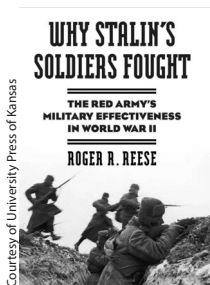


Book Reviews



Lawrence, KS:
University Press of
Kansas, 2011

408 pages

\$37.50

Why Stalin's Soldiers Fought: The Red Army's Military Effectiveness in World War II

by Roger R. Reese

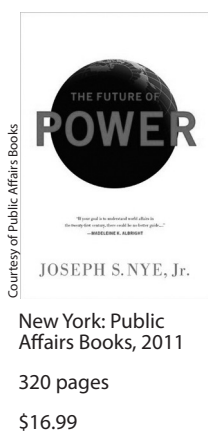
Reviewed by Stephen Blank, Strategic Studies
Institute, US Army War College

Roger Reese has already established himself as an outstanding historian of the Soviet Army. In this impressive book, Reese takes on one of the major questions of that army's history, namely the motivation of its fighting men and women in World War II or, as the Soviets and post-Soviet states still call it, the Great Fatherland War. It is no longer the case that we do not acknowledge this theater as the decisive one of the war in Europe, and that here as nowhere else in history we encounter all the terrors and awesome spectacle of total war.

Because this war was the greatest trial of the Soviet system, closely following the revolution and civil war of 1917-21, and because of the scope of the Soviet Union's victory and sacrifice, this war has become the object of a sustained and ongoing campaign by that government for historical memorialization. The Soviet Union and its successor states have deliberately fashioned a heroic narrative to explain the sacrifices of the war, the valor of the Soviet people, and the consequences of victory. This campaign of official mythmaking quickly attached itself to the question of why Soviet soldiers fought despite the terrible mismanagement of their commanders, the huge number of prisoners taken by the Nazis and their allies, and despite a generation of brutality by the Stalinist regime. Easy answers such as they fought for their homeland, for Stalin, for socialism, or it was the Nazi atrocities that drove people to fight all possess some element of truth; however, after reading Reese's description of the human dimension of the war, the reader will better understand it in all of its unadorned complexity.

Now that archives and memoirs have been opened, as was never the case under Soviet rule, it is possible for scholars like Reese to remind us that human motivations, whether we examine one man or the masses, never are simple or uniform. People who had every reason to resent and reject the regime volunteered or were mobilized as the case may be. Similarly, many who had reason to fight for the Soviet way of life sought other alternatives. Undoubtedly, the Soviet regime and its mass media missed no opportunity and spared little in its attempt to convince Soviet citizens of the rightness of its cause, resulting in a highly partisan and restricted information campaign to motivate its citizens. But even when allowing for the propaganda campaign and the influence such intangibles as Stalin's persona, socialism, or other more mundane motivations, it is clear the Soviet people were not an undifferentiated mass of heroic patriots as the nation's propaganda machine contended.

To be certain, heroic valor and endurance were abundant, tragically all too abundant given the nature of the regime for which people struggled. Nonetheless, they were and should remain to be seen as human beings not plaster saints. Reese goes a long way in addressing the question of the Red Army's motivation while revealing the genuine complexity that underlay the motives of its soldiers, sailors, and airmen (and women) in all their diversity and complexity. Similarly, the author effectively points to the diversity of motivation that sustained unit cohesion and military effectiveness in spite of all the disasters of 1941-42 and the associated suffering of all Soviets. In demythologizing the war, Reese gives back to the Soviet people something of which both Hitler and Stalin sought to rob them—their humanity and complexity. For this readers should be grateful.



The Future of Power

by Joseph S. Nye Jr.

Reviewed by Louis J. Nigro Jr., US Ambassador (Retired), author of *The New Diplomacy in Italy*

Anyone who tells you that America is in decline or that our influence has waned, doesn't know what they're talking about.
—President Barack Obama, 26 January 2012

This monograph presents Professor Nye's current reflections on the nature of power in international affairs and how states and nonstate actors will manage (or mismanage) the power available to them in the future. The author artfully blends theory and history, concept and concrete example to make his case. His conclusions are sensible, centrist, and unsurprising. Among other things, he makes an important contribution to our understanding of current trends, especially in his analysis of the debate over whether or not the United States is "in decline," either relatively or absolutely, in international affairs.

Joseph Nye has been making important contributions to American foreign and national security policy and policy debates for decades. As a University Distinguished Service Professor and former dean of Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, former Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Security Assistance, Science, and Technology (1977-79), chair of the National Intelligence Council (1993-94), Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (1994-95), and the author of many influential books, he has been one of the most prominent and consequential of the nation's public policy intellectuals. His theory of "soft power" introduced a new and useful concept to the panoply of political science tools for understanding the international system.

With *The Future of Power*, Nye makes yet another important contribution to understanding how the international system works by updating his views on power while providing a refined version of his signature concept of soft power,

offering significant arguments in the debates related to questions of America's alleged decline, and prescribing the use of "smart power" to US policymakers and implementers. As in so many of his previous efforts at explication, including his outstanding textbook, *Understanding International Conflict: A Guide to Theory and Practice*, Nye's writing in *The Future of Power* balances simplicity and accessibility with scholarly precision and documentation.

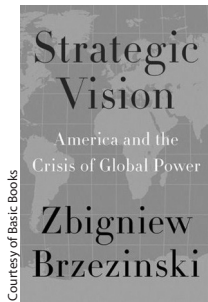
Nye divides his exposition into three parts. First, in four chapters on "Types of Power," he describes the nature of power in international affairs, and deals with military, economic, and soft power in detail.

Second, in two chapters on "Power Shifts," he educates his readers on the difference between power transition from one nation-state to another or others (a familiar historical process) and power diffusion from nation-states themselves to nonstate actors (a new phenomenon born of globalization and the information revolution): "the problem for all states in today's global information age," Nye says, "is that more things are happening outside the control of even the most powerful states."

For this reviewer, Nye's take on the "American declinism" debate is a key strength of the book. This debate got front-page news coverage as a result of news reports that President Obama's statement in his State of the Union Address (quoted above) was inspired by neoconservative strategic thinker Robert Kagan's new book, *The World America Made*, which strongly opposes the view that American power and influence is on the decline in the international arena.

Nye carefully analyzes the elements of the argument related to the debate regarding American decline, denying that of possible competitors (Europe, Japan, Russia, Brazil, India, and China) only China can be considered a serious contender for the title of top nation. Nye shows how enduring US international advantages—viable alliances and partnerships, economic adaptability, flexibility and innovation, significant soft power attractiveness in the culture and ideology of an open society—make predictions of American's decline far too pessimistic and unrealistic. Nye asserts that, despite major problems and obstacles, the US domestic front provides ample reason to believe the United States has the capacity to maintain its current international leadership position. This is based on continued prosperity and a constant national sense of purpose, as the United States exploits alliances (with states) and networks (civil society, the internationalized information society) in the twenty-first century. Finally, in a chapter titled "Smart Power," Nye tries to define how to exercise power to accomplish foreign and national-security goals, specifically addressing the American policymaking and policy-implementing elite.

As a practical matter, Nye's chapters on the nature of power in international affairs, the military, economics, and soft power, respectively, will be useful if assigned by educators as authoritative reading for classes on this crucial subject. As noted, Nye's chapter on "American Declinism" will be highly useful in classes that deal specifically with America's international role in the twenty-first century, especially when considered in relation to the rise of China.



New York: Basic Books, 2012

208 pages

\$26.00

Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power

by Zbigniew Brzezinski

Reviewed by John Coffey, retired Foreign Affairs Officer at the US State Department

Is America up or down? Will China eclipse America as the world's hegemon? What is the shape of the global landscape emerging in the twenty-first century, and how should the US chart its course in this new world? These questions of critical moment are addressed by the eminent scholar and practitioner of statecraft, Zbigniew Brzezinski, in *Strategic Vision*. His book invites comparison with Robert Kagan's recent work, *The World America Made*. While Kagan calls for a muscular defense of a historically unique liberal world order made by America, Brzezinski offers a new strategic vision for a world where American dominance is no longer attainable.

According to Brzezinski, our interactive, interdependent world is marked by a shift in geopolitical power from West to East, with the rise to global preeminence of China, India, and Japan. This redistribution of power is accompanied by the mass political awakening of previously repressed peoples in the Arab world and Central or Eastern Europe. These trends portend instability, yet human survival requires global cooperation. Europe is a spent political model for the world taking shape, and US global supremacy is no longer possible. American society still appeals to the world's peoples, provided it can revitalize itself and adopt a new strategic vision.

Brzezinski ascribes greater significance to the nation's domestic problems than does Kagan: a crushing national debt; a financial system driven by self-destructive greed; widening inequality; decaying infrastructure; a citizenry ignorant of the world; and a gridlocked political system. The author denounces America's Iraq and Afghanistan imperial wars and repeats the canard that President George W. Bush's global war on terrorism fostered anti-Islamic sentiment, tarnishing our international reputation. In fact, the Bush administration scrupulously tried to avoid this. On 17 September, six days after 9/11, President Bush visited the Islamic Center in Washington to assure members that America understands the vast majority of Muslims are peaceful and that we are at war with radical jihadist terrorists, not Islam. The President and his aides reaffirmed that message in numerous speeches and remarks.

Surveying the world "after America," Brzezinski predicts not Chinese dominance, but instead, like Kagan, a chaotic multipolar world where several roughly equal powers compete for regional hegemony. This conflict will jeopardize international cooperation and the promotion of democracy while placing the fate of the global commons up for grabs. East and South Asia will be the flashpoints of geopolitical rivalry with Japan, India, and Russia wary

of a rising China. Brzezinski states as axiomatic that the United States must avoid military involvement or, quite differently, any conflict on the mainland between rival Asian powers. The United States, he argues, should accept Beijing's preeminence on the Asian mainland and its emergence as Asia's leading economic power. We should balance this by maintaining close ties with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Singapore, and Indonesia, as well as by cultivating cordial relations with India. Brzezinski entertains cautious optimism that continued modernization and prosperity of a peaceful rising China will foster political pluralism and make it more amenable to the international democratic mainstream.

What role will America play in this new world? Brzezinski advocates enlarging the West by drawing Turkey and Russia closer to the European Union and North Atlantic Treaty Organization while balancing Asian rivalries through a cooperative partnership with China that reconciles it to its Asian neighbors. This realistic strategy, he claims, promotes a "revival of the West and facilitates the stabilization of the East within a broader cooperative framework." Looking beyond 2025, the author envisions a larger configuration of the West that includes Turkey and Russia. Casting an eye further ahead, this realist rhapsodizes about the "gradual emergence in the decades ahead of varied forms of a universal democratic political culture."

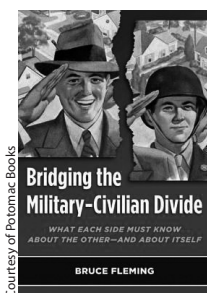
What should we make of a realist strategic vision calling for integration in a world riven by the centrifugal forces of nationalism and sectarian, racial, and ethnic animosities? Seventy years ago George Orwell wrote, "One cannot see the modern world as it is unless one recognises the overwhelming strength of patriotism, national loyalty . . . one must admit that the divisions between nation and nation are founded on real differences of outlook." Nowhere is this truer today than in the Muslim world. Nonetheless, Brzezinski attributes European, especially French and German, reluctance to absorb Islamic Turkey into the West to an ambivalent or ambiguous state of mind about an unassimilable alien culture. Europeans have had enough of the elite EU project, ignoring Eurocrats and repudiating it whenever given the opportunity. The Euro debt crisis has frayed already tenuous bonds and proved that Greeks will never behave like Germans any more than Sicilians will behave like Chinese. Moreover, the EU, already suffering enlargement indigestion, has had enough of Muslim immigrants. Small wonder that France and Germany, Europe's largest countries with populations of 65 and 81 million respectively, are loathe to merge with 80 million Muslim Turks.

Prospects for drawing Russia into a Western embrace appear no more auspicious. Brzezinski concedes numerous obstacles, not least the absence of the rule of law and the current power elite's opposition, thwart the political modernization of Russia necessary for genuine collaboration with the West. Yet despite whatever the intelligentsia and Dmitry Medvedev may tell Brzezinski in their private chit-chats, the odds are long against regime change in this "wild country," as Ambassador Michael McFaul indelicately called it. The Russian regime is fragile and contains the seeds of its own destruction. Russia depends

entirely on energy exports and has failed to modernize its Third World economy. Systemic corruption and secrecy in decisionmaking about policy and personnel matters block necessary political and economic reforms. Reforms are not possible without loss of political control. Corruption is the political glue holding the regime together, but exposure of corruption would destroy the criminal syndicate ruling the country. The regime's survival requires its suicide.

If a larger configuration of the West, including Turkey and Russia, is pie in the sky, a Sino-American partnership likewise strains the bounds of optimism. One need not exaggerate the Chinese threat to give due weight to the potential for regional conflict in Asia, particularly in the South China Sea. Brzezinski warns against American military involvement on the mainland between rival Asian powers. We can presume, however, that thoughtful observers agree with former Defense Secretary Robert Gates's admonition that "any future defense secretary who advises the president to again send a big American land army into Asia or into the Middle East or Africa should have his head examined." The only plausible scenario for US military action in Asia is a high-end naval, air, space, or cyberspace engagement. Gates outlined the forward deployment of the US military across the Pacific Rim to maintain maritime security and open access to international waterways. US forces will become more geographically distributed and operationally resilient, extending from Northeast to Southeast Asia and into the Indian Ocean.

Finally, what does Brzezinski mean by a "universal democratic political culture?" Does he express the American ethnocentric belief that the peoples of the world all want to be like us rather than vent their own passions and appetites? The author's democratic universalism ignores peoples' political culture—their values, habits, customs—and the propitious material circumstances that make decent, stable, effective self-government possible. His vision suggests merely some form of electoral democracy, head-counting, which produces not the blessings of Western liberal democracy, but the ability of 51 percent of the people to control the other 49 percent. A post-American world without the United States imposing order will be a nasty, brutish place, not a harmonious, universal democratic culture. Ironically, *Strategic Vision* offers an unrealistic vision of a post-American world.



Sterling, VA:
Potomac Books,
2010

283 pages

\$27.50

Bridging the Military-Civilian Divide: What Each Side Must Know About The Other—And About Itself

by Bruce Fleming

Reviewed by Charles Allen, COL (USA Retired),
Professor of Leadership and Cultural Studies, US Army
War College

While many treatments of civil-military relations focus on the exchange between appointed and elected officials with their uniformed senior military officers, this book examines the gap between American military culture and the civilian society it serves. The author is no stranger to the critique and provocation of the military establishment. While not inside the profession of arms, Dr. Bruce Fleming has the unique perspective of a civilian academic with long-standing engagement in a sector of the US military. Fleming has served over 25 years as a tenured professor of English at the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. An author of several books and recipient of writing awards, in this work he tackles thorny issues in a pedantic style that belies his passion for the subject. Fleming's opening line offers, "It's critically important in a democracy to encourage open thinking about how to improve its military." This statement rings true after more than a decade of conflict and the transition to an era of uncertainty for America's security forces.

Fleming crafts the book in an organized and deliberate manner to support his case that the US military-civilian gap does indeed exist. He then goes on to explicate the factors that allowed the gap to widen in the twenty-first century. A scholar well-versed in philosophy and literature, Fleming provides a primer on values and virtues, commonly touted as differentiating factors between military members and civilians in American society. He counters that belief with, "the military as a whole has no separable virtues, morals, or religion. All it has is technical virtues, pragmatic morality, and generalized, nondivisive religion." Because of mutual misperceptions of each other's roles, society has provided the military with the aura of monopolies and a degree of autonomy (in some cases, with undue deference) in how it conducts business. Fleming offers that the role of the military is that of the hammer to be wielded by the hand of democracy. He cautions that, too often, the military perceives itself as responsible for directing when, where, and how the hammer's blow is to be struck. In doing so, the military forgets it is not the hand of civilian disposition.

Readers may come away from this book like a punch-drunk fighter. Fleming provides a series of blows—jabs, hooks, and haymakers—that may or may not connect, but have the military reader ducking. What is the nature of war, virtue, religion, and human sexuality? And why should these questions matter to our military? He skewers the sacred cows of military virtue and

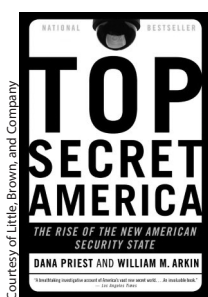
values, which have permitted the military to maintain its self-image as being above and superior to that of American society.

Naval Academy students in Fleming's classes must leave feeling uncomfortably confused but invigorated by the challenges to the taken-for-granted assumptions and beliefs integral to military culture. Readers external to his classroom experience might incorrectly charge Fleming with being racist, sexist, homophobic, and anti-Christian.

The author does not deny the need for diversity but is at odds at how the military goes about achieving it, especially for the service academies. He is against establishing policies and de facto quotas to ensure correct representation of the general population at the various academies. He is especially critical when the administration denies applicants who are more qualified the opportunity to attend. In the same light, he asserts the very nature of warfare and the inherent masculinity required to prosecute war effectively does not support women in the ranks since they significantly impact the male bonding process. Allowing openly gay members, he holds, would have the same adverse effect. In these instances, Fleming is decidedly not politically correct as he contests changes in the military that mirror changing attitudes in the general society. Many service academy graduates will raise an eyebrow as the author unabashedly targets their sports program, which he believes allows less qualified student-athletes into the academies.

The weakest sections of the book are Fleming's accounts of conflict with Naval Academy leaders. While he presents these incidents as illustrations of his themes, military readers may discount them as whining or attempts to get back at his superiors (this is part of their culture). Discerning readers will acknowledge such incidents occur with administrators who function within bureaucracies and others who may see themselves as institutional stewards.

Bridging the Military-Civilian Divide is necessary reading for military leaders at company-grade and above. The tendency within the military will be to dismiss out of hand the questions and challenges posed by Fleming. That would be a mistake. It is essential that members of the profession of arms are able to intelligently engage in a discourse and have a clear understanding of the profession and its role in service to the nation.



New York, NY:
Little, Brown and
Company, 2011

320 pages

\$27.99

Top Secret America: The Rise of the New American Security State

by Dana Priest and William M. Arkin

Reviewed by David W. Astin, Student, US Army War College.

In *Top Secret America*, authors Dana Priest and William Arkin explore the “intelligence-military-corporate apparatus” that has grown into a sprawling universe of its own since the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001. With Priest as primary author and Arkin serving as chief researcher, the two have expanded a four-part series of articles they first published in the *Washington Post* in 2010.

The result is an in-depth account of the enormous complex of organizations and agencies that have emerged in the decade since 9/11 to defend the country from the threat of terrorism. The purpose of the book is to promote debate about whether or not the response from the government is in the best interest of state security or has been conducted at the expense of individual liberties and democratic values. As the authors contend, “Only more transparency and debate will make us safe from terrorism and the challenges faced by the United States.”

The rise of the new American security state, which is the book’s subtitle, is the result of the overwhelming growth of the security industry and its vested interest in perpetuating the cycle of fear that 9/11 engendered. One of the book’s overarching themes is that such growth has not translated into greater security. As evidence, the authors cite cases such as US Army Major Nidal Malik Hasan’s shooting rampage at Fort Hood, Texas, in November 2009, as well as Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab’s failed attempt to ignite an explosive device hidden in his underwear on a flight bound for Detroit, Michigan, in December 2009. In these and other cases, the authors assert that “lack of disciplined focus, not lack of resources,” resulted in the failure of intelligence and security officials to detect the emerging threat. On a larger scale, such a lack of focus led to the colossal intelligence failure of 2011, namely the Arab Spring. The intelligence community’s inability to unearth the “dynamic political change sweeping across the Middle East” left American policymakers completely unprepared to promote acceptable alternatives. That no one is actually in charge should be a cause for concern among policymakers and citizens alike.

Acting on the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, Congress approved and the president signed the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act (IRTPA) in December 2004. The IRTPA established the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) and gave its leader responsibility over all intelligence matters. National policymakers viewed this as a necessary measure to rectify the perceived failure of the intelligence community to connect available information from various organizations, to include the CIA and FBI, that might have prevented the 9/11 terrorist attacks. As noted in *Top*

Secret America, the IRTPA failed to give the DNI authority over all intelligence matters, a key distinction that continues to impede the effectiveness of the position. As Priest and Arkin note, the passage of the IRTPA revealed the members of the intelligence community did not want to “give up the power they had over their budgets, personnel, and mission, and neither did the many congressional committees that supervised them and funded them.” It also revealed no one was willing to take on the entrenched interests that have resulted in an intelligence apparatus that, as of 2010, was 250 percent larger than it was on 10 September 2001. The estimated budget is approximately \$80.1 billion for the intelligence community, but it does not include the \$58 billion for the Department of Homeland Security, created in the aftermath of 9/11. As the authors assert, this growth has come “without anyone in government seriously trying to figure out where overlaps and waste were.”

This lack of visibility extends to the controlled access programs (CAPs) run by the CIA as well as the Pentagon’s special access programs (SAPs), which exist to give their respective organizations additional protection against unauthorized disclosure. As the Director of National Intelligence James Clapper stated, “There’s only one entity in the entire universe that has visibility on all SAPs—that’s God.” While the authors note that DOD has the bulk of the access programs, just as it has more than two-thirds of intelligence assets, the authors do not distinguish among the various types of CAPs and SAPs. The authors emphasize the lack of visibility on the vast number of programs and the fact that only a handful of senior government officials known as “Super Users” have access to them, which further compounds the problems the intelligence community faces in information sharing.

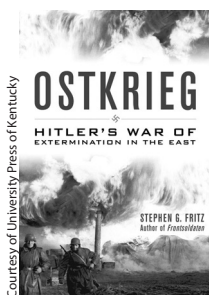
An area the book explores is the role of contractors in the intelligence-military-corporate apparatus. Priest and Arkin estimate there are 854,000 Americans with top-secret clearances, 265,000 of whom are contractors. Following 9/11, government officials intended to achieve cost savings by bringing large numbers of contractors into the intelligence and security arenas. Unfortunately for American taxpayers, this turned out to be another miscalculation. The authors note a 2008 study published by ODNI found contractors made up 29 percent of the workforce in the intelligence agencies but cost the equivalent of 49 percent of their personnel budgets. Of further note, former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said defense contractors cost him 25 percent more than federal employees. Though Gates vowed to reduce his department’s reliance on private contractors, he was unable to achieve a substantive reduction, and “by the Obama administration’s second year in office, its modest goal was to reduce the number of hired hands by 7 percent over two years.” The reason was simply that contractors had become entrenched in so many aspects of carrying out the mission that “what started as a clever temporary fix has turned into a dependency.”

Another theme of *Top Secret America* is that policymakers are flooded with marginally informative and redundant conclusions, and major challenges exist in processing the enormous volume of intelligence gathered. Data is often

outdated by the time it arrives to the appropriate decisionmaking entity, thus making it essential to develop an efficient processing, exploitation, and dissemination cycle capable of culling the most essential intelligence elements. Unfortunately, the emphasis appears to be on the development of technology and equipment rather than the means that direct such technology to the proper end.

One final theme in *Top Secret America* that warrants consideration by intelligence policymakers is the erosion of civil liberties for the alleged sake of security, a central concern of the authors. Priest and Arkin emphasize this theme repeatedly, contending “people seem not to notice the incremental changes taking place across the country, the eroding of privacy and the tabulation of personal information in government hands.” In spite of claims by advocates of greater security, the authors cite numerous instances of unwarranted surveillance and harassment of innocent individuals and groups at the hands of federal, state, and local officials. Thus, in the authors’ view, it is time to “close the decade-long chapter of fear, to confront the colossal sum of money that could have been saved or better spent, to remember what we are truly defending,” and in so doing usher in a new era of “openness and better security against our enemies.”

At 277 pages, *Top Secret America* flows smoothly across the political and military spectrums and from the national to local levels. For many readers, the book’s strength will be found in the ability of the authors to highlight the defining characteristics of *Top Secret America*, namely “its enormous size, its counterproductive duplication, its internal secrecy, and its old-fashioned, hierarchical structure.” However, in the process of making their point, the authors’ advocacy tends to become redundant and unbalanced. Those in the intelligence, counterterrorism, and homeland security arenas emerge as automatons in a hidden world or a sleepless place that ingests endless volumes of information that, in turn, is presented at acronym-laden, unemotional briefings. The authors contend today’s intelligence-security world has become a living, breathing organism, one that is impossible to control or curtail. While there is a great deal of validity in such claims, there is little or no recognition of successes in the areas the authors attack, nor is there much in the way of recognition of individuals who have performed admirably and worked selflessly in defense of America. The authors could have provided such recognition without diminishing their central themes. Nevertheless, *Top Secret America* does emerge as a powerful story that makes for essential reading for those interested in the shape that America’s future security will take. For America’s policymakers, it does not necessarily provide solutions, but it does provide warnings that should not go unheeded.



Courtesy of University Press of Kentucky
Lexington:
University Press of
Kentucky, 2011

664 pages

\$39.95

Ostkrieg: Hitler's War of Extermination in the East

by Stephen G. Fritz

Reviewed by Richard W. Harrison, author of *The Russian Way of War: Operational Art, 1904-1940*, and *Architect of Soviet Victory in World War II: The Life and Theories of G.S. Isserson*

This reviewer must confess to a keen sense of anticipation when I first picked up a copy of *Ostkrieg: Hitler's War of Extermination in the East*. The Eastern Front during World War II is one of the few remaining areas of the conflict that still holds the possibility of new discoveries for the serious student of military history. This is due primarily to the information coming out of the Russian military archives since the collapse of the Soviet Union, while the corresponding German archives have already been heavily mined and contain few surprises.

This context should be kept in mind when deciding whether to purchase this book. As the author admits in the preface, the book is not a work based on primary research, but rather represents a synthesis, an integrated narrative, based on research by historians from several Western countries, particularly Germany. Indeed, the author's bibliography is most impressive and relies heavily on German-language sources. Therein lies the book's strength as well as its weakness.

The almost-exclusively German focus serves the author well in dealing with such questions as the ideological underpinnings of Hitler's campaign in the East. He skillfully lays out the notion that Hitler's dream of *Lebensraum* for the German people could only be realized at the expense of the Slavic and other peoples inhabiting the western part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). This was certainly convenient, as Hitler had long before singled out the Soviet Union as the nexus of a worldwide Jewish-Bolshevik conspiracy. More grounded in reality was the belief that only by colonizing the area west of the Ural Mountains, Germany's India, could Hitler hope to achieve the economic wherewithal to sustain Germany in a final showdown with an American-led coalition and avoid a repetition of the German collapse of 1918.

These calculations also determined the timing of the attack. Fritz makes a good case that Hitler, stymied by British intransigence in the West, had only a very narrow window of opportunity in 1941 to destroy the Soviet Union before the United States could lend its enormous weight to the Allied cause. Time, as the author stresses throughout the work, was always against Hitler and Germany's ability to quickly dispose of the USSR; it eventually forced him into a losing struggle against a much more powerful coalition.

Fritz does a commendable job in examining what this meant for the various nationalities inhabiting Hitler's projected colonial empire—tens of millions deliberately starved so that the *Ostheer* and the German nation might

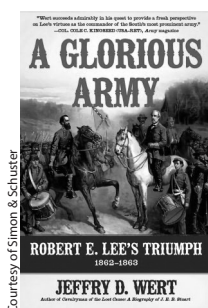
eat, as well as the more direct methods of extermination that eventually superseded this plan. This aspect of the book will inevitably invite comparisons with Timothy Snyder's *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin*, which will remain the gold standard in this area for many years to come. Fritz's focus is inevitably narrower in terms of time and place, although this should not be held against him.

Unfortunately, the author's approach, which he freely admits is told from the German perspective, is less conducive to a balanced understanding of the strictly military aspects of this gigantic struggle. This is due to his heavy reliance on German-language sources, which lead him to view the ebb and flow of combat from a distinctly German point of view. Such an approach hobbles the book from its very inception and recalls some of the books published during the first postwar years, when our appreciation of the Eastern Front was permanently skewed by the memoirs of such German generals as Manstein and Guderian.

Indeed, the very organization of the book reflects this lopsided version of events. Of the book's 10 chapters, the first two deal with the overall strategic situation preceding the war; Hitler's political, economic, and racial motivations for the invasion of the Soviet Union; and the German preparations for the attack. The next two chapters chronicle the German army's fortunes in the East from the start of the invasion on 22 June 1941 to the eve of the Soviet counteroffensive in early December, or fully a quarter of the book's text. Chapter 5 deals with the *Ostheer's* struggle to contain the Red Army's counteroffensive, while Chapter 6 covers the German advance during the summer campaign of 1942 to the Soviet counteroffensive at Stalingrad. Thus, of the book's 395 pages dealing with military operations, 221 pages, or 56 percent, cover the period when the Germans were primarily on the offensive.

Once the initiative passes to the Red Army, however, Fritz hurries to bring the book to its inevitable conclusion, as if he had unconsciously absorbed the upbeat narrative of the *Ostheer's* offensive period, while imbibing the grimmer picture (at least for the Germans) of the war's final two years. Chapter 7, for example, quickly disposes of the Soviet counteroffensive at Stalingrad, the German Sixth Army's death agony, and the failure of the German offensive at Kursk. Chapter 8 skims over the events of the German retreat in Ukraine to the spring of 1944, while Chapter 9 attempts to encompass the numerous Soviet offensives from the summer of 1944. Finally, Chapter 10 manages to cram in the Red Army's winter offensive of 1945 and the culminating operation to take Berlin, but you get the picture.

Unfortunately, by abandoning any pretense of being a balanced account of the war, the author becomes, in effect, a prisoner of his sources, much to the detriment of the overall narrative. Thus *Ostkrieg*, while moderately successful as a political-ideological analysis of the war in the East, ultimately fails as military history.



New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011

400 pages

\$30.00

A Glorious Army: Robert E. Lee's Triumph, 1862-1863

by Jeffrey D. Wert

Reviewed by Major Joseph C. Scott, Instructor,
Department of History, US Military Academy

Jeffrey Wert's *A Glorious Army* is an insightful command study of the senior leadership in the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia from the summer of 1862 until the summer of 1863, a crucial time in the American Civil War. Focusing on General Robert E. Lee and his well-known subordinates Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, James Longstreet, J. E. B. Stuart, A. P. Hill, and others, Wert shows how a cadre of talented military professionals led their force of valiant, if disorderly, soldiers to a virtually uninterrupted string of battlefield successes until their reversal in the fields near Gettysburg in 1863.

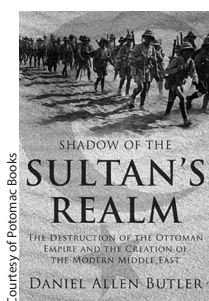
Wert's account presents a conventional—if often challenged—argument that the keys to Lee's operational and tactical success were his aggressive nature, his subordinates' abilities, and his opponents' excessive caution or outright incompetence. Like many historians in this camp, Wert agrees with Lee's assessment that the Confederacy needed an aggressive strategy because of its inferior numbers and resource base. The South could not outlast the North in a defensive war of attrition, and needed spectacular military success to get those people in the Union to allow the South its independence. This aggressive approach, Wert claims, was desperately needed. Lee assumed command of the Army of Northern Virginia in June 1862 when the full might of the Union Army of the Potomac was poised on the outskirts of Richmond. The Confederate army had just been repulsed in its efforts to relieve the capital, but Lee's way of war rescued Richmond by forcing a Union withdrawal in the Seven Days Battles. Lee's repeated seizure of the strategic initiative allowed his Army to nearly destroy the forces of John Pope in the Second Battle of Manassas, invade Maryland, and escape largely intact after the chaos of Antietam. In December, Lee's forces won a relatively easy victory against a bungled Federal attack at Fredericksburg, and in the following spring Lee's audacity led to his greatest triumph against astounding numerical odds at Chancellorsville. These successes were costly, however, as key subordinates (particularly Stonewall Jackson) were lost, and the army suffered immense casualties. Wert emphasizes that, despite the costs, these victories boosted élan and confidence in the Confederate Army, and solidified morale throughout the South. Gettysburg, however, brought Lee's string of victories to a halt when the very aggressiveness and confidence that had brought so much success instead resulted in shattering defeat.

Students familiar with the Civil War will find little new in Wert's book. The account is in many ways classic top-down, flags-and-generals military

history. He relies heavily on well-travelled primary sources and Civil War memoirs, and quotes liberally from scholars like Douglas Southall Freeman, Gary Gallagher, and Robert Krick, who have all gone this way before. This is, however, a good introductory work for students of the art of command or those looking for a good survey of this critical period and theater of the Civil War. The accounts of battles and campaigns are relatively clear, and the profiles of the Confederate leaders are in-depth and quite revealing in their humanity.

That being said, Wert is not afraid to take a stand on some contested issues within Civil War historiography. Though he is full of effusive praise for the Confederate leaders' accomplishments in the face of such overwhelming odds, he highlights critical mistakes, even in their greatest tactical victories. Such mistakes were especially detrimental because they increased Confederate casualties and prevented Lee's army from ever really crushing their dogged opponents. Given the South's objectives and limited manpower, such shortcomings were potentially deadly, and he portrays Lee's frequent disappointment when Union forces, though badly beaten, managed to escape to fight another day. Wert freely castigates Lee for his occasional mistakes, such as the wide dispersal of his command in hostile territory prior to Antietam, and for the overconfidence and lack of respect for his enemy that led to the Pickett's Charge debacle at Gettysburg. Though he praises Lee's effective subordinates, none of them escape entirely unscathed. Wert downplays the tactical reputation of "Stonewall" Jackson, for example, instead praising his ability to drive and motivate the men in his command. He highlights Longstreet's abilities, but also points out Longstreet was not above embellishing events in his memoirs. Worshipful partisans of the Confederate military pantheon may be troubled by the tarnish Wert puts on some of his portraits.

At its heart, this is a story about individuals and personalities. If there is any great flaw in *A Glorious Army*, it lies in Wert's occasional detours into moments of flowery, romantic prose that clash awkwardly with what is generally an effective narrative of real human beings struggling amidst the chaos and inhumanity of warfare in the Civil War era. Lee, his lieutenants, and their Army were able to accomplish an astounding series of triumphs, but at great, and ultimately futile, cost.



Washington, DC:
Potomac Books,
2011

302 pages

\$29.95

Shadow of the Sultan's Realm: The Destruction of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East

by Daniel Allen Butler

Reviewed by Dr. Rasheed Hosein, Assistant Professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic History, United States Military Academy

In recent years, there has been a growing conviction in popular scholarship for a more pragmatic and *longue durée* approach to the study of the formation of the modern Middle East. In so doing, there have been many noteworthy—and some not so noteworthy—contributions to the field. Most center around the post Great War mandatory system and tell the story of the resulting states in relation to their European tutors. Scholars are beginning, however, to address the role of the long-neglected Ottoman Empire in this narrative and examine how the death of this once great empire actually shaped the region. It is with this idea that Daniel Butler begins his survey, attempting to show that the configuration of states we call the Middle East is as much a product of Ottoman machinations while the empire existed as European ones after its demise.

Butler begins his survey by outlining in broad strokes the contours of the formation and expansion of the Ottoman Empire. It is regrettable the author included this foundational chapter, because it marks the weakest section of the book. There are some glaring factual errors—his claims that the Ottoman Empire was some fourteen hundred years old being the most egregious. Mistakes such as these demonstrate an author trying to do too much, without possessing the necessary foundation to execute this part of the book. This sort of essentialism is all too common in monographs where the author attempts to synthesize huge swathes of history; however, given the author's stated aim is not a discussion of the origin and high-water mark of Ottoman rule, but its decline, this error can be forgiven.

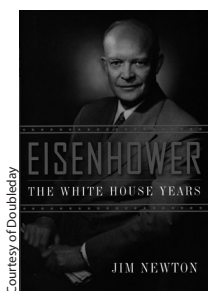
Where this work really shines is when Butler compresses the time period and digs deeply into the material. His lead-up to the Great War makes for an interesting examination of the interactions of the Great Powers and the precipitous military build-up between the navies of Great Britain and the German Empire. Likewise, his discussion on the various campaigns as they pertained to Ottomans, once hostilities began, is detailed and lively written. His descriptions of the Ottoman Grandees and their dealings with their European counterparts read as fascinating character studies, and his analysis of the historical outcomes are authoritative and logical. The Ottoman triumvirate of Ismail Enver Pasha, Ahmed Jamal Pasha, and Mehmet Talat Pasha really comes alive, and the author pays close attention to them, from their highs as power brokers

in the Committee of Union and Progress after the 1913 coup to the ignominy of their deaths roughly a decade later.

One element that is all too common in works appearing in this genre though, is the lack of even an attempt to utilize primary source materials from the Middle East or to tell the Ottoman story from an Ottoman-centered perspective. While Topkapi Serai archives are currently closed to the public, making access to some critical official and diplomatic records difficult, often the voice of these narratives is decidedly European. We should laud Butler for his attempt at constructing a narrative that speaks from the Turkish point of view. While his bibliography is overwhelmingly constructed of European language sources, there are (as mentioned above) some critical biographies of Ottoman notables included. Though this is a European driven narrative, the Ottoman Empire does not appear as a passive—although not mute—witness to the events in which it was to participate, but rather as an active participant in its own downfall.

In the title of this work, the author suggests he will tackle the creation of the modern Middle East that emerged from the rubble of the Ottoman Empire, but there is very little of this element in the work. This is the Ottoman Empire's story and the book concludes with the treaties that ended the allied occupation of the Anatolian peninsula and the formal dissolution of the old empire. We see little commentary on the arcs and trajectories of the various kingdoms and states that would arise out of her wreckage. Interested parties should look to new entries to the market such as James Barr's *A Line in the Sand: The Anglo-French Struggle for the Middle East, 1914-1948*; Efraim Karsh's *Empires of the Sand: The Struggle for Mastery in the Middle East, 1789-1948*; or even the now well-aged but still excellent narrative in David Fromkin's *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*.

In conclusion, aside from the unfortunate first chapter, there is much that is praiseworthy in this work. Butler is able to successfully straddle the line of an Ottoman work without forgetting the Ottomans. If one is looking for a lively and easily read book describing the death throes of the Ottoman Empire and its conduct prior to and through the Great War, then look no further. If one is looking for a work that leverages the formation of the modern Middle East into the equation, then some other works are likely better choices. With those caveats in mind, in the realm of nonspecialist literature on this critical period of Middle Eastern history, this book is a good option.



New York:
Doubleday, 2011

451 pages

\$29.95

Eisenhower: The White House Years

by Jim Newton

Reviewed by Major Josiah Grover, Instructor of Military History, United States Military Academy

In 2009, the Eisenhower Presidential Library revealed the prolific historian and Eisenhower biographer Stephen Ambrose fabricated interviews he claimed to have had with the former president. Ambrose's biography of Dwight D. Eisenhower had long been regarded as the definitive biography because of the author's unique access to the 34th president. The discovery of Ambrose's deception has made his biography suspect for both scholars and leaders seeking to understand Ike, while opening the door for new and more genuine appraisals of the former president. Jim Newton offers one such appraisal with a new biography of Ike in *Eisenhower: The White House Years*. The author of the previous work, *Justice for All*, a historical account of Chief Justice Earl Warren, is the latest Eisenhower biographer seeking to rehabilitate the image of a supposed caretaker president. Contrary to contemporary critics like Marquis Childs, who portrayed Eisenhower as "indecisive and lazy, stodgy and limited . . . a weak president," Newton argues Ike was "certain, resolute, and, though respectful of his advisers, commandingly their boss." In offering the thesis that President Eisenhower was an active leader in his administration, Newton builds upon the work of diplomatic historians and political scientists, notably Fred Greenstein, and does so in a very sympathetic fashion. As the title suggests, however, the author delivers not so much a biography of President Eisenhower but a biography of his presidency.

The story begins with Ike's childhood and passes rapidly through adolescence, tracing his path to the United States Military Academy, where Ike was both average and memorable. "An assignment in Texas followed graduation, where he met Mamie Doud. They married, welcomed and then lost a son, and decamped for Panama, where Eisenhower served under the tutelage of mentor General Fox Connor. That apprenticeship on the perimeter of the American empire kept Ike out of troop command in World War I. In the interwar period he served a second apprenticeship under the gimlet eye of General Douglas MacArthur. Service with MacArthur in Washington and later in the Philippines made Eisenhower wary of theatrics. When war broke out in 1941, General George Marshall selected the young general to head the War Plans Division on the Army Staff and then, ultimately, to lead Allied forces to victory in Europe.

The author covers all of this background rather quickly, driving the narrative toward Eisenhower's presidential years, which comprise 85 percent of the biography. The theme throughout is Ike's search for a "middle way," an attempt to steer policy between perceived extremist positions on the political right and left. Seeing as *The Middle Way* is the title of Eisenhower's presidential papers, it is an easy assertion to accept, though there are holes in every story.

Newton gives cautious credit to Ike for his civil rights record, asserting that by supporting Attorney General Herbert Brownell, the president was practicing a calibrated strategy for easing racial tensions in the fullness of time. A more critical biographer might interpret Ike's record on civil rights as an abdication of presidential responsibility to enforce the law.

Other domestic topics include Eisenhower's appointments to the Supreme Court, the administration's assertion of executive privilege, and the president's refusal to confront Senator Joe McCarthy during the height of the Red Scare, where Newton asserts "nothing was inevitable, even Ike's break with McCarthy." Eisenhower did confront accusations of socialism by his own party for supporting the highway bill and the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway, underscoring the fears of communism that were rampant in the 1950s. The internal politics of the administration are addressed in detail, including the close partnership between the president and John Foster Dulles, as well as the more complicated relationship Ike forged with his young vice-president, Richard Nixon.

The administration's foreign policy receives more in-depth treatment, from the development of a national security strategy centered on massive retaliation in the Solarium exercise to the conduct of covert operations against Iran and Guatemala. Irritated by French military misdirection during World War II, Ike rebuffed French pleas for assistance in Indochina in 1954, refusing to use American combat power to underwrite a "frantic desire of the French to remain a world power." Eisenhower employed strong-arm diplomacy against allies France, Britain, and Israel during the 1956 Suez crisis and a more conciliatory diplomacy with hostile China over the straits of Taiwan. The most important diplomatic relationship was between Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev and Eisenhower, a relationship that may have eased Cold War tensions had it not fallen apart in the wake of the 1960 U2 incident. Interestingly, an administration that sought to influence global affairs, led by a famous general, deployed American troops only once on a peace-keeping mission in Lebanon. The litany of international affairs drawing American attention over the course of the Eisenhower presidency supports Newton's argument for a reimagining of the 1950s as a deceptively eventful decade, kept under control by a president who actively worked to keep the nation on an even keel.

According to the author, President Eisenhower found an effective middle way and won the United States the peace it enjoyed over the course of his presidency. He made progress on advancing civil rights, supported his able subordinates, contained the growth of the American defense establishment, and did it all with little loss of life. *Eisenhower: The White House Years* is well written and researched, with sufficient endnotes and a full bibliography. Jim Newton draws from a wide variety of sources, including the Eisenhower Library and interviews with Ike's son, John Eisenhower. Newton also makes use of newly discovered documents to explore the drafting and evolution of the president's famous farewell speech. The biography is sympathetic to Eisenhower throughout—where others have criticized Ike's record on civil rights, Newton offers

cautious credit; where others have been critical of Ike's generalship, Newton is complimentary; where others have indicted Eisenhower's relationship with wartime driver Kay Summersby, Newton is inclined to forgive. Despite these partialities to his subject, the book is well worth reading. It is suitable for scholars and senior members of the defense establishment. As a single volume treatment of the Eisenhower presidency, it is invaluable, especially for understanding the context of decisions made in both foreign relations and domestic policy.



New York: Public Affairs Books, 2011

498 pages

\$35.00

The Age of Airpower

by Martin Van Creveld

Reviewed by Richard L. DiNardo, Professor for National Security Affairs, United States Marine Corps Command and Staff College

Ever since the Wright brothers demonstrated the possibility of flight in a heavier-than-air aircraft, airpower has become a standard feature of military operations, especially those conducted by the United States. Any number of air forces have been the subject of numerous works, especially those of Germany in World War II and its American and British opponents. Noted military historian, critic, and professional controversialist Martin van Creveld has now tackled the subject in a broad way with his latest work, *The Age of Airpower*.

Van Creveld takes the long view in a largely chronological fashion, beginning with the first employment of aircraft in a military manner, starting with the Italians in the Italo-Turkish War of 1912. The first major test of the potential of airpower was a World War I (WWI) challenge that the air forces of all the major combatants passed. Once it became clear airpower was here to stay, the major military powers turned to the question of how to incorporate air forces into their existing military. In many cases, incorporation meant the creation of an independent air service, closely linked to the emerging theories regarding the criticality of command of the air proposed by such thinkers as Giulio Douhet.

To his credit, Van Creveld does not limit his discussion to regular air forces. He includes extensive narration and commentary on the development and expansion of naval-air and its most common expression, the aircraft carrier. Here the author concentrates the majority of his attention on the two preeminent powers in this arena—Japan and the United States.

Van Creveld provides a fairly conventional discussion of the conduct of World War II and the air warfare, including naval operations. He fails, however, to note one of the great ironies of airpower theory and practice. The original airpower theorists proposed the use of aircraft and strategic bombing to avoid a repeat of the costly attritional warfare that was a hallmark of WWI. In actual practice, though, air warfare became the ultimate example of attrition warfare. Germany and Japan both lost control of the air because the Allies were able

to kill or disable pilots and other aircrew faster than they could be replaced. Van Creveld points out the doctrine of strategic bombing in actual practice fell short of expectations, mainly due to the limitations of the aircraft used, at least until the advent of the Boeing B-29, which the author classifies as the first true strategic bomber.

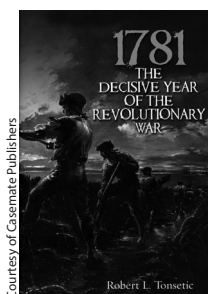
The emergence of atomic weapons is covered in depth. Van Creveld implies, correctly, that the development of atomic and later nuclear weapons did little to change the actual conduct of warfare. Rather, the specter of atomic and nuclear weapons had a greater impact on whether or not a country went to war.

Equally important was the advent of jet technology. The impact of jet propulsion over the long term, he suggests, has been deleterious to air forces. As time has passed, the expense involved in developing new generations of jet aircraft has become prohibitive. At the same time, the higher performance of jet aircraft, especially in terms of speed and endurance, poorly suits them to specific employment, especially close-air support and counterinsurgency—two missions air forces do not like anyway. The emergence of nuclear weapons reduced the likelihood that strategic bombers would be employed in a strategic attack role, given the possibility of escalation; this was especially true during the Cold War era. With the two major super powers veritably off limits because of the nuclear threat, bombers could not be used to any real effect in the proxy wars that were a hallmark of the Cold War, mainly due to a dearth of strategic targets. Thus, air forces found themselves facing situations like Vietnam, where strategic bombers were often utilized against tactical targets. This brings Van Creveld to the conclusion that airpower, especially jet-powered aircraft, has proven of limited utility in conflicts since World War II.

Aside from traditional kinetics, Van Creveld examines several other types of airpower, including helicopters, fixed-wing aircraft in transport and reconnaissance roles, and the later technology of missiles and drones. In regard to the latter, he sees drones as the future of airpower, since drones are cheaper than piloted aircraft, be they land or naval based. His comments will provide much grist for conversation in the Pentagon.

The book does have flaws. Van Creveld, for example, eschews any discussion of the German V weapons, stating they were the province of the army, an assertion that is only half true. While the V-2 was indeed the German army's program, the V-1 belonged to the Luftwaffe. While Van Creveld has an excellent grasp of the literature, there are times when he might have done better to acquaint himself with an archive or research library, as opposed to resorting to such dubious sources as Wikipedia®. Finally, there are times when the author falls into an old and unfortunate trap, making statements that are simply obnoxious or, at best, infelicitous, particularly with regard to women. Occasionally, Van Creveld tends toward sheer snarkiness, which undercuts the value of his argument. Finally, Van Creveld is too much a believer in the rational actor school of strategic decisionmaking. In the section on World War II, for example, Creveld states it was simply crazy that Germany and Japan ever thought they could win. That misses the point; Adolf Hitler and Hideki Tojo believed they could win and

that is why they went to war. Additionally, Van Creveld is too quick to minimize the danger of a nuclear armed Iran. Despite its flaws, this book should be read by those military professionals and historians who are interested in airpower and its future.



Philadelphia:
Casemate
Publishers, 2011

258 pages

\$32.95

1781: The Decisive Year of the Revolutionary War

by Robert L. Tonsetic

Reviewed by Dr. J. Boone Bartholomees Jr., Professor
of Military History, US Army War College

Robert Tonsetic offers an examination of the year 1781, which he calls the decisive year of the Revolutionary War. While one might debate whether that was the decisive year—as opposed to say 1776 that saw both the political transformation of the war and the all-important survival of Washington’s army—1781 was indisputably one of the most significant years of the war. Tonsetic covers both northern and southern theaters and examines strategic, operational, and tactical level events.

The year opened with a rebellion in the Pennsylvania line that might have been fatal to the cause of independence, however, it ended with the British defeated in all but the formal sense of a treaty. The strategic seat of the war moved from New York, New Jersey, and Philadelphia to Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. The year 1781 opened with battles in the Carolina backcountry at Cowpens (17 January) and Guilford Courthouse (March 15). Although each side won a battle, the British winning the big one, the combination proved disastrous for the Crown. Cornwallis headed for the safety of the coast and ended up at Yorktown waiting for the Royal Navy. In an act of joint and combined cooperation, the Americans’ new ally France provided both an army and a navy to help isolate and besiege Yorktown. Meanwhile, the Americans managed to lose the battles but still recover control of the Carolinas and Georgia. The year ended with Cornwallis’ surrender and the Americans in control of their country, with the exceptions of New York City, Charleston, Savannah, and outposts on Lake Champlain and the Great Lakes. The political debate in London to end the war lasted into 1782, and the Treaty of Paris was not signed until 3 September 1783, but the war was over in all but the most formal sense by the end of 1781. That is a good story, and Tonsetic tells it well.

There is always tension in a survey like this about the ratio between generalities and details. Similarly, in a book about one year of a long war, there is also tension between providing or assuming background knowledge about the historical and strategic setting. Authors grapple with what needs explanation and what the audience should already know. Tonsetic handles these tensions ably. He moves the reader nimbly from broad brush to detailed descriptions,

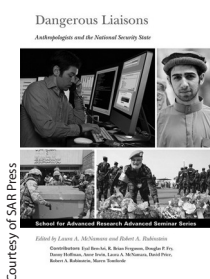
and a person likely to read this book will probably have the background knowledge the author assumes about armies and politics during the Revolution. The book is interesting and readable; however, a few points deserve mention.

One such point is the Battle of the Capes (5 September 1781). That naval engagement between the British and French fleets off the Chesapeake Bay was critical to the eventual success at Yorktown and tremendously more important to the war than Hobkirk Hill or Eutaw Springs. Although Tonsetic discusses the battle and acknowledges its significance in about a page of text, it comes off as a sideshow. In fact, the Wikipedia entry on the battle is longer, more detailed, and better documented.

Tonsetic provides the reader seven maps—three at the operational level (eastern coast, northern theater, and southern theater) and four tactical (Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse, Eutaw Springs, and Yorktown). While the seven are well chosen, and the publisher rather than the author probably established the limit, four or five more would have been helpful. Maps contribute a great deal more to a book's success than any collection of pictures.

From an academic perspective, the book is light on endnotes, and does not cite or acknowledge some obvious and important sources. For example, the Rhode Island Historical Society for several years (ending in 2005) collected and edited thirteen volumes of *The Papers of General Nathaniel Greene*. While these are priced beyond the grasp of the individual, good academic libraries have them. Since Greene was one of the main characters in the story of 1781, one expects to find material from this excellent collection. More generally, Tonsetic uses some primary sources, but most of the bibliography is secondary material. Since the audience seems to be the general public, this is not as egregious as it would be in a primarily academic work.

Overall, the book is worth reading. Its strength is its breadth—it covers matters that full histories of the war ignore or mention only in passing. That breadth, however, is limited to military events, so those with interests in political, economic, diplomatic, and the social aspects of the year will find scant satisfaction. That should not be a surprise. The book is about the decisive year of the Revolutionary War, not the decisive year of the Revolution. That distinction also clarifies the issue of decisiveness that opened this review. From a military perspective, 1781 was *the* decisive year of the Revolutionary War.



Santa Fe, New Mexico: SAR Press, 2012

257 pages

\$29.95

Dangerous Liaisons: Anthropologists and the National Security State

edited by Laura A. McNamara and Robert A. Rubinstein

Reviewed by Dr. Daniel G. Cox, Professor of Political Science, School of Advanced Military Studies, US Army Command and General Staff College, author of *Terrorism, Instability, and Democracy in Asia and Africa*

The ostensible purpose of this book is to provide the reader with opinions from a “small group of ethnographers from four different countries, each with a variety of experiences studying war, violence, the military, and the state” in an effort to examine the relationship between anthropologists and the national security state. It becomes

clear, however, from the first page of the introduction that bias, coupled with a startling lack of a rigorous methodological approach, prevents this edited work from being much more than a politically motivated collection of opinion essays.

The book is replete with postmodern and postcolonial references. Constant allusions from multiple authors to neocolonial wars, American empire, hegemonic militarism, among others betray the roots of the deep-seated biases inherent in the subfield of cultural anthropology. The fact that this work is, for the most part, little more than a collection of politically motivated opinions emanating from the School for Advanced Research Annual Seminar further dilutes any academic rigor. These biases are magnified by the fact that a number of authors end up relying on the opinions of polemically inclined anthropologists and anthropological blogs, such as those of Roberto Gonzalez and Hugh Gusterson, along with the web blog *Zero Anthropology*. What borders on the almost humorous is the fact that authors are so unaware that their chapters are presented as impartial attempts to explain the intersection of social science and military endeavors. At least Gusterson admits in one of his articles deriding the Human Terrain Systems (HTS) that cultural anthropology is academia’s most left-leaning discipline and that many come to this field with a prejudice related to war and warfare.

There is, indeed, something interesting about this book, but it is not what the authors intended. For example, when the reader examines Chapter 8, “Anthropology, Research, and State Violence” by Israeli anthropologist Eyal Ben-Ari, the book takes on an entirely different focus. Instead of providing an insightful, probing work exploring the intersections of anthropology and the military, the book provides a glimpse into the tribal narrative cultural anthropologists have weaved for themselves. Richard Geertz first referred to these cultural webs in his book *The Interpretation of Cultures*, but many of the authors in this volume are unaware of the cultural web that ensnares them. Ari illuminates this perception by pointing out the liberal political bias presentation in this work and within anthropology as a whole. He argues that a mythical conception of the allegedly horrible use of American anthropologists in the

Vietnam War led many in the field to distrust any collaboration with the military. In fact, several authors note that anthropological groups have attempted to remove anthropologist collaborators from the field. German anthropologist Maren Tomforde highlights the fact the American Anthropological Association does not stand alone in its attempts at ending academic careers.

Besides a liberal bias, Ari argues American anthropologists suffer from a peculiar form of arrogance and engage in what might be characterized as “colonization of the mind.” Ari came to realize he had better luck publishing in American anthropological journals if he used the coda of postmodernism along with a healthy dose of America bashing. It is interesting to note there are numerous references to the George W. Bush administration and none are positive. Ari worries that American anthropological dominance at conferences and in professional journals will continue to influence the work of anthropologists outside the United States.

It is with this understanding of these innate biases that R. Brian Ferguson’s chapter on the HTS concludes “the capacity of HTS is helping to build cannot be seen as being in the interests of the indigenous peoples of the world—the people to whom anthropology is most responsible—unless their interests coincide with the incorporation into a neoliberal US empire.” So, too, is Laura McNamara’s chapter on interrogation techniques used by the Bush Administration, which she dubs torture. She believes such acts permit “a unique perspective on the dynamics through which America is made, unmade, and remade.” Her chapter is placed in the proper context after reading Ari’s chapter with its postmodern, anti-Bush context.

One would be hard pressed to recommend this work on its academic merits. This book, however, is a great read for anyone interested in understanding academic ivory towers. It is also an integral window into the current state of cultural anthropology.