
Reviewed by Audrey Kurth Cronin, George Mason University

This book examines the character and legality of nation-states’ threats of force under international law, drawing its title from Article 2(4) of the United Nations (UN) Charter: “All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.” The article’s wording seems straightforward enough: most statesmen recognize unlawful *uses* of force when they see them, and hundreds of legal works are available to help dissect any areas of ambiguity. But identifying prohibited *threats* of force—as legally serious as actual uses, according to the author—forms the question at the heart of this book. How should lawyers and statesmen identify and respond to illegal threats of force under the UN Charter?

Astride the intersection of war and diplomacy, this short and readable volume is the author’s revised dissertation in international law. The first and second of the book’s seven chapters examine threats of force from 1648 to the present, determining how international law dealt with them (or mostly did not). Francis Grimal’s argument is that coerced states reacting to threats of force have lost their independence and are thus damaged by them. This perspective is a key assumption for the theoretical analysis that follows. Grimal contends that the failure to deal with threats of force is a serious risk to international peace and stability, frequently neglected not because of a lack of enforcement mechanisms but because of the imprecise wording and interpretation of Article 2(4) of the UN Charter. What is needed, he believes, is an objective categorization of legal and illegal threats, separate from historical or geopolitical contexts and known to all parties involved. Hence, he sets forth to create one.

Turning first to legal precedent, Grimal scrutinizes cases of the International Court of Justice as well as several national courts to find appropriate guidelines. Through a series of case studies in chapter three, he searches in vain for judgments that explain exactly what type of state threats of force violate the UN Charter. Yet statesmen do seem to recognize such threats when they see them. Chapter four assesses the UN’s record, including dozens of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions responding to threats of force—over Suez (1956), Cyprus (1963–1964), Kashmir (1965–1966), Western Sahara (1975–1976), and other international hotspots. (The book includes
a handy 24-page appendix that summarizes dozens of cases.) Grimal concludes that, even in the absence of enforcement mechanisms, threats of force by state governments have not been tolerated by other UN member-states under international law, and that this constitutes de facto evidence of their significance to the international community. But the precise nature of prohibited threats remains to be clearly defined.

Grimal turns to strategy for guidance, focusing in particular on the works of Thomas Schelling and mid-20th-century deterrence theory. Drawing mainly from Schelling’s classic Arms and Influence, Grimal maintains that capability, credibility, communication, and commitment are the necessary characteristics of real threats. With the addition of just war concepts and hegemonic theory, the book then focuses on nuclear proliferation (particularly by Iran and North Korea) as a serious risk to the international community. Does withdrawal from the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) suffice as a threat of force? Is the acquisition of nuclear weapons an inherent threat of force, even in the absence of threatening behavior or statements? Given the nature and purpose of nuclear weapons, is any violation of the NPT a threat of force? The author parses these and other questions according to existing international law and strategic theory, concluding that the current formulation of Article 2(4) is ill equipped to deal with nuclear threats and thus inadequate for current challenges to international security.

In the final chapter, Grimal seeks to offer an alternative means of prohibiting threats of force by reinterpreting Article 2(4). He argues that international lawyers cannot recognize legal and illegal threats of force in the absence of an understanding of strategic theory, but even with such an understanding the line is blurred. Threats of force do sometimes serve a purpose, so “Article 2(4) may have been deliberately drafted in a nebulous way” because “the drafters wanted to deliberately leave room for manoeuvre” (p. 165). Thus threats will always be an ambiguous part of international discourse, impossible to identify and categorize in any strict sense. What about an appropriate response? Because international law entitles states to use force for self-defense, the legal and constructive answer to threats of force, Grimal asserts, is to threaten active self-defense in return.


Reviewed by Daniel W. Drezner, Tufts University

In international relations theory, one of the most important fault lines between realists and liberals is over the relationship between economic interdependence and military conflict. From Norman Angell onward, liberals have argued that cross-border trade and economic exchange are engines for peace. According to the liberal logic, great powers refrain from using force to extract resources when trade is far more cost-effective. As
trade and economic interdependence increase, going to war becomes an exercise in mutually assured economic destruction. Realists from E. H. Carr onward have argued precisely the opposite. The realist logic is premised on the notion that cross-border economic exchange can foster more insecurity than security. Interdependence is rarely mutual; the more asymmetrically dependent actor usually fears a loss of autonomy and acts accordingly.

This debate has raged for more than a century, but Dale Copeland argues in *Economic Interdependence and War* that the truth is more complicated than either realists or liberals claim. Copeland’s book—an extension of his decades-long research program on interdependence and conflict—posits that the key variable affecting the likelihood of great-power conflict is not *actual* trade but “trade expectations.” If great powers anticipate a robust and fruitful economic relationship with each other, they will curtail their foreign policy bellicosity to maintain those relations. But if trade expectations are pessimistic, great powers will also be more skeptical about their future security prospects. This leaves them less constrained in pursuing foreign policies designed to reverse such a decline. Copeland tests his “trade expectations theory” against both realist and liberal arguments. He examines the extant statistical research and dives into case studies of most great-power conflicts from 1790 to 1991. After thirty such case studies, which form the overwhelming bulk of *Economic Interdependence and Conflict*, Copeland concludes that his theory explains 26 of the cases—a far more impressive hit rate than either realists or liberals can claim.

One might assume that economic interdependence is not a useful variable to explain U.S.-Soviet dynamics during the Cold War. However, if what matters is expectations of the future, international economic relations can affect great-power politics even when actual levels of cross-border exchange are low. At the start of his chapter on the Cold War, Copeland argues that “in situations when current trade is low or nonexistent, leaders’ expectations of future trade and commerce can still be critical to their decision-making processes” (p. 248).

Copeland maintains that Soviet leaders’ changing expectations of their trade and economic relationship with the United States had profound effects on both the beginning and the end of the Cold War. The U.S. decision to ramp down Lend-Lease arrangements with the Soviet Union at the end of World War II, he contends, convinced Iosif Stalin that the USSR’s economic relationship with the United States was souring. This perception, according to Copeland, spurred the Soviet Union to embrace a harder line in 1945 and 1946. Similarly, he explains the waxing and waning of détente by the degree to which Soviet leaders anticipated an end to the U.S. trade embargo. When Dwight Eisenhower refused to offer much in the way of greater trade and investment, the Soviet Union rebuffed his bid for more cordial relations. Richard Nixon was poised to offer more expansive economic ties, and as a result the Soviet Union acted in a more accommodating manner. In Copeland’s view, the end of the Cold War was peaceful because the United States eventually agreed to an expansion of trade credits for the Soviet Union. Mikhail Gorbachev, hopeful that Western technology imports would jumpstart the faltering Soviet economy, was willing to reciprocate by
offering major concessions on arms control and the reunification of Germany within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Copeland uses his theory to side with the revisionists on the historiography of the onset of the Cold War, concluding, “in terms of simple chronology, the United States was the first to shift to a grand strategy designed to reduce the strength of the other side” (p. 251). He later concludes that the United States “must be seen as the superpower most causally tied to the onset of Cold War tension” (p. 266). His argument also helps to explain why Eisenhower was unable to reach a significant détente with the Soviet Union, whereas Nixon accomplished this feat. According to Copeland, the gradual slowdown of the Soviet economy meant that Nixon was less fearful than Eisenhower of trade-enhancing growth. The book gives pride of place to Soviet economic concerns as a key driver of Cold War international politics.

Although Copeland confidently asserts that his trade expectations theory can account for U.S.-Soviet dynamics during the Cold War, his chapter on this period is somewhat uneven. In comparison to the other periods discussed in Economic Interdependence and War, the Cold War is not the best fit. As Copeland acknowledges, his theory cannot explain several of the most important episodes during the Cold War, including the Berlin blockade and the Korean War. At best, “the trade expectations argument lacks salience, even if it is not wrong per se” (p. 271). Even more curiously, Copeland does not mention either the Vietnam War or the Soviet war in Afghanistan, despite the role both great powers played in each of these conflicts.

The trade expectations theory, when applied to the Cold War, is perhaps more problematic than Economic Interdependence and War acknowledges. The “expectations” part of “trade expectations” does a lot of the work, but the source of those expectations is not always straightforward. For example, Copeland’s account of the 1956 Suez crisis shows that Eisenhower and British Prime Minister Anthony Eden had very different expectations of the trade impact of Egypt’s nationalization of the Suez Canal. Eden thought the effect on trade would be calamitous, whereas Eisenhower was more sanguine. Although Copeland might be correct that the divergence in expectations explains the divergence in U.S. and British foreign policy in Suez, he does not explain why Eden’s and Eisenhower’s expectations differed so much.

This variation in expectations hints at a bigger problem with Copeland’s approach, a problem that goes beyond the Cold War. Copeland acknowledges that when the U.S. government developed its trade expectations vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, U.S. officials knew that “Russia was an authoritarian state that had been practicing hard-core neomercantilism for 150 years” (p. 269). In the face of Soviet protectionism, U.S. efforts to minimize any expected benefits that could have accrued from a more open economic relationship with the USSR were hardly surprising. This suggests that economic ideas—a subject barely discussed in Economic Interdependence and War—matter greatly in forming trade expectations. Governments that internalize David Ricardo’s law of comparative advantage will not act the same as governments that see merit in Friedrich List’s ideas. Copeland acknowledges in his conclusion that authoritarian actors are more prone to the mercantilist mindset. If there is a strong
historical link between authoritarian regimes and mercantilist doctrine, Copeland’s trade expectations approach might be more of an intervening mechanism than a causal driver of conflict.

_Economic Interdependence and War_ answers many questions about the Cold War, but it leaves unanswered some key questions about the precise link between trade and conflict.

---


Reviewed by James I. Rogers, University of Hull (UK)

The strategic utility and perceived morality of airpower are what led to its inclusion within the foundations of American warfare after World War I. Proportionate and discriminate targeting of the enemy became the mantra of U.S. officials, many of whom had watched aghast as the “Old World” of Britain and Germany had been embroiled in a disproportionate and indiscriminate war of attrition from 1914 through 1918. World War I had not only resulted in more than 200,000 U.S. casualties, but had seen the mass killing and deliberate targeting of civilian populations. Consequently, in social, political, and strategic dimensions the culture of American warfare began to change. Reducing enemy civilian casualties while mitigating the number of U.S. soldiers killed became the primary goals of the United States. By the time World War II began, airpower and its perceived precision characteristics were deemed the silver bullet to achieve these goals while maintaining U.S. strategic superiority.

Adrian R. Lewis, a professor of history at the University of Kansas who earlier was a major in the U.S. Army, points to this period as the starting point of a new age of warfare. He argues that “World War II ushered in the new age of airpower, and by doing so initiated a process of transformation that would ultimately end with the elimination of ground forces as major combatants in war” (p. 41). According to Lewis, this marked the start of a significant transformation in the American culture of war; namely, “the removal of the American people from the conduct of the wars of the United States” (p. 366). Lewis contends that these changes have left the United States in a situation in which “Americans willingly expend hundreds of billions of dollars annually on the means for war, but do not show up for the fight” (p. 492). This state of affairs, Lewis argues, has not only left the public disconnected from American warfare but has also left the United States short of boots on the ground in its most recent conflicts.

This book, from a European perspective, may be compelling, but Lewis’s omission of a detailed study of World War I is striking. Even if European and American perceptions of history differ slightly, the influence of World War I on the way wars are waged is undeniable. However, this does not detract from the merit of Lewis’s
concluding recommendations, which seek to remedy numerous issues raised in the book.

Lewis, in bringing his two worlds together, the academic and the military, suggests that by enrolling thousands of military officers and non-commissioned officers in the university system, they can be exposed to differing languages, ideologies, cultures, debates, and discussions. Lewis wants “the best educated, smartest forces on earth” (p. 501), which, although relatively small, will be able to make informed and educated decisions to solve problems faced in future conflicts. As such, Lewis’s impassioned recommendations for the future, alongside his detailed study of the past, make the book of obvious value to academics, policymakers, and military officers.

Proceeding through the major U.S. conflicts after World War I—World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the 1991 Gulf War, the 2003 Iraq War, and the post-9/11 war in Afghanistan—Lewis provides a captivating analysis of the U.S. experience of war. He also gives a cogent assessment of cultural theory and the contribution culture can make to the way wars are fought. In offering a convincing argument for people at all levels of scholarship to consider, the book succeeds. Yet, Lewis has a mission as well as a message, and his opinion repeatedly shines through. For balance, this book should be read and taught alongside Christopher Coker’s War in an Age of Risk (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2009) and P. W. Singer’s Wired for War (London: Penguin Books, 2011). If these two highly acclaimed books are read in conjunction with The American Culture of War, they will fulfill Lewis’s desire to broaden the historical and cultural understanding of military students. Lewis’s bountiful use of photographs and maps allows readers to visualize the conflicts he so clearly and logically details. Perusal of the book’s accompanying website, with its quizzes and further resources, is also recommended for students and instructors alike.

Overall, even though a detailed analysis of World War I and its significant impact on warfare is an unfortunate omission—an omission that can be rectified when a third edition appears—the book makes a valuable contribution to scholarly debate.


Reviewed by John Prados, National Security Archive

Some people have all the luck. The late President Dwight D. Eisenhower was one of them. His running mate and vice president, Richard M. Nixon, ended up tarred with the Vietnam War and accused of suborning democracy with Watergate. Plenty of similar things happened on Eisenhower’s watch. He almost got the country into the same Vietnam War at the time of Dien Bien Phu. He undertook to overthrow legitimate governments through covert operations of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) across the globe. Eisenhower engaged in so many crises that his secretary of state,
John Foster Dulles, coined the term “brinkmanship” to denote the art of getting into a crisis but then out of it. Eisenhower pre-delegated authority to military commanders to use nuclear weapons. On his watch the United States innovated the thermonuclear bomb and began a nuclear buildup that ended with thousands of delivery vehicles and tens of thousands of warheads and bombs.

Eisenhower’s reputation by the end of his presidency was not high, but in retrospect historians have often reevaluated him favorably. Despite his brinkmanship, one school of thought considers him a peacemaker. Several of President Eisenhower’s speeches or diplomatic maneuvers have served his reputation well over the years. His 1961 farewell speech warning about the military-industrial complex is by far the greatest, but he also gets good press for his “atoms for peace” speech of 1953 and—the subject of this book—his “Open Skies” initiative of 1955.

In Eisenhower and the Cold War Arms Race, Helen Bury provides us with the latest examination of Open Skies, a diplomatic maneuver at the 1955 Geneva summit whereby Eisenhower sought to convince the Soviet Union to adopt, as a major confidence-building measure, a scheme that would permit both sides to conduct legal aerial photography of the other for intelligence purposes. Clear intelligence on the Soviet Union would have enabled Eisenhower to calibrate U.S. military budgets finely and might have avoided some of the crises that later arose. Nikita Khrushchev, afraid the CIA might discover how weak the Soviet Union actually was, rejected the proposal.

That much is familiar. What is extraordinary in Bury’s work is her argument that Eisenhower the peacemaker kept on the case. That is, she argues that the president made repeated attempts to induce Soviet leaders to accept what they had spurned. This is an intriguing proposition, and I would like to believe it. But I fall short of doing so for two reasons.

First, the Open Skies Eisenhower exists in tandem with the brinkmanship president. On nuclear issues, his proposal for a nuclear test ban as well as one for General and Complete Disarmament foundered on the issue of inspections (i.e., verification). By no means was the Soviet Union the only rejectionist. Eisenhower would have been no more successful in selling limited on-site inspections to John McCone at the Atomic Energy Commission or to Curtis LeMay at the Strategic Air Command than he was to the Soviet government.

Bury seems to treat Open Skies as if it existed by itself. But Eisenhower launched a massive nuclear buildup in response to each of the successive intelligence gaps—on missiles and bombers. He predelegated authority to employ nuclear weapons, creating a “Strangelovian” dilemma. He cooperated in giving the U.S. Navy a bigger share of the nuclear pie in the form not only of ballistic-missile submarines but also of nuclear-armed aircraft carriers. He integrated and coordinated all the targeting plans for those forces in the Single Integrated Operations Plan (SIOP). For Bury to be convincing in her depiction of an Open Skies Eisenhower, she would have to show that these military programs did not conflict with Eisenhower’s arms control efforts. That argument is absent here.
The second count is evidence. Bury marshals and carefully deploys the evidence on the Geneva summit proposal for Open Skies. I kept waiting for the material that would show Eisenhower bringing up his proposal time after time until Khrushchev was sick of hearing about it. Instead I got sick of waiting. Beyond the rhetoric in some letters exchanged between U.S. and Soviet leaders in late 1957 and 1958, only vague and circumstantial allusions to late-term Eisenhower moves are to be found here. Missing is the record of staff work that might show the letters to be deliberate attempts to revive Open Skies, as well as evidence that the assertions in Eisenhower’s letters were not simply debating points offered in the long struggle to define a framework for on-site inspection acceptable to both sides. More work needs to be done on the subject. For the meantime, Bury has given us a very good account of Open Skies in 1955.


Reviewed by Jorge I. Domínguez, Harvard University

“The feelings of culture shock and rejection in this extreme social environment of violence and poverty,” Christine Hatzky writes about Cuban civilians from the education sector who were deployed to Angola in the late 1970s and 1980s, “culminated in personal crises in the forms of homesickness, illness, psychological stress, anxiety, and feelings of helplessness.” She finds evidence of such trauma, cultural shock, and personal crises from “almost all my interviewees” (p. 261).

After the 1974 military coup in Portugal, contending political and military forces fought over power in Angola, hitherto a Portuguese colony, gradually drawing South Africa, Cuba, the United States, and the Soviet Union, to varying degrees, into a classic pattern of action-reaction escalation as each supported a preferred Angolan faction. In October 1975, after a large contingent of Cuban troops landed in Angola in support for the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the South African Defense Forces invaded Angola, and thousands of Cuban troops followed as well. On 11 November 1975, the MPLA declared Angola’s independence, and over the next four months some 36,000 Cuban troops and their Angolan allies defeated the South African invasion.

Hatzky’s book, set against the background of a war involving Cuban and South African troops alongside their Angolan partners that lasted until 1991 (and continued among Angolans until 2002), focuses on Angolan-Cuban civilian cooperation with special attention to the advisers, instructors, and teachers who worked on education in Angola. Originally published in Germany in 2012, the jewels in this book are chapters 8 and 9. In those chapters, Hatzky explores the personal experiences of Cuban civilians who worked in Angolan education at some point from 1976 to the end of the 1980s. She draws on Angolan government documents, interviews with ordinary Cubans and
Angolans who were participants in the bilateral cooperation of those years, and some Cuban government documents as well as interviews with experts.

She shows that for the most part Cuban civilians in Angola lived in separate enclaves and, unless explicitly authorized to engage, were prohibited from most social interactions with Angolans outside the workplace. The Cuban government’s motivation was to police its workforce to sustain the identity of those civilians as non-defecting Cubans; in general, it succeeded. The ever-present war was also one of the secondary rationales for such management of intercultural contact and one source of the trauma noted at the outset. Hatzky also explores a double reality; namely, Angolan students valued the work of their Cuban teachers and learned from them, and the Cuban civilians blamed their own failures on the Angolans and “often used their negative impressions of Angola and the Angolans to highlight their own merits” (p. 276). Yet, Angolans and Cubans managed to find each other in violation of the rules of separation and the barriers of “otherness,” engaged in personal intimacies, and some even married, but the wider impact of the faraway deployment during war on most Cuban civilians appears to have been traumatic in the clinical sense. Hatzky argues that the main cultural impact of Angolan-Cuban cooperation on the Cuban civilians was, therefore, to foster their reidentification with Cuba.

Elsewhere in the book, Hatzky explores the disputes that in time emerged between the governments of Cuba and Angola over the education cooperation program as well as other political, diplomatic, and military issues. She demonstrates that the “image” of Cubans in Angola—and the quality of bilateral relations—deteriorated in the 1980s. Of special analytical value are four of Hatzky’s findings.

First, much has been written about the origins of the international widening of the war in Angola in 1975. Hatzky shows that the MPLA took the initiative to invite the Cuban troops and then followed up by inviting Cuban civilians. Cuban leaders had been skeptical about a civilian cooperation program. Angola cemented this civilian relationship by paying the Cuban government for Cuban education advisers and teachers at a rate just below what it paid for similar persons from other countries. The Cuban government kept most of this money, paying Cuban civilians at their much lower Cuban salary rate, plus expenses. Hatzky notes the following reasons for the MPLA’s interest in Cuban civilian cooperation:

- Cuban success in running a literacy campaign.
- Cuba’s familiarity with tropical diseases and how to prevent and treat them.
- Cuban experience with light prefabricated housing adapted to a tropical climate.
- Two agricultural economies, with similar agricultural crops in Cuba and Angola.
- Strict Cuban social organization that allowed the Cuban government to mobilize resources.
- Harsh living standards in Cuba that somewhat prepared Cuban civilians for even harsher circumstances in Angola.
• Similarity of climate, which prepared Cubans for hard work in the warm, humid tropics.
• Sufficiently similar cultural traits, including root crops in the diet and a music that features drumming.
• A rainbow of skin colors.

Second, Hatzky shows that Cubans for the most part volunteered to serve in Angola. Their reasons for doing so included beliefs in the value of internationalist solidarity and a sense of mission. Cubans also had other motivations, among them a desire for adventure, escaping families and relationships, careerism, search for social prestige, and so forth. But the most glaringly missing motivation was one of the Cuban government’s key rationales, namely, Cuba’s African roots through slavery. Regardless of skin color, most of Hatzky’s interviewees reported no special affinity for Africa or Angola. Only three interviewees mentioned, among other reasons, searching for their roots in Africa.

Third, Angolan youngsters did learn from Cuban teachers, but the principal explanation for the allocation of Cuban education personnel was to “help stabilize the government’s rule by enforcing views, terminology, and interpretations that contributed to the MPLA’s consolidation of power” (p. 134). Cubans strengthened and centralized the state administration, modernized the infrastructure, and introduced more effective methods of instruction. The key goal was to implement a political and military strategy to support the MPLA’s power: “All civil development was subordinate to this objective” (p. 288). It worked. Cuba and the MPLA won. South Africa was defeated, and the internal opponents of the MPLA were defeated in due course. Many of the youngsters who were taught by the Cubans rose to become Angola’s new elite in the twenty-first century—in an authoritarian regime marked by a high level of corruption.

Finally, Hatzky is genuinely saddened by what she calls the “silence”—the silence about the people of Angola who suffered from prolonged war; the silence, especially in Cuba, regarding Cubans traumatized by the experience of service abroad during war; the silence regarding the broken families and the pain to loved ones during prolonged absences; the shock of cultural misunderstanding; the silencing of alternative interpretations regarding a war more complex than official triumphalism; and the silence about a war that may have made the returning Cubans feel even more Cuban.


Reviewed by Athan Theoharis, Marquette University

Established in 1908 as the investigative division of the Department of Justice, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) soon moved beyond law enforcement to include
monitoring of radical activists and organizations and then after 1936 to conducting “intelligence” investigations. The purpose of the latter was not simply to anticipate planned espionage and sabotage threats but also to monitor those who could influence the political culture. The targets included Hollywood producers, directors, writers, and actors; German émigré writers and playwrights; prominent writers (including prominent sociologists); and liberal and radical journals of opinion (*The Nation; I. F. Stone’s Weekly*). In 1960, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover authorized a special index, the Reserve Index, to list for possible detention any individuals who “are in a position to influence others against the national interest or are likely to furnish financial or other material aid to subversive elements due to their subversive associations or ideology.” Hoover specified that the Index should include “writers, lecturers, news men and others in the mass media field,” and, as one example, he cited the author Norman Mailer. Two responses by senior FBI officials highlight the capriciousness of the FBI’s surveillance operations. First, after Hoover learned that he himself was allegedly the model for one of the characters in Walt Kelley’s comic strip *Pogo*, he ordered his aides to conduct a content analysis of the strip to ascertain whether the portrayal was positive or negative. Second, after learning that Hollywood actor Rock Hudson was gay, FBI officials worried that Hudson might play an FBI agent in a movie.

In this vein, William Maxwell’s recently published monograph *F. B. Eyes* offers the promise of expanding our understanding of FBI surveillance operations and the role that race played in determining the targets of FBI investigations. To research this issue, Maxwell filed Freedom of Information Act requests seeking all FBI files on “Afro-modernist writers” (his characterization) listed in the *Norton Anthology of African American Literature*. He eventually obtained 51 files while discovering that the FBI had no records on 53 other writers and that the records on an additional six either had been destroyed or were “missing” when transferred to the National Archives. In the introduction, Maxwell posits that during the years 1919 through 1972 “a who’s who of black protest was spied on, often infiltrated, and sometimes formally indicted by Hoover’s FBI” (p. 3).

As it turns out, Maxwell’s principal contribution to FBI scholarship is his decision to post 49 of the accessible FBI files online at http://digital.wustl.edu/fbeyes. Unfortunately, his own analysis of these files is disappointingly thin. For one, his cursory account of the contents of the FBI files on these 51 African American writers resembles the contents of FBI files on other writers and political activists: namely, information on their personal conduct and political beliefs and associations and at times a close analysis of their published writing. Second, these files confirm that they were compiled because of FBI officials’ ideological conviction that “subversive” writers could possibly influence their readers and not because the writer violated federal laws (including espionage and sabotage). Maxwell, however, does not fully develop this theme, which is not the central focus of his at times rambling, impressionistic assessment of African-American literature and the FBI’s response.
Phillip Deery's *Red Apple* consists of five loosely connected vignettes: the surgeon Edward K. Barsky and the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee; the popular writer Howard Fast and professors Lyman Bradley and Edwin Burgum; the composer Dmitri Shostakovich; and the lawyer O. John Rogge. Deery's archival research is impressive and his prose clear and happily free of the obscuring jargon marring too much scholarly writing.

Deery sees his case studies as illustrating the heinous effects of McCarthyism. McCarthyism in *Red Apple* has little to do with the particular activities of Senator Joseph McCarthy. Rather, McCarthyism is Deery's catchall term for criticism and actions against domestic American Communists and their close allies in the late 1940s and 1950s. Deery asserts that “upon the altar of anticommunism, domestic Cold War crusaders undermined civil liberties, curtailed equality before the law, and tarnished the ideas of American democracy.” Deery sees a vast array of government agencies, university administrators, publishing house, movie studios, television networks, and private law firms engaged in “crushing domestic dissent” (p. 1). Deery's *Red Apple*, then, is an addition to the already vast literature that depicts the popular and official anti-Communism of the late 1940s and 1950s as a nightmare era of fear, paranoia, oppression, and injustice.

Two of Deery's five cases, however, do not fit well with his overall narrative. Shostakovich was not an American radical who was hauled before a hostile congressional committee. Instead, he was a Soviet composer who was coerced by the Stalinist regime into becoming a propagandist for the Soviet cause by serving as the star attraction at the 1949 Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace held at the Waldorf Hotel in New York City.

The Soviet authorities and their allies in the United States designed the Waldorf conference as a forum to bring together high-profile Soviet and American cultural figures to deliver a massive propaganda blow against U.S. Cold War policies while praising the policies of the Soviet Union. The conference failed badly because of the diligent efforts of key anti-Stalinist intellectuals in the United States who attended. At numerous panels they asked pointed questions and offered stinging rebuttals that exposed the conference for the propagandistic charade it was. As for Shostakovich, he dutifully delivered a speech in which he not only endorsed the view that the U.S. government was a fascistic warmonger while the Soviet dictator Iosif Stalin pursued only peace, but he also endorsed Stalin's purging of Soviet composers like himself who were guilty of “bourgeois formalism” in their music (p. 125). Shostakovich did not write his own speech and did not actually believe what he had been ordered to say, but he chose to deliver it because a failure to do so would have meant not only his continued professional death in the USSR but also the possibility of real death at the hands of Stalin's security services.
After Shostakovich’s speech Nicolas Nabokov, an anti-Bolshevik Russian exile who had become a U.S. citizen, pointedly asked Shostakovich whether he agreed with a recent Pravda article denouncing composers Paul Hindemith, Arnold Schoenberg, and Igor Stravinsky as decadent formalists and lackeys of imperialism whose music was banned from the USSR. Shostakovich completed his degradation by endorsing the article and thereby destroying his credibility in the eyes of leading figures of Western high culture, who regarded the three as giants of modern classical music.

Deery cogently describes Shostakovich’s victimization at the hands of Stalin. The problem comes when Deery absurdly insists that Shostakovich was also a victim of McCarthyism. Nabokov and other anti-Stalinist intellectuals are blamed for humiliating Shostakovich and damaging his reputation by exposing Shostakovich as, accurately, a propaganda puppet for Stalin. To depict the work of anti-Stalinists in undermining the pro-Soviet propaganda of the Waldorf conference as an example of McCarthyism is silly.

Deery’s essay on O. John Rogge is also an ill fit for the book. Rogge was not jailed for contempt of Congress or prosecuted under one of the sedition laws of the era. Nor did he lose his job or suffer any professional penalties from blacklisting. Instead, he just changed his mind. An ardent supporter of causes backed by the U.S. Communist Party (CPUSA) from the late 1930s, Rogge by the end of the 1940s was one of the most prominent radical lawyers in the United States. But starting in 1950 Rogge began to shift his views. He had been for many years a prominent member of various international Communist peace fronts, but he began shocking his pro-Soviet associates by supporting Yugoslavia after Stalin expelled the country from the Communist bloc and tried to bring it to heel. Rogge delivered speeches saying that the Soviet Union and the United States were equally responsible for Cold War tensions, and he blamed North Korea for the Korean War. Not surprisingly, Rogge swiftly lost his honorary standing in the various pro-Soviet peace fronts. Shifting further, Rogge appeared voluntarily as a prosecution witness when the U.S. government attempted (unsuccessfully) to force a Communist peace front, the Peace Information Center, to register as an agent of a foreign power. As Deery notes, the viciousness and vitriol that Rogge received from the pro-Communist left after his shift were at least as harsh as the denunciations that Deery’s victims of McCarthyism received.

Deery’s essay on Rogge is a valuable contribution to historical literature because, as Deery observes, Rogge is a strangely neglected topic of scholarly attention. But it is difficult to see how this essay, interesting as it is, has much to do with the book’s theme of McCarthyism as a horror story.

Deery’s three other vignettes do deal with American Communists or close allies of the CPUSA who suffered in some way from public and private anti-Communists. The problem here, as in much of the literature on this era, is that it is framed in a “saints and sinners” narrative in which the Communists and their allies are saintly figures fighting for social justice or some other noble humanitarian cause and are punished by sinful anti-Communists for their actions. The reality was never that simple. The victims of McCarthyism that Deery discusses were either members of the CPUSA...
or long-time allies. None had dissented from any of the ideological shifts of the CPUSA’s slavishly pro-Soviet line—from the Nazi-Soviet Pact, to the repudiation of Earl Browder’s attempt to Americanize the CPUSA, to the preposterous claim that the Korean War was started by South Korea invading the North. They were members of or allied to a party that regarded Stalin’s USSR as an ideal society that should be emulated by the entire world. Deery attempts to finesse the problem of his saints adhering to a totalitarian political movement by assigning the CPUSA’s role in aiding Soviet espionage and its other covert subversive activities to a hidden “bad” Communist Party while assigning all of its work for social justice to a separate “good” open Communist Party of which his saintly victims were a part. Deery states: “So we must delineate the clandestine ‘nonlegal’ party apparatus from the open, daily struggles waged by communists for social justice and ‘a better world.’ The existence of the first does not invalidate the legitimacy or sincerity of the second” (p. 160).

In reality, the CPUSA was not two parties but only one. The party leaders who directed the open activities of the CPUSA also directed its covert activities. The Communist ideology that animated activists of the party’s open activities also animated the actors in its covert apparatus. Those Communists and their allies who were engaged in what Deery sees as a fight for “a better world” were in solidarity with and ardently defended their covert comrades who were exposed and prosecuted—such as Julius Rosenberg, Morton Sobell, and Alger Hiss.

The popular and official anti-Communism of the late 1940s and 1950s produced plenty of abuses, injustices, and shameful actions by government and private institutions. But given what we now know about the nature of the CPUSA and the international Communist movement, it is inappropriate for scholars to treat the era with a saints-and-sinners narrative in which opposition to Communism is derided as a “virus” (p. 162).


Reviewed by William Stueck, University of Georgia

At best, encyclopedias of wars and historiographical volumes of the same are dull compendiums of information and ideas that provide useful references to buffs, fact-checkers, and non-specialists. This volume of 32 essays focusing on the historiography of the Korean War is much more. Senior scholars James I. Matray, a diplomatic historian, and Donald W. Boose, Jr., a military historian, have produced a book that not only will inform members of the general reading public interested in the war but will also inform and engage historians with considerable expertise in the early Cold War. At minimum, the essay authors effectively describe the secondary literature and sources available on the topics assigned to them; at most they provide insights on the
strengths and limitations of that literature (based in part on their own research) and suggest avenues for future study. Rather than attempt summaries of all 32 essays in the volume, I will comment on a few of the most interesting ones and then outline some of the volume’s limitations.

In “Prelude to Conflict, 1910–1948,” Boram Yi does an excellent job of placing Bruce Cumings’s classic two-volume study *The Origins of the Korean War* (Princeton University Press, 1981 and 1990) in the evolution of the literature on Japanese rule and the U.S. occupation. She shows both the study’s early impact, which was profound, and how subsequent scholarship superseded it with regard to Korea’s economic, social, and political development.

Steven Casey, the author of the leading study of the U.S. domestic political dimensions of the war, expertly traces the twists and turns of scholarly treatments of the topic. Of special note is his emphasis on a long-forgotten analysis by Alonzo Hamby in 1977 that offered an insightful discussion of the differences between domestic dissent during the Korean and Vietnam Wars and the sources thereof, a needed reminder that some scholarship actually improves with age.

In the volume’s longest essay, Allan Millett, the most prolific scholar of the war over the last decade, provides an extremely useful narrative of the ground war in Korea. More a discussion of events than of scholarship, the essay should be a starting-point for people seeking a basic understanding of the topic.

Peter G. Knight, who wrote a doctoral dissertation on the intelligence war under Millett’s direction, uses his own research as a departure point for evaluating the literature on his topic. Among other things, the result is a provocative discussion of the U.S. intelligence failure in the fall of 1950, which suggests that Generals Douglas MacArthur and Charles Willoughby in Tokyo were not so much willful in their misreading of Chinese Communist intervention as they were fooled by the enemy’s deception campaign through electronic communications.

Jiyul Kim’s essay, “United Nations Command and Korean Augmentation,” joins Knight’s in both reviewing the scholarly literature and developing his own interpretation based on substantial original research. Some will claim that Kim exaggerates in asserting that “the United Nations Command . . . was an unprecedented coalition and an important factor in the outcome of the fighting” (p. 283), but he musters considerable evidence to support his argument.

Unlike most of the other authors, Robert M. Collins integrates Korean-language sources into his discussion of both the secondary literature and his own research on the North Korean army. His crisply written essay leaves the reader wishing only that Collins had had more space to develop his penetrating generalizations.

In focusing on the issue of prisoners of war, Charles S. Young devotes his attention primarily to Americans who were captured by the enemy or went missing. His coverage of the small literature on those in the latter group, including those whose remains were either never found or were identified only many years later, will be highly informative to most readers, even those with expertise on the Korean War. His coverage of the prisoners who did return to the United States, especially the controversy that surrounded many
of them, interjects some cultural history into a volume that is notably short in that area.

It is hard to criticize what is covered in this impressive volume, but some areas are largely ignored. The substantial Korean-language scholarship on the war is mostly absent, even though many of the volume’s authors are native Koreans. Atrocities on both sides are given only cursory treatment, and most of the literature involving cultural and social issues is totally absent. Even Dong-Choon Kim’s important if flawed *The Unending Korean War: A Social History*, which has long been available in English translation from the Tamal Vista publishing house, is overlooked. One hopes that scholars with expertise in these areas will not hesitate to evaluate their historiography in other venues. Meanwhile, we should honor the contributors to this volume for their considerable achievement.


Reviewed by Kathryn Weathersby, Johns Hopkins University

This fine collection of essays commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Korean War makes a significant contribution to English-language scholarship on that pivotal conflict. The authors broaden the investigation of the war by addressing new questions or bringing new perspectives to old questions about important issues of alliance diplomacy, military strategy, public opinion, and historical memory.

In “An Alliance Forged in Blood: The American Occupation of Korea, the Korean War, and the US-South Korean Alliance,” William Stueck and Boram Yi supplement the extensive scholarship on U.S. strategic calculations regarding the Korean peninsula with a subtle, balanced examination of the sources of the mutual mistrust and disrespect that quickly took root between U.S. occupiers and newly liberated Koreans. Drawing on Korean-language sources and U.S. Army documents, they chart the evolution of attitudes that contributed to Washington’s failure to extend a security guarantee to the Republic of Korea (ROK)—a guarantee that might have deterred the North Korean attack of 25 June 1950.

In “China and the Dispatch of the Soviet Air Force: The Formation of the Chinese-Soviet-Korean Alliance in the Early Stage of the Korean War,” Shen Zhihua extends his pioneering research into Chinese sources on the war. Deepening our view of Kim Il-Sung’s subordination to Iosif Stalin, Shen reveals that from July through September 1950 the North Korean leader repeatedly asked for Soviet permission to request Chinese assistance. PRC officials expressed eagerness to intervene, but Stalin refrained from giving the necessary approval. The Soviet leader also refused to provide air cover for Chinese troops deploying in the northeast of China. By the time Stalin finally asked China to intervene on 1 October, it was too late to prevent
the near-destruction of the Korean People's Army and enemy occupation of North Korea.

Robert Barnes explores new territory in “Branding an Aggressor: The Commonwealth, the United Nations and Chinese Intervention in the Korean War.” He argues persuasively that when Commonwealth countries joined in opposition to U.S. efforts to brand China an aggressor in late 1950, they were able to restrain the United States from taking an action they feared could expand the conflict. In “Lost Chance or Lost Horizon? Strategic Opportunity and Escalation Risk in the Korean War, April–July 1951,” Colin Jackson of the U.S. Naval War College presents a carefully reasoned claim, based partly on Chinese and Soviet documents, that the United Nations (UN) command squandered an opportunity to advance the front line to the narrow neck of the peninsula in the wake of the failed Chinese offensive of April–May 1951. The militarily unsound decision to suspend offensive operations resulted from the political environment in the United States created by the removal of General Douglas MacArthur, which made it difficult to support any action that appeared to intensify the war. In Jackson's view, Washington's failure to take advantage of Chinese weakness “redefined the war in a way that surrendered all of the UN's major advantages” (p. 113) and prompted the U.S. military to draw questionable “lessons” from the war in Korea.

The book's editor, Steven Casey, explores the little-understood issue of how the U.S. military reported casualties as the war unfolded. In “Casualty Reporting and Domestic Support for the War: The U.S. Experience during the Korean War,” Casey provides a fascinating discussion of the practical difficulties of casualty reporting and the complex interaction between the military's attempt to soften the blow, Republican efforts to discredit the Truman administration, and the media's eagerness to report the resulting controversy. Casey concludes that this dynamic led to an exaggerated sense among the American public that the war was unusually bloody. Charles Young addresses another aspect of Washington's management of public perceptions of the war. In “POWs: The Hidden Reason for Forgetting Korea,” he discusses the awkward disconnect between the public presentation of the war's aims with the UN command's adoption of voluntary repatriation of prisoners of war as a “substitute for victory” in the lengthy armistice negotiations. He concludes that the Truman administration declined to publicize the repatriation issue out of fear that public support for the war would collapse if Americans thought they were fighting for the fate of Communist POWs. He contends, on a provocative note, that the obscuring of the war's aim over its final two years was a major reason the Korean War was quickly forgotten.

As Robert Barnes rightly notes in the book's introduction, the varied perspectives and approaches of the contributors shed light on why the Korean War continues to scar domestic politics and international relations in East Asia. This collection of essays is thus of value not only to historians of the Cold War but also to analysts of contemporary East Asia.

Reviewed by Mao Lin, Georgia College and State University

Xiaobing Li’s *Voices from the Vietnam War* is an oral-history collection of 22 personal stories of U.S., Vietnamese, Chinese, Soviet, and South Korean soldiers and officers who served in the Vietnam Wars, covering the period from 1946, when the French-Indochina War started, to 1975, when the North Vietnamese took over the whole of Vietnam. In their own words, the veterans recount their war experiences in Vietnam as well as details about their family lives before and after the war. Li’s book testifies to the well-established notion that oral history, despite certain methodological problems, can be a very productive tool of historical inquiry. Those 22 stories allow the reader to approach the Vietnam War from the bottom up, as most of Li’s interviewees were rank-and-file soldiers and midlevel officers during the war. The stories humanize and contextualize the wars in Vietnam, as they are told from different perspectives. Overall, Li’s interviews add new dimensions to our understanding of the impact and scope of the war, and his book is a valuable contribution to the Vietnam War historiography.

The most obvious strength of Li’s book is its scope. Li, a professor of Cold War and military history who served in the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) in the 1970s, spent seven years gathering hundreds of oral histories from Vietnam War survivors. He interviewed not only U.S. and South Vietnamese veterans, but also Chinese, North Vietnamese, and Soviet participants. The voices from the other side of the Iron Curtain are particularly interesting because the stories of the Communist veterans were unavailable until this book’s publication. The 22 stories Li chooses to present thus speak to the internationalized nature of the Vietnam wars. Moreover, Li endeavors to maintain a careful balance among the 22 accounts. The book is divided into five parts. The first three parts include stories told by veterans from both Cold War camps, ranging from foot soldiers to officers and from artillery experts to a Soviet foreign intelligence officer. The remaining two parts consist of stories from those who served in the war as doctors, nurses, and logistical personnel, thus expanding the book’s scope beyond mere battlefield combat and looking into the complicated infrastructures of the war.

The selection enables Li to achieve his major goal of “[moving] away from the conventional combat-centered war history and instead [looking] into the relatively neglected subject of men and women’s lives beyond the battleground” (p. 10). By “[putting] each veteran in the context of the society, culture, and politics,” Li tries to show that “each society has its own way to transform its civilians into soldiers” (p. 10). For example, the stories reveal that patriotism and ideology were not the only factors that sent people into the war. Other factors, such as a lack of choice, family and cultural heritage, and the desire to use the war to advance one’s career, were also important. Tran Thanh, for instance, joined the North Vietnamese Army largely out of pride of being a “Black Thai” warrior. Zhao Shunfen decided to serve in the Chinese army because
that would get him out of his impoverished native village. Although Terry Lynn May recognized that service in Vietnam was essential for any officer considering the army as a career, Judy Crausbay Hamilton, the only female informant in the book, was happy to serve in Vietnam as a nurse and to be the wounded soldiers’ “mother, sister, girlfriend, or whatever they needed to see when they woke up” (p. 163). Collectively, Li’s stories reveal the multifaceted nature of the war in Vietnam and how it affected people’s lives both on the battlefield and beyond.

Another major goal of Li’s book is to use those individual stories to shed light on the larger historical context of the Vietnam wars. For example, all of the South Vietnamese veterans attribute the failure of the South Vietnamese army (ARVN) to its “Americanization.” When required to do things in the American way, those soldiers felt they were fighting for their U.S. commanders, not for the Vietnamese people. The resulting lack of fighting spirit, according to those interviewees, demoralized the entire ARVN and encouraged corruption and dereliction of duty. On the other hand, some U.S. veterans use their own experiences to explain that the U.S. side's inability to win the war was due to a lack of clear political strategy, the failure of nation-building in South Vietnam, and the self-imposed limits on the U.S. military. Li’s collection of Communist stories also provides fresh details regarding the extent and scope of the Chinese and Soviet involvement in the war, thus supplementing the existing literature on this topic. In addition, Li tries to use the stories to illuminate the Sino-Soviet split and its impact on the war. However, the book is less successful here. Only a few of the Communist veterans explicitly discuss that topic; moreover, most of them were not in a position to grasp the full picture of the Sino-Soviet split.

The book has a couple of other minor drawbacks. The omission of any stories from African-American soldiers is an unfortunate gap. The inclusion of such stories would have further enriched our understanding of the war on the U.S. side. Another shortcoming is that Li presents the oral histories only as edited narratives. The interview questions are not mentioned. Nor does he discuss the design, methods, and assumptions used in his questionnaires. That kind of information would have given readers a better understanding of the context of the stories. An appendix should have been included to this end. Despite these drawbacks, Li’s book is a good read and a suitable assignment for courses on the Vietnam War.


Reviewed by Hiroaki Kuromiya, Indiana University

This massive volume surveys the trajectory of the life of the Soviet dictator Iosif Stalin in more detail than most existing biographies. The first of three projected volumes, Paradoxes of Power covers the period up to 1928, when Stalin embarked on the forced
collectivization of agriculture. The volume is more than a mere biography. Kotkin seeks to place Stalin in a global (or at least Eurasian) geopolitical context and tells “the story of Russia’s power in the world and Stalin’s power in Russia, recast as the Soviet Union” (p. xi). The book is more a “marriage of biography and history” (p. xi) than a traditional biography. The result is immensely impressive if exhausting.

Stalin emerges in the book as a singularly important historical figure who defined much of the history of the world in the twentieth century. Kotkin summarizes the Soviet dictator as a leader “who stands out in his uncanny fusion of zealous Marxist convictions and great-power sensibilities, of sociopathic tendencies and exceptional diligence and resolve” (p. xi). The most significant contribution of this first volume is Kotkin’s analysis of how Stalin became a dictator with “great-power sensibilities.” The book traces Stalin’s ideological breakthrough to 1924–1925, when, in the wake of the death of his mentor, Vladimir Lenin, he began to formulate the concept of “Socialism in One Country,” which Kotkin characterizes as a “Marxist approach to geopolitics” (p. 532). Stalin’s ideological breakthrough linked revolution to war (and not just to class), depicting “conflicts and wars between our enemies” (p. 558) as a catalyst for revolution. Of course, this may not have been a breakthrough, insofar as Lenin had advocated the same much earlier. Yet Kotkin carefully traces the evolution of Stalin’s thinking within a geopolitical context vastly different from the one that faced Lenin. The book places Stalin in a position similar to that occupied by his Tsarist Russian predecessors, particularly Petr Stolypin, who led Russia under Tsar Nicholas II after the 1905 revolution. Kotkin’s portrayal of Stalin is thus essentially as a Marxist who became—or made himself into—a Russian (recast as Soviet) statesman.

Kotkin does not say so, but his position comes close to that taken by another biographer of Stalin, Robert C. Tucker, who described Stalin’s postrevolutionary ideology as “neo-Tsarist Marxism.” As Kotkin reminds us, Stalin always criticized dogmatic Marxism and insisted on “creative Marxism” (p. 205). Was Stalin’s breakthrough really a breakthrough, or did it have roots in Stalin’s experience of war? Unfortunately, Kotkin, like his predecessors, has been unable to find much information on Stalin’s contemporary thoughts about the Russo-Japanese War and World War I: Stalin “published absolutely nothing of consequence during the greatest conflict of world history, a war that roiled the international socialist movement” (p. 153). However, Kotkin details Stalin’s experience of the civil war, which clearly had far-reaching effects on his thinking.

Like Tucker, Kotkin emphasizes the singular importance of Stalin as an individual. Without Stalin, the Soviet Union would have been utterly different. No other person would have done what Stalin did, particularly the brutal and headlong campaign for the wholesale collectivization of agriculture. Stalin proved far superior as a politician than his chief rival, Leon Trotsky: “Stalin’s core beliefs, Stalin’s abilities and resolve were an order of magnitude greater” (p. 738). Like Tucker, Kotkin believes that if Stalin had died, everything would have been different. Kotkin thus harshly criticizes E. H. Carr, who is “[u]tterly, eternally wrong” in claiming that more than “almost any other great man in history, . . . Stalin illustrates the thesis that the circumstances
make the man, not the man the circumstances” (p. 739). Kotkin may be right but may be wrong too. He acknowledges that history is full of surprises. Stalin’s rise to power itself was a surprise to many of his contemporaries, even though, as Kotkin and others have shown, it was not really a surprise to others. At least to the extent that Stalin’s determined path to brutal rule enjoyed a degree of popularity, the possibility had always existed that a surprise leader or dictator might emerge. Moreover, Kotkin seems to contradict himself when he describes Stalin as prone to “self-pity” whenever he was reminded of Lenin’s “testament.” (Lenin’s testament, the authenticity of which cannot be definitively confirmed, called for the removal of Stalin from the Communist Party’s top position because Lenin said Stalin was too rude and had accumulated unlimited power in his hands.) Most likely, Stalin was bluffing, maneuvering, and scheming by feigning humility when he repeatedly offered to resign from his post. Indeed Stalin justified his rudeness as a respectably “proletarian” quality.

Kotkin writes well, and his narrative is rarely dull. Nevertheless, one cannot help but feel that many of the details in the book are excessive. Paradoxes of Power contains almost 400,000 words. In a book half the size, Kotkin would still have been able to make the same argument without any problem.

Kotkin’s method of writing about the world as seen from Stalin’s office sometimes skews his own view of the world. Regarding Stalin’s Polish rival Józef Piłsudski, for example, Kotkin accepts the Stalinist propaganda at face value: “It was no secret that even without British prodding, the dictatorship in Warsaw coveted those parts of historic Ukraine and Belorussia it did not yet control” (p. 616). In reality, Piłsudski in the wake of the Polish-Soviet war came to support the independence of Ukraine and Belarus (Belorussia).

Despite these caveats, this is an enormously rich book that, if read carefully, will greatly benefit anyone interested in Russia and the Soviet Union. One eagerly awaits volumes two and three.


Reviewed by Richard Pipes, Harvard University

This slender volume deals with a minor but interesting episode in the history of Zionism, the expulsion from the Soviet Union to Palestine of more than 1,000 Zionist activists. Ziva Galili teaches Russian and Soviet history at Rutgers University, and Boris Morozov is a research fellow at the Cummings Center for Russian and East European Studies at the University of Tel Aviv.

On the eve of the Bolshevik Revolution, Russia had the largest number of Jewish citizens of any country, more than 5 million. Despite the Jews’ reputation for espousing
socialism and Communism, the majority of them favored Zionism. Thus in elections held in 1917 to the All-Russian Congress, Zionist candidates won 60 percent of the votes. This book informs us that “the Zionist parties received more than two-thirds of the votes given to Jewish parties in the elections to the Constituent Assembly. In these elections, the provinces of the so-called Pale of Settlement, which had large Jewish minorities, gave a considerably smaller vote to the Bolsheviks than [did] the Russian provinces.”

The Bolsheviks, under Vladimir Lenin’s influence, were fiercely anti-Zionist. In 1903, Lenin described the “Zionist idea” as “entirely false and reactionary in its essence.” In 1905 he wrote of Jewish nationalism in general and of Zionism in particular: “the idea of Jewish “nationality” bears a clearly reactionary character. . . . The idea of a Jewish nationality contradicts the interests of the Jewish proletariat, creating in it, directly and indirectly a mood hostile to assimilation, the mood of a ‘ghetto.’” Not surprisingly, soon after seizing power in Russia, the Bolsheviks began to harass and arrest Zionists. This despite the fact, documented in this volume, that Feliks Dzerzhinskii, the head of the secret police, opposed the persecution of Zionists. In a letter of March 1924, addressed to his deputies, he wrote, “I do not understand at all why [Zionists] are persecuted. . . . The majority of their attacks on us are based on our persecution of them. Persecuted, they are a thousand times more dangerous for us than they would be not persecuted.” Nevertheless, persecuted they were, and more with each year.

As this book tells us, conditions for Zionist activity in Soviet Russia worsened appreciably in the mid-1920s. In 1924 thousands of Zionists were arrested, 3,000 in a single day. At this point, a prominent pianist who was friendly with Lev Kamenev, David Shor, proposed that instead of being imprisoned or exiled, active Zionists be allowed to emigrate. There was a precedent for such a solution. In 1922, several imprisoned Mensheviks were permitted to leave Soviet Russia. In July of that year, Lenin told Iosif Stalin that he wanted the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party expelled from the country. Later that year, the state security organs arrested and deported 120 anti-Soviet intellectuals who were forced to sign vouchers in which they acknowledged that if they refused to leave or tried to return they would be subject to execution.

Shor’s proposal was for voluntary exile abroad instead of confinement. Under his influence, beginning in 1924 and through the early 1930s, some arrested Zionists were given the opportunity to emigrate to Palestine. Thanks to British cooperation, described in detail in this book, the would-be immigrants reached their goal. Ziva Galili estimates their number at 1,200–1,300. This trickle would become a flood: a few decades later. After the dissolution of the USSR, more than a million Russian Jews emigrated to Israel, and today they constitute some 15 percent of that country’s population.

Reviewed by Alfred J. Rieber, Central European University

Geoffrey Roberts has undertaken the formidable task of refuting the interpretation of Vyacheslav Molotov as an inveterate Cold Warrior and replacing it with a more subtle picture. Most of the book is devoted to a review of Molotov’s diplomatic career under Iosif Stalin’s heavy hand. This is familiar ground. Roberts passes quickly over Molotov’s life and activities before 1939 while reminding us that Molotov was a faithful supporter of Stalin in all major domestic policy decisions from collectivization to the purges and mass terror. Molotov’s service as head of the Communist International is not touched upon. Nor is much space allotted to Molotov’s relations with Communist parties after World War II. Roberts attributes the decision in 1939 to replace Maksim Litvinov with Molotov as foreign commissar to Stalin’s displeasure over the pace of negotiations with Britain and France on a treaty of alliance. Roberts mentions the differences between Litvinov’s concept of a postwar settlement based on spheres of influence and Molotov’s more open system, but he does not explore the implications. Litvinov’s plans for postwar Europe were based on the assumption that there would not be any revolutionary transformations. Molotov took a different view.

The centerpiece of Roberts’s revisionist view is a thorough and well-documented account of Molotov’s support for the reunification of Germany and the establishment of an all-European collective security system. Roberts stresses how Molotov employed his well-known diplomatic skills—his attention to detail, his tactical flexibility, his persistence, and, what may come as a surprise to some readers, his sharp wit—in pursuance of this “daring policy initiative” (p. 149). Roberts further argues that this was not primarily intended to split Western Europe from the United States or to encourage neutralism in France or prevent the integration of West Germany into a Western bloc, desirable as these ends might have been. Rather, Molotov was committed to resolving the German problem and thus nipping the Cold War in the bud. Roberts accepts at face value Molotov’s stated purpose of achieving through negotiations with the United States and Great Britain a united, “peaceful and democratic” Germany within a security system that would guarantee peace and security for Europe. To be sure, Roberts acknowledges that Molotov remained committed to a Marxist-Leninist worldview and that he envisaged the ultimate triumph of Communism. How did Molotov square the idea of a “peaceful and democratic Germany” (adjectives that had been used before in the Declaration of Liberated Territories at Yalta) with the idea of the ultimate triumph of Communism? Unfortunately, even the abundance of archival material that Roberts has unearthed over the years does not yield any direct answer to this question. One of the most interesting insights in the book is the extent to which Molotov was embedded in the culture of the Foreign Commissariat (Ministry). He often assigned the drafting and reworking of proposals to his subordinates—notably, Vladimir Semenov, Mikhail Gribanov, Georgii Pushkin, Andrei Gromyko, and Andrei...
Vyshinskii. This working team was held together by professional ties that survived most of the political storms raging around them. When the tide turned against Molotov, they abandoned him and kept their posts. Continuing along these lines, one would have liked to find out more about Molotov's links with the diplomats in the field. We now have considerable documentation on their reporting. Although Molotov's public pronouncements emphasized the desirability and feasibility of negotiated settlements over Germany and other questions with the West, the tone of the diplomatic reporting carried a different message. This was reflected in part by the analyses of Nikolai Novikov, to which Roberts gives appropriate importance.

The problem of differentiating Molotov's views on foreign policy after Stalin's death from those of other members of the Communist Party's ruling organs is complicated. Roberts insists that Molotov was from 1953 to 1955 “a partisan of peace” (ch. 5). Molotov was instrumental in negotiating the Austrian State Treaty despite subsequent attempts by Nikita Khrushchev to deny this. Molotov's attitude toward Yugoslavia is particularly instructive given his ideological predispositions. Even though Molotov accepted the necessity of reestablishing state-to-state relations with the government in Belgrade, he opposed the readmission of Yugoslavia into the socialist camp. The real break with Khrushchev came over the German question. Molotov was willing to take the risk involved in creating a united Germany within a European collective security system. Did he envisage the “Finlandization” of Germany? Or was he counting on a gradual internal social transformation of Germany that could not be opposed from the outside under the terms of a European security system guaranteeing non-interference in domestic affairs. We will probably never know. In any case, Roberts demonstrates convincingly that Khrushchev was not prepared to take the risk of sacrificing the “socialist achievements” of East Germany in exchange for the possibility of a neutral Germany. The conflict with the West came over which should take precedence: all-German elections or a European security pact. Molotov did his best to meet the Western demands for elections so long as a united Germany remained neutral and the “democratic and social reforms and freedoms” of East Germany would be preserved. Presumably, that neutrality could have been maintained within a European security system. Khrushchev and other Communist Party leaders were having none of it.

Roberts provides a clear, detailed summary of the growing conflict between Molotov and Khrushchev. Policy and personal issues were mixed. The abortive coup by Georgii Malenkov, Molotov, and Lazar Kaganovich against Khrushchev in May 1957 remains, however, obscure. Molotov later attributed it to the lack of unity and a program. Still, one wonders how such experienced conspirators and protégés of Stalin could have let power slip through their hands so easily.

Roberts's command of the sources is excellent, and his attempts to reexamine fixed positions are stimulating. He points the way to future research and debates on questions that continue to fascinate and challenge.

Reviewed by Matthew Farish, University of Toronto

In October 1961 a Soviet plane dropped a hydrogen bomb over Novaya Zemlya, the long, seahorse-shaped Arctic archipelago between the Barents and Kara Seas. The 50-megaton “Tsar Bomba,” as it has been nicknamed (its creators called it “Big Ivan”), is the most powerful weapon ever detonated. Astonishingly, its light was visible from a distance of 1,000 kilometers. But it was also just one of more than 200 such tests conducted on or above the islands over 45 years, tests with severe environmental consequences.

Tsar Bomba makes a surprisingly brief appearance in the final pages of Paul Josephson’s ample book (p. 378). Although Josephson occasionally mentions Novaya Zemlya, he does not discuss its military role, except for the offshore dumping of nuclear components from the *Lenin* icebreaker in the 1960s (p. 347). This omission reflects the orientation of the volume as a whole: despite its strengths, *The Conquest of the Russian Arctic* is a disappointing volume for students of the Cold War.

I am not a specialist on Russia, and many of the places and sources drawn together by Josephson are unfamiliar to me. I therefore approached his book as someone interested in the North American Arctic during the early Cold War. To be sure, this is hardly the only era discussed by Josephson. *The Conquest of the Russian Arctic* covers the entirety of the twentieth century and concludes with a chapter on northern research and resource development in the Russia of Vladimir Putin.

Josephson, a prolific historian who has published important work on “brute-force technology” (to borrow the subtitle of his 2002 book, *Industrialized Nature*), writes compellingly about the concerted Soviet attempt, particularly under the leadership of Iosif Stalin, to turn northern Russia “into a planned economic entity” (p. 63), a project of remarkable social and ecological violence. Although Josephson does not set out to compare the Soviet and Canadian Arctic, the similarities—and differences—are clear enough. The comprehensive effort by the Soviet state, beginning in the 1920s, to “harness” its northern possessions and “civilize” their inhabitants was conducted earlier, on a more dramatic scale, and much more brutally (including the extensive use of prison labor) than elsewhere in the circumpolar Arctic. Still, in the hubris of the state, the entanglements of science and geopolitics, the treatment of the Arctic as a colonial frontier, and the continued (and concomitant) oppression of indigenous peoples, the parallels are conspicuous.

The massive expanse of the Russian Arctic means that Josephson is compelled to make geographical choices. He mostly confines his account to the provinces of Arkhangelsk and Murmansk, along with the Republic of Karelia. His rationale is straightforward. “To this day,” he writes, “the northwest is the most heavily settled, urban, and industrial of all Russian Arctic regions” (p. 3). His use of archival collections from locations such as Arkhangelsk is impressive, although I was disappointed not to...
find a full list of the repositories consulted. His research efforts across a range of Russian-language sources must be commended, but this diligence also seems to have encouraged a dizzying emphasis on detail. The book is bursting with biographies, expeditions, megaprojects, settlements, and statistics, presented in clear prose that is equal parts blunt and breathless. When Josephson does lift his attention from this assemblage to discuss the world beyond Russia, his gestures seem haphazard or offhand.

Chapter 1 covers the many Russian attempts, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to explore, map, and know the Arctic. The list is fascinating, but Josephson treats it matter-of-factly and does not position either specific journeys or the infrastructure of northern research alongside the extensive literature on the history of colonial science in the Arctic or elsewhere. Importantly, Josephson notes that Russians who ventured northward encountered and interacted with diverse indigenous communities. Although he is attentive to the costs of “conquest” for these peoples, his initial description of them as “tired, hungry, and dirty,” as opposed to the “educated Russian public” who learned about them through the narratives of travelers (p. 54), treks close to old stereotypes. Later in the book, Josephson introduces readers to important indigenous authors. But in writing about the early decades of the twentieth century, he confronts and does not really try to transcend a familiar challenge: the north is presented here overwhelmingly through the eyes, and the sources, of colonial authority.

Chapters 2 and 3, on the monstrously ambitious industrialization of the Arctic during the three-decade rule of Stalin, make up the strongest section of Josephson’s book. He convincingly links the ruthless, almost baffling “momentum” of technological modernization (p. 67) to the terrible apparatus of the Soviet Gulag. Meanwhile, the photograph, circa 1938, of Vyacheslav Molotov, Stalin, and the formidable Arctic expert Otto Schmidt (the head of the powerful agency Glavsevmorput, or Main Administration of the Northern Sea Route) greeting the return of daring northern aviators (p. 103) perfectly captures the attempt to “open the Arctic to the new Soviet man” (p. 101).

In chapter 3, Josephson introduces the prisoner-built shipbuilding city of Molo
tovsk, renamed Severodvinsk in the 1950s. Severodvinsk, one of the Soviet “closed cities,” later became the most prominent location on the planet for nuclear submarine construction. That it has more recently been converted into a site for the production of “extractive technology” for “hydrocarbon wealth” (p. 351) is notable. Josephson’s modest chapter 5 portrait of Severodvinsk is a valuable one, although he concentrates on the physical form of the city and the scale of its maritime industry rather than social life in this quintessential Cold War space. Pages later, he mentions equivalent “facilities and cities of scientists devoted to weapons of mass destruction” in the United States, but he does little with this allusion (p. 266).

Overall, the militarization of the Soviet Arctic, before and during the Cold War, is frustratingly elusive in Josephson’s book, which races too quickly through the second half of the twentieth century. Although he is correct to acknowledge that “indigenous people in Alaska and Canada felt the burden of securing the Arctic during the Cold
War” (p. 286), what about indigenous communities in Soviet Russia—and what about the larger Soviet Cold War “burden” in the north? State-driven modernization and militarization arrived in the North American Arctic together, during, and immediately after World War II. Although this was not exactly the Russian experience, various Soviet modernization initiatives continued full-steam after the war—which Josephson treats as a pause in his account, rather than (potentially) as a hinge. Alongside Tsar Bomba, his late introduction of the toxic legacies of the U.S. Air Force–built Distant Early Warning Line, which stretched across the North American Arctic and Greenland, is followed unhelpfully by the comment that “Soviet and Russian programs had similar impacts on the environment” (p. 379).

The Conquest of the Russian Arctic is a unique and rewarding text. But its limitations, from the lack of a compelling cover image to the dearth of a convincing conclusion, are significant.

Vasilii S. Khristoforov, Istoriya strany v dokumentakh arkhivov FSB Rossi: Sbornik stat’ei i materialov [The country’s history in documents from the archives of Russia’s FSB: A collection of articles and materials]. Moscow: Glavarkhiv, 2013. 958 pp. RUB 1,779.00.

Reviewed by Stefan Karner, Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Research on War’s Consequences (Austria)

The Central Archive of Russia’s Federal Security Service (FSB, the internal security component of the former Soviet KGB) has never been accessible to the vast majority of researchers, but the archive has made available some important collections of declassified material. This anthology of articles, speeches, and interviews, published by the head of the FSB’s archival service, Vasilii Khristoforov, is of great value. The book provides the reader with an extensive collection of materials presenting the history of Soviet Russia from the perspective of the USSR’s security services. The volume gives scholars an opportunity to learn the views of the FSB’s chief historian, including disputed issues. The items that were used for the drafting of articles and speeches consist mainly of archival documents from the Soviet KGB in its various incarnations (NKVD, OGPU, etc.).

The volume is not the result of any single project. Instead, it reflects some of the variegated archival research Khristoforov has undertaken in the decade-and-a-half since he took up his post in 2001. Numerous volumes that shed new light on Soviet history and the international relations of the twentieth century have been published under his guidance, including multivolume sets such as “Sovershenno sekretno”: Lubyanka—Stalinu o polozhenii v strane (1922–1934) [“Top Secret”: Lubyanka Reports to Stalin about the Situation in the Country (1922–1934)] and Tragediya sovetskoi derevni [The Tragedy of the Soviet Village] and many individual anthologies. These publications
have typically focused on one specific topic. The huge volume under review is different in offering a wide-ranging sample of Khristoforov’s research, divided into several topics.

The broad scope of the volume ensures that almost every reader will find something (and most likely many things) of great interest. The book covers issues that were never discussed openly during the Soviet period, such as the mass execution of 22,000 Polish citizens at various sites in Belarus and Ukraine in March 1940 by NKVD forces (pp. 298–302); espionage scandals, including the fate of the wife of Soviet spy Richard Sorge (pp. 926–929); the Soviet State Defense Committee’s activities regarding the wide-ranging evacuation of the country’s industry eastward beyond the Ural Mountains (pp. 310–319, 341–348); the wartime partisan movement and the formation of a special board for its organization within the framework of the NKVD (pp. 320–328, 360–385); the participation of the Soviet special services in the preparation and realization of the Nuremberg trials (pp. 596–598); the anti-regime demonstrations in East Germany in June 1953 (pp. 735–739); and many more.

Furthermore, a whole chapter of the book is dedicated to the issue of the Great Terror in the USSR in the late 1930s. Khristoforov points out the role of the NKVD’s officers who regarded this work as “fulfillment of civic duty” (pp. 5–6, 814–816). That chapter also discusses the FSB’s cooperation with the special services of other former Soviet republics on issues of rehabilitation, such as the cooperation with the Security Committee of Kazakhstan on this issue in 2007 (pp. 895–901). Among the interviews in the book are some dealing with official measures to counter the “ falsification of history” (pp. 817–827, 885–894), rehabilitation (pp. 814–816), declassification (pp. 947–954), points of contention relating to the history of World War II and the number of its victims (pp. 836–852), the activity of the Soviet SMERSH counter-intelligence service (pp. 853–866), and the fate of Adolf Hitler’s remains (pp. 876–884).

Several of Khristoforov’s articles discuss people whose lives were destroyed in the prisons of the Lubyanka: the historian Sergei Melgunov; the political activist Vasili Shulgin (pp. 50–66); the Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, who saved the lives of tens of thousands of Jews in Budapest from the Nazis in 1944/1945 and whose fate in Soviet captivity remains unknown to this day (pp. 691–709, 930–935); the poet Osip Mandelstam (pp. 902–905); several Soviet and German generals (pp. 454–491, 630–652, 710–716); and numerous others.

Khristoforov took part in the Soviet war in Afghanistan in 1979–1989, and his chapter about that war is not the first time he has written about it. His other works on this topic include “Trudnyi put’ k Zhenevskim soglasheniyam 1988 goda po Afganistanu” [The long path toward the agreements on Afghanistan in 1988], Novaya i noveishaya istoriya, No. 5 (September–October 2008), pp. 23–47; Afganistan: Pravyashchaya partiya i armiya (1978–1989) [Afghanistan: The ruling party and army (1978–1989)] (Moscow: Granitsa, 2009); and KGB SSSR v Afganistane 1978–1989 gg.; K 25-letiyu vyvoda sovetskikh voisk iz Afganistana [The USSR’s KGB
in Afghanistan, 1978–1989: On the 25th anniversary of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan] (Moscow: Glavarkhiv Moscow, 2014). Nonetheless, in his essay here he covers aspects of Afghan history hitherto unknown: the activity of the Eastern section of the administration for secret operations of the OGPU in the 1920s (pp. 202–209), the civil war in Afghanistan before the Soviet intervention (pp. 210–224), and the participation of Soviet intelligence and security services in the war in Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989 (pp. 801–807).

Another question discussed in the book is the rehabilitation of millions of political prisoners, war criminals, and internees, as well as the declassification of the FSB’s documents about these people. Several essays in the anthology are devoted to these issues (pp. 663–690), drawing on formerly closed archive materials of the Soviet intelligence services. From the large number of criminal case files about Austrian citizens that are being kept in the FSB’s archive, we can see that most of the people who were arrested by Soviet officials had been informants of Allied (not German) intelligence services. The Soviet military counterintelligence service regarded them as spies. Among them were roughly 100 individuals who were sentenced to death by the Soviet Military Tribunal of Army Unit No. 28990 in Baden and executed in Moscow from 1950 until Stalin’s death in March 1953. The severe penalties levied against these purported Austrian “spies” are outrageous in retrospect. Valuable information was provided by the FSB archive for the analysis of the fate of these “last victims” of Stalin. The results of this analysis were published in the volume edited by Stefan Karner and Barbara Stelzl-Marx, Stalins letzte Opfer: Verschleppte und erschossene Österreicher in Moskau 1950–1953 (Vienna: Oldenbourg, 2009), which contains, among other things, an article by Khristoforov on SMERSH activities in Austria, showing how the Soviet penal system was exported to the Soviet occupation zone in Austria during the early Cold War to gain leverage against the West. After a law on rehabilitation was adopted in Russia in October 1992, all these criminal cases were reconsidered and many of the Austrian citizens were rehabilitated and their files were sent to the archives of the FSB for storage.

Valuable as this anthology is, some amendments would be worthwhile in a future edition. Greater context for the various essays would be useful, and additional topics should be covered. If the FSB archive follows through on its promise to release more collections for the post-1945 period, the section of the book concerning events from 1950 to 1989 can be expanded and enriched. Among the issues that should be added are the cooperation between the KGB and intellectuals and social organizations from the 1960s to the 1980s, Soviet intelligence activities in European countries and the United States after 1945, and the role of the KGB in Soviet military operations in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968.

With the publication of this anthology, readers can better understand the perspective of the Soviet intelligence services. This is an important step toward a reconsideration of Soviet history and the role of the KGB.

Reviewed by Valerie Sperling, Clark University

The stereotypical image of East European women during the Cold War was captured in a notorious 1980s Wendy’s commercial depicting a mock Communist-run fashion show. Under the command of an East European–accented announcer, a plain, heavyset woman came out on the catwalk to show off her daywear, eveningwear, and swimwear, each time wearing the same kerchief and shapeless blue dress. The message of the Wendy’s commercial was the clear advantage conferred by having freedom of choice, a freedom sadly unavailable in the Communist world. This edited volume by Joanna Regulska and Bonnie Smith shows, by contrast, that women in Europe—West and East—exercised their agency both during and after the Cold War, if under sometimes radically constrained choices.

The topic of the book—gender in Eastern and Western Europe during and after the Cold War—is vast. This vastness is simultaneously an advantage and a disadvantage. Chapters cover aspects of the social, economic, and political history of the region and its two geopolitical subdivisions, examining commonalities and differences in the gender order. Some chapters cover both Eastern and Western Europe, providing a cross-bloc comparative analysis, whereas others are single-country case studies. The chapters are ably researched and are likely to inspire scholars to continue and extend (into other country cases) the work presented here.

Yet the book lacks a clear organizing principle tying the chapters together in anything more than a loose sense. A chapter on the paradigms of masculinity in post–Cold War Lithuania (and the particular challenges faced by gay men and working-class men) thus resides next to an essay that examines how World War I is interpreted in post–Cold War Serbia (where a militarized narrative about the war paints the Serbian nation in gendered terms—as an abused and raped female body—which serves to distract attention from the atrocities committed by Serbs in the mid-1990s). That chapter neighbors a study of the plight of highly educated South Korean nurses who were brought to West Germany during the Cold War and forced into positions as hospital cleaners, later leading to a transnational mobilization (from Germany to Korea) for the rights of healthcare workers. (I had never heard about this particular example of transnational struggle over labor rights, and I welcome the author’s insights into the way the nurses became aware of the violation of their own rights as women in the context of patriarchy, as well as of the ways the South Korean and West German governments alike were using the nurses to pursue their own economic goals, thus inducing them to protest and to develop a rather cosmopolitan identity.)

The book also includes case study chapters on Cold War civil society in West Germany (of the “provocative” public type as well as the less formal kind, such as women’s centers and the alternative press), on the diverse strategies of women’s
activism in post–Cold War Poland, and on the way motherhood was portrayed in psychoanalytic radio shows in Great Britain after World War II. A second chapter on motherhood—focusing on France—examines how the reassertion of traditional women’s roles following World War II coexisted with a countercurrent of women’s sexual agency, including women’s pursuit of lesbian relationships, as well as the use of illegal contraception and abortion. (Here, a somewhat shallow comparison to the USSR falls flat, as Soviet women’s high abortion rates are cited as evidence of women’s agency—that is, that women were supposedly choosing how many children to bear—and nothing is mentioned about lesbians in post-1945 Eastern Europe.) Another chapter investigates women’s involvement in the field of social work in Yugoslavia before and after World War II, showing (via a comparison with the USSR) that social policy in the Communist world departed from its reputed homogeneity.

Two chapters are more explicitly comparative, exploring ideologies of consumerism and paid work across Eastern and Western Europe. The latter chapter examines women’s attitudes toward working outside the home in postwar Europe, as well as the prevailing ideologies in Eastern and Western Europe that characterized women’s paid labor as either beneficial or undesirable, respectively. The essay shows that this initial divergence was later replaced by a certain convergence as gender ideologies changed.

Taken together, the book’s chapters highlight the differences and similarities in understandings of gender on each side of the Iron Curtain. The first two chapters, however, were the ones I found most fascinating with regard to the politics of the Cold War. These illuminated how the inter-superpower competition (following World War II) turned the women’s rights movement into something of a fiasco at the international level (creating rifts in the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women) and at the state level in postwar Czechoslovakia. The latter chapter is a blow-by-blow analysis of how the broad-spectrum, multiparty women’s movement in Czechoslovakia was taken over by the Communist Party–run women’s organization. This process included the violent purging of the heads of other, non-Communist women’s groups and illuminates one of the mechanisms of dictatorship at the small-scale political level. The chapter’s author concludes that the victorious women’s association—tied as it was to the Czechoslovak Communist Party—was ultimately unable to exercise agency and work for women’s interests, having been reduced to serving as “a mere arm of the male-dominated Communist state” (p. 29). The Czechoslovak Communists had divided and conquered the country’s women’s activists by whipping up a highly gendered campaign “for peace” (p. 29) and then dissolving the non-Communist women’s organization altogether.

The volume’s introduction by Smith and conclusion by Regulska frame the book well, providing some larger-picture context for the chapters. But in a few places in the introduction, Smith makes assertions about “Europe” that do not apply to the Soviet bloc (e.g., “As American goods also flooded the European market, women were to learn about and buy those products, too,” p. 4; “In the 1950s... soft-porn magazines... arrived on European newsstands,” p. 5; “homosexuality came under explicit attack, even being equated with communism,” p. 4, emphasis added). This could be confusing or misleading for students unversed in the political-ideological history of
Europe after 1917. That said, the introduction contains eye-openers (such as Smith’s contention that West German grocery stores after World War II were legally prevented from being open after 5:00 p.m. as a means of preventing women working outside the home from purchasing groceries for their families). Such observations illustrate the themes common across postwar Eastern and Western European states, such as the value placed on population growth and the concomitant unavailability of contraceptives across the region, as well as the rise of consumerism and governments’ attempts to improve popular living standards as a way to bolster the legitimacy of their rule. The individual chapters likewise provide fascinating and informative glimpses into a wide range of countries and topics, examining them under a gender lens. Scholars of the Cold War, of Europe, and of gender studies would all stand to gain from reading this diverse, detailed, and insightful work.


Reviewed by Olav Riste, Norwegian Institute for Defence Studies

This book is an English translation of Peer Henrik Hansen’s Ph.D. dissertation at Roskilde University in 2008 about U.S.-Danish intelligence relations in 1943–1946. The book is based largely on his research in the U.S. National Archives at College Park, Maryland, from which he brought back around 12,000 pages of documents, most of them from the records of the wartime Office of Strategic Services (OSS). The dissertation was also published in Danish as a book with a title that translates as “When the Yankees Came to Denmark.” The English title of the book is somewhat enigmatic because it does not make immediately clear who or what is “second to none.” Is it the U.S. intelligence activities as compared presumably to British intelligence? Or is it the Danish intelligence effort in comparison with that of the other countries of Northern Europe, about which Hansen says little or nothing?

The book is not an easy read. Some parts give the impression of a running annotated commentary to individual documents from the OSS archive, supplemented by references to an impressive number of secondary works. Only occasionally does Hansen step back to put his information into a larger historical context. A bewildering array of names and code names also makes the narrative rather difficult to follow. The structure of the book is generally chronological, but chapter and subchapter headings are seldom apposite. For the war years 1943–1945, in particular, the reader rarely comes across evaluations of the intelligence that was collected and analyzed. What we do often get are excerpts of general congratulatory praise. Thus we learn that the head of the British Special Operations Executive, Major-General Colin Gubbins, when evaluating the work of two major Danish resistance leaders, said that he saw “the work that was carried out in Denmark by the Danish Resistance Movement as the best that had been performed in any country” (p. 107). We are also treated to a
long paragraph from a posthumous 1989 book by the late Central Intelligence Agency director William Casey, who says, “The Danes were in a class by themselves” (p. 108).

Whatever value one attaches to such celebratory tributes, they seem to relate to the Danish resistance movement in general. Hansen does not explain what he means when he refers to a “Danish Intelligence Service,” a “Danish Intelligence organization,” “Danish military intelligence,” or “Danish intelligence groups.” Other authors, especially Hans Christian Bjerg in his two-volume work *Ligaen* (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1985), have described the intelligence activities of such informal groups as “Ligaen” (the League) or “the Princes,” which refer to Danish military officers who supplied valuable intelligence to the OSS. But Denmark was not at war, and Danish official institutions were under surveillance by the German occupation authorities. Hence there was no such thing as a Danish Intelligence Service, although the Danish armed forces, such as they were, retained the formal structures that included a G-2 or intelligence branch.

The lack of a formal, established intelligence service of course did not prevent resistance groups or individuals from supplying intelligence of value to the allies. Hansen’s evaluation of the importance of the contribution of Danish intelligence to the allied war effort is summed up in a few pages at the end of part 1 of the book (pp. 104–108). Here the reader finally learns the origin of the phrase “second to none” in the book’s title. The phrase comes from a book by Niels Barfoed (which, oddly, is missing from Hansen’s extensive bibliography). Hansen’s reference to it is somewhat cautious. Even though Barfoed attributes the phrase to Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery, Hansen says he could not confirm this “via source evidence.” However, he himself avers that “the material leaves little doubt that the Allies were very appreciative of the extremely useful intelligence they had received from the Danish intelligence service and the help it had provided to the Allies.”

In a curious aside in a book that has nothing to say about U.S. intelligence activities in the other countries of Northern Europe, Hansen delivers a broadside against the Norwegian intelligence service and Norwegian intelligence agents: “OSS was very critical of the Norwegian intelligence service and Norwegian agents and was unimpressed by its Norwegian partners’ talents regarding intelligence work” (p. 107). Because the official, well-established Norwegian intelligence service in exile did not report to the OSS or to other U.S. officials—its “extremely close” partnership was with the British Secret Intelligence Service, as discussed by Keith Jeffery in *MI 6: The History of the Secret Intelligence Service 1909–1949* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010), p. 686—and because Norway’s cooperation with the OSS was in “Special Operations” (“SO” rather than “SI” in the jargon), one might have thought that such an acerbic derogation of Norwegian intelligence, which is totally at variance with both British and other intelligence assessments, would at least be substantiated by citations and further analysis. But Hansen provides nothing of the sort.

When Hansen occasionally considers the kind of intelligence the Danes provided, we are told that much of it concerned German troop movements into or through Denmark. Information about this topic was the staple commodity of most intelligence
reports from occupied countries. But if we are to assess its importance to Allied strategy and warfare, we need to know the context. Was such information from Denmark tactically or strategically useful to Allied air or naval actions against the Germans, identifying important targets for attack? Because Denmark was a strategic backwater in terms of the overall Allied campaign in Northern Europe, one might question whether such information from Denmark was of major significance to the Allies. One of Hansen’s few attempts to highlight intelligence reports of special importance is a quoted report about repairs to the damaged battleship *Tirpitz* in northern Norway (p. 44). However, because the *Tirpitz* was under constant watch by a network of three to five Norwegian agents reporting by radio from the area, a lone report from a Danish source was hardly of enormous value.

One example of vital intelligence from Danish sources is mentioned in the book, albeit only in the caption to a photograph. The photograph shows what was apparently the first available evidence of a German V-1 flying bomb—in the caption misleadingly referred to as a “rocket”—which had crashed on the Danish island of Bornholm. The picture is described in the caption as one of a collection of photographs and drawings provided by “the Danish intelligence organization in Stockholm” (p. 45). But the official history of MI6 by Keith Jeffery (*MI6*, p. 513) tells a different story: Jeffery reveals that this important V-1 intelligence material was provided through MI6’s station chief in Stockholm, Cyril Cheshire, from his “especially valuable Danish agent,” codenamed “Elgar.”

Ultimately, therefore, Hansen’s book is disappointing to readers who expect to learn about the contribution of Danish intelligence agents to the Allied (and especially the U.S.) war effort in Northern Europe. This is doubly unfortunate because much more thorough and much better documented works on this topic by Jørgen Haestrup and Hans Christian Bjerg are available only in Danish.

---


Reviewed by Elizabeth Campbell Karlsgodt, University of Denver

How did the political context in Europe after 1989 shape commemorations of the Holocaust? This is a central question in Peter Carrier’s erudite comparative study of the Vélodrome d’Hiver (commonly shortened to “Vél d’Hiv’”) memorial in Paris and the Holocaust Monument in Berlin. By focusing on debates in the planning phases, Carrier seeks “to explain public understandings of monuments prior to their construction” (p. 5; emphasis in original). Carrier uses primary source material from newspapers, magazines, open letters, speeches, and press releases, situating his analysis in a review of the relevant literature by James Young, Pierre Nora, Henry Rousso,
Peter Reichel, and many other scholars. The end result is an important theoretical contribution to memory and cultural studies on the creation, interpretation, and impact of monuments in post–Cold War Europe.

The book is divided into three parts. Part one defines contemporary monuments in relation to past forms of commemoration. Carrier explores the development of French and German “memory cultures,” a term used here “to describe the social context in which monuments and commemorations take effect” (p. 186). According to Carrier, these memory cultures developed in European countries after the 1970s and intensified in the 1990s amid the 50th-anniversary commemorations of the Second World War.

The heart of the analysis is in Part II, with a chapter on the Vél d’Hiv’ and another on the Berlin Holocaust Monument—both expanded versions of previously published articles. A third chapter in this section compares the commemorative processes in France and Germany, underscoring several important parallels in the two cases, such as the important role in public debates played by citizen action groups and the media.

In Paris, the Vél d’Hiv’ memorial occupies roughly 300 square meters on a Left Bank quay near the Eiffel Tower. This quiet spot away from the crowds lies adjacent to the site of the old Vélodrôme d’Hiver indoor cycling arena where, on 16–17 July 1942, French police rounded up 13,152 Jewish men, women, and children and held them without food, water, and adequate restrooms before deporting them to French transit camps and, ultimately, to Nazi death camps. The monument’s multi-figure sculpture, inaugurated in 1994, depicts several figures seated or lying down, including an embracing couple, a woman holding a child, and a young girl playing with a doll. On 16 July 1995, newly elected president Jacques Chirac spoke on the site of the memorial, acknowledged the role of French authorities in the round-up and deportations, and for the first time apologized on behalf of the French state. Although Chirac left unclear whether the “state” included the post-1945 republic and not merely the collaborationist Vichy regime, the apology, which had been demanded by Jewish interest groups since the 1980s, marked a turning point in official French memory of the Holocaust. Thus, in the French case, Carrier argues, rhetoric shaped the monument and national memory culture, from the planning debates to Chirac’s 1995 speech and subsequent annual commemorations.

The Holocaust Monument in Berlin, also known as the Monument for the Murdered Jews of Europe, creates an altogether different kind of commemoration. The monument is highly visible, taking up nearly 20,000 square meters in the heart of Berlin near the Brandenburg Gate. The monument contains 2,700 concrete steles and an information center, commemorating the Holocaust broadly—not a particular event or day. As Carrier explains, in the wake of unification, German activists, political leaders, journalists, scholars, and artists were deeply divided over whether the monument was necessary, and if so, the appropriate scope, style, and substance. The involvement of many political actors—parliament, the Berlin senate, Chancellor Helmut Kohl—hindered decision-making, as did widespread German skepticism that a single monument could adequately commemorate genocide. Despite persistent and
contentious debates, the monument finally was inaugurated in 2005, seventeen years after the initial proposals.

The book’s third section turns to theoretical analysis, with some regrettable repetition from previous sections. Carrier argues that a “post-national memorial paradigm” emerged in the wake of the Cold War and that these two sites “exemplify the internationalization of critical metatheoretical memorial practices” (p. 207). Also important here is the idea that public discussions fundamentally shaped public memory. Carrier aims to debunk Robert Musil’s claim from 1927 that there is “nothing in the world so invisible as a monument” (cited on p. 228), emphasizing that “the real monument is not the stone object but the debate itself” (p. 228).

Despite the valuable theoretical contribution of Carrier’s analysis, the comparisons made are not always convincing. By focusing on similarities and transnational practices, Carrier at times overestimates the visibility and impact of the Vél d’Hiv’. The prominence and centrality of the German monument is indisputable, yet passers-by can easily miss the Vél d’Hiv’ site. Thus the claim that the Holocaust Monument in Berlin “modifies the memorial urban landscape of the city” in “similar fashion to the Vél d’Hiv’ in Paris” (p. 141) exaggerates the latter’s scale. Although Carrier claims that the Vél d’Hiv’ “has become a household name in France” (p. 54), a 2012 poll reported by Stéphanie Le Bars in Le monde (16 July 2012) reveals that 42 percent of French citizens are unaware of the round-up, a figure that rises to 57 percent of young adults (i.e., those aged 25 to 34). The similarities in the two cases seem to pale against real differences in the symbols, referents, and public awareness of the crimes committed.

If, as Carrier argues, debates make these monuments visible, what happens once discussion subsides? Musil’s observation on the invisibility of monuments, at least in the French case, appears uncomfortably true. The challenge of understanding cultural reception promises to sustain rich debate about the politics of memory, a discussion that should be informed by Carrier’s important study.


Reviewed by Allan M. Winkler, Miami University

Daisy Petals and Mushroom Clouds by the journalist and historian Robert Mann is a thoughtful and engaging account of the television advertisement that made a huge splash in the U.S. presidential election of 1964. That advertisement showed a little girl counting (often non-sequentially) the petals on a daisy as she pulled them off, and it then shifted to an ominous countdown that culminated in a nuclear blast. It concluded by declaring that the stakes were too great to stay home and asking viewers to vote for Lyndon B. Johnson rather than Barry Goldwater in the forthcoming election.
Mann, who holds the Manship Chair in Journalism at the Manship School of Mass Communication at Louisiana State University, provides the background, the strategy behind the advertisement, and the impact it had on the election itself and on campaign advertising in the future. The book provides a crisp assessment of an important issue that merits our attention today.

Mann begins with a chapter on “The Atom Theme.” He notes the fear and anxiety that were a pervasive part of American life in the 1950s and 1960s, and he reveals that a public opinion survey in 1963 indicated that 90 percent of respondents believed that nuclear war was possible, and 38 percent thought it was likely. He quotes a letter from 10-year-old D. G. Green to The Nation magazine in 1981 recalling the pervasive threat of the mushroom cloud: “I remember going Christmas shopping with my mother who naturally asked what I wanted that year. I don’t remember what I said, but I remember what I thought. ‘What’s the difference? We’re not going to live till Christmas anyway’” (pp. 12–13). Green feared that Barry Goldwater, the Republican presidential nominee, would be a trigger-happy nuclear cowboy who would risk an all-out war.

The next chapter amplifies perceptively on Goldwater and his liabilities. In a ghostwritten book, The Conscience of a Conservative, Goldwater criticized what he called “a craven fear of death” (p. 17), which he said compromised the struggle against Communism. In 1960 he told colleagues in the Senate that the United States should not rule out a preemptive strike against the Soviet Union. His speech accepting the Republican nomination in 1964 only underscored his approach when he told listeners that “extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice” and “moderation in the pursuit of justice is no virtue.” (p. 27)

Mann lucidly explains how Democratic strategists worked with the advertising agency Doyle Dane Bernback (DDB) to craft a campaign to attack Goldwater. The firm, which had produced enormously successful advertisements for Volkswagen, now turned its attention to politics at a time when television was becoming increasingly important in American life. President Johnson and his staff wanted to exploit Goldwater’s inflammatory rhetoric about nuclear weapons. The daisy petal advertisement was the result. When Johnson and staff members, including Bill Moyers and Jack Valenti, watched the advertisement, they were delighted, even though they knew it would cause trouble. Johnson said simply, “Good job, boys” (p. 61).

Mann shows how Democratic leaders justified their use of negative advertising by arguing that it never mentioned Goldwater. Knowing the backlash it would cause, they were prepared to respond to protests by pulling it—after it had already aired. Hence it was broadcast at 9:50 p.m. (Eastern Time) on 7 September 1964 during NBC’s popular Monday Night at the Movies. At a time before cable television and an inordinate number of different channels, tens of millions were tuned in. By one estimate, as many as 50 million viewers saw the daisy petal advertisement. The response was precisely what strategists had expected. The White House switchboard found itself inundated with calls of protest. Furious Republicans highlighted the advertisement, which had already been pulled, and the major networks played it over and over as part
of a developing story. *Time* magazine featured the little girl on the cover of a special “Nuclear Issue” on 25 September 1964.

*Daisy Petals and Mushroom Clouds* is particularly good in reflecting on both the ethics of the advertisement and the long-term implications. “Was it ethical to use a presidential campaign to strike fear into the hearts of American voters?” (p. 80), Mann asks. In answering that question, he cites some of the protagonists’ acknowledgments that the spot may well have gone too far. At the same time, he contends that Goldwater’s casual rhetoric did pose a threat. Mann quotes Theodore White in *The Making of the President*, highlighting the candidate’s self-inflicted wounds and reflecting, “And then it must be added that he made the worst of them” (p. 87).

Mann notes that ultimately the daisy petal advertisement did not affect poll numbers. But, he argues, this “does not mean that the Daisy Girl spot was not a pivotal and historic moment in American political history” (p. 102). He maintains that the advertisement was the first to use fear so creatively in a presidential campaign. It asked viewers to interpret the scene through the framework of their own experience, but it contained no real information, no rational argument. Most important of all, “DDB brought to politics the same approach it applied to advertising automobiles, soap, and other products. In that way, Daisy Girl helped usher political advertising into the modern era” (p. 111).

*Daisy Petals and Mushroom Clouds* is a pleasure to read. Brief but to the point, it has a lively narrative that captures and holds one’s attention. The appendix, with reproductions of documents that contributed to the campaign, seems unnecessary, but the story itself remains fascinating from beginning to end.


Reviewed by Ryan C. Briggs, Virginia Tech University

Neopatrimonialism has become a catch-all explanation for state dysfunction and failed development in Africa. While serving this role, the concept has become “stretched,” to use Giovanni Sartori’s term from his essay on comparative methodology in *The American Political Science Review* some 45 years ago. This has resulted in a concept that is mostly confined to Africa but that within Africa is applied to a very broad range of phenomena. The concept’s limited geographical scope and weak intension hinder its usefulness and further development. *Neopatrimonialism in Africa and Beyond* attempts to rectify these problems by collecting essays that return to Max Weber to analyze the concept of neopatrimonialism, reexamine its applications in Africa, and apply it to political life outside Africa. Although the book replicates some of the conceptual confusion in the field as a whole, it also provides a useful starting point for authors who want either to make more-informed use of neopatrimonialism in their work on Africa or to apply neopatrimonialism to new contexts.
Section one begins with an examination of the history and nuances of patrimonialism and neopatrimonialism. Here, Daniel Bach makes the important point that as the concept of neopatrimonialism spread through African studies, it became increasingly associated with anti-developmental outcomes. He points out that in the instances where patrimonialism or neopatrimonialism were used in other regions, such as Latin America or East Asia, it referred to aspects of personal or informal rule that were potentially compatible with a developmental state. Neopatrimonialism requires an entanglement of public and private interests, but this does not mean that the state is captured, hollowed out, or failing. This is a central theme of the book and comes up again in the conclusion. Diana Cammack and Tim Kelsall recently made a similar point in their article “Neo-patrimonialism, Institutions and Economic Growth: The Case of Malawi, 1964–2009,” *IDS Bulletin*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (2011), pp. 88–96, but this related work is unfortunately ignored in the Bach and Gazibo volume. The remaining conceptual chapters usefully analyze how Weber understood the concept of patrimonialism and the value of the prefix “neo-.” After the conceptual introduction, section two focuses on applying neopatrimonialism to new aspects of African cases, and section three examines cases outside Africa.

Although section one includes the book’s first case study (a revised version of Jean-François Médard’s 1987 chapter on Charles Njonjo), it is the second section that focuses squarely on African cases. This section contains new work on democratization, conflict, “godfatherism” in Nigeria, and the customs bureaucracy in Niger. All of these chapters have new empirical details and generally smaller but interesting conceptual innovations, and in the interest of brevity I will note only a few. In the chapter on neopatrimonialism and democratization, Nicolas van de Walle makes a distinction between elite and mass forms of clientelism and argues that African states have traditionally relied on elite clientelism. If Africa experiences a sustained rise in participatory and competitive democratic politics, he expects to see elite clientelism decline and mass clientelism rise. The chapter on “godfatherism” in Nigeria shows how the mixture of public and private interests that is the hallmark of neopatrimonialism can exist at the margins of the official state as well as within it. At their best, these cases demonstrate novel applications of neopatrimonialism and show how the concept can still illuminate new aspects of African politics.

The final section applies neopatrimonialism to cases outside Africa and includes chapters on the Philippines, Brazil, Uzbekistan, Italy, and French-African international relations. In many ways, these chapters are the most novel, and it is unfortunate that this section and the chapters within were not given more space. The third section provides strong evidence for the usefulness of the concept of neopatrimonialism outside Africa, helping to show that neopatrimonialism can exist in a wide variety of circumstances, from the Philippines to post-Soviet Uzbekistan, and can be coupled with diverse political and economic outcomes.

The largest failing of the book is a failure that it shares with much of the field; namely, a disconnect between careful conceptual work (section 1) and empirical research (sections 2 and 3). After a long discussion about the theoretical differences...
between patrimonialism and neopatrimonialism, for example, some of the case studies then alternate between the two terms unselfconsciously. Although some of this may be expected from edited books, the disconnect is jarring. The book’s greatest success is that it provides Africanists with both a deeper and wider view of one of their central concepts. The flaws of the book in no way outweigh its usefulness, and if anything they should propel more cross-regional work on neopatrimonialism.


Reviewed by Paul Buhle, Brown University (emeritus)

Cold War studies are in high gear, including recent attacks on the lively volume by Jon Wiener, *How We Forgot the Cold War: A Historical Journey across America*. Wiener investigates, sometimes comically, dozens of sites, a high proportion of them downright silly as well as tragic (a California suburb has a Korean War jet on display, with a plaque honoring City Council members—even though no Korean War veterans are among them). Amy Bass homes in on a single location, the homesite of the greatest of African-American political thinkers in the twentieth century, W. E. B. Du Bois.

Great Barrington, Massachusetts, now home to prosperous, educated Manhattanites on vacation or in retirement, might easily and logically have tried to benefit from the celebrity of the location. After all, Du Bois led the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in the crucial early years, wrote volume after volume of black history as it had never been written before, delivered his own kind of fiction and popular interpretation of religious practices and ideas, and lived long enough to influence Martin Luther King, Jr, and the whole civil rights movement.

This last point was, admittedly, part of the problem. If Du Bois had conveniently died as early as 1930, his memory would have been far easier to accept and hail. Thereafter, the great scholar delivered *Black Reconstruction* (1935), now seen as a masterpiece, but ignored or discredited by the historical profession for almost thirty years. Reconstruction in the eyes of liberal and conservative historians was not such a tragedy after all: it had a happy ending of sorts, with social stability restored and the country spiritually reunited. Compared to the dangers of “black rule” and the unrest it caused, the unhappiness of African-Americans was not such a big thing. Young radical historians, including African-American scholars, took issue with this view, but they could be kept aside for scholarly influence until the dawning of the 1970s. Popular elections in the historical associations, an unwanted innovation of the time, finally led to the demise of the old establishment, confirming significantly changed views of the American past.

Du Bois, depicted as a crypto-communist and supporter of the Soviet Union, was not exactly a new figure by the 1930s. He had supported Woodrow Wilson and
at the same time, looked upon Bolshevik Russia as potentially ushering in a new era for the world’s people. He could oppose American Communists’ strategy of the legal defense case of the Scottsboro defendants while holding the idea that they, or some Marxists, could do better. But it was Du Bois of the 1940s and later who rankled. He was not loyal enough, he accused the liberal as well as conservative communities of favoring racial integration for the purposes of global power rather than out of a deep sincerity (until 1960, most liberals believed integrationists were “moving too fast,” and theologian Reinhold Niebuhr along with Hannah Arendt assailed the Southern school-integration campaign as bad for America in the world). In his nineties, removed to Africa, he became a Communist. It was a parting gesture of an old man that could not easily be forgiven.

Du Bois had, in fact, been fond of Great Barrington and its physical beauties, but here he also discovered what he called “the veil,” the separation of whites and non-whites. He was not broken by it; quite the contrary. But it left a memorable scar.

That scar was still evident when, in 1950, and retired from Atlanta University, he drafted a petition accusing the United States of hypocrisy, and the American South as a far greater danger to black people than the Soviet Union could be. A firestorm followed. By 1968, when a handful of residents set out to do something with the former Du Bois homestead, *The Berkshire Eagle* supported the effort, but conservative and “Cold War Liberal” locals howled with rage. It was the “wrong time,” they argued, particularly because the civil rights movement and Black Power, to boot, had been largely inspired by Du Bois. A see-saw battle continued for a decade, until the property was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1979. Author Amy Bass notes that opponents were comfortable with African Americans as servants and as occasional heroes in various wars. A black radical intellectual was another matter.

The controversy dragged on with the transfer of the DuBois Papers to the University of Massachusetts. The American Legion, still hurting from the U.S. defeat in Vietnam, aimed its shafts at the budding scholarship on Du Bois’s life and work. Still later, Freedom of Information Act requests turned up illegal efforts by the Federal Bureau of Investigation to discredit the great black leader, a continuation of the bureau’s pursuit of Du Bois almost since its founding and the rise of J. Edgar Hoover. Ultimately, the warmest supporters of the memorial aged, and as local interest faded, the town of Great Barrington went after the family home for back taxes. Further skirmishing followed, with mostly disappointing compromises. Signs greet visitors to Great Barrington, from several directions, with “Birthplace of W. E. B. Du Bois,” but public information about him is not so easy to find. Seen (or not seen so well) against all the designated battlefields, tanks in local parks, statues to figures known or unknown outside their locations in the United States, this is a pathetic record at best. Amy Bass reminds us how much it reflects the uneasy, unending saga of race in America.
This book will be of interest to students of the Cold War because it examines the antecedents of the many population movements not only during the interwar period but also after World War II. The Turco-Greek population exchange was not the first exchange in the Balkans (a Greek-Bulgarian voluntary population exchange was signed in 1919, as discussed by Theodora Dragostinova in Between Two Motherlands: Nationality and Emigration among the Greeks of Bulgaria, 1900-1949, published by Cornell University Press in 2011), but because of the large scale of the Greek-Turkish exchange—resulting in more than a million refugees in Greece and half a million in Turkey—its obligatory character, and its relatively organized nature, it has become a reference point for the “transfer of large ethno-religious groups by means of which minorities were forcibly uprooted under the aegis of international law to contribute, in turn, to the reconstitution of ethnically ‘pure’ homogeneous states” (p. 10). Many of the examples that are discussed, however, are hardly comparable to the Turco-Greek population exchange and instead constitute instances of disorderly exoduses or unilateral ethnic cleansing.

Onur Yildirim’s motivation for writing Diplomacy and Displacement appears to be his dissatisfaction with most of the interwar, post–World War II, and contemporary literature on the subject, which he believes has either idealized the 1920s Turco-Greek population exchange at the international level or narrated it in a way that serves nationalistic purposes at home. The only literature that puts some of Yildirim’s concerns in relief comes from anthropologists, such as Renée Hirschon’s Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe: The Social Life of Asia Minor Refugees in Piraeus (New York: Berghahn, 1988), and from refugee studies scholars who problematize population exchange and request the input of the subjects involved in the actual process rather than just a state’s diplomatic/political elites. However, although the “voice of refugees” (p. 20) is an important lens from a human perspective, it is not necessarily the only lens through which to evaluate population exchanges. For example, in a paper presented at a conference in Istanbul in November 2013 marking the 90th anniversary of the population exchange, George Mavrogordatos argued that in the absence of this exchange the result would most likely have been the “unilateral expulsion of Greek populations.” Not surprisingly, the lens through which we approach a historical event determines the conclusions we draw.

Yildirim rightly concludes that both countries pursued an obligatory population exchange to address national security threats and achieve ethnic homogenization. To understand this choice, however, we need to place the event into the larger context of the spread of nationalist ideology, the delegitimization of alien rule of nationalized peoples, and the homogenization imperative that captured the imagination of most rulers of existing nation-states and aspiring stateless nationalist movements. In the
context of the fluid borders and international competition in the Balkans at the time, nationalist agitation by neighboring and external powers in an attempt to weaken enemies was common, and the response to this process was nation-building aiming at inoculating the population, as I discuss in *The Politics of Nation-Building: Making Co-Nationals, Refugees, and Minorities* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Within such a context, the exchange of populations was one of many steps individual leaders could rely on to render the borders of the state congruent with those of the nation, the most critical element of nationalist ideology. The population exchange enabled Greece and Turkey to turn what they perceived as enemy-backed, non-core groups into refugees.

Yildirim is also dissatisfied with the imbalance in favor of the Greek case in the historiography, and he sees his study as a necessary corrective. For a variety of reasons, including nationalist ideology, the Turkish literature either neglects the Muslim refugees or suggests that their integration was without problems. This imbalance in the literature may, however, be partly because refugees formed a much smaller percentage of the total population in Turkey than in Greece—5 percent versus 25 percent.

The book comprises an introduction, which provides a theoretical framework and discusses the contribution of yet another history of the population exchange, and two main parts, titled “Diplomacy” and “Displacement.” Within each part, Yildirim gives equal emphasis to the Greek and the Turkish sides of the story. He takes the reader from the diplomatic negotiations that produced the Exchange Convention at Lausanne to the conclusion of its implementation in 1933. The book is well written, although accents are absent in the Greek titles and there are several problems in the Greek quotations and terms as well as in the bibliography. Yildirim refers to the Karamanlides as “non-Hellenic Greeks” (p. 69) when he probably means “non-Hellenic Orthodox Christians” or maybe “Turkish-speaking Orthodox Christians.”

Building on the works of Stephen P. Ladas, *The Exchange of Minorities: Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey* (New York: MacMillan, 1932), and Dimitri Pentzopoulos, *The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and Its Impact on Greece* (Paris: Mouton, 1962), both of whom used primarily European sources instead of Greek or Turkish, Yildirim’s narrative is based on both Greek and Turkish primary sources. For the Greek side, he relies on documents from the Historical Archives of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For the Turkish side, he relies on documents from the Turkish Republican Archives as well as the minutes of the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

The main contribution of the book is the new information it provides on the Turkish side of the story. Despite Yildirim’s efforts, we are still missing on the Turkish side a book equivalent to Mavrogordatou’s *Stillborn Republic: Social Coalitions and Party Strategies in Greece, 1922–1936* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983)—one that would focus on the sociopolitical and economic consequences of the population exchange within Turkish society. Alongside other recent works on the topic, including Konstantinos Tsitselikis, ed., *Ελληνοτούρκικη αυταλλαγή πληθυσμών: Πτυχές μιας Εθνικής Σύγκρουσης [The Greek-Turkish exchange of Populations: Aspects of a National Conflict] (Athens: Kritiki, 2009); Bruce Clark, *Twice
a Stranger: How Mass Expulsion Forged Modern Greece and Turkey (London: Granta, 2007); and Elisabeth Kontogiorgi, Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia: The Rural Settlement of Refugees 1922–1930 (Oxford, UK: The Clarendon Press, 2006), Yildirim’s Diplomacy and Displacement is an important work. His attempt to challenge the perception of this population exchange as a success, based on the human suffering that it caused, is given prominence throughout the text. But such a question cannot get resolved in a historical volume like this one.


Reviewed by Hamza Karčić, University of Sarajevo

The tragic death of Džemal Bijedić in an airplane crash on a cold January morning in 1977 epitomized for many the end of an era. In death his stature rose, and anniversaries of the tragic crash even now, nearly forty years later, are covered on the evening news in Bosnia. From humble beginnings in the southern Herzegovinian town of Mostar, Bijedić rose to become one of Josip Broz Tito’s closest lieutenants and the highest-ranking Muslim official in Tito’s Yugoslavia. After stints in the Communist party and government administration, Bijedić emerged as the compromise candidate for the position of Yugoslav prime minister in 1971. He was Tito’s choice for a second term and retained the job until his death in 1977.

Bosnian historian Husnija Kamberović’s political biography of Bijedić is the most serious work to date about the life and politics of this Communist official. Kamberović conducted impressive archival research in Bosnia, Serbia, and Croatia and has analyzed primary and secondary sources pertaining to the Communist regime in Yugoslavia. He depicts Bijedić as a politician with a popular touch, a dedicated Communist, and one of the most important political figures in Bosnia in the twentieth century. The book credits Bijedić with reintegrating western Herzegovina into the mainstream after the region was ostracized in early postwar Yugoslavia because of its fascist past. Bijedić worked on setting up factories in Herzegovina and played a key role in providing reconstruction assistance to the western Krajina region of Bosnia after a major earthquake in 1969. As a Bosnian cadre for the federal Yugoslav position of prime minister, he successfully lobbied for a greater share of federal funds for the less-developed parts of Yugoslavia. Bosnia’s economic development benefitted from his voice at the federal level. As a high-ranking Bosnian Muslim Communist official in the 1970s, Bijedić firmly rejected the attempted imposition of Serb or Croat national labels on Slavic Muslims in Yugoslavia and secured the introduction of a national category for “Muslims.” The censuses held thereafter recorded that the vast majority of Slavic Muslims chose the “Muslim” national label (in previous censuses many had chosen the “undecided” category meaning that they were nationally neither Serbs nor Croats).
In foreign policy, Bijedić at the peak of his career was received by President Gerald Ford, by Soviet Communist Party leader Leonid Brezhnev, and by the Chinese Communist leader Mao Zedong. Despite Tito’s stewardship of Yugoslav foreign policy, Bijedić played a significant complementary role in diversifying Yugoslavia’s foreign policy choices. In relations with the nonaligned countries, Bijedić focused on improving economic cooperation. His Muslim (though Communist) identity may have helped, and certainly did not hinder, his success in relations with the nonaligned countries.

The circumstances of Bijedić’s death spurred conspiracy theories. To this day, claims abound that his death was not merely an accident and that Tito’s failing health and increasingly tenuous hold on power opened the way for a succession struggle. Kamberović cites at length the official inquiries into the tragedy and concludes that despite inconsistencies in the reports, they turned up no evidence of a conspiracy. He nevertheless emphasizes that an archive in the Sarajevo Prosecutor’s Office has yet to be opened and could potentially shed further light on this issue.

Kamberović has done a commendable job of piecing together a narrative based on serious archival work. However, his book is based for the most part on Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav regional sources. In his research, he did not use international media reports or archives (including published volumes of the Foreign Relations of the United States series) to show what impression Bijedić left outside Yugoslavia, both publicly and privately. For instance, how did the U.S. media cover Bijedić’s 1975 meeting with President Ford, and how did Ford himself perceive the visit? Kamberović also omits several scholarly works on Yugoslavia in English language. The use of these sources could have provided a view of how Bijedić’s political career was assessed by non-Yugoslav experts and historians. Furthermore, scrutiny of the memoirs of key international leaders of the 1970s would have provided insight into their perceptions of Bijedić’s role at the helm of Yugoslav government.

In spite of these shortcomings, Kamberović’s book sheds valuable light on the life and times of Tito’s comrade and the most prominent Bosnian Communist leader of Socialist Yugoslavia. Bijedić’s biography is in a way a story of Bosnia’s development within postwar Yugoslavia. A translation of the book into English would be eminently worthwhile to make accessible to a wider audience this aspect of Yugoslavia’s and Bosnia’s history.


Reviewed by Rachel J. Vaughan, Aberystwyth University

In recent years, a growing body of academic literature has analyzed the role of international sport, including the Olympic Games, in the Cold War. Philip A. D’Agati’s book contributes to this field of enquiry by looking at why the Soviet Union (and
most of its allies) chose to boycott the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. The author re-examines the traditional assumption that Soviet non-participation was a direct and inevitable consequence of the Carter administration’s boycott of the Moscow Games four years previously, in protest at the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. D’Agati provides an alternative interpretation to this “tit-for-tat” reasoning, instead suggesting that the boycott was a consequence of a complex series of considerations within an overarching “surrogate war” between the United States and the USSR, and drawing on the bidding process (and subsequent hosting) associated with the 1976, 1980, and 1984 Olympics in particular.

D’Agati’s methodological framework combines a relatively straightforward historical narrative with aspects of international relations theory. In relation to the latter he uses both the idea of “surrogate war” and George Tsebelis’s concept of “nested games” (whereby the observed outcome might not be the main aim of any particular action). As such, D’Agati disputes that the Soviet action was simply retaliation for the U.S. boycott of 1980, suggesting instead that it was the result of a complex set of considerations relating in particular to external projections of the “success” of Moscow’s Games. D’Agati acknowledges that he has made no use of Soviet and Russian sources (even though many relevant items have been declassified in Moscow in recent years) but suggests that by adopting an alternative methodological approach he is able to overcome such difficulties. He relies on a three-tiered analysis, examining material from the USSR’s allies (especially Bulgaria, which also boycotted in 1984); correspondence between the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee (LAOOC); and a broad historical analysis of the politicization of international sport by the Soviet Union. Such an approach is not without its problems, not least the lack of Russian-language primary sources. In addition, much of the discussion of Soviet “concerns” (including the potential actions of the “Ban the Soviets” coalition and other security problems) is based on a write-up of a single meeting between the IOC, the Soviet National Olympic Committee (NOC), and the LAOOC in early 1984.

After relatively straightforward examinations of the history and politics of the Olympic movement and the development of a Soviet international sports policy, D’Agati examines the bidding processes for the 1976, 1980, and 1984 Summer Games. He analyzes it within the context of the surrogate war between East and West. Three cities bid for the right to host the 1976 Games: Montreal—the eventual winner, albeit subsequently discredited for unfinished stadia and crippling financial mismanagement—Moscow, and Los Angeles. Round two and the right to host the 1980 Games went to Moscow (ahead of Los Angeles, with a less-than-stellar bid). Finally, Los Angeles was awarded the Games of 1984, albeit as the sole bidder. The bidding and hosting processes and their interpretation as central tenets of a surrogate war between East and West provide the basis for the rest of the book. D’Agati’s thesis is directly linked to the unique status of the LAOOC—it was a private, for-profit enterprise, and neither the state nor federal government was directly involved. As a consequence this was not an environment familiar to or comfortable for Soviet officials,
Book Reviews

and in negotiations with the IOC and LAOOC, the Soviet NOC raised a succession of concerns about the organization of the Games, not least relating to guarantees of security for the Soviet delegation. Security issues became the official reason for the Soviet boycott, which was announced in April 1984. However, D’Agati concludes that the real reasons the USSR stayed away were far more complex and centered on perceptions and projections of the comparative “success” of the 1976, 1980, and 1984 Olympics. Within the context of the surrogate war, the USSR could not risk going to Los Angeles and becoming part of the ultimate Olympic success story, especially after the U.S.-led boycott of the Moscow Games four years earlier.

The book poses several methodological problems. A fair question to ask is whether the chosen approach is a truly convincing alternative to the use of Russian archival materials. On occasion the author’s factual claims are also open to debate; for example, he states that “in 1988, the Seoul Olympics were the first boycott-free Summer Games in 12 years” (p. 54)—but in fact North Korea and several of its allies did not participate in these Olympics. D’Agati’s conclusions are also helped somewhat by the sometimes less-than-transparent policies and practices of the IOC (members’ ballots are secret, for example). A discussion of the possible role (if any) of public opinion, the significance of differences between the Soviet NOC and other Soviet viewpoints, and the impact of the alternative “Friendship Games” that were hosted across the Soviet bloc in 1984 would have proved interesting additions, although none of these are central to the book. Overall, the D’Agati’s approach constitutes a new and interesting analysis of why the USSR stayed away from the 1984 Games and provides timely insight into political maneuvering in the Olympic movement as well as wider East-West relations during the later Cold War.


Reviewed by Mark L. Clifford, Asia Business Council (Hong Kong)

Park Chung Hee was one of the most important leaders of the second half of the twentieth century. The Republic of Korea (ROK) is one of the greatest economic success stories in history, thanks to Park’s obsessive pursuit of economic strength. In 2013 his daughter Park Geun-hye was inaugurated as South Korea’s first woman president, in a reminder of how important the elder Park remains. Yet probably no significant leader in the post–World War II period is less remarked-upon than Park.

When Park seized power in a 1961 coup he took over a country that was almost unimaginably poor—poorer indeed than most African countries and certainly poorer than North Korea when measured by per-capita income ($80) and natural resources. The fact that South Korea today ranks among the world’s fifteen largest economies and is one of the most successful of the newly industrialized economies reflects Park’s
most important achievement. Park also made the Republic of Korea a significant part of the regional security architecture in northeast Asia, one whose importance is greater than its relatively small population (now about 50 million) might suggest.

The wide-ranging collection of essays in *The Park Chung Hee Era: The Transformation of South Korea* is an important and welcome addition to the literature on Park's Korea. The essays are largely written by South Korean scholars, drawing on interviews and documents that are accessible in today's far more open political environment. The work succeeds admirably in its aim to be the first comprehensive scholarly account of the Park years, an “objective integrated history of its accomplishments and limitations.”

Koreans were fortunate that the chaotic post-armistice years threw forth Park, the son of a peasant who had spent his formative years in the Japanese military. For his part, however, the major-general did not think much of his fellow Koreans. As described in *The Park Chung Hee Era*, despite some populist tendencies, the new leader was “elitist with a dirigiste vision of modernization, critical of his people’s alleged passivity, opportunism, indolence and defeatism” (p. 27). Park thus took upon himself the burden of dragging his country into the modern world.

Park was driven by a few simple concepts that he learned in the Japanese military: “rich nation, strong army” and “production promotion.” Park put these concepts into practice with ferocious single-mindedness. Whether eliminating thatched roofs from peasants’ houses or building one of the world’s most efficient steel plants, Park was at the center of a development whirlwind from the 1961 coup until his 1979 assassination.

Park began by arresting and fining chaebol heads, including Samsung’s Yi Pyong-chol. Coup officers mooted the idea of nationalization and even executions. Having demonstrated his willingness to use his power, Park worked with chaebol heads who showed that they could perform. He favored risk takers such as Hyundai’s Chong Chu-yong, whose success in building a globally competitive auto company is one of the more remarkable elements of South Korea’s rise. Frustrated by U.S. and World Bank rebuffs in his attempt to build a steel mill, Park used Japanese funds provided as part of the controversial 1965 normalization agreement to build steel-maker POSCO, finding in junior officer Pak T’ae-jun another capable leader.

Park pushed the chaebol—and the economy—harder and faster than orthodox economists said was possible. Yet the chaebol understood that Park would bail out competent companies when crises hit. One of the many strengths of this book is the detailed accounts of the measures Park took to save the chaebol when larger macroeconomic forces worked against them. Park willingly used technocrats, many of them trained in orthodox Western economics by the United States, but he completely disregarded them when necessary to meet his objective of higher economic growth.

This volume fills in many of the details that enabled South Korea’s extraordinary economic success. The ROK is almost alone in the post–World War II period in going from penury to developing a sophisticated industrial base with globally significant companies such as Samsung Electronics, Hyundai Motors, and POSCO. South Korea’s experience shows both the value of a heterodox approach—Park was too obsessed with
success to worry about consistency—and the need to have objective measures of success. Park picked winners, but he also jettisoned losers. This was crony capitalism with a twist: the cronies had to perform or they could lose their businesses.

The Park Chung Hee Era excels in its detailed account of Park’s political maneuvering. Park cultivated an image of being above politics, but he “had a natural instinct for power” (p. 147) that allowed him to make strategic moves well ahead of others. As a military officer Park had experience in commanding resources. He developed strong and extensive networks, yet his exercise of power was solitary. He repeatedly brought down many of his closest and longest-serving aides, including his brother-in-law, fellow coup leader, and political strategist Kim Chong-p’iI. “The president had the ability to turn political, economic, and international challenges into an opportunity for power aggrandizement, to successively eliminate the alternative options to his leadership” (p. 260).

The volume includes a rich discussion of how Park ingratiated himself with the United States. First he had to allay suspicions that he was a leftist; later he needed to remain important enough to the United States that it would not abandon South Korea at a time when a Vietnam-weary country was pulling back from the region. An account of South Korea’s attempt to develop a nuclear weapon is illuminating.

Park was a dictator—and an increasingly ruthless one during the second half of his time in power. His 18 years of rule ended in October 1979 when he was assassinated by one of his closest associates. Park’s assassin at the time of the shooting was the head of the powerful and feared KCIA (an organization that was “more like a Soviet KGB than an American CIA,” p. 143), an indication of the extreme centralization of power.

South Korea today still struggles with Park’s legacy. His daughter is president largely on the strength of her father’s reflected halo. South Korea is a country that is still riven by regional factionalism and deep ideological differences. Labor militancy is widespread; so, too, is the love-hate relationship with the chaebol. Invaluable as this book is as a historical document, it is also an important tool for understanding the continuing tensions in today’s ROK.


Reviewed by Qiang Zhai, Auburn University at Montgomery

This is a welcome addition to the literature on Chinese-Cambodian entanglements during the Cold War. Drawing primarily on interviews with Cambodian cadres and Chinese technicians who worked together during the Khmer Rouge period, Andrew Mertha provides an in-depth analysis of the implementation of China’s aid program to Democratic Kampuchea. He uses three cases (the Krang Leav airfield, the Kampong...
Som oil refinery project, and commerce between China and Cambodia) to demonstrate how bureaucratic fragmentation in China and differences between the Chinese and Cambodian institutions contributed to the ineffectiveness of Beijing’s financial aid and technical assistance. He argues that in a markedly asymmetrical partnership, China failed to translate its large-scale aid into leverage over the Khmer Rouge.

Although Mertha’s treatment of the Cambodian side of the story, especially his chapter on the Khmer Rouge bureaucracy and Pol Pot’s work style, is highly revealing and instructive, his discussion of Chinese policymaking leaves much to be desired. Mertha’s conclusion that “China’s provision of vast quantities of cadres, guns, and money had brought precious little” (p. 9) is not persuasive. When Mao and his successors measured the return of their assistance to the Pol Pot regime, they were not looking at tangible material gains and benefits. Instead, they concentrated on the political support and loyalty they received from the Khmer Rouge in the common opposition against Moscow-backed Vietnamese influence in Indochina. This was in line with China’s imperial “Central Kingdom” tradition of maintaining tributary relations with peripheral countries.

Even though Mertha has benefited from access to documents at the National Archives of Cambodia, his employment of Chinese-language sources is inadequate and unsatisfactory. His claim that “the period between 1960 and 1990 in Cambodia is off-limits even to those scholars with special access to classified Ministry of Foreign Affairs documents” (p. 14) is not true. From 2011 to 2012 when Mertha was conducting research for this book, the files on Sino-Cambodian relations for the period of 1960–1966 were open to scholars, both domestic and foreign, at the Chinese Foreign Ministry Archives (CFMA). (In 2013, the CFMA reclassified many documents that had been available for research from 2005 to 2012.)

In addition, many published sources in China contain useful information on the interactions between China and Democratic Kampuchea. Mertha’s endnotes give no indication that he has carefully explored these publications. For example, he failed to consult the memoirs of Xiong Zhen, the wife of Shen Jian, who served as deputy director of the International Liaison Department of the Chinese Communist Party in the 1970s. The volume was published in China in 1995 under the title “The Footprints of a Diplomatic Couple.” According to Xiong Zhen’s account, on the eve of the Khmer Rouge’s assumption of power in Cambodia in 1975, Marshal Ye Jianying called a high-level meeting in Beijing to discuss China’s response to the change of government in Phnom Penh, and Shen Jian was responsible for carrying out the decisions made at the meeting. Two years later when Pol Pot visited China, Shen Jian accompanied him in touring Dazhai and Nanjing. Mertha also does not mention the official biography of Fang Yi, who was head of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations from 1970 to 1977. According to this authoritative account, which was published in Beijing in 2008, Fang Yi led a Chinese government delegation in December 1976 to Phnom Penh, where he formally signed agreements that committed China to helping Democratic Kampuchea rebuild or establish 34 industrial, railway, and port projects. Incorporating the information and revelations from these sources would have helped
Mertha flesh out his sketchy and limited outline of China’s assistance to the Pol Pot regime.

Because Mertha made inadequate use of Chinese archival collections and is largely unfamiliar with secondary Chinese sources, his descriptions of Sino-Cambodian encounters are often simplistic and impressionistic. For instance, he writes: “From the mid-1960s onward, Sihanouk had enjoyed a particularly good relationship with China’s top leaders, including Mao, Zhou, and Liu Shaoqi” (p. 5). This statement is inaccurate. In fact, during the most radical phase of China’s Cultural Revolution in 1967, the Red Guards attempted to export Chinese radicalism to Cambodia. As a result, China’s relationship with Cambodia plummeted after an angry Sihanouk responded by closing the Cambodia-China Friendship Association, shutting down Chinese-language newspapers, and announcing the withdrawal of diplomats from the Cambodian embassy in Beijing.

When Mertha attempts to explain the motivations for Beijing’s decision to assist the Khmer Rouge, his explanations tend to be brief and focus mainly on Chinese domestic politics. His arguments are unconvincing. He fails to present evidence to support his assertion that leftist leaders, such as Zhang Chunqiao and Chen Yonggui, who supported the Khmer Rouge were motivated by a desire to bolster their political position at home. Mertha contends that Mao gave his blessing to Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping, who pursued a pragmatic foreign policy that subordinated ideological fervor to cold, realpolitik calculations. This contention is correct but lacks nuance. Mao did rely on Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping to carry out his policy of aligning with the United States against the Soviet Union during the final years of his rule in China, but Mao often distrusted Zhou at that time for making too many concessions in his negotiations with U.S. officials and blamed Deng for trying to roll back the results of the Cultural Revolution. That was why Mao organized “criticism sessions” against Zhou in late 1973 and against Deng toward the end of 1975.

Finally, Mertha reveals his orientalist tendency when he portrays Sihanouk as “mercurial” (p. 5). As the weak leader of a small country confronting hostile neighbors (Thailand and South Vietnam) and caught in the vortex of great-power rivalry in Southeast Asia, Sihanouk had to adjust his policies according to the circumstances of different times in order to preserve his power and protect the interests of his country. His frequent policy shifts were often the result of his careful consideration of harsh reality and of available sources of support rather than the product of his personal whims and emotions. Calling him “mercurial” is not helpful in deciphering the underlying reasons for his policy changes.


Reviewed by Denise M. Bostdorff, The College of Wooster
A Companion to Harry Truman (ACHT) aims to provide an overview of scholarship that situates the Truman administration’s policies and their long-term impact, as well as Harry Truman the man and politician himself, within U.S. and world history. In this regard, it has much to offer, with a series of 27 chapters written by eminent scholars, mostly historians and a few political scientists.

Part I, “Considering Truman in Historical Perspective,” contains one chapter that examines Truman’s role in historical, popular, and political memory and another that discusses Truman’s leadership. In Part II, “Enduring Questions,” ACHT covers realist, revisionist, and post-revisionist explanations of the Cold War; Truman’s decision to use the nuclear bomb; and U.S. versus international accounts of the origins of the Cold War. Part III on “Truman, the State, and the World System” reviews foreign economic policy, NSC-68, and the president’s foreign policy advisers, and Part IV details research on domestic matters, such as the Fair Deal, civil defense, and civil rights. In the longest section of ACHT, Part V, the authors discuss research on Truman’s foreign policy, followed by Part VI, which concentrates specifically on Truman’s policy in the postwar Pacific Rim.

ACHT makes several laudable contributions. One strength is that it draws together historical research, both old and new, into one comprehensive volume, particularly scholarship based on archives and perspectives from countries other than the United States. In addition, although ACHT’s omission of a chapter focusing on domestic anti-Communism is puzzling, the book commendably includes topics that are frequently glossed over—Mark Harvey’s fine chapter on the environmental history of the Truman years is an example—or offers insights into the complexities of issues the administration faced, such as how officials grappled with the issue of segregation when making civil defense plans that would send refugees from northeastern cities to rural areas of the South. Editor Daniel S. Margolies intends each chapter to stand alone, which leads to some unavoidable repetition, particularly on the matter of orthodox versus revisionist versus post-revisionist perspectives. However, such themes are integral to understanding much of the scholarship on Truman, and Amanda Kay McVety does an especially nice job in giving an overview of these frames.

Despite these strengths, two weaknesses are also very much in evidence, both of which relate to words. First, both Sean J. Savage and Steven Casey seem to accept Merle Miller’s Plain Speaking at face value as though it were an authoritative account of Truman’s words, but historian Robert H. Ferrell and political scientist Francis H. Heller long ago compared the tapes of the Truman interviews with Miller’s book to conclude that Miller distorted and even fabricated much of what he presented as true. (See Robert H. Ferrell and Francis H. Heller, “Plain Faking?” American Heritage, Vol. 46, No. 3, May/June 1995, pp. 21–33.)

ACHT also frequently ignores or underplays the large body of rhetorical research that exists on the Cold War generally and Truman specifically. As a scholar of rhetoric, I am admittedly partial to such perspectives, but my critique here stems in part from the fact that ACHT regularly purports to deal with rhetoric. Benjamin A. Coates’s chapter, “Strategists and Rhetoricians: Truman’s Foreign Policy Advisers,” mentions historian

278
Frank Costigliola’s study of George Kennan’s language but does not mention the work of communication scholar Robert Ivie, specifically his essay “Realism Masking Fear: George F. Kennan’s Political Rhetoric,” in Francis A. Beer and Robert Hariman, eds., Post-Realism: The Rhetorical Turn in International Relations, (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1996), pp. 55–74. Moreover, Coates generally discusses rhetoric in superficial ways. Casey, to his credit, cites relevant scholarship in his chapter, “Rhetoric and Style of Truman’s Leadership,” but he also sometimes overlooks other insights that the very scholarship he cites might have to offer, such as the fact that there is almost no evidence to substantiate the truism Casey repeats that Senator Arthur Vandenberg told Truman that passage of the Truman Doctrine would require the president to “scare the hell” out of the country. (See the discussion of this matter in Denise M. Bostdorff, Proclaiming the Truman Doctrine: The Cold War Call to Arms, College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2008, p. 72.)


The exclusion of so much rhetorical scholarship is particularly noteworthy when the topic is the Cold War and the Truman presidency. Words—those spoken by political leaders in the United States and abroad and those written in media accounts—shaped people’s perceptions of the postwar reality they faced. Indeed, ACHT’s own recognition
of how scholars have marshaled different arguments to advocate for orthodox, revisionist, post-revisionist, and now corporatist interpretations of the same set of events should underscore rhetoric’s significance in the construction and evolution of the Cold War itself.

Just as importantly, ACHT’s general tendency to underemphasize or even disregard rhetorical research sometimes leads its authors to make claims that are questionable or at least incomplete. Elizabeth Edwards Spalding, for instance, offers a chapter on the Truman Doctrine speech and events leading up to it in which she asserts that Churchill’s Westminster address aided Truman in his efforts to “educate his fellow Americans about the Kremlin threat” in 1946 and succeeded in swaying American public opinion in approximately two weeks time (p. 331). However, Churchill’s speech became a major embarrassment to Truman, who quickly distanced himself from it, and Dean Acheson swiftly canceled his own scheduled appearance at a reception for the former prime minister. (See, for example, Hinds and Windt, The Cold War as Rhetoric, pp. 97–100; and Bostdorff, Proclaiming the Truman Doctrine, pp. 26–27.) Even George McKee Elsey (Clark Clifford’s assistant) noted in his 2005 memoir, An Unplanned Life (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2005)—a notable work that also receives no mention in ACHT—that Truman’s reaction reflected the president’s “ambivalence” (p. 137). From April 1945 until March 1947, Truman remained low-key about the growing conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States, a fact that belies another Spalding claim; namely, that it took only “a brief time—which is often erroneously depicted as a period of delays, missteps, and vacillation—for Truman’s policies to crystallize” (p. 329). Furthermore, Spalding credits the State Department’s Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (NEA) for helping the president propagate the Truman Doctrine. Although Loy Henderson of NEA did indeed advocate for intervention on behalf of Greece, the Truman Doctrine itself—as articulated in both the State Department’s “Basic United States Policy” and Truman’s famous speech—was the work of Francis Russell, the director of the Office of Public Affairs at the State Department. (See Bostdorff, Proclaiming the Truman Doctrine, pp. 74–75, 96–97.)

Just as rhetorical analysts must be familiar with scholarship in history and political science if they are to understand the situational constraints to which political actors respond through their messages, historians and political scientists must likewise familiarize themselves with scholarship in the field of communication in order to comprehend better how language is used as a strategy and also how language can take on a life of its own even when policymakers are unaware of the linguistic frames shaping policy and policy perceptions. Although my criticism of ACHT may be as welcome—in words that Truman himself might have used—as “the skunk at the garden party,” interdisciplinarity offers the best chance of providing holistic understandings of events like the Cold War and historical figures like Harry Truman.

In sum, A Companion to Harry Truman makes significant contributions but falls short in several important ways.

✣✣✣
Book Reviews


Reviewed by Mitchell Lerner, Ohio State University

On 10 June 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson delivered the commencement address at the College of the Holy Cross. He began his speech by talking about the Cold War, committing his administration to the pursuit of peace and coexistence. Quickly, however, Johnson went a different direction, warning the students about a host of emerging international problems that had been largely ignored because of the focus on superpower relations. Even if the Cold War ended, he noted, Americans would find themselves “on a new battleground as filled with danger and as fraught with difficulty as any ever faced by man. For many of our most urgent problems do not spring from the cold war or even from the ambitions of our adversaries.” Instead, he warned of problems that “menace man’s welfare and will threaten it even when armed destruction and war are things of the past. They are the problems of poverty, of disease, and of diminishing natural resources.”

Over the next four years, according to the authors in Beyond the Cold War, the Johnson administration became the first to grapple seriously with a series of these new security challenges, many of which still resonate today. The 1960s, the editors argue, “appears as a period in which a new set of global problems, largely independent of the Cold War, began to take a form still recognizable several decades later” (p. 3). Various factors from this period, notably the global social unrest that reflected popular frustration with the Cold War stalemate, the emergence of a large network of global organizations and activists, and the increased interconnectedness brought about by technological advance, combined to bring these issues to the attention of the American people and the Johnson administration in ways that were unprecedented. In eleven thoughtful and provocative essays, the authors here examine the way the administration adapted and responded to this changing environment.

If the contributors generally agree that this was a vital decade for the world to recognize these new challenges, they are in less agreement about how successfully the Johnson administration handled them. Matthew Connelly is particularly critical of Johnson’s efforts in the field of population control, finding a widespread backlash both at home and abroad against the complications that resulted from the administration’s “needless social engineering experiments” (p. 159). Most of the contributors, however, take more moderate positions that acknowledge the limits of U.S. influence over these emerging issues, recognize the long-term significance of starting conversations about them, and offer at least a modicum of praise for Johnson’s efforts. Sarah Snyder’s excellent piece on human rights, for example, finds that the administration was reluctant to risk weakening the North Atlantic Treaty Organization over human rights issues but offers some praise for the administration’s more forceful response in Rhodesia and for placing the topic on the agenda in the first place. Erez Manela recognizes that many factors contributed to the World Health Organization’s eradication of smallpox
through the U.S.-supported Smallpox Eradication Program, but one of these was the president’s endorsement of the effort. Manela concludes that the endorsement of this program was “one of the administration’s most significant decisions in terms of its global human impact” (p. 166). Other chapters, including Andrew Preston’s essay on religious upheaval and Christopher Dietrich’s analysis of oil power, find less to praise but stress the limited tools available to the administration to meet these challenges. Other sections look at such topics as economic globalization, food scarcity, and global anti-poverty efforts, including a terrific piece by Sheyda Jahanbani on the connection between domestic and foreign anti-poverty programs. Through it all, what emerges is a Johnson administration that generally seems to deserve praise for recognizing these new problems and for attempting to address them, even though many of the specific details of their implementation come under justified criticism.

The editors have done an excellent job selecting authors and topics, but two omissions seem notable. Any collection that addresses economic globalization in the 1960s needs at least some discussion of South Korea, but that country is not covered at all here. Africa is similarly given short shrift, despite the fact that many in the administration saw it as the test case of modernization and development, a place where many of the topics addressed in the book—disease, hunger, population growth, environment—were the subject of U.S. or U.S.-led efforts. Nevertheless, Beyond the Cold War makes a significant contribution not only with its detailed studies about the Johnson administration and these emerging crises but also with the step it takes in moving Cold War–era scholarship into new and exciting areas that outlasted the Cold War.

✣✣✣


Reviewed by Ivan T. Berend, University of California, Los Angeles

The literature of the Cold War could fill a library. Tarah Brookfield’s book, however, represents a very special approach: the reaction of the population, especially women, to Cold War dangers and tensions. The book is also a story of Canada, a country that is “sandwiched in between the Soviet Union and the United States,” (p.30), but was not in the first trenches of the Cold War confrontation. These features make the book both interesting and also somewhat marginal.

The discussion is divided into two quite separate parts: the home front and abroad. Canada was involved in wars with its Western allies and shared the Cold War hysteria and even the American anti-Communist crusade of McCarthyism in the 1950s and 1960s. The Canadian government warned the population to be prepared for a nuclear war and possible nuclear attack. The population reacted in various ways. Volunteers accumulated and stored food, even built family bomb shelters, trained nurses, and spread useful information among the population.
Postwar Canada, however, like the postwar West in general, was a flourishing place where birthrates steeply increased and an efficient welfare system was created. In a country of 18 million inhabitants, only 3,000 families built bomb shelters. The most important popular reaction was the mobilization of activist women from various layers of the society against war. “One October morning in 1968 Claire Culhane began a ten-day hunger strike and demonstration on Parliament Hill to protest what she considered to be the Canadian government's hypocritical position on the war in Vietnam” (p.161). The popular movement started out in opposition to nuclear war but soon became a movement against the war in Vietnam. A great number of volunteers collected money for the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund to save children and adopted children from war-ridden Vietnam. In 1965, 10,000 homeless children were placed in 36 orphanages in South Vietnam, and their number doubled by 1973. Canadian families, among them the Simpsons, Bronsteins, and Cappucinos, adopted several of them. The reader can learn about their motivations and feelings because Tarah Brookfield's is based heavily on oral history with activists. This strongly personal characteristic is a special value of the work, a major addition to archival sources.

The book presents the everyday life and reaction of the Canadian population to the Cold War danger. This reaction, in turn, changed Canadian welfare policy, educational curriculum, and immigration law, as well as several other spheres of life and politics.

The book, prepared originally as a Ph.D. dissertation, is Brookfield's first monograph. Although definitely not in the first lines of Cold War studies, it still has a place in that vast literature and offers an interesting, sometimes moving account supported by well-selected photographs.


Reviewed by Hope M. Harrison, George Washington University

This book is a good antidote to the polarized debate in Germany about how to judge the German Democratic Republic (the GDR, or East Germany). It has become *de rigueur* for German politicians to denounce the GDR as an *Unrechtsstaat* (translated variously as a “state without the rule of law,” a “dictatorship,” an “illegitimate state,” or a “criminal state”) dominated by the State Security Ministry’s secret police (Stasi) and the Berlin Wall. By contrast, many former East Germans defend the GDR as a benevolent welfare state in which most people found a niche and lived their lives peacefully. These either-or, black-and-white arguments largely ignore the truth that East Germans experienced life in the GDR in all sorts of ways. Just in time for the 25th
anniversaries of the fall of the Berlin Wall and German reunification, Hester Vaizey’s engaging book presents us with East German life experiences that fit in with the black-and-white narratives of GDR history but also with the large gray area between these extremes.

By providing us with portraits of eight of the roughly 17 million people who grew up in the GDR, lived through the fall of the wall at a formative age, and then had to adjust to life in the completely different system of the united Germany, Vaizey’s book shows us a broad spectrum of lives lived in East Germany and assessments of both life in the GDR and its comparison with life in the united, democratic, capitalist Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Vaizey’s eight portraits demonstrate that there is no one-size-fits-all understanding of either the GDR or the pros and cons of life in united Germany. Although the German journalist Anja Goerz has published a similar book (Der Osten ist ein Gefühl: Über die Mauer im Kopf; a best-seller when it was published in Germany in 2014) about her conversations with more than two dozen former East Germans, as well as a few West Germans, about their lives in the GDR and since unification, Vaizey’s book provides much more context and detail by focusing just on eight people and is also grounded in scholarly analysis. Born in the GDR will be quite useful for classes in German history, Communist history, and the transition from Communism to capitalism and democracy in Europe.

In an introduction that deals with post-1945 German history as well as the methodological challenges of oral history, Vaizey recognizes that she is really writing about memories of the GDR rather than how the GDR really was (although she conflates the two more in her conclusion). Her source base includes the answers to questionnaires she distributed to interviewees, her follow-up interviews, contemporaneous diaries, schoolwork, school reports, and, where applicable, Stasi files on the interviewees. After completing 30 interviews with former East Germans, she chose to focus on eight, although she refers to some of the others. Most of her protagonists are from cities: four are from Berlin, and the others are from Dresden, Eisenach, Prenzlau, and the village of Golzow in Brandenburg.

When the Wall opened in 1989, Vaizey’s subjects ranged in age from 10 to 28 years old. Some had felt constrained in the GDR; others had not. Some came into problematic contact with the Stasi; others did not. Mario had attempted to escape from the GDR, was caught and imprisoned by the Stasi, and still suffers from post-traumatic stress syndrome. Petra had been an ardent young socialist in the GDR and had hoped 1989 would result in a reformed socialist state instead of leading to the collapse of the GDR. Carola felt stifled by the restrictions on freedom in the GDR, and when she got a tourist visa to attend a relative’s 75th birthday in West Germany, she never returned to the GDR. As a pastor’s daughter, Katharina was discriminated against for being religious and for marrying a man who had been imprisoned by the Stasi, but she found a welcoming community and career in the church.

Vaizey’s conclusions about her interviewees are sometimes jarring. For example, she comments about an interviewee named Lisa: “Ultimately Lisa knew no other
world than the GDR and quite understandably did not view her situation as especially restricted” (p. 66). It is not clear why Vaizey views this as “quite understandable” when others she interviewed did feel restricted in what they could say or in where they could travel. Similarly, Vaizey observes that “people aren’t always wholly logical or rational” and thus was surprised when Mario told her he had been afraid when the GDR collapsed. (p. 175) She assumed he would have been happy that the regime that treated him so poorly had been removed. Yet Mario feared that his former Stasi interrogators and torturers would be able to find him in West Berlin once the Wall was down. These fears were neither illogical nor irrational, despite what Vaizey may think.

Vaizey’s conclusion emphasizes that the eight protagonists are still marked in one way or another by their time living in the GDR, offering them a point of comparison to life in united Germany. Although the reader learns that the eight subjects see various advantages of unification, these are not elaborated upon and are largely overlooked in the conclusion. One senses that Vaizey is more interested in what her interlocutors miss about the GDR and less about what they feel they have gained in united Germany. None of the interviewees wants to have Communist East Germany back, but (with the exception of Mario) most of them miss something, whether it be a certain sense of security or a shared social mission. They view life in capitalism as too materialistic and regret that their GDR experiences are looked down upon. Vaizey emphasizes that any nostalgia her interviewees feel about the GDR does not have to do with the regime but with “the shared understanding stemming from joint memories and similar experiences” (p. 174), a point also emphasized in Jana Hensel’s best-selling memoir, After the Wall. Four of the eight interviewees find it easier to relate to people from the East than to people from the West.

Vaizey’s final chapter is tinged by what one could call the “Mary Fulbrook approach” or even “the British approach” to GDR history. Vaizey argues that in the GDR many felt they were “active citizens” instead of “passive victims” because they were “invited to air their views...be it in public meetings or through letters of complaint,” and thus many did “not (feel the GDR was) like a Stasi-state” and instead saw it as “a country in which they could lead a perfectly ordinary life” (p. 164). “It is therefore rather more helpful to see the state as ruling through society than against it” (p. 165). Mario and Katharina certainly would not agree with this assessment. Many East Germans never really felt safe expressing their views or complaining about problems, as was the case for four of Vaizey’s subjects: Mario, Carola, Katharina, and Mirko.

Aside from a sloppy mistake when Vaizey writes about Mikhail Gorbachev’s visit to East Berlin on 3 October instead of 7 October to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the GDR in 1989 (p. 8), she provides many useful historical details to help ground and clarify the experiences of her interviewees. Born in the GDR thus offers an interesting cross-section of experiences and views of East Germans before and after unification.
Jefferson Adams, *Strategic Intelligence in the Cold War and Beyond*. London: Routledge, 2015. 166 pp. $135.00 cloth, $34.95 paper.

**Reviewed by Jeffrey T. Richelson, National Security Archive**

At 142 pages before one reaches the back matter, this slender volume is more an essay than a book. Thus, one cannot realistically expect that the author, Jefferson Adams, will devote as much attention to the topics covered as one would expect from a longer work. One can also expect that some topics that merit attention will be passed over altogether.

After a brief introduction, the book is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter discusses the origins and activities of some of the key Western and Soviet-bloc intelligence organizations of the Cold War era, as well as the Israeli Mossad. The next chapter recounts some of the early post–World War II espionage developments—such as the discovery and uprooting of the vast Soviet espionage effort in the United States and elsewhere, thanks to the Venona decryption project and the cases of Kim Philby and the other members of the Cambridge Five. The third chapter focuses on some of the major events involving covert action or intelligence through 1979, including the 1953 Iranian coup, the Cuban missile crisis, the war in Vietnam, the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Three Cold War spies—Gunter Guillaume, Robert Hanssen, and Ryszard Kukliński—are discussed in chapter five, and chapter six is devoted to espionage in film and fiction. The penultimate chapter, “The Climax of the Cold War,” deals with intelligence and covert action in the 1980s from Central America to Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Specifics include the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II, U.S. support for the Sandinistas, the Able Archer 83 military exercise, Soviet active measures, the Team B controversy over Soviet capabilities and intentions, and intelligence estimates of Mikhail Gorbachev’s prospects for keeping the Soviet Union intact. Adams concludes with a review of post–Cold War intelligence, including organizational developments in the United States, Russia, and Eastern Europe.

The most detailed treatment is of the evolution of the former Soviet-bloc intelligence services as their Communist governments were replaced (either permanently or temporarily) by democratic governments. Adams’s account focuses not only on the changes in names and responsibilities but also on the impact within the societies, including confronting the legacy of pervasive domestic surveillance and secret-police interference in the lives of citizens. Adams also notes the new relationships established with Western intelligence agencies—as illustrated by the Romanian foreign intelligence service’s turning over to the French security service a dossier indicating that former defense minister Charles Hernu once served as a paid asset of the Bulgarian and Soviet intelligence services.

A common, although unreasonable, complaint from reviewers is that the author failed to write the book the reviewer wishes the author had written, rather than the book he or she set out to write. What *is* reasonable to expect, however, is that a
book’s content will match its title. In that vein, one might question, given the brevity
of Adams’s monograph, his decision to allocate twenty pages to an examination of
literary and cinematic spies. One might also question why Adams devotes such detailed
attention to the year-long insignificant *Burke’s Law* television show but ignores much
more celebrated films and shows such as *The Ipcress File*, *I Spy*, and Patrick McGoohan’s
*Secret Agent* (titled *Danger Man* on British television).

Much of those twenty pages could have been employed to fill in the most notable
gap in the book: the limited treatment of the role of technical collection in Cold War
strategic intelligence. Beyond some discussion of the U-2, Adams makes some brief
references to the Corona, the KH-11, and Soviet Zenit satellites. But he offers no
significant analysis of the impact of those and other imagery satellites on the end of the
missile gap, arms control, or other applications. Signals intelligence (SIGINT) and its
communications intelligence (COMINT) component do get several mentions—with
regard to the Berlin tunnel and the Korean, Vietnam, and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars. But
the reader will not get any sense of the enormous U.S. and Soviet efforts that led to
the orbiting of a variety of specialized eavesdropping spacecraft, flying antenna-packed
aircraft near and over targets, and building massive ground stations around the world.
Even less coverage is given to other notable technical efforts, including the Sound
Surveillance System underwater arrays that tracked and collected intelligence on Soviet
submarines, and the nuclear intelligence efforts of both superpowers. John Le Carré
receives more attention than is devoted to either the U.S. National Reconnaissance
Office or the Soviet military intelligence agency’s Space Intelligence Directorate.

A reader who approaches this book or essay truly expecting a treatise on strategic
intelligence is likely to be disappointed (or should be). However, the reader who retitled
the book, in his or her mind, as *Jefferson Adams on Intelligence in the Cold War and
Beyond* might well be pleased with an interesting discussion of a variety of topics on
developments in the real and fictional worlds of intelligence.

✣✣✣

Richard Woodman and Dan Conley, *Cold War Command: The Dramatic Story of a

Reviewed by Timothy J. Galpin, Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory

The history of submarine operations during the Cold War has by now been told
many ways, but typically from the American point of view. *Cold War Command: The
Dramatic Story of a Nuclear Submariner* adds an important dimension to this literature
by coming at the confrontation between Soviet and Western submarine forces from the
perspective of the Royal Navy. Despite the title, *Cold War Command* is less a dramatic
story of nuclear submarine operations and more a narrative of Captain Dan Conley’s
career as a Royal Navy submariner against the backdrop of the Cold War, including
some nuclear but also diesel submarine operations. Written with Captain Richard
Woodman, a distinguished maritime historian, the book offers an effective telling of the waxing and waning in importance of the Royal Navy’s submarine flotilla during the Cold War, including details such as the challenges associated with shipbuilding, maintenance, and weapons effectiveness, which are often omitted from accounts of submarine operations.

As Admiral The Lord Boyce makes clear in his introduction, details of the missions conducted by the silent services—that is, the submarine forces of the United States Navy, the Royal Navy, and those of other Western allies—remain classified for good reasons. Yet Woodman and Conley manage to bring the reader into that world by conveying an appreciation of the rising strategic importance of nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarines (SSBNs), which carried sea-launched ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads. Effectively creating a new class of capital ships, this Cold War development required a new breed of nuclear-powered hunter killer submarines (SSNs) to hold Soviet SSBNs at risk, protect the United Kingdom’s own SSBNs, and conduct clandestine intelligence collections.

For the reader interested in the thrilling exploits of the Royal Navy hunter-killer submarines, Woodman and Conley do not disappoint. Their account of the submarines lost at sea during the Cold War is harrowing even when presented in a professionally disinterested voice, with losses by Soviet, British, French, and U.S. forces alike. Moreover, their account of engaging Soviet SSNs that were specifically designed to protect Soviet SSBNs demonstrates the importance of the Royal Navy’s constant struggle to improve the professionalism, tactics, and material readiness of the submarine flotilla. Despite these efforts, the Soviet Navy occasionally got the upper hand. So Conley’s success in detecting and tracking five Soviet submarines in one deployment while remaining undetected, as Woodman and Conley describe under the colorful heading of “the Black Pig and the Red Banner Fleet,” was quite a feat even with a fair measure of good fortune in the mix.

One of the strengths of Cold War Command is that it goes beyond submarine operations and deals with the impact of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) decision to invest in a sea-based nuclear deterrent. In Great Britain, struggling with the contraction of empire as well as recovering from the ravages of the Second World War, this inevitably required trade-offs not only with the other services but within the Royal Navy. The resources required to build and sustain a nuclear submarine force as the country’s reliable bulwark were substantial. Woodman and Conley perform an important service in capturing the tragic waste of resources caused by mismanagement in British shipbuilders and repair yards over this period, as well as the Royal Navy’s culture of making do that allowed poor weapons performance to hinder war-fighting effectiveness for far too long.

Although resolution of these issues took years, or decades in some cases, this internal MOD struggle was an essential part of the Cold War story for Great Britain. Woodman and Conley suggest two important consequences. One was the attendant reduction in resources made available to other British forces, which caused tremendous strain when British forces had to meet the challenges of the Falklands War. This
overseas war was a much tougher fight for the British than it should have been because of the imbalances in the fleet among submarines and other combatants and aviation capabilities brought about by the Cold War. Until the most serious problems—the poor design and ineffective corrective actions for the Tigerfish and Spearfish torpedoes, as well as lack of an effective anti-surface missile until deployment of the sub-Harpoon by the Royal Navy—were resolved, they constrained the ability of Royal Navy SSNs to engage and sink the enemy in the event of a full-scale confrontation with the Soviet Union.

By following Conley’s career, which included tours of duty with both the Royal Navy’s Submarine Weapons and Tactics Group and the U.S. Navy’s Submarine Development Squadron Twelve, Command at Sea offers a useful comparison of training and tactical preparation between the allied silent services. Even though each navy took a different approach, this was a truly joint effort that resulted in multiple shared successes; notably with tactics for use with towed acoustic arrays or with exercises to evaluate torpedo performance under the Arctic ice. The American reader may find Conley’s experiences in the deservedly famous Royal Navy “Perisher” course for prospective commanding officers (PCO) to be of interest. Conley himself is scrupulous if understated in meting out criticism as well as praise, and his particular comparison of Perisher with the U.S. submarine PCO course is insightful and worth reading.

Overall, I recommend this book for its detail, insight, and unique perspective on the history of the Cold War beneath the waves. The book should be especially enlightening for those interested in a contrast between the U.S. and Royal Navy approaches to submarines in the context of maintaining naval power during the Cold War.


Reviewed by Vladimir Tismaneanu, University of Maryland

No two persons were more qualified, both morally and politically, to explore together, in dialogues and letters, the daunting dilemmas of the post-Communist world than the protagonists of this enthralling book. Both Václav Havel and Adam Michnik were active in Central Europe’s dissident counterculture during the Communist era, both shared the philosophical perspective of civic liberalism, and both noticed, as soon as the old system collapsed, that it was gradually replaced by virulently fundamentalist movements and illiberal demagogues. The main themes of this series of conversations are the legacies of Communism, the advent of various illiberal movements, and the challenges of coming to terms with the past. These challenges, the authors argue, are not only political and legal but also, first and foremost, moral.
No less important, the Polish journalist and historian and the Czech playwright, philosopher, and politician examine the nature of politics after the demise of Leninism, the many faces of nationalism, and the transmogrification of the old Communist elites into the new economic power holders.

For Michnik, de-Communization was justified morally only to the extent that it would not result in what he feared (and still fears) to be the temptation to engage in witch hunts. For many years, as editor of Poland’s most influential daily, Gazeta Wyborcza, Michnik has opposed radical de-Communization. This stand, founded on moral grounds, antagonized many of his former friends from the independent, self-governed union Solidarność. The more he came under critical attack, the more he protested what in his view was a logic of vindictiveness. The dialogues with Havel, included in this timely and absorbing book, allowed Michnik to spell out his fears about what he saw as an obsessive fixation upon righting the wrongs of the past. The problem with his position is that he extends this conciliatory perspective beyond Poland’s border, trying to present it as valid for all post-Communist countries. But even in Poland, or among communities of Polish intellectuals abroad, many have reservations regarding what they perceive as Michnik’s much too lenient attitude toward the “comrades.” I am a close friend of Michnik’s and I share many of his views, but his stance clearly does not apply to the Romanian situation.

A passionate defender of memory, Michnik has frequently uttered his misgivings regarding lustration. Havel was less adamant on these issues. While sharing to a large extent Michnik’s worries, Havel remained convinced that the origins of totalitarianism were in the Communist ideology itself. He was one of the initiators, together with Joachim Gauck, Vytautas Landsbergis, and other prominent former dissidents, of the 2009 Prague Declaration calling for a merger of European memory based on the recognition of the common criminality of both Communism and fascism. Michnik did not endorse this view and refused to sign the declaration.

On the other hand, as Czech president, Havel publicly criticized his country’s lustration law for some of its more excessive provisions, notably the inclusion of some largely irrelevant entities such as the People’s Militia among the main Communist organizations whose members needed to be vetted and lustrated. All these topics are prominently and substantively featured in the volume. The editor, New School professor Elżbieta Matynia, and the staff of Yale University Press, deserve high praise for putting together this illuminating volume.

Matynia’s thoughtfully detailed introduction highlights an important topic: the history of the collaboration between dissident groups in the two countries. For example, Havel’s most influential political-philosophical essay, “The Power of the Powerless,” was commissioned by Michnik during one of the encounters between members of Charter 77 and members of the Workers’ Defense Committee in the Tatra Mountains. Before being published by the Czechoslovak underground press, the essay came out in Polish. Together with Michnik’s own essay “The New Evolutionism,” it was to become one of the most authoritative moral and strategic documents generated by Eastern and Central European dissent.
Memory is the main theme in the book. Both Michnik and Havel invoke memory in order to argue against any form of extremism or moral absolutism. In Michnik's words: “We cannot complete the revolution, because then we stop being people of freedom and become Jacobins and Bolsheviks. In that case, we take freedom away, as we say: ‘This power is good.’ We are not saying: ‘You must choose. If you choose badly, you’ll have a bad government, but the choice is yours.’” He then asks Havel, “Don’t you think that the call to finish the revolution is in essence antidemocratic?” (pp. 82–83). Havel’s response bears out his vision of the relationship between politics and morality. He refuses to see a chasm between those elected and those who elected them, between government and people. The two former dissidents agree on ultimate principles, yet they see political realities differently: one as a public intellectual, a journalist, and a historian; the other as a public intellectual, a playwright, and a political thinker turned statesman. Michnik and Havel were close friends, and this book is also about friendship. In a way, it is a tribute to Havel’s Socratic ideal of living in truth as the only way to safeguard one’s dignity. The volume ends with a superb essay by Michnik, written for Havel’s 75th birthday, titled “When Socrates Becomes Pericles.” The piece concludes with these most accurate words about Havel’s life in politics: “Who was he, then, in politics? He was—I will repeat Havel’s own metaphor—like Baudelaire’s albatross, forever hovering slightly above the ground because ‘a pair of colossal wings’ prevented him from walking. This albatross of Czech politics stubbornly wrestled with a quite unpolitical question—the question of the meaning of life. For him, it was identical to the religious question of the ‘absolute horizon’” (p. 212).

As an ideology-driven tyranny, Communism demanded a continuous and systematic onslaught on the individual, a permanent attempt to destroy subjectivity and regiment individuals, turn them into obedient “cogs in the wheel.” For Havel, the answer to this unbearable humiliation was the search for dignity in everyday life, the rediscovery of freedom through small gestures of civic disobedience, the affirmation, via such endeavors, of the power of the powerless. This was and still is the meaning of anti-politics: the refusal of utopian schemes of societal revolutionary improvement, the rejection of any social engineering.


Reviewed by Piotr H. Kosicki, University of Maryland and Stanford University

Being asked to review a book by Adam Michnik is a tall order—to say the least. Michnik is one of the founders of the Third Polish Republic, which emerged from Poland’s negotiated 1989 exit from Communism. Before 1989, he was a renowned figure in the Central and East European dissident community. In the post-Communist
era he has been one of the most influential voices in Polish public life, especially in the pages of Gazeta Wyborcza (Electoral Newspaper), the daily newspaper he has edited for more than 25 years.

Through prolific advocacy and wide-ranging activism, Michnik has remained remarkably consistent in his insistence on the interconnectivity of dialogue, pluralism, and civic freedoms. More than almost any other Soviet-bloc dissident—with the possible exception of Václav Havel—Michnik has long stood out for his ability to put pen to paper and channel his own struggle into thought-provoking meditations on social and political ethics. His first publication—Kościół, lewica, dialog (1977), published in English translation in 1993 as The Church and the Left, a history of the pre-Solidarity rapprochement between Poland’s secular left and its “open-minded” Catholic intellectuals—was conceived from the outset as a book-length work. He subsequently published many other books in English, French, and Polish as collections of essays, some dating back to his years as a political prisoner in Communist-era Poland. Prior to 1989, his essays originally appeared in émigré or underground presses. Since 1989, his default forum has been Gazeta Wyborcza.

Such is likewise the genesis of The Trouble with History, a new collection of English-language translations of essays written over the past decade. At first glance, one wonders how well the five essays—organized into two parts—will fit together. The first part deals with political ethics in post-1945 Central and Eastern Europe, and the second focuses on the French Revolution and its long shadow. The book’s first chapter explores the ethical complexities of West German Chancellor Willy Brandt’s career as a Cold War statesman, and the second looks at the pitfalls of political de-Communization and lustration in post-Communist Poland (particularly under Jarosław Kaczyński’s Law and Justice Party government). The final three essays, inspired principally by the writings of the nineteenth-century French novelist Stendhal, concern the bitter fruits of revolution and restoration in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century France.

Taken as a whole, however, the collection is fully coherent. A single overarching lesson in political ethics and morality emerges from a mosaic of much smaller lessons. In book form, these essays represent a clarion call for non-monocausal, non-ideological, dialogue-driven—Michnik uses the term “polyphonic”—approaches to learning from the past. Acknowledging that narratives of collective accomplishments and failures play a central role in constructing a given community’s contemporary political identity and mores, Michnik calls for, among other things, “a conversation with the Other, the one who thinks differently, who is differently situated, and who has been differently shaped by his or her social position” (p. 49).

Ideals of “freedom” and “truth” have long served to anchor Michnik’s writings. Abstract and elastic as these concepts might seem, Michnik fleshes them out in the most concrete possible terms in the book’s eponymous chapter, “The Trouble with History.” The definition of freedom that Michnik provides is eminently practical: “the capacity for autonomous evaluation of the past, the confrontation of various points of view, and various interpretations of the sources” (p. 48).
Too rarely do historians reflect on their craft—not only on its epistemology and ethics, but also on the power that historical narratives hold over current political and social imaginaries. For Michnik, political opposition to Communism was anchored in the power and possibility of narratives: “the democratic opposition confronted the monologue of the communists’ version of history with a polyphonic voice” (p. 47). As the one-time dissidents who worked for decades toward Communism’s dismantling enter old age and pass out of public life, it is all the more important to have such a coherent set of reflections on the liminal space separating narratives of heroism from narratives of betrayal. For post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe, Michnik argues, the burden of negotiating the ethical straits of this transition rests with the current generation of historians: “This is why, as it turns out, the role and responsibility of historians acquires new meaning” (p. 46).

Readers unfamiliar with Michnik’s oeuvre should begin with the immensely helpful editor’s note, which clarifies the links between the writings on France and those focused on Central and Eastern Europe. This note opens the door to understanding, for example, the role of the French Revolution in Michnik’s book as that of a cautionary tale. He declares, “All of the French nineteenth century was a history of the grudge born of the bitterness of the Restoration, the era of the great disappointment, when grand ideas faded and turned into platitudes” (p. 169). This is precisely what Michnik does not want to see happen in Central and Eastern Europe.

For scholars of the Cold War, The Trouble with History should serve first and foremost as fodder for ethical self-reflection on how and why we practice our craft. Although Michnik’s judgments tend toward severity, the book’s first chapter serves as a case study in the complexity of pronouncing judgment on any historical figure. Willy Brandt, the West German chancellor best known in Poland for his 1970 act of genuflection before the monument to the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, was the architect of Cold War Ostpolitik and one of the statesmen responsible for inaugurating détente.

And yet, as Michnik points out, the same kind of stance that earned Brandt respect and moral authority in both West and East in the 1970s had, by the mid-1980s, made him—at least for Poland’s democratic opposition—a problematic figure. When in 1985 Brandt visited Poland and honored the generals who imposed martial law, and then refused to meet with Lech Wałęsa or to acknowledge the social power of the suppressed Solidarity movement, he demonstrated—in Michnik’s words—“the moral powerlessness of the powerful” (p. 22). In the 1970s, Brandt opened the door for international dialogue and human-rights protections, but this legacy proved wholly inadequate a decade later when confronted by new moral dilemmas.

Just as the French Revolution began by declaring liberty, equality, and fraternity and then ended in terror and death, Brandt’s example indicates the necessity for Cold War historians to see both sides of any figure or event they analyze. This, indeed, is the great service done by Michnik’s new book.

Reviewed by Peter Bugge, University of Copenhagen

Czech dissent, Jonathan Bolton argues in this ambitious and thoughtful book, needs rescuing not just from its detractors but from its eulogizers as well. Both sides portray the dissidents as an isolated, minute counter-elite, defined either in terms of human rights activism (“the Helsinki narrative”) or as theorists of civil society alternatives to the Communist systems (“the parallel polis narrative”), but neither perspective does justice to the complexity and diversity of dissent in Czechoslovakia. The problem has been exacerbated by the backshadowing often present in discussions of the impact of dissent in bringing down Communist rule, as these tend to assume that getting political results was a major motivating factor for the dissidents. This, Bolton shows, was not necessarily the case.

Bolton welcomes the recent trend to question the understanding of Communist rule under “normalization” as resting only on repression and popular apathy and to study everyday life and the complex negotiations of power and consent going on in various spheres. The “ordinary people narrative,” too, however, tends to stylize the dissidents as a small band of heroes (or, in Václav Klaus’s political exploitation of the trope, of mostly ex-Communist exhibitionists indulging in their imagined moral superiority) with no everyday of their own. This obscures the intersections between dissent and the rest of society and overlooks how dissidents persistently struggled with the painful question of how to judge and address the vast non-joining majority.

Dissent, Bolton suggests, must be studied as a cultural phenomenon in its own right, shaped by the specific conditions of Czechoslovakia in the 1970s. He therefore sets out to “recover that world, better to understand the texture of dissident life, its local practices, its vocabulary, and its obsessions” (p. 4). Based on comprehensive and varied source material, Bolton’s effort to recover that world (or, more accurately, reconstruct it) produces a meticulous investigation of how a heterogeneous group of Czech intellectuals came to converge around the Charter 77 Declaration and of how this nascent community came to define its identity and purpose for its surroundings and for itself. The account ends in 1980, a choice made to liberate the analysis from the shadow of 1989.

The result is an innovative, thought-provoking study that combines perceptive reinterpretations even of such well-digested texts as Václav Havel’s “The Power of the Powerless” with solid factual historiography. Bolton expertly dismantles the myth of the “trial of the Plastic People,” frequently presented as a main catalyst for the drafting of Charter 77, and also shows when, how, and why that myth arose and caught on. Equally convincing is his description of the many contingent factors affecting the recruitment of potential Charter signatories in December 1976. Bolton has an astute eye for the concrete: what it took to draft a samizdat text and to get in contact with potential contributors and readers, the role of spouses and the distribution of labor
within dissident “husband-and-wife-teams,” the locations of dissent, and the impact of surveillance, interrogations, and media smear campaigns. Such contextualization adds authority to his analyses of the many heated debates within the dissident community.

Charter signatories constantly discussed the meaning and purpose of their activity in the light of what Havel called the “cruel paradox” of dissent: the more some citizens stood up in defense of fellow citizens, the more they were labeled with a word separating them from these—hence also the ambivalence of Havel and others toward the term “dissident.” The discussions brought no consensus on what dissent meant or was to achieve, but keeping a public debate alive was, Bolton argues, valuable in its own right, and dissent’s ongoing commitment to articulating its own relationship to society at large gives it a different quality from other local manifestations of resistance to the regime. Historians may feel unfamiliar with Bolton’s emphasis on storytelling and first-person writing, but he persuasively shows how both were important practices of dissent, contributing vitally to the forging of group identities. Moreover, self-writing created freedom for a private sphere for those engaging in dissent, a sphere constantly violated by the authorities. If writing, in Ludvík Vaculík’s words, became a “daily self-grooming,” reading the resulting texts could be a kind of group therapy for those familiar with the issues and situations described, or a “de-newspaperized” source of information about the inner worlds of dissent for outsiders.

This privileging of dissident writing in all its manifestations is analytically and historiographically fruitful, but it also results in a certain bias. Bolton’s protagonists are almost exclusively men and women of letters, and the study deals less with the Plastic People of the Universe and the musical underground as a whole than the subtitle would lead one to believe. Bolton remarks in passing that after the drafting of the Charter, Havel was surprised when one of the most senior reform Communist politicians of 1968, Zdeněk Mlynář, a lawyer by training, turned up with over a hundred signatures. This group of signatories, mostly reform Communists with no background in arts and letters, largely remains invisible in the book even though several played significant roles in the Charter. If Worlds of Dissent thus cannot stand alone as a history of the early years of the Charter 77, no future study of dissent can on the other hand ignore Bolton’s work. When Bolton sums up his analysis of Vaculík’s The Czech Dream Book, one of the most important literary works emerging from dissent, by arguing that Vaculík produced “a textured, fine-grained image of a living, breathing community, as well as a vivid sense of that community’s genuine interest in the well-being of Czech culture as a whole” (p. 262), he indirectly gives a fitting description of his own splendid biography of a remarkable and admirable community of human beings.


Reviewed by Edwin Moise, Clemson University
Why South Vietnam Fell attributes the outcome of the Vietnam War to a wide range of factors, including generous foreign support for the Communist forces in Vietnam; inadequate U.S. support for the Republic of Vietnam (RVN); a deficient fundamental strategy of attempting to defend the borders that had been established for South Vietnam in 1954; the U.S. decision to encourage a military coup against RVN President Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963; gross irresponsibility by the U.S. media; and the inadequate training and poor leadership of the RVN armed forces.

Anthony James Joes, a political scientist and a specialist on insurgency and counterinsurgency, is intensely anti-Communist. He lays great stress on the brutal and dictatorial character of the Communists. He is exaggerating somewhat, but not much. Vietnamese Communism was in fact brutal and dictatorial.

Joes’s exaggeration of the amount of Soviet-bloc and Chinese assistance to the Communists, and his underestimation of U.S. assistance to the anti-Communist forces, represent a more serious problem, especially in regard to the final stage of the war, from 1973 to 1975.

Joes states that in June 1948 France recognized the independence of the State of Vietnam with Bao Dai as its head and suggests that France from this point on was so clearly committed to independence that the Vietnamese no longer had any need to fight for it (p. 5). Joes thus is able to deny credit to the Viet Minh as nationalists for the remaining six years of their war against the French. “Ho Chi Minh made war not for an independent Vietnam but for a Stalinist Vietnam” (p. 164), he writes. Joes also avoids, in his chapter on the reasons the French and their Vietnamese allies lost the war against the Viet Minh, any acknowledgment that Vietnamese who supported the French might to some extent have been compromising their credentials as nationalists. In this chapter he treats the State of Vietnam as “an independent state” (p. 7) with its own army (the Vietnamese National Army) and ignores the way the French kept command of the Vietnamese National Army firmly in their own hands and in general kept the State of Vietnam weak and helpless because they feared it might attain actual independence if allowed to grow too strong. Only in a later chapter, when Joes is describing the accomplishments of Ngo Dinh Diem from 1954 onward, does he abruptly notice that the position of prime minister of the State of Vietnam still carried no real power when Diem took that post in mid-1954.

Joes’s endorsement of the democratic character of the various elections held in South Vietnam is based more on statements by other authors praising those elections than on factual details. Thus, in discussing the 1955 referendum that made Diem chief of state, Joes avoids mentioning the official vote figures, which seemed to most observers absurd on their face: a 97.8 percent turnout of eligible voters and 98.2 percent of the votes cast for Diem. Instead Joes claims (though the source he cites does not support this claim) that U.S., Australian, British, and French representatives believed the figures had been “reasonably accurate” (p. 39). In other places as well, Joes’s sources, if checked, turn out not to say what he claims they say.

Probably the worst parts of the book are Joes’s extended denunciations of the way the U.S. media covered the war, especially the turmoil that culminated in the
coup that overthrew President Diem in 1963 and the Tet Offensive of 1968. Joe wildly exaggerates the negative tone of the media. Thus he says of the Tet Offensive, “Apparently, not even one positive story on the fighting performance of any ARVN [South Vietnamese Army] unit appeared in any American newspaper” (p. 109). His statements are based too often on quotations from other authors who share his view of the media and far too seldom on actual examples from the media of the attitudes he claims were pervasive there.

In some sections of the book Joe makes a better case; notably, the argument that the United States and the RVN, which tried to defend the borders of South Vietnam, would have been better off if they had chosen to do either less or more. North Vietnamese forces moving through Laos along the “Ho Chi Minh Trail” were able to attack South Vietnam from the west, across a border of such great length that it was essentially indefensible. Either extending a defensive line across Laos to block the Ho Chi Minh Trail or abandoning some of the northernmost provinces could have given South Vietnam a much shorter border to defend, one that was more within RVN and U.S. capabilities. But there are not enough such sections to justify the high cost of this very short (151 page of actual text) and somewhat repetitive book. Why South Vietnam Fell cannot be recommended for any category of reader.


Reviewed by Radoslav A. Yordanov, Independent Researcher

The end of the Cold War and the subsequent opening of East European archives have been a boon for scholars who study East-West relations in the second half of the twentieth century. One of the topics that have attracted a good deal of attention among students of international history is the U.S.-Soviet rivalry in the Third World. A rich set of local, regional, and international dynamics and actors contributed to a complex set of motives for the superpowers to become involved in remote areas. Two recent accounts try to shed more light on the issue through markedly different approaches: Elizabeth Schmidt’s *Foreign Intervention in Africa* offers a broad synthesis based on well-known secondary accounts regarding U.S. motivations for engaging in Africa, whereas Louise Woodroofe’s *Buried in the Sands of the Ogaden* provides a detailed study of U.S. reactions to the Horn of Africa crisis from 1974 to 1978, based almost entirely on original research in U.S. archives.

Examining Schmidt’s and Woodroofe’s books together may seem a bit strange at first, owing to their different scopes and frameworks, but the nature of their
conclusions justifies reading these accounts together. Different as the two studies may seem from one another, they arrive at nearly identical conclusions, painting in dark tones the outcomes of foreign intervention on the African continent. Despite their methodological limitations, they represent two noteworthy studies of contemporary history, using contrasting yet complementary frameworks. The books demonstrate the pitfalls and deficiencies of the West’s approach (and inevitably the East’s as well) toward the Third World during the Cold War.

In *Foreign Intervention in Africa*, Schmidt tries to challenge the “popular myths” (p. 1) in which Africans are assumed to be reluctant or unable to govern themselves and are blamed for their own plight. Schmidt takes on this ambitious task by offering a sweeping historical overview of external powers’ involvement in Africa. In defending her thesis, she contends that the variety of predicaments ravaging the continent today are not solely the outcome of choices made by Africans themselves but are also partly the result of foreign interference in African politics. The time span of Schmidt’s account is broad, encompassing the entire period of the Cold War and decolonization (1945–1989), the years of state collapse (1991–2001), and the unfinished “global war on terror” (2001–2010). With limited space available, the task of examining external powers’ involvement in a vast and complex continent is bound to be difficult. Schmidt focuses mostly on U.S. political and military interventions in carefully selected African case studies. Woodroofe’s *Buried in the Sands of the Ogaden* provides a well-documented and insightful story, which, though lacking the breadth of Schmidt’s “histories,” demonstrates an enviable depth in tracing U.S. policies and perceptions toward the Horn of Africa in the turbulent period for the region that began with the overthrow of Haile Selassie in 1974 and the Ethiopian-Somali war of 1977–1978. Schmidt weighs the relative importance of key variables that determined the extent of foreign influence over a host of troubled African regimes, whereas Woodroofe’s biggest challenge seems to have been her failure to use Soviet, East European, and Cuban documents that would yield a fuller picture of East-West interaction. Regardless, her focus on issues of U.S. decision-making and Washington’s reactions to Moscow’s intervention in the Horn delivers an insightful and detailed analysis of debates in the White House and at Foggy Bottom.

Both books, though employing different frameworks in tackling the issue of foreign intervention in Africa, come to similar conclusions. Schmidt’s approach, historically examining continent-wide development, has a more Africanist tint, whereas Woodroofe’s “globalist” outlook shows the extent to which the Cold War moved to the Third World. However, the two authors agree that Cold War animosities played a vital role in motivating the involvement of external powers on the African continent. Schmidt’s account shows “the ways in which African actors sought outside assistance to bolster their positions in internal struggles and how their external allies introduced geopolitical considerations into local and regional conflicts” (Schmidt, p. 13). In six Cold War and decolonization case studies (nationalism and nonalignment in Egypt and Algeria, the Congo crisis, decolonization in Portugal’s Africa, white minority rule in Southern Africa, border conflicts in the Horn, and France’s “private African
domain”), Schmidt covers territories formerly controlled by the four major imperial powers, demonstrating, as a result, the nuances in the “range of motivations for foreign intervention” (p. 30). She is well aware that her case studies represent only a small fraction of the variety of foreign interventions in Africa during the Cold War years, and thus, instead of offering a broad outline, she provides “evidence of patterns that transcended time and space” (pp. 31–32), according to which the Cold War powers tried to shape “a new international order that instead catered to their interests” (p. 2). Woodroofe’s detailed examination of the Horn of Africa crisis, on the other hand, demonstrates the extent to which the Cold War “had moved beyond Europe” (p. 3). She reaches similar conclusions to Schmidt’s, claiming that the U.S. response to the Horn conflict demonstrated the an inability to move beyond a “Cold War mind-set.” “Détente and the failure in Vietnam,” she argues, “had not done enough to enable American policy makers to reframe their world vision” (p. 11).

Still, both authors show that the local actors were far from passive observers of what was happening in their domains. Schmidt contends that although foreign intervention in Africa strongly influenced the outcome of conflicts and the fate of African nations, the intervening powers also got engaged in complex interactions with African societies. Even though foreign governments took advantage of African divisions to promote their own interests, local “actors also used external alliances for their own ends” (Schmidt, p. 227). Particularly interesting in this regard is the Horn of Africa crisis. Woodroofe’s account rightly hints at the limitations of external actors on the outcomes of local conflicts. Moreover, the Horn of Africa case also shows how small countries, such as Somalia and Ethiopia, were “easily able to manipulate the superpowers by playing them against each other” (Woodroofe, p. 137).

Instead of alleviating African conflicts, foreign intervention throughout the periods under consideration tended to aggravate them. This is another conclusion that emerges from the two accounts. Woodroofe claims that superpower involvement in the Horn’s conflict “was a complete disaster for all parties involved.” She declares, in a caustic tone: “Everybody lost,” with Moscow ending up supporting “a brutal and ineffective ally who bled it financially and proved so unpopular abroad that it did nothing to enhance Soviet prestige” (p. 11). Washington, on the other hand, seemed to have backed Somalia’s invasion of its Ethiopian neighbor, an erroneous step that eventually helped make the United States appear to be a “vulnerable giant” (p. 11). Schmidt also supports the argument that the foreign powers’ intervention in Africa had a detrimental effect on the recipients of their assistance. Without the vast quantities of weaponry provided by Washington and Moscow, local conflicts would not have spiraled into regional ones that claimed many lives. Evaluating the external powers’ involvement in the Horn, she concludes, “[t]he militarisation and destabilisation of the Horn during the Cold War are at the root of the conflicts that continue to devastate the region in the twenty-first century” (p. 144).

Schmidt extends her conceptual framework through the post–Cold War period by an examination of U.S.-African relations amid the global “war on terror.” This coverage allows her to highlight parallels between Cold War-era external interventions
and interventions in the twenty-first century. She claims that in the Cold War years, owing to the fluctuating balance of powers and circumstances, Washington pursued “contradictory Africa policies” (p. 24). On the one hand, as an open advocate of decolonization, the U.S. government rhetorically championed freedom, democracy, and self-determination. On the other hand, some officials in Washington sympathized with the concerns of white settlers in southern Africa, and this sympathy was reinforced by anti-Communist sentiments that often led to a misunderstanding of African nationalist movements. In southern Africa, a region prized for its strategic location and mineral wealth, conflicting U.S. interests led the United States to prop up, rather than oppose, colonialism and white-minority rule (p. 24). Surprisingly or not, local issues have again mostly been ignored by foreign interests in the post–Cold War period, and Schmidt maintains that humanitarian interventions, while well intentioned, have often been “ineffective or counterproductive” (p. 22).

The two books demonstrate the lack of learning on the part of the great powers. Woodroofe shows that the failure to understand local conditions damaged the superpowers’ bids to enforce their beliefs on underdeveloped countries. The United States was deeply frustrated by its inability to influence developments on the Horn, and the Soviet Union, despite a successful military outcome in the Ogaden in early 1978, ended up in a worse position. Soviet leaders found themselves helping an objectionable client, and they were eventually embarrassed when Ethiopia’s Soviet-supported policies resulted in “the most famous famine of the twentieth century” (Woodroofe, p. 137). Woodroofe’s conclusion is understandably dark. She claims that often “in the Cold War, there were no winners—just more victims” (p. 137). Taking the analysis a little further, Schmidt argues that U.S. policymakers appear not to have learned the lessons of the dismal experience during the Cold War. The global war on terrorism has led to an increased foreign military presence on the continent and renewed support for repressive regimes. Concerned about U.S. energy and physical security, U.S. officials have focused on resource-rich countries and those deemed susceptible to terrorist infiltration. Therefore, rather than promoting security, U.S. military involvement on the continent “often provoked intensified conflict and undermined the prospects for peace negotiations” (Schmidt, p. 229).

No single scholarly work can provide a sufficiently wide and in-depth account of a given historical period. Where Schmidt’s history falls short, Woodroofe’s detailed examination complements it very well. Although the case studies in Schmidt’s book vary enormously, she seeks to distill patterns from her wide-ranging survey of contemporary historical processes. Her collection of skillfully chosen cases presents a valuable introduction to students interested in the field of twentieth-century international history. Her synthesis is also a valuable addition to the scholarship on these controversial issues, which continue to attract the attention of researchers and students. Woodroofe’s study provides an easy-flowing narrative, insightfully outlining U.S. policymakers’ perceptions by linking regional issues and global agendas. The result is appropriate for more-advanced students who would like to understand how seemingly unimportant matters in international politics may interfere and obstruct a state’s primary objectives.
Crucially, the implications of Woodroffe’s account go beyond the goals she sets for her study. By demonstrating the limits on external powers’ involvement in a remote and less than fully understood setting, her book hints at the devastating discrepancies between intentions and outcomes—and the far-reaching implications past discrepancies still have today.