjab. This reflects both the regional intensity of the parti-
tion-related massacres and migration and the significance both Indian and Pakistani nation-building discourses attached to the successful resolution of the monumental Punjabi refugee “problem.” Concentration on the Punjab has, however, obscured the variety of partition experiences, especially with regard to the timing of migration and the effectiveness of state responses. This book by Joya Chatterji is an important reflection on the partition process and its implications for the social, economic, and political development of West Bengal. The book contains excellent case-study material, thereby serving as an antidote to Punjab-centric approaches. Chatterji also provides insights into the wider understanding of state downsizing as a policy tool in situations of ethnoreligious conflict.

The book takes up the narrative from Chatterji’s earlier monograph, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalsim and Partition, 1932–1947* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994). The two works should be seen as companion volumes. In the earlier study, Chatterji challenged the conventional understanding of the Bengal Congress Party’s role in the demands for Bengal’s partition. *The Spoils of Partition* similarly challenges established views, especially regarding the boundary award process. Chatterji questions the easy assumption that Sir Cyril Radcliffe determined the whole process. Instead she sees Indian politicians actively engaged in shaping its outcome. They were activated, she argues, by seeking the kind of boundary that provided the best prospects for their power after independence. Such considerations led some Congress Party officials to want a compact West Bengal state that would maximize their influence. Political considerations of this nature outweighed the desire to gain a boundary that would best preserve economic resources. Chatterji also tellingly reveals that the maneuverings were based on the assumption that large-scale movements of population and economic dislocation would not follow partition.

The East Bengal *bhadralok* community saw partition as a way of reversing its declining political influence after the introduction in 1937 of provincial autonomy. Chatterji reveals why such expectations did not materialize. The downsizing of Bengal after the creation of Pakistan severely limited Bengal’s ability to influence post-independence Indian politics. The region was marginalized as power gravitated to the large states of the Hindi heartland. Changes in resource allocation redounded to West Bengal’s disadvantage, and the politicians there never secured the degree of financial support from the center that they had anticipated. This limited the state’s ability to respond to the ongoing refugee influx. The harsh conditions of refugee existence opened the way for the eventual eclipse of the Bengal Congress Party by the Communist Party of India.

In addition to providing fresh insights, Chatterji also covers the more familiar ground of the different patterns of partition related to migration in the Bengal and Punjab regions. In the latter, a concentrated exchange of populations occurred, creating immense and unforeseen problems for the fledgling state but also galvanizing responses. Bengal lacked Punjab’s tsunami of migration in 1947, but continuous waves of migration transpired throughout the 1950s and beyond. These coincided with communal conflict both in the region and elsewhere in the subcontinent. The Indian and Pakistani states tried to limit migration rather than assist it as they had done.
through the Military Evacuation Organisation in the Punjab. They constantly hoped that migrants would return home. Thus, no exchange of refugee property took place in Bengal to assist the process of rehabilitation for a cash-strapped state government.

Chatterji sheds crucial fresh light on one important aspect of migration: internal migration by Bengali Muslims following the upheavals of partition. Partition-related migration is usually understood as a cross-border phenomenon. Chatterji highlights the movement by Muslims from urban to rural areas and in particular to their clustering along the border regions with East Pakistan. This flow of population was linked with their marginalization and paralleled the difficulties that Muslims faced in Uttar Pradesh after independence. Internal migration was much greater in extent in Bengal, but in both regions processes of ghettoization were clearly at work.

Chatterji may be criticized for privileging the East Bengal *bhadralok* experience of migration to West Bengal in her account. The book contains nothing about the movement of refugees into Assam or Tripura or of the migration of Muslims to East Bengal. Comparisons of the East and West Bengal experiences of partition and its aftermath would have been intriguing. Such a study is still awaited. Nevertheless, Chatterji has provided a definitive account of the western part of the Bengal experience.

*The Spoils of Partition* not only is a meticulously researched study but is written with considerable style, verve, and elegance. The text provides a compelling and authoritative account of the transitions and transformations in West Bengal in the early post-independence era. It is an essential addition to the burgeoning literature on partition and is deserving of a wide readership.


Reviewed by Mao Lin, University of Georgia

The two books under review testify to the long-established idea that bureaucratic politics matters in the making of U.S. foreign policy. Although both books are by political scientists and focus on U.S. policy toward the People’s Republic of China (PRC), they adopt different research strategies and can be described as studies of bureaucratic politics only because they dwell on how the policymaking process shaped U.S. ties with the PRC.

Jean Garrison intends to “explore and refine a theory of strategic framing in the context of foreign policy advisory systems” by examining change and continuity in America’s China policy from Richard Nixon to George W. Bush. The focus on “strategic framing,” she argues, requires paying attention to “the structure of the advisory
process, the nature of presidential involvement, and the interaction patterns among central advisers” (pp. 203–204). Garrison thus frames her analysis around such issues as the struggle over the definition of the challenges posed by China among top U.S. foreign policymakers, the formulation of policies to meet such challenges within the national security advisory system, the communication of such policies to the president (who has the final say), and the effort to gain support for these policies from the Congress and the public.

Six chapters constitute the main body of Garrison’s book, with each chapter devoted to one president from Nixon to George W. Bush (Gerald Ford is discussed together with Nixon). Each chapter evolves around the “strategic framing” of U.S. policy toward China. For the Nixon administration, the task was how to reframe U.S.-China relations in geostrategic terms, connect the China policy to a new structure for world peace, and prepare the domestic ground for policy change. For the Carter administration, the central concern was how to push forward normalization while managing U.S.-Soviet and U.S.-Taiwan relations. Under Ronald Reagan, the key issue unfolded around the contest between a “China-first” strategy and a “Taiwan-first” approach. For George H. W. Bush, the challenge was how to maintain a meaningful dialogue with the PRC and how to manage the public uproar in the aftermath of the Tiananmen Square massacre. For Bill Clinton’s administration, the policy question was how to develop a strategy of engagement that would encourage economic liberalization and progress toward democratization in China. For George W. Bush, the problem was how to continue engaging a rising China for its cooperation in areas of common interest without damaging other U.S. vital interests, such as the commitment to Taiwan. Garrison also wonders whether the “war on terror” provided a more lasting foundation for U.S.-China cooperation.

Garrison concludes that the advisory systems in these administrations were crucial to understanding why policy choices evolved as they did. The centralized Nixon and George H. W. Bush systems, for example, ensured the consistency and predictability of policy toward China but risked excluding dissenting voices. In contrast, the more decentralized advisory systems under Jimmy Carter, Reagan, and Clinton gave rise to bureaucratic infighting, which caused vacillation and fragmentation of policy. The cognitive predispositions of the presidents also shaped choices. Reagan and George W. Bush tended to see the world through an ideological lens, whereas others proved to be more flexible in their outlooks.

Unlike Garrison, Yukinori Komine focuses exclusively on the Nixon administration’s policy toward China. The extreme secrecy surrounding the policymaking process affected the bureaucratic interplay. Nixon and Kissinger, Komine points out, believed that secrecy was crucial to prevent leaks, to forestall possible opposition from the right, and to avert bureaucratic pressure for concessions. As a result, secret diplomacy greatly shaped the U.S. rapprochement with China.

Komine begins with a discussion of the formation of Nixon’s and Kissinger’s China initiatives and then proceeds to analyze their effort to establish a new National Security Council (NSC) hierarchy. Komine next examines the implementation of the rapprochement with China. Drawing on a wide range of primary sources, he details
the development of policy options, the reassessment of policy toward China, the re-
sumption of the Warsaw ambassadorial talks, and the evolution of back-channel com-
munications. The final two chapters are devoted to the direct talks between U.S. and
Chinese leaders that culminated in Nixon’s 1972 visit to China.

In highlighting the role of secrecy in Nixon’s policymaking, Komine shows that
Nixon and Kissinger used the centralization of power in the NSC not only to control
the decision-making process but also to exclude the State Department. As a result, the
two men were able to encourage broader discussions about a new policy toward China
without revealing their true intentions. They developed closely guarded communica-
tions with China via back channels such as Pakistan, Romania, and France, and
avoided getting bogged down with bureaucratic objections. “It was the pursuit of
strict secrecy that materialized the US rapprochement with China” (p. 231), Komine
concludes. Although secrecy gave Nixon adequate room to shape policy, it also had its
drawbacks. Nixon and Kissinger not only “oversold” their commitment to China; they
also made issues such as the status of Taiwan more complicated by excluding the
State Department’s expertise.

Both books demonstrate the central role played by bureaucratic politics in the
making of China policy, but they also raise questions. In Garrison’s book, the distinc-
tion between the changes caused by “frames” and changes induced by the shifting in-
ternational “realities” is not always clear. One can argue that only “framed” realities ex-
ist, but Garrison often suggests that “frames” changed in response to the real world,
thus undermining the usefulness of “strategic framing” as an analytical tool. Garrison
concludes that “the policy consensus on engagement [with China], which has survived
despite presidents with very different political pedigrees . . . is the only reasonable pol-
icy alternative” because “China as a rising power cannot be contained or ignored”
(pp. 199–200). But this raises the question why, despite the different “framing” ef-
forts, each administration still found it hard to break away from the policy of engage-
ment.

Komine’s book also raises questions about the actual impact of bureaucratic poli-
tics. His evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of secrecy is plausible, but he
does not show the consistent relevance of secrecy to policy outputs. He highlights dif-
ferent policy opinions among U.S. officials and their rejection by Nixon and Kissinger
but does not always make clear whether they were rejected because of their own merits
or purely for the sake of secrecy. Indeed, Komine’s single-minded focus on “secrecy”
sometimes causes him to overlook the impact of larger strategic factors on Nixon’s
China policy.

Overall, the two books are well written and grounded in archival research. Scholars both of Sino-American relations and of policymaking studies will learn from
them.

✣✣✣

Reviewed by Gilbert Rozman, Princeton University

This book offers snapshots of U.S. thinking about the two most significant rivals of recent times. It presents a clear contrast, insisting that Americans have looked unfavorably on Russia since the late nineteenth century when explorer George Kennan equated it with oppression and have looked favorably on China since William Rockhill admired its culture and potential. This comparison was popular in the 1970s but lost favor in the late 1980s and 1990s. Reviving it and arguing that it applies continuously for more than a century, the authors seek supporting evidence and explanations for the difference. Choosing the title *Distorted Mirrors,* they aspire to show how and why U.S. “cultural stereotypes were almost primitive” (p. xxi) and argue that such “unrestrained prejudices . . . could have dangerous consequences (p. xxii).

The quality of the snapshots—20–25 pages each—varies. Many are rich in detail, capturing important moments in bilateral relations. Yet, the preoccupation with the overall thesis of the book leads to dubious assertions. This is particularly the case in the chapters focused on Russia. They suffer from a lack of two-way analysis, overlooking the events on the Russia/Soviet side that may have elicited the perceptions under discussion. Implicit in much of the analysis is the view that Washington was primarily at fault in this relationship, demanding “conversion to American standards” (p. 126). Treatment of George F. Kennan and the “Kennanization” of U.S. foreign policy is particularly problematic, giving the impression Paul Nitze was his logical heir. In places a kind of Russian paranoia appears to take hold, coloring views of the United States in a manner that became common in the period of rising “anti-Americanism” under Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin. Rather than test the thesis through careful examination of changing images over the past quarter century, the book largely ignores this period while assuming that earlier negative views were fixed. This leaves an impression of Americans at all levels as easily gullible and stuck in old ways of thinking without taking into account new developments.

The various snapshots of China are seemingly divorced from the book’s generalizations despite the introductory remarks that “the restored love affair continues” and “America’s Chinese bonding, from the beginning to now, has rested on certain misconceptions and misunderstandings of China as perpetrated by a handful of people” (p. 178). We learn of Woodrow Wilson’s idealism, John Dewey’s pragmatism, Edgar Snow’s sympathy, Pearl Buck’s empathy, and the struggle over how to interpret Chiang Kai-shek at *Time,* where Theodore White battled with Henry Luce. Considerable detail is devoted to the meetings of Henry Kissinger with Zhou Enlai. These stories largely stand alone without clarification about the supposed “love affair” with China since 1949 or about how to determine the impact of admittedly influential figures on public opinion, media coverage, and academic analysis.
Many of the stories are worth retelling and benefit from not being tailored to illustrate a predetermined thesis, as in the case of the Russian snapshots. Yet, the authors make no effort to assess the complex U.S. views of a rising China since the end of the Cold War, which is presumably the primary test of the authors’ thesis.

This book suffers from methodological shortcomings besides the fact that the two countries are treated differently in regard to supporting the book’s generalizations. Comparisons are reserved for the overall conclusions rather than being raised in any systematic manner. Perceptions are judged by the views of selected observers or leaders but are not analyzed in any sustained way. The case for distortions is often implicit, not well supported by specific evidence despite the likelihood that many distortions have been present and deserve close scrutiny. Indeed, although summaries of the writings of individuals may be accurate, the authors’ grasp of the broader picture of reasoning in the United States is not convincing. This leads to a mixture of extensive details not well situated in the context of evolving diplomacy and perceptions, and broad generalizations not convincingly linked to the details.

Among other things, the authors never explain why perceptions are distorted, apart from citing habit and individual failings. A free press, lively academic debates, and electoral politics do not appear to matter in shaping perceptions. If the authors are correct in their thesis, they are obliged to explain what makes Americans romanticize China and demonize Russia. They could draw on national identity studies, international relations theory, or interest group analysis. Yet, to do so they would have to trace changes in images, including Gorbymania in the late 1980s and the Red China threat of the 1950s–1960s. Only by rejecting a fixation on enduring cultural stereotypes could a foundation be built for systematic analysis. The book covers some influential individuals, and for this it deserves attention—if one takes care not to dwell on the problem of how weakly it supports its overarching message.


Reviewed by Murray A. Rubinstein, Baruch College of the City University of New York

Lee Teng-hui, a tall, stately, scholarly, and politically astute Hakka from northwestern Taiwan has constructed an important place for himself at the center of Taiwan’s transition to democracy and, in doing so, has transformed the very nature of the political system of the Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan.

Lee was the president of Taiwan from 1988 to 2000. When his formal political career ended, he did not move into the limelight but remained as a player, providing support for the members of the Taiwanese-dominated Democratic Progressive Party, the rival to his own Kuomintang (KMT), which had taken the presidency from his designated successor. As the years went on, he moved into the background and let
Chen Shun-bian held center stage and run the party and government as he thought best. Chen's best was not nearly enough, however, and the hopes of Lee and many millions of DPP members were dashed when Chen proved to be a weak and inept national leader.

What President Lee lacked, he seems to have felt, was recognition from those outside Taiwan. He was a Cornell-trained Ph.D. and a man always involved in the study of philosophy and religion. A committed Protestant and visible member of the powerful and influential Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, he had a vision of Taiwan as a “city on a hill” and of himself as a sort of Moses, a theme that can be found as a subtext in many of his more personal, self-reflective, and philosophical speeches and articles. In recent years Lee has begun to open himself up to the larger public, both in his philosophical quasi-memoir and in the numerous frank and detailed conversations he has held with his biographers, Shih-Shan Henry Tsai and Richard C. Kagan.

Both books offer impressive, insightful portraits of Lee. Of the two, Tsai’s is more elegantly written. A Taiwanese-born historian affiliated with the University of Arkansas and the Institute of Taiwan of Academia Sinica (a large-scale academic think tank that is the center of intellectual life on Taiwan), Tsai has written numerous important books and articles on the Ming Dynasty, most notably the well-reviewed Perpetual Happiness: The Ming Emperor Yongle (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), The Chinese Experience in America (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), and The Eunuchs in the Ming Dynasty (New York: SUNY Press, 1995). His most recent work, to be published by Cornell University Press, deals with Taiwan and the larger world from Ming times to the present. Tsai's biography of Lee places the ROC leader within the larger context of Taiwan's 400-year-long history, giving a complete picture of Lee and the Taiwan he labored to transform. Readers would do well to read Tsai and Kagan reflect different backgrounds, disciplines, and approaches to Lee and the world he helped to mold. The two works thus complement each other, giving us a more comprehensive understanding of this important albeit not-so-well-known East Asian leader.

Tsai places Lee within the larger contexts of Taiwan's history. He begins with parallel narratives that merge as Lee rises in influence and power within the ROC government led by Chiang Ching-kuo. The middle and later chapters of the book chart Lee, now seen as being one with his nation, as he determines its complex domestic policies—policies that must take into account the tensions produced by a successful socioeconomic revolution, the struggles of the island's ethnic groups for power, the country's difficult-to-chart foreign policies, and Taiwan's relationship with its larger and more powerful neighbor to the west, the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Kagan is a political scientist and both a Taiwan watcher and an activist in Taiwan's march to democracy. He has written on the long struggle of the Taiwanese to gain control of their “invaded” nation—the invaders being the KMT government that was long viewed as a colonial regime attempting to transform a small, isolated, yet modernized province into not only the “real” China but the true heir to the Chinese cultural tradition.

Kagan's long years of scholarship and engagement have led him to view Lee dif-

251
ferently from the way Tsai does. Kagan’s portrait of Lee is more “presentist” in nature, and Kagan is more determined to present Lee as an actor within the larger context of East Asian politics and East Asian and PRC-ROC state-to-state relations.

Kagan sets Lee’s life within the context of Taiwan’s development, but he focuses more on the inner Lee than on the times themselves. For example, in his coverage of the Japanese period, he seeks to find the inner Lee, the man who possesses both a Chan (Zen) sensibility and a deep Presbyterian faith. The Lee he presents is both distant and yet engaged as befits his underlying philosophical and spiritual foundations. The early chapters focus on Lee and his personal and scholarly evolution. Lee is depicted as a rebel of sorts who sees himself as a Taiwanese and thus rejects, though perhaps too quietly, the KMT’s vision of Taiwan as a surrogate for China or, better, the true China. Kagan shows Lee’s growing recognition of the vulnerability of his position as a Taiwanese scholar and bureaucrat working for the mainland regime and given positions of authority within it. Only later does he become the hard-nosed, practical careerist who, in the mind of Chiang Ching-kuo is the exemplar of the Nationalist policy of bringing qualified, pro-KMT Taiwanese into the government and political system.

Kagan moves step by step through the crucial moments of Lee’s life, including when Lee was forced by circumstances to make difficult decisions about who and what he is and what role he will play in his country’s destiny. In the chapters that cover the 1970s and 1980s, Kagan shows where Lee is and why he takes such seemingly contradictory steps. Kagan has done deep research and interviewed many of the actors. He has also read and been able to tease out the hidden meanings in Lee’s words and actions. He presents Lee as a man at war with himself, the reluctant collaborationist who used his position to transform Taiwan into a real Taiwanese state rather than the hybrid Taiwan-as-China that the mainlander KMT leaders wanted it to be.

The final chapters focus on how Lee brought about the new Taiwan. Kagan takes us through the democratization process and through the years of growing contact with the PRC. He describes the many roles Lee had to play while moving his country in the direction his people needed. Kagan is not a blind admirer, however. His account of a man coming into his own as a leader and nation-builder is clear-eyed yet leaves us with an accurate sense of the scope of Lee’s accomplishments.

People who do not follow Taiwan closely need to know more about Lee Teng-hui. He played a critical role in defining the nation of Taiwan, a nation that is both a Little Dragon and, as the Presbyterian in Lee would argue, a “city on a hill.” With the publication of Tsai’s lyrical tone poem of a biography and Kagan’s harder-edged and perhaps more grounded piece of portraiture, we now have two distinct images of this amazing man.
The essays in this publication focus on relations within the Warsaw Pact. After an introductory outline of the Pact’s history by Winfried Heinemann, Christian Nünlist discusses why Nikita Khrushchev decided to add a multilateral alliance to bilateral arrangements on mutual assistance. Nünlist shares the view that Khrushchev’s motive was political. Until the early 1960s, the Pact was militarily unimportant but demonstrated the Soviet Union’s determination to counter West German accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The Pact was also designed to make Western publics believe that the USSR was willing to sacrifice alliance with the other socialist countries in exchange for a system of European security that allegedly would overcome East-West conflict. The calculus behind this proposal was that it would eliminate NATO, terminate the U.S. presence in Europe, and establish Soviet hegemony on the continent.

In Moscow’s view, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) was the crucial ally. Rüdiger Wenzke argues that the USSR needed the GDR not only as a glacis against Western Europe but also, for many decades, as an indispensable source of uranium for nuclear armament. The National People’s Army was under tight Soviet control. The Group of Soviet Forces in Germany had a privileged status and was even exempt from the country’s legal order. Torsten Diedrich addresses the problems that resulted from the contrasting facts that the East German regime was most strongly committed to the alliance with the USSR but at the same time could not rid itself of ties to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). The population’s attention was directed at the FRG as the nation’s other, infinitely more attractive, state. The Communist regime also failed to overcome economic weakness. Despite a major effort to “eliminate disturbance,” the Communist leaders remained economically dependent on deliveries and, from the early 1970s onward, even on material aid from West Germany. As a result, alliance relations with the Soviet Union were continually if slowly undermined.

Andrzej Paczkowski describes Iosif Stalin’s extreme distrust of Poland as a country that strongly opposed Soviet rule. As part of the Sovietization of the country, Poland’s military forces were put under the direct command of Soviet marshals and generals to an unheard-of extent. Even after the Soviet officers were no longer a majority, they continued to hold both the key positions at the military center and the higher troop commands. When, during the “Polish October” of 1956, Defense Minister Konstantin Rokossovskii, a Soviet marshal, was finally ousted, the whole of Poland, including the most devoted Communists, rejoiced. What remained, though, was a group of Soviet military advisers who participated in major decisions. Also, Moscow’s strategic guidelines and military instructions continued to be obligatory. Soviet control of the Polish army was loosened but not terminated. At the political level, how-
ever, the USSR was less able to enforce agreement. As Wanda Jarząbek states in her essay, the FRG’s active pursuit of Ostpolitik from 1966 onward caused much conflict between Warsaw and Moscow.

Csaba Békés’s chapter on high-level political debates in Hungary regarding the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe makes clear that East-West détente policy was a topic of heated controversy in the Warsaw Pact in the early 1970s. The USSR had difficulty making its views prevail, and Hungary had a mediating role. On the basis of much new Soviet source material, Mark Kramer provides an informative, detailed study on Soviet decision-making with regard to intra-alliance crises. Although the Soviet Politburo was quick in sending troops to crush the Hungarian revolt in 1956, it hesitated when orthodox Communist rule was challenged by Czechoslovak reformism in 1968 and by Poland’s Solidarność movement in 1980–1981. The leaders of the GDR and other socialist countries had wanted military intervention from the start. Another interesting point is that after the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries forcefully “pacified” Czechoslovakia, a process of East-West détente set in that resulted in relative intra-bloc tranquility for almost a dozen years. Only when East-West relations became tense again did unrest reemerge in the Warsaw Pact. Christopher Jones offers stimulating and highly controversial views about Mikhail Gorbachev’s new military doctrine in 1986–1987 that was based on the principle of “sufficient” rather than “reliable” (i.e., overwhelmingly strong) military power and renounced the postulate of immediate offensive action.

Jordan Baev shows that Bulgaria always served Moscow as a reliable and obedient military partner, and Imre Okváth’s chapter indicates that the Hungarian army was brought under firm Soviet control after the 1956 uprising. However, other Balkan countries were more obstinate. Ana Lalaj explains that Albania, after having successfully sought alliance relations with the USSR and a Soviet submarine basis at the Bay of Vlorë, discovered that its national sovereignty was not respected and, as a result, took decisions in 1960–1961 that amounted to a break with Moscow both politically and militarily. Because Yugoslav territory separated Albania from the other Warsaw Pact countries, Soviet leaders had no option but withdrawal and the loss of their listening post on the Mediterranean. As Petre Opris and Carmen Rijnoveanu tell us, Romania entered a course of deviation in matters of both military and alliance policy a few years later. Because Communist orthodoxy was never put at stake but invariably upheld and because Romania was a strategically marginal country, the Soviet Union tolerated the deviations.

Winfried Heinemann concludes that the Warsaw Pact was much less of a monolithic bloc than it appeared to the outside world. He notes that even though the primary source base for research on the Warsaw Pact has expanded a good deal since 1989, many collections are not yet accessible. Hence, the book provides but tentative results of research. To be sure, quite a few questions remain, but the chapters in this volume—early versions of which were presented and discussed at an international conference in Washington, DC in May 2005 organized by the Military History Research Institute in Potsdam and the Cold War International History Project of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, DC—add sub-


Reviewed by Edith Raim, Institut für Zeitgeschichte (Munich, Berlin)

Coming to terms with the Nazi past is an ever-popular theme in German politics and society. This collection of essays tackles anew an old leitmotif of German historiography and focuses on the debate of West Germany’s politics of the past in the “long 1960s.” The book consists of revised papers presented at a German Historical Institute conference at the University of Nebraska in 2001, offering a synopsis of several projects under work at the time. Given the long span of time between the conference in 2001 and the published version of 2006, the once “forthcoming” dissertations and monographs of several young historians were completed before the volume appeared, thus devaluing it slightly and counteracting the idea of a “sneak preview” of inspiring works to come.

How did West Germans in the 1960s perceive their Nazi past, and how did they deal with this burden? For many years, the “long 1960s” were considered a crucial turning point for the society’s critical look at the Nazi past. The late 1940s and 1950s were portrayed as a time of self-pity and self-stylization of Germans as victims, whereas a dashing new generation in the 1960s bravely confronted the crimes of their forefathers. The rebellious youth seemed to be exposing the atrocities that everybody else in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) had tried to forget. However, historians nowadays argue that that the debate on the repressed Nazi past actually came to light in the late 1950s and that the students’ revolt of 1967 and 1968 merely joined rather than initiated an ongoing discourse. It is also a fact that the judicial prosecution of Nazi crimes peaked before the 1960s.

The authors of the eighteen essays in this volume examine a plethora of political, social, and cultural aspects of German politics of the past. After a lucid introduction by Konrad Jarausch discussing the main currents of the 1960s and their historiographical challenges, a group of four essays deals with the confrontation of West Germans and the Nazi crimes. Habbo Knoch analyzes the return of photographs of the
Holocaust to the public sphere after a decade of absence that began in 1945. Bernhard Brunner and Marc von Miquel explore the prosecution of Nazi crimes in the FRG, and Jürgen Lillteicher focuses on the restitution of Jewish property. Three essays deal with occupational groups and how they coped with the legacy of the Third Reich: Klaus Weinhauer’s chapter on the West German police recounts the problems of integrating a heavily incriminated police force into a democratic state; Karen Schönwälder examines West German policies toward foreigners, using these as a litmus test for how the FRG dissociated itself from the Nazi past while still nurturing racist thinking; and Sigrid Stöckel investigates the West German Public Health System and its various traditions.

Youth culture and generational conflict are the theme of a further group of essays. Dagmar Herzog’s essay delves into the sexual mores of the 1960s against the backdrop of the Third Reich and the 1950s. Detlef Siegfried brings youth and pop culture to the fore by analyzing the magazines *Twen* and *Konkret* and Radio Bremen’s “Beat Club” and their portrayal of the Nazi period. Michael Schmidtke, Elizabeth Peifer, and Belinda Davis probe discourses and expressions of opinion among the FRG’s New Left and consider whether the 68ers’ protest movement did indeed instill a new discussion of the Nazi past or whether its schematic views of National Socialism in the vein of “fascism theory” instead stifled debate and furthered an “instrumentalization” of the past. Joachim Scholtyseck and Michael Hochgeschwender scrutinize the reactions of their conservative counterparts (i.e., conservative intellectuals and Catholic student fraternities). Three final essays present the perspective from abroad, with examples of Israeli-FRG relations (Carole Fink); transatlantic contacts with their intertwining economic interests and West German lobbying for a positive image in the United States on the one hand and the growing demands of investigating the complicity of German enterprises in Nazi crimes on the other (S. Jonathan Wiesen); and the link between the renunciation of nuclear weapons and Germany’s past (Susanna Schrafstetter).

The authors have taken great pains to identify the neuralgic points of 1968. The book is carefully edited, and all of the essays are solidly researched and immensely readable. The collection provides a good introduction on current German historiography in a concise form for an Anglo-American readership.

It is easy to find fault with the FRG’s attitude towards its Nazi past and point to the inadequacies of the prosecution of Nazi criminals—which even a high-ranking German state attorney characterized as “too little, too late”—or lamenting the bureaucratic ways of restitution and the all-too-glib integration of former perpetrators into West German society. However, not a single year has passed since 1945 that the FRG has not investigated Nazi crimes and tried to make amends for crimes committed. This task stubbornly continued even after the Western allies had stopped their own war-crimes prosecution programs in the late 1940s and 1950s. In this task, West German officials were not deterred by public opinion, which clamored for an end (Schlußstrich). The FRG—admittedly late—came up with a fund to compensate forced laborers and is now paying pensions to former ghetto laborers. Unlike East Germany, West Germany did accept—if grudgingly—responsibility for the Third
Reich. The success story of the FRG is intricately linked with the German *Sonderweg* of coping with the Nazi past. All the essays demonstrate that confronting the past—in necessarily different ways—was inherent in each strand of West German society.

As opposed to movements in other parts of the world in 1968, the rebellion that year in the FRG had a strong historical undercurrent reflecting the Third Reich, thus giving the rebellion a further if tormented dimension. The radical changes in society and the perception of the Nazi past affected West Germany only, but this reviewer would have liked to see some exploration of how East Germany reacted to these developments. Both Germanys, after all, shared the Nazi past—but each dealt with that past in its own way.


Reviewed by Mary Sarotte, University of Southern California

Although the end of the Cold War is a relatively recent event, it has already produced a small library’s worth of literature, including an abundance of memoirs, histories, and theoretical tracts all reflecting prevailing assumptions. One of the most widespread of these concerns the leader of France, President François Mitterrand, who is usually held to have been viscerally opposed to German unification from beginning to end and to have undertaken all possible measures to sabotage it.

The great accomplishment of Frédéric Bozo’s terrific 2005 book *Mitterrand, la fin de la guerre froide et l’unification allemande*, newly and skillfully translated into English by Susan Emanuel as *Mitterrand, the End of the Cold War, and German Unification*, is to put this assumption to an empirical test and to find it wanting. Bozo gained access not only to official French sources in the national archives and French Foreign Ministry collections but also to papers held individually by key officials from the time. He also conducted numerous interviews. What he found challenges the view of Mitterrand as an implacable and ultimately defeated foe of unification.

As Bozo states, “[f]irst and foremost . . . was Mitterrand’s grand European design—in other words, his ambition with regard to European construction, which was the alpha and omega of French policy during the upheavals of 1989–1991.” Bozo shows that although Mitterrand was shocked by the opening of the Berlin Wall, he realized that subsequent events could facilitate European integration. Mitterrand had a “determination at the end of 1989 to obtain from the chancellor [Helmut Kohl] a confirmation of his definitive agreement the following year to launch an economic and monetary union . . . a confirmation, it should be remembered, that the chancellor had very much seemed to shy away from in the preceding months” (p. xxv).

In achieving his goals, Mitterrand kept his cards close to his vest. Not for nothing was he nicknamed “the sphinx.” He had a tendency to agree with nearly all interlocutors in conversation, regardless of his personal views. This tendency has created a con-
fusing picture of his actual thinking in the documentary record and has provided the
holders of various views of Mitterrand with supporting evidence for their own partic-
ular interpretations. Numerous conversation partners emerged from their talks with
the French president convinced that Mitterrand was on their side and was opposed to
everyone else. Hence, the evidence shows Mitterrand listening sympathetically while
the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev described Kohl as a Nazi, even though the
French president had been working closely with Kohl himself. The British prime min-
ister, Margaret Thatcher, was fully confident that Mitterrand was in complete agree-
ment with her, a mistake that her foreign minister, Douglas Hurd, tried unsuccessfully
to correct.

The evidence presented by Bozo confirms that Mitterrand liked to have many
irons in the fire at any given time. But by judging the French president in the full con-
text of his many negotiations—not just a few selected bilateral ones—and by his ac-
tions, Bozo shows that Mitterrand did eventually choose an iron. He decided to coop-
erate with Kohl and help the West German chancellor’s drive for rapid unification in
return for Kohl’s strong support for advancing the causes of European integration.
In Bozo’s words, Mitterrand became “resigned to engaging in arm-wrestling Kohl”
(p. 122) in the interest of securing advantages for France and for Europe.

Bozo details the evolution of this policy through its various twists and turns. He
also sets it in the context of longer-term French foreign policy, beginning his detailed
narrative in 1981. In an interesting new epilogue to the English edition of 2009, he
updates his thinking from the French original. Bozo argues that the outcome of 1990,
while successful in many ways, also “marked the limits of the Mitterrandian project
for the post-Cold War period at the level of the continent, a project . . . derived from
the Gaullist grand design of a Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, freed of the tute-
lage of the superpowers” (p. 389). Instead Bozo finds, “there took place a re-Atlantic-
ization of European security to a degree unprecedented since the origins of the Cold
War” (p. 390).

On reading the new epilogue, the question arises: when, if ever, had European
Cold War security been significantly de-Atlanticized? Would it not be more accurate
to say that perpetuation of the Atlanticized nature of European security was one of the
outcomes of the end of the Cold War? As Bozo himself documents with evidence, “the
US warned the Europeans against any impulse to establish their own military entity”
(p. 318). This evidence suggests a story of continuity despite the upheaval of 1989–

This issue is a minor one, however, and does nothing to change the fact that
Bozo’s book is a significant addition to the literature on the end of the Cold War. It is
fortunate that the book is now available in English and thus will reach the wider audi-
ence it deserves.

Reviewed by Gary Bruce, University of Waterloo

Because of the almost complete destruction of files from the foreign espionage branch (Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung—HV A) of the East German Ministry for State Security (Stasi) in the tumultuous fall of 1989 (with the blessing, it must be said, of East Germans participating in the “Round Table” process), scholars face a tremendous challenge when writing the history of Stasi operations abroad. Kristie Mackrakis has painstakingly pieced together her narrative from scant documentation (including the skeletal files of the System for Information, Research, and Evaluation and the Rosenholz files on Stasi agents in the West obtained by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency through unknown means); from inferences in other Stasi record groups; and from interviews. The result is a detailed examination of the Stasi’s use of technology and its efforts to forestall economic collapse by targeting Western science.

Part One of *Seduced by Secrets* discusses the Sector for Science and Technology (Sektor Wissenschaft und Technik—SWT), which was responsible for stealing scientific know-how from the West. Mackrakis illustrates the work of SWT through several case studies of individual spies: Stasi agents who worked in the West, as well as two U.S. citizens stationed with the military in Berlin who spied for the Stasi. Although much of the information the author provides in the chapter on Werner Stiller is well known, it illustrates the extent to which his 1979 defection dealt a devastating blow to SWT’s network of agents in the West.

Part One ends with an investigation of the Stasi’s efforts to acquire Western computer technology, a Stasi priority from the late 1970s when the East German regime realized that a severe lag in this area would have serious consequences for industry. Macrakis is at her strongest here, demonstrating the limits of knowledge obtained in an underhanded fashion. As she summarizes: “A scientific establishment based on pirated and cloned technology can never be a leader, especially in such a fast-moving field as computer technology” (p. 140)

Part Two deals with Stasi gadgets employed to obtain knowledge from the West (and sometimes used against East Germany’s own population), including invisible ink, miniature cameras, telephone taps, and microrecorders. Much of this information will be of interest to the amateur spy buff, although the insertion of the author and her students into the narrative will not be to the liking of some. Historians of East Germany will find Macrakis’s information on the close ties between the Stasi and other aspects of East German state and society, such as industry and the postal service, of particular interest. She illustrates the common Stasi practice of planting informants in sensitive scientific industrial areas and working closely with industry to determine needs. In this way, as Macrakis reminds her readers, the secret police had considerable influence in the machinery of state and society and almost unfettered access to information on citizens held in other branches of the state apparatus. Even though histori-
ans of late have moved away from describing East Germany as totalitarian, it is worth remembering that the Stasi had total access to state institutions and industry in order to accomplish its tasks.

Although Macrakis offers a flood of fascinating “insider” information, the book is not structured around a tightly argued thesis. She appears to argue that the Stasi “became so caught up in the great game of espionage that it lost sight of its initial goals” (p. 3), yet we hear little about this stance elsewhere. From her own account, other overriding factors limited the Stasi’s ability to save the sinking economy, including a Stasi that had grown from its modest roots into a bloated organization with overlapping jurisdictions, like those of SWT, internal security, and Department XVIII, which was responsible for protection of economic installations. Macrakis does not differentiate between a normal increase in the sophistication of the Stasi’s work—something one would expect from an organization in its third decade—and an obsession with gadgets and spying for its own sake. Moreover, the Cold War context was paramount. Was the Stasi “seduced by secrets” or was it simply engaged in fierce intelligence during an era when the stakes were high? Macrakis’s argument about the limitations of stolen technology to revive an entire economic system would have been a more convincing central tenet.

Several errors detract from the book. Wilhelm Zaisser, not Ernst Wollweber, was the first minister for state security (p. 10). Erich Mielke was not head of the Stasi in 1956 (p. 10). The German Democratic Republic (GDR) did not become sovereign in 1950 but in 1955, if one subscribes to the belief that the GDR was indeed ever sovereign (p. 3). The twentieth anniversary of the GDR occurred in 1969 not 1968 (p. 117). Her suggestion of parallels between Stasi special assassination squads and Nazi Einsatzgruppen is, at best, ill advised (p. 175). Of more concern are the secondary sources. Macrakis has not referenced many of the key works on the Stasi. Notably missing are Jens Gieseke’s Mielke-Konzern (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 2001) and Die hauptamtlichen Mitarbeiter der Staatssicherheit: Personalstruktur und Lebenswelt 1950–1989/90 (Berlin: BStU, 1995) and the compilations of interviews with former Stasi officers (including in the branches Macrakis discusses) such as Christina Wilkening, ed., Staat im Staate: Auskünfte ehemaliger Stasi-Mitarbeiter (Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1990) and Ariane Riecker, Annett Schwarz, and Dirk Schneider, eds., Stasi intim: Gespräche mit ehemaligen MfS- Angehörigen (Leipzig: Forum, 1990). She has also accepted at face value pronouncements in Die Sicherheit, a work written by former Stasi officers to “correct the record.” The use of the travel guide Lonely Planet as a source, even for flavor, detracts from the scholarship.

The appropriate audience for this book is not entirely clear. Macrakis has an accessible, frequently engaging writing style but does descend into the realm of pop espionage with constant repetition of “super-secret” and allusions to James Bond films (even referring to those who worked in the operations sector as “Q”). Undergraduate students will delight in the writing style and the sensational revelations. Senior scholars will lament the absence of a cogent thesis and the lapses in academic rigor.


Reviewed by Günter Bischof, University of New Orleans

The field of Austrian contemporary history writing is not blessed with a surfeit of studies on Austria’s role and fate during the Cold War (1945–1990). Austria’s military position between the superpowers and the impact of the Iron Curtain on border communities have been ignored. The collection of essays in the massive volume edited by Manfried Rauchensteiner is a book long overdue. A dozen scholarly essays usually do not amount to an almost 800-page book. The editor, however, encouraged the contributors to range broadly in their analyses. The result is a series of in-depth studies of Austria’s national security policies and military position and maneuvering between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact during and even after the Cold War. The essays go beyond regular scholarly articles and serve as first drafts of monographic studies.

This is easily the best volume we have on military aspects of the Cold War in Austria and will set the parameters of the debate for a long time to come. As with all collections of essays, the contributions are uneven. The scholars fully engage the discourses of Cold War historiography, whereas the practitioners who served in leading positions in the Austrian postwar military establishment ignore them. Peter Jankowitsch’s chapter on foreign policy is not grounded in the historiography and stands out as the only weak contribution.

Summarizing such a rich volume of mostly well-informed contributions can be done only by outlining some of the larger themes addressed. Bruno Thoss’s and Wolfgang Mueller’s contributions on the formation of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact and Austria’s role in the military planning of the opposing Cold War alliance systems trace the parameters within which Austrian national security policy had to operate. During the four-power occupation of Austria, according to Thoss, the country maneuvered itself into the position of an “indirect ally” (p. 60) of the United States and NATO. In the 1950s, Austria played the role of a “glacis” (Vorfeld) for NATO’s defense efforts in northern Italy (p. 63), which helps explain why U.S. officials viewed Western troop withdrawals from Austria in 1955 as “catastrophic” (p. 69). After the signing of the Austrian State Treaty in 1955, the Western powers put considerable pressure on the Austrian government to build up “credible” defense forces for the protection of its new neutral status. A “military vacuum” in Austria had been a specter in the Pentagon since 1947 (p. 70). After the Italian defense minister suggested in 1955 that the Alpine passes be defended with nuclear arms (p. 78), the ultimate question looming over the protection of neutral Austria during the Cold War was whether NATO ultimately would defend it with nuclear weapons. From the beginning of Aus-
tria’s newborn independence in 1955, U.S. military planners never had any illusions about Austria’s military capability—the maintenance of domestic security was the primary task; Austria’s limited role in “delaying” invading Soviet forces in their advances West was only secondary (pp. 81, 85). Throughout the Cold War it was unclear whether Austria would be Durchmarschland or Aufmarschland—a venue for NATO troops to “pass through” along the Danube and the Alpine passes or an operational base for the positioning of Warsaw Pact troops to attack Bavaria and Italy (p. 83).

From the perspective of Soviet strategists, Austria constituted from the beginning a suitable blockage (Sperriegel) between the NATO fronts in West Germany and Italy, notes Wolfgang Mueller. At the same time the creation of a neutral Austria in 1955 spelled the loss of the Danube Valley through which a Warsaw Pact attack from southern Bohemia and Hungary might advance (p. 152). During a visit to Austria in 1959, Soviet Defense Minister Rodion Malinovskii remarked ambiguously that the Soviet Union “will never be first in violating Austrian neutrality” (p. 153). Starting in the early 1960s, Warsaw Pact plans included the Danube Valley in their plans for a (counter)offensive against NATO forces. Under Nikita Khrushchev in the 1950s and early 1960s, Soviet military strategy increasingly relied on the nuclear threat and thought a nuclear war “winnable” (p. 157). Soviet strategy became offensive and included planning for a “preventive nuclear blow” (p. 158) against NATO territory. Warsaw Pact scenarios envisioned countering NATO surprise attacks with massive preventive strikes involving “hundreds of nuclear bombs blasting away” (Vojtech Mastny)—a scenario in which Austria would not have been spared (p. 163). Hungarian strategic plans envisioned destroying Vienna with two 500-kiloton nuclear weapons (pp. 164–167).

Friedrich Korkisch’s well-informed essay on “the nuclear component” in NATO and Warsaw Pact thinking parallels many of Mueller’s and Thoss’s conclusions. Escalation to nuclear war was an integral part of strategic planning in both alliance systems. It goes without saying that neutral Austria would have borne the consequences. Warsaw Pact planning envisioned a “super Cannae” (p. 403) by enveloping NATO forces east of the Rhine in Germany. Korkisch does make the major distinction that Soviet options for the use of nuclear weapons also included dropping them on Austrian military targets, whereas NATO planning envisioned the use of nuclear weapons in Austria only after the expected collapse of the Austrian army (p. 389).

How did the Austrian political establishment deal with such threat scenarios during the Cold War? With much “wishful thinking” (the “Prinzip Hoffnung”), says Rauchensteiner (p. 266); by “sticking their heads in the sand,” says Hannes Philipp (p. 376). Rauchensteiner’s and Philipp’s thorough chapters are serious indictments of the entire postwar political leadership in Austria. With a negligible defense budget hovering around 1 percent of gross national product (p. 339), the political elite in both major parties (the Socialists more so than the conservative People’s Party) never gave the Austrian military the means to come even close to credibly defending the country. The Austrian military did make credible efforts to defend at least the core of the Alpine region against an enemy expected to come from the east (p. 255). This was the Alpine reduit with its important mountain passes that, until the signing of the
Austrian State Treaty, the Western occupation powers had planned to defend between the northern and southern flanks of NATO. However, the politicians never funded these military plans. Even as the generals planned, the politicians diddled. In the mid-1970s, General Emil Spannocchi developed an ambitious plan for Austria’s territorial defense that aimed to slow down Warsaw Pact offensive thrusts through the Danube Valley. But the Socialist government of Bruno Kreisky did not provide sufficient funding even for storage of the munitions needed to slow down the Soviet military juggernaut for three days (p. 372). As a young and badly trained recruit in the Austrian Army in 1973–1974, I would have provided the “cannon fodder” for the criminal neglect of Austria’s defense forces by the political elite!

If these essays allow any overall conclusion, it is the dismal state of civil-military relations in Austria during the entire Cold War. That mistrust between the two sides never allowed for a credible defense of Austrian territory, much as NATO planners had anticipated. When push came to shove, Austrian public opinion relied on the country’s neutral position and always expected the United States and NATO to bail them out in case of an attack from the East (p. 379). Neutralist Austrians never were willing to shoulder any sacrifices to counter the awful threats the country was facing during the Cold War. The political and military elite was unprepared to educate the public about these threat scenarios. This situation prevailed into the post–Cold War era. Even as Moscow’s former satellites all gained entry into NATO, the leaders of Austria’s Socialist Party continued to view NATO suspiciously and prevented Austria from joining the alliance (p. 646).

General Horst Pleiner surveys the dance of Austrian politicians in positioning the country in the new European security architecture after the Cold War around a common European foreign and security policy. Although Austria’s formerly Communist neighbors did not shy away from the higher defense expenditures that came with joining NATO, Austria sat on the fence and continued its Trittbrettfahrerei. Martin Malek shows in his fine essay on Austrian perceptions of the collapse of the Warsaw Pact that Austrians, led by the Socialists, cut their defense budgets even before the end of the Cold War and embarked on an “army light” ("Bundesheer light"). When it came to cutting defense expenditures, the Austrian public always enthusiastically followed the Socialists across the precipice toward their own doom (p. 604). Austrians did not recognize their improved security position after the collapse of the Warsaw Pact but feared a new “security vacuum” and viewed NATO with suspicion (p. 613).

Andreas Resch’s and Berthold Molden’s data-rich chapters on Austria’s trade with Eastern Europe and the Austrian media’s perception of the Cold War tread uncharted ground in Austrian Cold War studies. Both essays divide the Cold War into three distinct periods: the occupation decade (1945–1955), the “golden years” of economic prosperity and détente (1955–1975), and the late phase when Cold War tensions resumed (1975–1989). Resch notes the decline of Austrian trade with its Eastern European neighbors, going from 40 percent of all Austrian trade (prewar) to below 10 percent (postwar). He carefully places Austrian trade with the region within the restraining framework of the Western-sponsored Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls restrictions, particularly in the initial and final phase of Cold...
War tensions. In the 1970s, Viennese banks and trading firms specialized in the East-West exchange of goods and moved into the forefront of East-West trade (p. 525). Particularly after the “oil shock” of 1973, Austrian trade with the East became the “export valve” (p. 529) that compensated for the loss of demand from the West.

Molden neatly summarizes the entire range of Austrian media from print to radio and TV and their reporting on Cold War politics, especially during the dangerous crises on Austria’s borders (1965, 1968, 1989). In general, Austrians were as uninterested as Americans in foreign policy (p. 690). Only during the Hungarian and Czechoslovak crises in 1956 and 1968 and during the “Polarka Affair,” when Warsaw Pact plans for an occupation of Austria during an invasion of Yugoslavia were published in the Austrian press, did the public stir from its willful obliviousness to Cold War tensions. Molden stresses that apart from the local Communist newspapers the reporting of the Austrian media during the Cold War was always pro-Western (eindeutig prowestlich).

Although Rauchensteiner’s voluminous analyses provide macro-studies of Austria’s national security position during the Cold War, the book by Muriel Blaive and Berthold Molden, Grenzfälle, is a fascinating micro-study of two border towns on opposite sides of the Iron Curtain—the quintessential tale of “Berlin in the Waldviertel” (p. 140), the part of Lower Austria where Gmünd is located. On the basis of extensive oral history interviews, Molden recounts the twentieth-century trajectory of the Lower Austrian border town of Gmünd, and Blaive analyzes the curious fate of České Velenice right across the border. These two towns were once united but were separated by peacemakers in St. Germain in 1919 who moved the border between Lower Austria and Bohemia-Moravia a few miles north. České Velenice prospered as a railroad and border town, whereas Gmünd became a provincial backwater. After the two towns were reunited under the Nazis during World War II (1939–1945), the 1919 border was redrawn in 1945. By 1948 the Iron Curtain had created an impermeable border between two ideological systems. For the Communist regime in Prague, České Velenice became a kind of Communist model town on the East-West divide.

This tale of two cities through twentieth-century upheavals sets the context for a subtle history of mentalities and identities through the Cold War years. The historically deeply rooted prejudices that both Austrian Germans and Bohemian Czechs harbored vis-à-vis each other (“lazy and shifty Bohemians” versus “arrogant Germans”) were instrumentalized during the Cold War. Those stereotypes survive to this day in the European Union. Even though the border has become practically non-existent, both sides maintain their distance (p. 39). The Gmünder see themselves as victimized by history, by the peacemakers in both 1919 and 1945. Thousands of expelled “Sudeten Germans” from Velenice and across the border settled in Gmünd and further fed this “victims narrative.” Stranger still is the fact that “the Cold War seems to have passed by” the people of Gmünd (p. 109). They remember the years 1955–1989 as an era of total ennui—on the border of the Western world “at the end of the world” (p. 117). Ignoring the barbed wire in their face, they perceived the Cold War as John Lewis Gaddis’s “long peace” during which nothing happened. The Gmünder did not feel threatened by the Iron Curtain—to the contrary, it acted as an “anti-communist
(or even anti-Czech) protective wall” (p. 114). After 1989, some bemoaned the end of the Cold War and the security it had provided. The Iron Curtain in Gmünd was not perceived as a “death zone” or a “murderous border” as on the German-German border (p. 124). People saw Cold War news on Austrian television as distant events that did not concern them much. The Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 did not affect them either. Molden’s story reads as if the Cold War was a fata morgana on the Austrian side of the Iron Curtain.

The Cold War did not entirely pass by České Velenice. Blaive’s account of life under Communism in Velenice is of a different sort. She bases her analysis of České Velenice on a growing body of scholarship about people's existence under Communism (much of this work has concentrated on East Germany) and the “totality” (pp. 151, 165) of this experience in everyday life. Because České Velenice was a model Communist community on the border, the level of both voluntary and forced collaboration with the regime was unusually high—about half of the population served as informers for State Security (p. 183). Most people who lived in České Velenice after the war had moved there as a result of jobs and the available housing. The community had not grown historically as a social unit, and therefore “ordinary people” regularly denounced one another to State Security. One interviewee called the place a “giant pig sty” (p. 185). These “ordinary Czechs” under Communism may not have been as murderous as Christopher Browning’s “ordinary Germans” who killed Jews during World War II. Yet like the Nazi totalitarian system, Communism brought out the worst in people (p. 170). The Communist regime guarded the border against those who wanted to escape. Blaive encountered numerous stories in popular border lore about escape attempts, yet few actual cases of attempted flight are known. Strangely, people in České Velenice were by and large content with their lives and saw no reason to cross the border or help others escape (p. 171).

The historical memory in České Velenice, then, is a mirror image of that in Gmünd. The people who moved to České Velenice know little history and, like East Germans, are mired in nostalgia (Ostalgie) about life under Communism (p. 227). Silencing the difficult chapters of the past seems to characterize Czech historical memory as well as Austrian historical memory. The mutually hostile perceptions with their long history live on in spite of a uniting Europe. The collaborative effort by the Franco-Czech scholar Blaive and the Austrian Molden serves as a paragon in studying the impact of the Iron Curtain on the Alltagsgeschichte of border communities in the Cold War. Many more such case studies are needed to determine whether border residents in general were as oblivious to the Iron Curtain as this one study suggests. If these two books share a common thread, it is the obliviousness of common folk to the larger forces of history that buffet them.

Reviewed by M. Mark Stolarik, University of Ottawa

Paul Hacker, who was trained in political science at Columbia University by Zbigniew Brzezinski, found a career at the U.S. Department of State. One of his more interesting postings was as consul, then as consul-general, and finally as chargé d’affaires in the Slovak capital of Bratislava from October 1990 to July 1993. This book consists of his reminiscences of those heady days, when Slovakia moved from its former subjugation by the Communist regime to a capitalist and democratic society and, ultimately, to full independence.

The book offers no overall theme. Instead, we get glimpses of Hacker’s difficulties in reopening the U.S. consulate in Bratislava in 1990 (it had been closed since 1950), including his initial need to rely on the U.S. embassy in Vienna to send his dispatches first to Prague and then to Washington; the bugging of the embassy by persons unknown in the fall of 1992; his problems with Shirley Temple Black, the U.S. ambassador to Czechoslovakia; his meetings with Vladimír Mečiar, who dominated Slovak politics during Hacker’s tenure and beyond; and his interpretation of various other aspects of Slovak political life, such as Slovak-Czech relations, Slovak-Magyar relations, and Slovak-Jewish relations. He ends on a pessimistic note with a postscript on the sixteen years following Slovak independence in 1993. Had Hacker written his book after the June 2010 victory of the center-right coalition led by Iveta Radičová over the leftist-nationalist coalition led by Robert Fico, he might have concluded on a happier note. The book also contains photographs of some of his activities and meetings with various personalities in Slovakia, as well as an appendix of Slovak leaders, tables of election results, transcripts of cables sent to Washington, a short bibliography, and index.

Because Hacker is not a historian, the book contains both obvious and not-so-obvious errors. Among the obvious ones are the wrong dates for the Pittsburgh Agreement (18 May instead of 31 May 1918) and 28 October instead of 18 October for Tomáš Masaryk’s declaration of Czechoslovak independence in Philadelphia in the same year (the latter error is found in the foreword by the late Senator Claiborne Pell; p. ix). On two occasions Hacker mistakenly locates the south-central Slovak city of Lučenec in eastern Slovakia (pp. 80 and 146). He also refers to Ján Cardinal Korec as “the primate of Slovakia” (p. 95) when that honor belonged to Archbishop Ján Sokol of Trnava. The caption of the lower photograph on p. 82, featuring Senator Pell and Daniel Tanzone, the president of the Slovak League of America, is botched. The not-so-obvious errors pertain to both his and Pell’s references to the administration of the first Slovak Republic (1939–1945) as that of President Jozef Tiso, when it was actually that of Prime Minister Vojtech Tuka (pp. ix, 107). In these days of “nuanced” history, one should be able to distinguish between the ceremonial head of state and the de facto head of government.
Although this is an interesting book, it by no means captures the complexity of Slovak politics and society in the last two decades (or even earlier). Fortunately, such a work will soon be published: Juraj Hocman’s Slovakia from the Downfall of Communism to Its Accession into the European Union, 1989–2004: The Re-Emergence of Political Parties and Democratic Institutions (Bern: Peter Lang, forthcoming).


Reviewed by Evanthis Hatzivassiliou, University of Athens

This is a penetrating discussion of the complicated relationship between the United States and one of its minor allies, by an author who displays a deep knowledge of U.S. policymaking, Mediterranean and South European affairs, and Greek history. James Miller examines the U.S.-Greek relationship from the end of the Greek civil war until the restoration of Greek democracy following the collapse of the colonels’ dictatorship (1967–1974).

The most novel feature of the book is its emphasis on the role of Andreas Papandreou, the Greek prime minister from 1981 to 1989 and from 1993 to 1996, in projecting an interpretation of contemporary Greek history (the “Andreas Version”) that opened his way to power, riding on a wave of anti-Americanism. The term “history” in the title of the book also refers to this use of a historical narrative by Papandreou as a tool in a power struggle both within Greece and between Greece and its major Western ally. The book convincingly argues that the role of the United States in shaping Greek history must be carefully assessed. The United States committed some mistakes in policies toward Greece but also strongly aided Greek modernization through the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. Nonetheless, the revisionist thesis that Greece was turned into a kind of U.S. protectorate is not supported by the evidence.

For example, many Greeks, influenced by the “Andreas Version,” continue to blame the United States for the imposition of the military dictatorship in 1967. In rebutting this view, Miller’s book bolsters the work of other authors (Louis Klarevas, Konstantina Maragkou, Effie Pedaliu, Theodore A. Couloumbis, John O. Iatrides) who have shown that the 1967 coup in fact came as an unpleasant surprise in Washington. U.S. policymakers did not view the military regime as compatible with U.S. interests. The main origins of the dictatorship, Miller argues, should be sought in the failures of the Greek political system rather than in the infamous “foreign factor.” However, after the 1967 coup Washington changed course and cooperated with the dictatorship, thus contributing to the radicalization of Greek anti-Americanism. Miller notes that the U.S. government was mistaken and failed to uphold its own
democratic values, but he stresses that this does not mean the United States “imposed” a repressive regime.

The structure of the book is also interesting. The introduction discusses issues of Greek identity and political culture (including the long-established “underdog” mentality of the Greeks), revealing a deep understanding of major trends in Greek history. Three out of the eight chapters are devoted to the Cyprus crises from 1950 to 1974. Recent scholarship agrees with Miller that Cyprus and Cold War issues such as the U.S.-Greek relationship cannot be treated in watertight compartments. Cyprus always had the tendency to spill over to the bilateral level, as Theodore Coulombe has shown in his The United States, Greece, and Turkey: The Troubled Triangle (New York: Praeger, 1983). Miller’s other chapters examine the U.S. role in the modernization of Greece in 1950–1952, a period of unstable center governments; discuss the peak of Greek-U.S. cooperation during the conservative domination of 1952–1963; and analyze U.S. attitudes during the collapse of Greek democracy in 1964–1967. One chapter examines the “Andreas Version,” and another deals with the reluctant yet clear U.S. acceptance of cooperation with the military regime in 1969–1974. This was, according to the author, the major U.S. mistake in dealing with Greek affairs and a departure from major principles of U.S. policy. This lapse seemingly legitimized the “Andreas Version,” allowing Papandreou to capitalize on the “underdog” mentality and on the Greek tendency to indulge in conspiracy theories. The tendency of U.S. officials, especially Henry Kissinger, to mismanage policy on Greek democracy and the Cyprus crisis in 1974 gave credence to the complaints of the most aggressive versions of Greek anti-Americanism.

The book is in need of more rigorous analysis of some points. Miller discusses the events that led to the Greek colonels’ coup against Cypriot President Makarios on 15 July 1974 and to the first Turkish invasion on 20 July, arguing that Kissinger opted for a policy of non-intervention, which in the end allowed for a showdown. Yet, U.S. inaction during the second Turkish invasion of Cyprus in mid-August—by which time democracy in Greece had been restored, the new prime minister, Konstantinos G. Karamanlis, was struggling to control the extremists in the army, and Greece and Turkey were at the brink of war—deserves more scrutiny. Miller ends his narrative without fully discussing this pivotal moment in U.S.-Greek relations.

The book is based on vast archival research, and Miller correctly notes that “all bibliographies are selective” (p. xii). However, he also discusses the use of a historical narrative for political purposes, and here he could have drawn more extensively on some of the recent literature. The book presents a somewhat inflated picture of the “Andreas Version.” This is to some extent understandable: Papandreou has always represented both a challenge and a charm to U.S. scholars. However, the Andreas narrative has been sharply challenged by post-revisionist scholars. Miller could have turned, for example, to the four books by Ioannis Stefanidis (two on U.S.-Greek relations, one on Greek anti-Americanism, and one on Cyprus); the two books by Sotiris Rizas on U.S. policy in Cyprus in 1963–1974; Mogens Pelt’s Tying Greece to the West: U.S.-West German-Greek Relations, 1949–1974 (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2006), which discusses the Washington-Bonn-Athens triangle; or Konstantina
Botsiou’s work on Greece’s relation with Europe from 1947 to 1961. Miller presents a notable thesis, but to some extent he exaggerates the effect of “Andreas-ism” in Greek and international scholarship. However, his research in U.S. archives is impressive and fruitful, and his discussion of U.S. perceptions and policymaking is notable for its high quality. The book is a remarkable analysis of a hotly debated subject and will undoubtedly emerge as compulsory reading and a major reference work in the years to come.

✣✣✣


Reviewed by Priscilla Johnson McMillan, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University

With this book Jay Bergman, a professor of history at Central Connecticut State University, has written the best biography of Andrei Sakharov as a man and prophet of human rights that has appeared so far. (The best book in English on Sakharov as a physicist remains Gennady Gorelik’s *The World of Andrei Sakharov*, published by Oxford University Press in 2005.)

Drawing on a seemingly limitless array of sources in at least four languages (English, Russian, German, and French), Bergman shows Sakharov’s roots in the Old Russian intelligentsia and praises him for ultimately transcending those roots, with their paternalistic attitude toward human rights, to become a prophet of the inborn rights of all human beings everywhere.

Bergman traces Sakharov’s beginnings as the son of a Moscow physics teacher and his invitation, at the age of 24, to study for a doctorate at FIAN, the Moscow Physics Institute, under the tutelage of the great Russian physicist Igor Tamm. Three years later, Sakharov was assigned to work in the Soviet thermonuclear bomb program in a unit headed by Tamm. For nearly twenty years he worked in the program, first at FIAN and then at the highly secretive nuclear weapons laboratory in Arzamas, not far from Gorky. Although Sakharov’s wife, Klava, and three children were permitted to live at Arzamas with him part of the time, he, like other scientists there, was shielded from most of the realities of Soviet life. He had occasional contact with zeks, inmates of the labor camp nearby, who did menial tasks at the installation, but did not give a great deal of thought to how they had come to be there.

Sakharov’s talents as a physicist were prodigious: the sloika, or “layer cake,” bomb tested in 1953 was regarded as his invention, and the Soviet Union’s radiation-implosion bomb, which became the first hydrogen bomb to be dropped from an aircraft (1955), was the result of work he did with Yakov Zeldovich in 1954. For his enormous contributions to the USSR’s standing as a superpower, Sakharov was three times awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labor with accompanying emoluments. Inevitably, these successes led him into the political arena. His efforts to explain to
crudely educated members of the top elite the damage that a hydrogen bomb of given megalonage could do led to his making recommendations about whether and how the weapon should be tested. On this issue, his independence of mind and sense of duty as a scientist collided with the prerogatives of power. Having calculated that each nuclear test conducted in the atmosphere would, over thousands of years, cost at least 10,000 lives worldwide, Sakharov in 1961 urged the Soviet party leader Nikita Khrushchev to prolong the informal moratorium that Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union had observed for nearly three years. At a meeting in the Kremlin, Sakharov advised Khrushchev against a resumption of testing on the grounds that it would jeopardize “test ban negotiations, the cause of disarmament, and world peace” (p. 95). At this, Khrushchev erupted: “Leave politics to us—we’re the specialists. You make your bombs and test them. Sakharov, don’t try to tell us what to do” (p. 96). The following year, when Sakharov was double-crossed in his efforts to forestall the unnecessary duplicate test of a huge new weapon, he reached his own personal Rubicon. He realized, Bergman says, that to be “a humane scientist in the Soviet Union, one had to be a social critic of the Soviet system” (p. 101).

Describing Sakharov’s early steps as a dissident—his successful opposition to the election of a Lysenkoite biologist to the Soviet Academy of Sciences; his attendance at the 1966 demonstration in Pushkin Square in defense of political prisoners incarcerated in violation of rights guaranteed under the Soviet constitution; and his appeal to the new Soviet leader, Leonid Brezhnev, on behalf of four human rights activists who had been arrested—Bergman explains that once certain truths became clear to Sakharov, some inner imperative forced the great physicist to take action. The government responded to these displays of independence with what Bergman calls “a bewildering mixture of leniency and repression” that was to become typical of its dealings with Sakharov. It fired him from Arzamas and cut his salary in half. At the same time it let him have an office at FIAN and allowed him to keep the chauffeured car and the dacha outside Moscow to which his awards entitled him.

Then, in 1968, Sakharov produced his lengthy essay “Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom,” which, though published in the USSR only in samizdat, was published in full in The New York Times and created a sensation in the West. In the essay, Sakharov called for application of the scientific method to the discovery of universal moral truths. Despite remaining a socialist, he expressed his belief in a different utopia from the one the Soviet leaders believed in. His utopia would come about not via the Marxist dialectic but by way of convergence, whereby the best features of socialism and capitalism would combine to produce a society in which every individual could fulfill his or her potential. Faced with this challenge to the Communist Party’s monopoly of wisdom and power—indeed, its very legitimacy—the Soviet authorities responded with fury. Fuelling their outrage was the sense that, while claiming special moral status, Sakharov was actually a hypocrite who criticized the elite for its privileges while enjoying many of those privileges himself.

Dissidence had become Sakharov’s way of life. Supported by his second wife, Elena Bonner, he traveled widely to attend political trials, stood outside courthouses to bear witness, and penned appeals to the highest Soviet leaders on behalf of those
suffering human rights abuses. Acting frequently in conjunction with the Moscow Human Rights Committee, he hoped to force the government to abide by its own constitution. But by the early 1970s he had concluded that the Soviet Union, China, and other Communist countries bore greater responsibility for world disorder than he had realized. He ceased to consider himself a socialist and became pessimistic about chances for reform in the Soviet Union. Increasingly, he and the dissident movement looked to the West, and they received support in 1975 when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Sakharov was by now in a deadly cat-and-mouse contest with the regime. The head of the State Security Committee (KGB), Yurii Andropov, reportedly called Sakharov “domestic enemy number one” (p. 237). In December 1979 the protection Sakharov received from détente and the human rights movement in the West abruptly ended with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Less than a month later, Sakharov was on an airplane bound for the city of Gorky, 250 miles from Moscow, where he and Bonner spent seven hard years in exile.

When they were finally permitted to return to Moscow in December 1986, they found a capital very different from the one they had left behind. The Soviet Union had a new leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, who was trying to “restructure” the political system in a more liberal direction, not altogether different from what Sakharov had promoted for two decades. For the physicist who had followed immutable laws of nature and for the human rights advocate who had been guided by unyielding moral principles, the challenge now was to learn the art of political compromise—and to engage in it without squandering his enormous moral authority.

During the three years that remained to Sakharov, he and Gorbachev circled one another with wariness and respect, each needing the other, yet neither able to control the other. In contrast to earlier days, Sakharov found his views on arms control sought and his advice taken. With respect to the rights of citizens, he acted as Gorbachev’s conscience, prodding him step by step in a more radical direction while never pushing so hard that he would irrevocably alienate the Soviet leader. The year before Sakharov died, he told a group of foreigners in Moscow that it was necessary to “explore all possibilities. We should also show flexibility in discovering new paths. Flexibility and fidelity to one’s principles are hardly compatible, but we have to find some way to combine them” (p. 350). When Sakharov died, Gorbachev expressed sadness to Elena Bonner about losing “my one honest opponent” (p. 349).

The care and respect Bergman has brought to his study of his subject’s ideas makes this the biography Sakharov deserved.

Reviewed by Michael Share, City University, Hong Kong

When examining the Asian front in the Cold War, most scholars, such as Robert Accinelli, Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, and James Tang, have focused on three major players: on one side, the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China (PRC), on the other, the United States. Steve Tsang Yui-Sang, the director of the Taiwan Studies Program at Oxford University, attempts to redress this imbalance by investigating the crucial roles of the United Kingdom and the Republic of China (ROC, or Taiwan) in the Asian Cold War in the 1950s. Using the Chiang Kai-shek Papers at the Academia Historica in Taiwan and documents from British and U.S. archives, Tsang contends that the two principals constituted an “odd couple” at that time. Despite being declining powers and secondary partners in Cold War alliances, they made strenuous efforts to assert themselves as much as possible, and both sought to influence the outcome of the Taiwan Straits crises provoked by the PRC. By 1958 the two states had reached a de facto, albeit temporary, strategic partnership.

Until 1950 Britain sought to defend its own security and to safeguard the oil routes to the Middle East and the sea-lanes of communications with its colonies and Commonwealth partners. After India gained independence, Asia, except for the defense of Malaya and Singapore, became rather peripheral to British foreign policymakers. After the Nationalist regime on the mainland collapsed and its leaders fled to Taiwan in 1949, the British government anticipated that the offshore island would inevitably soon fall to the Communist victors. Although the United Kingdom quickly recognized the PRC as the legitimate government of China, it also maintained a consulate in Tamsui, Taiwan, from which British consuls and military attachés sent their government invaluable reports on political, economic, and military developments on the island. The ROC likewise maintained low-level unofficial representation in London.

The outbreak of the Korean War significantly enhanced the significance of Asia in general and Taiwan in particular. Taiwan’s position off the Chinese coast meant that it was an invaluable naval and air base, part of the U.S. defense perimeter in the drive to contain Chinese Communism. This situation, together with China’s diversion of forces to Korea, saved the ROC from the invasion that had previously been expected (and indeed planned by Mao Zedong). To Chiang Kai-shek, the ROC’s leader, who realized that a war would bolster the ROC’s chances of survival, the Korean conflict came as a godsend, essentially making it impossible for the PRC to invade Taiwan.

Although Britain did not wish to see Communist forces seize Taiwan, British leaders were unwilling to go to war to prevent an invasion. In the first half of the 1950s, Britain endeavored to restrain militarily aggressive U.S. policymakers, especially Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. In 1954 Mao Zedong, seeking not only to...
deter the United States from signing a mutual defense treaty with the ROC but also to forestall future ROC covert operations against the PRC from offshore islands, precipitated the first Taiwan Strait crisis. Britain supported Operation Oracle, measures intended to defuse the Strait Crisis, and sought through persuasion to restrain the United States from defending any offshore islands. The British attitude infuriated Chiang, who deeply resented what he considered British attempts to neutralize Taiwan and its offshore islands. As a result, relations plummeted.

British power declined substantially in the wake of the 1956 Suez crisis. From then on, according to Tsang, Britain was no more than a junior partner of the United States. Britain recognized, furthermore, that Chiang’s successful agrarian and political reforms had bolstered KMT support in Taiwan, giving his regime new legitimacy and strength. Despite recognizing the PRC as the only legitimate government of China, Britain somewhat inconsistently supported U.S. efforts to keep the ROC seated in the United Nations Security Council. In the summer of 1958 Mao triggered a new Taiwan Strait crisis when, seeking to divert attention from the appalling loss of life caused by his revolutionary Great Leap Forward policies, he shelled the offshore islands of Quemoy and Matsu. Whereas Britain had taken a vigorously independent stance during the 1954 crisis, on this occasion it merely followed the U.S. lead. In subsequent years, Britain did not deepen its relationship with the PRC, which remained at largely a token level.

By supporting the ROC and U.S. positions during the second Taiwan Strait crisis, and by giving primary emphasis to the UK’s special relationship with the United States, Britain formed a de facto strategic partnership with the ROC. There were limits to this. Because the two economies were not complementary, UK-ROC cultural, commercial, and other economic connections were almost non-existent. ROC activities in British-ruled Hong Kong, where the ROC and PRC both maintained extensive intelligence networks, could easily have provoked friction with Britain. ROC agents conducted numerous raids against PRC territory, and in April 1955 they bombed an Air India flight originating in Hong Kong that had been expected to carry PRC Premier Zhou Enlai to the Bandung Conference in Indonesia. Even though the ROC refused to extradite the accused terrorists to Hong Kong, British officials pragmatically refrained from making the matter into major dispute, once the ROC had assured Britain that such incidents would not occur again.

Tsang provides a thorough study of UK-ROC relations in the 1950s in the wider context of the Sino-American confrontation, giving new details about the two Taiwan Strait crises, the Air India bombing, and Operation Oracle. His account is nonetheless repetitive, mentioning the impact of the Korean War, for example, on at least six separate occasions. He never clarifies just how long the UK-ROC de facto strategic partnership endured, and he fails to explain why, if Britain’s policy of constructive engagement with the PRC proved so unsuccessful, it should have been continued for so long.

Despite these reservations, Tsang’s well-researched and clearly written book fills a major void in the current literature on East Asian diplomatic history and will be of value to all interested in the Cold War in Asia or in Sino-British relations.

**Reviewed by Alessandro Brogi, University of Arkansas**

On 16 December 1981, Enrico Berlinguer, the leader of the most powerful Communist party in Western Europe (*Partito Comunista Italiano*—PCI), announced in a television interview that he considered the “propulsive force” of the Bolshevik Revolution and of the Eastern regimes “terminated.” The Soviet-backed imposition of martial law in Poland, repressing the Solidarity trade union movement, was the last straw in a series of events and ideological turns causing the rift between Soviet Communism and the Communist reform forces in the West. Silvio Pons tackles the important question of how the PCI understood (only to a limited extent) the prospect of Communist collapse in the East, and, even more crucial, the question of how the international actions of the PCI affected the transition to a post-Communist Europe in the West as well as in the East.

Pons has no doubt that Eurocommunism, the PCI-led movement of West European parties that in the late 1970s pursued a “third way” between Soviet Communism and social democratic reformism, was, in Anatoli Chernyaev’s words, the “tombstone of the international Communist movement.” Even more, Pons adds, Eurocommunism was “one of the factors that contributed to modifying the international environment in Europe: its political message, connected to other factors and events, actively helped bring the Cold War to an end” (p. 247).

Does this statement give too much credit to the short-lived and rather inconclusive political experience of Eurocommunism? Or does it reveal the much overlooked international role of opposition forces that relied on several factors—popular support, a charismatic and innovative leadership, and even unresolved ideological contradictions—to influence the crucial political and strategic choices of the world’s main leaders? Or do the PCI’s choices reveal inescapable inner contradictions of Communism, even in its most reformed expression in the West?

Pons does not ignore the profound limits and even isolation of the PCI and Berlinguer, whom Pons describes as a “tragic figure . . . inadequate to confront even the crisis of Italian Communism” (p. xi). But Pons also partly endorses the party’s own assessment of Berlinguer as a “disarmed prophet” (p. xii) who prepared Europe’s Marxist left to reinvent itself in the post-Communist world.

The record supporting both conclusions is abundant. Pons, who benefited from his privileged position as director of Rome’s Gramsci Institute, which houses the PCI’s archive and releases its rich files with exemplary speed, bases his account on a vast collection of documents spanning from the late 1960s to the death of Berlinguer in 1984. This remarkable record is complemented by significant recent literature (in English, Russian, and other Slavic languages) on the Soviet and Eurocommunist experiences in the last decades of the Cold War.
The impact of Eurocommunism was minimal in the West and limited in the East. But this account shows it was stronger than has generally been believed. Pons’s general conclusions about its failures deserve special attention. Contrary to common wisdom and the trends in the PCI’s own historiography, Pons argues that the party’s defeat (failing first to enter the Italian government through a “historic compromise” with the Christian Democrats, then to become the national and international guide of the “third way”) was due much less to external constraints (the U.S. veto or the persistent exclusion of the PCI from a government role) than to the party’s inner contradictions. The PCI’s own “political culture” and its persistent identification with the Soviet legacy despite its own discerning criticism of Soviet conduct predated and even caused the party’s political isolation. The PCI’s failure to establish a workable relationship with Europe’s social democratic forces and its “ambition to reform Communism” in the East as well as the West were perhaps the “most influential and decisive” (p. 161) causes of its political defeat.

The book’s title emphasizes “the end of Communism,” and Pons’s main focus is on the persistent ambivalence of the PCI toward Moscow and toward the Soviet legacy that still constituted the core of its own identity. The PCI began its slow emancipation from Soviet tutelage in 1968, after Soviet and East European troops repressed the Prague Spring movement. The idea of “socialism with a human face” was indeed the starting point for the PCI’s enduring illusion that Communism could be reformed from above. By the mid-1970s, Berlinguer believed that his party could assume that inspiring role. But he also recognized that such change in the East could not have occurred without preserving détente between the two superpowers or, better, without giving the reins of détente to the European powers, thus overcoming the “politics of the two blocs.” The PCI, in Berlinguer’s ambitious vision, would have played a “bridge role” between East and West. That was why he focused his main diplomatic action not with the obdurate French Communists but with the social democratic forces in Sweden and Germany who advocated Ostpolitik. A crucial corollary of that choice was that the PCI fully accepted European integration and even, by 1974, offered a tactical endorsement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Furthermore, access to Strasbourg and the consequent connection with leaders such as Willy Brandt and Olaf Palme enabled the PCI to address global policies, especially with regard to nuclear disarmament and Third World issues. But the effort to “bridge” East and West and the belief that Communism could be reformed from above also meant preserving the party’s ties with Moscow. Pons aptly recognizes that the “Europeanization” of the PCI was a political choice but never a “civilizational choice” (p. xxiv). The party’s identity remained anchored to the Soviet experience.

Indeed, opposition to Soviet policies never translated into anti-Sovietism. Despite condemning bipolarism, the PCI never truly renounced a Cold War rhetoric assigning the main blame to the United States. Although the party criticized the two superpowers’ resumption of nuclear rearmament from the late 1970s, it resented Moscow mainly for provoking the rise to power of the “warmongering” Ronald Reagan. While recognizing human rights as a universal value, the PCI maintained a cautious position on the repression of dissent in the Soviet bloc, lest the chances for
détente be lost. Thus, the PCI leaders never truly saw a moral equivalence between the two superpowers. The Italian Communists maintained their “anti-American prejudice” (p. xix) even as they reprimanded Moscow for mistakes that could still be remedied. Western Europe, they argued, was never seriously threatened by Soviet military power or by the USSR’s “decline and imperial instability” (p. 252). Further analytical, archive-based studies on the PCI’s reaction to Mikhail Gorbachev’s reforms and failure will soon complete this story. The fact remains that renouncing the legacy and long-standing outlook of the Soviet Union would have meant for the PCI losing its own identity, as Pons repeatedly reminds us.

Although the influence of Eurocommunism on regimes in Eastern Europe was limited, it did have some consequences. In 1977, Hungarian leader János Kádár, for example, concurred with Berlinguer’s desire to end bipolarism and even called the PCI’s position on NATO “acceptable” (p. 112). Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu emulated the PCI’s “autonomy” from Moscow, though with purposes that diverged from the agenda in Rome. During the Polish crisis in 1981—two years after Eurocommunism had come to an end—both Kádár and Ceaușescu justified their opposition to intervention with arguments echoing the Italian point of view. The PCI was prudent on the issue of human rights but maintained contacts with notable dissidents in the East. Soviet leaders became the most virulent opponents of Berlinguer’s vision, fearing his more-or-less deliberate encouragement of “upheaval in the Communist world” (p. 100). Later, however, Gorbachev, after rising to power, came to consider Eurocommunism a model for his own reforms.

But the assumption that Communism could be reformed from above was fatally mistaken. Even during the initial resurgence of Solidarity in Poland in 1989, the PCI still counted on possible changes from the top, along the lines of the Prague Spring. The party did not realize soon enough that the revolution in Poland was systemic, a stock indictment of Soviet “legitimacy” (p. 195), and that only through repression could the regime survive for a while longer.

The PCI’s faulty analyses of Eastern regimes were compounded by its equally flawed view of capitalism in the West. Rather than understanding the post-Fordist revival, the PCI continued to adhere to a “catastrophist” interpretation of capitalism. Rather than conceiving the possibility of revival of the welfare state, Berlinguer saw its decline in the 1970s as evidence of the shortcomings in social democracy. He maintained his faith in the potential of a reformed Communism, following the Italian example, that could both reform socialism in the East and profoundly transform capitalism in the West.

The end of Eurocommunism coincided with the end of the PCI’s external support to the Italian government in early 1979. The PCI’s main partner in that international design, the orthodox, pro-Soviet French Communist Party (PCF), had never been a genuine supporter of the idea. The PCF’s endorsement of European integration was also very brief and half-hearted at best. Rather than lingering on the various feuds that marred this international cooperation, Pons focuses on the PCI’s diplomacy with Europe’s social democrats. Failing to strengthen those links, he insists, Berlinguer lost an opportunity to mitigate the external pressures (especially the U.S. veto) stand-
ing in the way of PCI entry into the government. Apart from shared ideas on North-South relations and nuclear weapons, the PCI did not pursue the connection with Willy Brandt and Palme any further. As Berlinguer’s main adviser on foreign affairs, Sergio Segre, argued, the party merely conducted a *Westpolitik* in conjunction with Brandt’s own opening to the East. The record Pons reveals makes clear that the Italian Communists sensed the danger of becoming just another social democratic party.

Another problem was that Brandt’s choice to embrace pacifism was doomed to fail. It came at a time in which, as Pons also notes, the leaders of the most prominent Socialist parties in the West, notably French President François Mitterrand, had endorsed the installation of U.S. Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe. That choice determined the political defeat of Brandt’s faction within the German Social Democratic Party (SDP), thus frustrating the encounter between his *Ostpolitik* and the PCI’s *Westpolitik*. This failure did not affect the PCI, which in the 1980s deliberately chose to emphasize its moral appeal over a possible government role. Pons correctly links this ambition to a general tendency, also among Catholic forces in Italy, to aspire to an international and moral role disproportionate to the actual power of the country and, in so doing, to advance foreign policy toward concrete political projects or national security interests. But one is left to wonder whether Berlinguer’s pursuit of a high moral ground (which included the fight against domestic corruption and the “ethical” as well as economic resistance against consumerism) was mostly a way to offset the political ostracism that was partly imposed on and partly caused by the PCI itself. As the PCI’s former leader Palmiro Togliatti once told his Socialist comrade Pietro Nenni, the Socialists in Italy managed to gain access to the government and to “make politics,” whereas the Communists were relegated to “making propaganda.”

But of course, Berlinguer’s policies cannot be reduced to mere propaganda. His international and internal choices did accelerate an “authentic cultural change” (p. 248), paving the way for complete ideological surrender to the very reformism the party leader still opposed in the early 1980s. At the end of the Cold War, the PCI thus adopted a social democratic agenda and renamed its majority the Democratic Party of the Left. The choices of Berlinguer and his party followers also allowed the PCI’s symbiosis with Western European integration, ultimately favoring that system of values over a strong identification with Soviet Bolshevism. Less emphasized by Pons, Berlinguer’s “moral pacifism,” a more universal message replacing the PCI’s previous “class-determined pacifism,” contributed to the cultural rift that Western Europe began to experience in the 1980s with an increasingly conservative United States.

Pons’s book, for all its merits, leaves some questions unanswered. In the West, what made the impact of Eurocommunism so important was not its embracing of universal democratic values but its recognition of how they were connected to Western European integration and interdependence. Integration in the West had its counterpoint in the disintegration of the East. In the East, the impact of Eurocommunism was destructive. Pons presents evidence of both trends but does not entirely clarify how the PCI was such an agent of change in the East. Although Soviet leaders genuinely feared this Italian “influence” on the East European countries, most of the key events in the Eastern bloc, from the Solidarity movement to the Velvet Revolution in
Czechoslovakia, seem to owe little to Eurocommunism. If, moreover, the PCI’s project of reforming the regimes in the East was so linked to its integration in the West, the effects of Berlinguer’s choices on the international orientations of Western leaders (including Italian Socialist Prime Minister Bettino Craxi) deserve more attention than Pons gives them. Brandt’s successor in the SDP, Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, represented one of the pivotal forces opposing Eurocommunism, but he receives little mention here. Craxi’s own pro-Atlanticist policies were in part dictated by domestic politics and the Italian Socialists’ vital need to ostracize the PCI. One can plausibly argue, then, that Berlinguer’s “third way” philosophy reinforced the pro-Atlantic orientation of Europe’s social democrats, which in turn further stymied the Eurocommunist design.

This leads to the question of “external” constraints. Pons’s argument ascribing the failure of Eurocommunism to its own contradictions and to the fundamental flaws of the Eastern regimes is strong. But the argument would be even more compelling if Pons showed clearly how those contradictions were mutually nurturing with the external constraints on the PCI. Pons contends that Berlinguer’s defeat was attributable to the combination of his “socialist reform from above” vision and his persuasion that a government of “national solidarity” including the PCI “could be obtained without radically changing [the party’s] international alignment” (p. 160). From this, one might conclude that the veto of both Washington and Italy’s centrist parties was indeed crucial. It is no accident that the PCF managed to enter a coalition government under Mitterrand’s presidency, but only because it had reduced itself, with its own orthodoxy and repudiation of Eurocommunism, to electoral marginality and political impotence.

Finally, we can see how Berlinguer was both “tragic” and “prophetic.” But Pons does not sufficiently anchor those qualities to the issue of ideology. The PCI leader’s paramount goal—a transformation of the very nature of Communist regimes in the East centered on the PCI’s example in accepting the democratic values of the West—was seriously marred by the issue of ideology, or “identity,” as Pons prefers to broaden the definition. The PCI failed to renounce its identification with the Soviet legacy until the Cold War—and the Soviet Union—came to an end. The PCI should have, as Pons argues, “founded its new position [from the late 1970s] on a [thorough] cultural battle” against totalitarianism. But it is difficult to see how a Communist ideology, or identity, could have survived in Italy (or in Western Europe) had that fight been so consistent. In the final pages of the book Pons admits this reality, but he praises the remarkable Berlinguer for his “ethical and universalist vision,” even though that vision was detached from the “real political challenges” (p. 258).

Pons’s book is an outstanding contribution to the historiography of Eastern and Western Communism. Its originality lies not only in Pons’s invaluable archival research but also in a profound understanding of party politics and their international context. Such remarkable work cannot be left solely for an Italian audience and deserves translation at least into English and Russian.

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

Mark Fenemore, a senior lecturer in Modern European History at Manchester Metropolitan University, spent almost a decade researching the subject of this book, sifting through archives in Berlin, Leipzig, and elsewhere and conducting extensive interviews with those who had had contact with the rock ‘n’ roll scene in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the 1950s and 1960s. He quickly became frustrated with the simplistic, cardboard portrayals of young people in archival sources, as well as with scholarly publications that placed more emphasis on institutions of the party-state than on the brittleness of the social reality they were intended to transform. He decided to offer an alternative account. The result is a highly readable book that highlights the limits of socialization by the Socialist Unity Party (SED) regime.

The book covers issues of gender equality, efforts to create a usable concept of masculinity, street culture, teenage rebellion, rock ‘n’ roll, and predatory males, as well as the SED’s policies in relation to these matters. Because of the highly politicized nature of the Communist system, phenomena that were seen as non-political in the West came to be treated as political threats in the East. As an example, Fenemore discusses nudism which, in the years 1954–1955, became the target of a series of high-profile but unsuccessful efforts at suppression. Heinz Bachmann, a resident of Leipzig sympathetic to nudists, thought that the practice offered benefits for physical health and even proposed the establishment of a mass organization for nudists within the framework of the party-state. But Bachmann’s argument that being naked helped to “deconstruct old conditioned reflexes and to construct new ones in their place” (p. 30) failed to convert the SED to the banner of nudism.

The East German Communists claimed to be effecting a decisive break with the past in all spheres of social life, and some legislation seemed to live up to that promise. Examples include the declaration of gender equality in the constitution of 1949, passage of a law in 1950 abolishing the right of husbands to make unilateral decisions affecting their families, and, in time, the legalization of homosexuality and abortion. The embrace of the cult of the hero-worker, modeled on the Soviet Union’s Aleksei Stakhanov and embodied in the GDR’s Adolf Hennecke, also offered a glimpse into the imagined socialist future.

But in many regards, the SED took over much of the ballast of the past and failed to transform it. For one thing, inevitably those persons with the skills to staff the mass organizations (such as the Free German Youth, or FDJ) in the GDR were those who had relevant experience in the organizational equivalents in the Third Reich (such as the Hitler Youth). More to the point, these individuals brought with them a commitment to conformity, obedience, and the erasure of individuality—"virtues" that found a natural home in the militarized atmosphere fostered by the SED. The leading figures in the party had indeed been anti-fascist fighters during World War II, but many of
their subordinates either had fought for the Third Reich or were the sons or daughters of soldiers who had given their lives for the Nazi state. Associated with this “was a tendency to underplay the importance of the Holocaust and to present the Jews and other groups targeted by the National Socialists as passive victims in contrast to the heroic activism of the communist Kämpfer” (p. 210).

Thinking for oneself (being eigensinnig) was viewed by the SED as deviant, bourgeois, and a tendency to be overcome. Private interests were at best an irrelevance, at worst a dangerous distraction. Hence, a communiqué of the SED Politburo advised in 1963: “If your life is to have meaning, then every hour and every day you must engage yourself for socialism” (p. 158). Accordingly, when females donned provocative fashions, this was understood as a threat, and women were advised to dress and behave modestly, to avoid taking the initiative in contacts with men, and to decorate their work stations with “pleasant paintings, pretty curtains or easily looked-after plants” (quoted p. 25). Boys and men were encouraged to aspire to be both good soldiers and good fathers, but, as Fenemore notes, the way in which these messages, themselves rather common in the Western world at the time, were presented had much in common with the Nazi-era exhortations to women and men.

Teenage rebels often joined street gangs, in which the males proved their masculinity by defending “their” territory and by taking large-breasted females as their girlfriends. When these groups turned violent, they exposed themselves to regime charges of “rowdyism” (p. 92). The SED preferred to see young people engage in the approved activities of the FDJ, but a 1969 survey revealed that less than half of young people believed that the FDJ offered interesting activities, and 85 percent reported that they considered informal (unofficial) groups more interesting.

Fenemore offers, along the way, a short social history of the early rock ’n’ roll scene in the GDR, pointing out that the real provocation to the morality of the older generation was not so much the music itself as the gyrating dancing to that music, with its sexual overtones. To compel couples to stick to dancing in accord with more traditional conventions, the authorities posted signs in FDJ dance halls advising young people that “Dancing apart is forbidden” (p. 139), a restriction that proved difficult to enforce. Another rule, requiring local bands to play “socialist” songs for at least 60 percent of their music and Western songs for no more than 40 percent, was routinely defied. Bands switched midstream from Western songs to “socialist” songs when the inspectors showed up, and then switched back once the inspectors had left.

As Fenemore notes, young people in the GDR in the 1950s and 1960s were engaged in a struggle with the SED over how to define culture and modernity, and rock ’n’ roll was an important arena for this struggle. Ultimately, despite enjoying monopoly control of the schools, the media, and the instruments of coercion, the regime failed. The collapse of the GDR in 1989–1990 reflected not just its political and economic failure, according to Fenemore, but also the failure of its socialization program.

This book is energetically researched, elegantly written, and cogently argued. It is highly recommended for university libraries.

✦ ✦ ✦

280

Reviewed by Nicholas Daniloff, Northeastern University and Harvard University

The Cold War of the early 1960s was a period of great peril for the United States and the world. Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, anxious to influence the power balance in Europe and to gain recognition for the German Democratic Republic (GDR), was regularly threatening to sign a separate peace treaty with the GDR that would terminate Western access and occupation rights in West Berlin. The United States and its French and British allies, for their part, regularly affirmed that they would resist any such action, by force if necessary.

Kempton Jenkins, then a junior diplomat and expert on Germany in the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, reveals in vivid detail the private negotiations between legendary U.S. Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson and long-time Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko in which the real possibility of World War III cropped up, including the nuclear obliteration of New York City.

From January to March 1961, Thompson and Gromyko met six times at the Soviet Foreign Ministry to seek a negotiated resolution to the Berlin crisis. Although Gromyko discussed East German issues in his memoirs he did not dwell on his talks with the U.S. envoy. Ambassador Thompson never put pen to paper at the end of his career and left only handwritten notes on early drafts of his official, secret messages to Washington.

From the start of the negotiations, the Soviet side made clear its desire for a treaty that would formally end World War II, define national boundaries, recognize the existence of the two Germanys and create a “free city” of Berlin deep within the new Communist state of the GDR. The Western allies, unwilling to abandon their Berlin rights to an increasingly truculent Soviet Union, argued instead for an International Access Authority to regulate and police ground and air access routes to Berlin.

Jenkins describes how the talks got under way on 2 January 1961 in cordial fashion at Gromyko’s office in the towering ministry building on Smolensk Square with the foreign minister inquiring gently in fluent English about the ambassador’s wife. “Tommy,” Jenkins quotes Gromyko as saying, “I hope Jane is well.” Gromyko then addressed the 34-year-old Jenkins in Russian, testing his fluency, and patting him in a friendly manner on the back.

This is the sort of inside stuff of U.S.-Soviet diplomacy that often gets lost in historical accounts. Viktor Sukhodrev, the talented Soviet interpreter at the meeting, does not mention this particular incident in his memoir, *Moi Yazyk—Moi Drug* [My Language Is My Friend] (Moscow: ACT, 1999), but he does confirm that Gromyko always tried to establish cordial relations with his interlocutor even though he could be totally obstinate in negotiating.

Jenkins served as Thompson’s note-taker, jotting down Gromyko’s statements with pencil and paper and then refining his notes when Sukhodrev rendered the remarks sequentially into English. Sukhodrev was equally fluent in both languages, having gone to school in England during World War II as the son of a Soviet trade
official. Jenkins preserved his notes of those meetings, with Thompson’s handwritten clarifications, for fifty years before sitting down to write his autobiography.

As East and West butted heads over Khrushchev’s repeated ultimatums that he would sign a separate peace with East Germany by December 1961, the pleasant atmosphere of the first meeting gave way to incendiary threats at the third on 13 January. Jenkins writes that Ambassador Thompson, responding to Gromyko’s tirade that access could be discussed only in terms of full sovereignty for East Germany, warned that the point of the negotiations was not to draw a line under World War II but to avoid a nuclear holocaust of World War III. The allusion to force set off the Soviet foreign minister, who declared that diplomats should refrain from trying to intimidate the Soviet Union and that a further deterioration in relations could lead to “the incineration of New York City.”

The chain-smoking U.S. ambassador did not react immediately but kept pulling on his cigarette until Gromyko prompted him impatiently, “Well, Mr. Ambassador?” Jenkins recalls that Thompson finally addressed Gromyko with utter calm, saying: “I deeply regret you have been required to present such a performance. You know as well as I that if there were to be a nuclear exchange between our two great nations, the Soviet Union would disappear from the face of the earth.” Gromyko was stunned by this retort. Jenkins states that he was full of admiration for Thompson’s sang froid.

The tenor of these conversations continued in meetings between Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Soviet Ambassador Anatolii Dobrynin in Washington until Khrushchev finally dropped the issue by the end of the year. The next year, Khrushchev thought up a new ploy to win Soviet advantages at the expense of the United States: the secret deployment of missiles in Cuba in October 1962.

Jenkins’s autobiography provides many unusual glimpses of family and professional life in the looking-glass world of the Cold War era in which the U.S. embassy’s doctor turned out to be an intelligence operative by night, and long time enemies metamorphosed into friends.

Unfortunately, Cold War Saga suffers from having been issued by a low-cost publisher Nimble Books of Ann Arbor, Michigan, whose line-editing leaves much to be desired.