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Book Reviews

From *Parameters*, Summer 1998, pp. 166-74.

 **Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical, Biographical, and Bibliographical Sourcebook.** By Anthony James Joes. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996. 320 pages. \$89.50. **Reviewed by Brigadier Gavin Bulloch (UK, Ret.),** Directorate General of Development and Doctrine, UK Ministry of Defense, and author of the British Army publication *Counter Insurgency Operations*.

At first instance this source book seems to provide a large selection of the basic facts, figures, and details about guerrilla warfare that any sensible researcher would need when covering this wide, complicated, and diverse topic. Anthony Joes has assembled a vast amount of material about guerrilla warfare in general which should satisfy the most avid reader by providing sufficient useful information to begin more detailed research. To that extent the author is to be congratulated. All those who conduct this type of research will know the frustration of having to check in many different areas to get at the facts they may need. However, on closer inspection one has reservations about the items chosen for this source book, and the degree and level of analysis which, when examined in more detail, affect the status and authority of the book as a whole.

The three parts of the book cover separate aspects of guerrilla warfare. The first provides an analysis of a large selection of guerrilla struggles, while the second assembles biographical data on prominent individuals involved in guerrilla warfare (on all sides). The third part is a bibliographical listing of important documents on the subject of guerrilla warfare over a 300-year span. These have been sensibly split into different sections covering particular periods of history.

The second and third parts of the book are excellent and provide the reader with a comprehensive database from which to conduct research over a wide range of source material. The biographical list mixes leaders, statesmen, writers, and fellow travelers, and it has a fairly obvious American bias. For example, several European, Middle Eastern, and African personalities who have achieved prominence since the Second World War do not get a mention. Among these, Grivas as a guerrilla leader in Cyprus, Tsombe as an African leader of a separatist movement in the Congo, and Sir Robert Thompson as a very influential writer and practitioner in counterinsurgency are names that are much more closely connected with guerrilla warfare than, say, Alfred Milner or Sir John French, who for some reason best known to the author do rate a mention.

This same sort of comment can be applied to the first part of the book. It is impractical to conduct an analysis of every guerrilla campaign and so hard choices have to be made. On reading through these campaigns there is much recorded that will be of use to the research student in his or her initial work. Presumably the student will then dip into the bibliography for more detailed references as well as information about particular campaigns. To that extent the source book is valid and useful. However, the well-informed reader will know that of the 40 campaigns chosen there are some distinctly curious choices which do not add much to a general understanding of guerrilla warfare.

Furthermore, a source book should remain factual and untainted. The analysis of some of the campaigns is not, to my judgment, completely neutral or factual. Where I also find the source book irritating is in the geographic comparison of a particular country or region, say Greece, with individual states in the USA. If a reader requires this sort of elementary instruction, then this sort of book is not really for him or her. More informed readers will find this patronizing and it could raise the retort that "I've heard of Greece, but where is Maryland?"


I also question why the author discusses the nature of guerrilla warfare at the start of the book. Surely this should be included at the end of the first part, along with the author's views on the various styles of counterinsurgency and his own reflections on their continuing relevance.

The introduction gives the clear indication that guerrilla warfare is a "set of tactics" designed for the weak to make war

against the strong. But to give the impression that guerrillas can achieve overwhelming military success by adopting these tactics needs much more careful consideration and focus. The Spanish guerrillas had no real hope of defeating French troops in Spain in 1810-14 without unambiguous support from the British Army. It took three years of hard campaigning by regular troops and guerrillas to ensure that the French were driven out of Spain. The same sort of comment could be made about other guerrilla campaigns.

Finally I would question the hard-cover format. The work is intended to be a source book; it will never be totally up to date or complete, so why not produce it in a form that can be reused or amended as time and events pass by? The sale price of about ,80 a copy in the UK (about \$90 US) also brings a tear to my eye; it might well induce me to join a guerrilla campaign against profit-making publishers.

In sum: It's a useful and relevant source book for degree students and for those starting to research the subject of guerrilla warfare.

 **The Great Admirals, Command at Sea, 1587-1945.** Edited by Jack Sweetman. Naval Institute Press, 1997. 535 pp. **Reviewed by Captain John C. Dailey, USN, Senior Navy Representative, US Army War College.**

Shortly before midnight on 30 April 1898, nine American Navy ships glided past defensive shore batteries and into Manila Bay. The decisive battle of the Spanish-American War in the Pacific was about to begin, and the outcome was far from certain. The Bay's narrow entrance was most likely mined, more than 200 shore guns defended key installations, and the Spanish naval squadron awaited the intruders. For the Americans, 7000 miles from home and with their magazines only half full, the odds against decisive victory seemed long. But for Admiral George Dewey, standing on the bridge of the lead ship, the *Olympia*, the moment was sublime. When told that it was too dangerous for his flagship to lead the way into the Bay, Dewey replied: "I have waited 60 years for this opportunity. Mines or no mines, I am leading the squadron in myself."

Leadership amidst the confusion and violence of war at sea is a central theme of Jack Sweetman's *The Great Admirals*. Sweetman has assembled biographical essays on 19 naval combat leaders written by an international group of authors. In addition to the profiles of individuals, the book contains six companion essays that chronicle the development of tactics, technology, and doctrine of naval warfare through the centuries, making *The Great Admirals* two books in one. This fine book's discussions of Drake and the Age of Sail through Bull Halsey and the development of naval aviation should be on every naval professional's reading list. Much would be gained as well if the book were read by senior officers in the other services. The problems of high-level command may differ in form according to the medium in which command is exercised, but they are comparable in function.

With these essays as a basis for an examination of combat at sea, one can explore the similarities and differences between the challenges faced by Admiral De Ruyter in 1667 and Admiral Spruance in 1943. An additional value of reading 19 short biographies is that the reader can compare and contrast the historic figures in an attempt to discern the common traits that made these officers great combat leaders. *The Great Admirals* challenges the reader to examine this issue in detail and to decide whether the combat leadership traits of these historic figures transcend time and technology so as to be relevant to the education of today's officer corps. Besides chronicling military history, this book attempts to capture the essence of command and victory at sea.

Certainly the great admirals had the elements of character one would expect: physical courage, great seamanship skills, tactical expertise, and aggressiveness. The essays suggest that the consistent victors also had a quality that set them apart from their contemporaries. The truly great admirals seemed to possess a clearer understanding of the battle than their opponents. They had what Jomini describes as the "coup d'oeil," the ability to see order in the confusion of combat. Somehow, in a moment of crisis, they could process data and take the required decisive action.

How each developed this feel for battle is at the core of the study of leadership and can have important consequences for contemporary readers. Clausewitz felt that "greatness" is an inherited trait, a gift bestowed on the few. But at the heart of today's military education system is the belief that leadership is an acquired trait, one that can be learned. Many of the admirals in this book had been at sea for decades. Often they had fought in several major fleet actions.

They had the opportunity to develop their skills in combat. Histories, exercises, and simulations attempt to help today's officers develop their own combat skills in the absence of actual combat.

Interestingly, one of the biographical essays seems out of place in a book about great admirals. The author writing of the career of Admiral Yamamoto tells such a negative story that one must wonder why it was included in the book, for it is certainly counter to the conventionally held view of Yamamoto. The author questions Yamamoto's judgment on both the strategic and operational levels, arguing that Yamamoto was wrong to insist on attacking on Pearl Harbor. The author asserts that the attack was not necessary, and in fact assured US entry into the war when Japan's strategic objectives in Southeast Asia could have been achieved without involving the United States. The discussion of Yamamoto's role in the Battle of Midway also casts doubt on his skill as a planner and operational commander.

The book's technical essays are uniformly excellent. One particularly interesting discussion is relevant today even though it examines the evolution of French naval doctrine in the 1690s: the development of doctrine and its ultimate effect on battles. After a series of defeats in fleet engagements, the French adopted a strategic concept that stressed attacking the enemy's merchant fleet. The surest and most cost-effective way to defeat the English island nation and their mercantile Dutch allies, the French thought, was to avoid fleet combat and attack and capture their commerce. This strategic concept was reflected in doctrine and tactics. The desire to capture, not sink, merchant ships led French gunners to aim their shots high so as to demast rather than sink their opponents. This change in doctrine, while effective, was not decisive. Some authors concluded that it eventually ceded command of the sea to the English.

As George Dewey led his ships into Manila Bay, his thoughts returned 35 years to 1863 when then-Lieutenant Dewey observed, firsthand, Admiral Farragut's attack on New Orleans. At the most critical moments on the eve of battle when he felt a gnawing doubt, Admiral Dewey asked himself "What would Farragut do?"

It is important to think critically about combat leadership, and that, perhaps, is one of the values of this book. It made me reexamine my own experiences and raised a disquieting thought: Is today's Navy, with its abbreviated command tours and increasing emphasis on staff tours, fostering an environment that can produce future great admirals? Books such as *The Great Admirals* help fill the void in combat experience for today's naval officers by providing a rich history of men who have successfully commanded the seas.

 **The Paratroopers of the French Foreign Legion--From Vietnam to Bosnia.** By Howard R. Simpson. Washington: Brassey's, 1997. 147 pages. \$25.

 **Green Devils! German Paratroopers 1939-1945.** By Jean-Yves Nasse. Paris: Histoire & Collections, 1997. 139 pages.

 **Kommando. Hitler's Special Forces.** By Leo Kessler. London: Pen & Sword Paperback, 1997. 167 pages.

Reviewed by Lieutenant-Colonel Bernd Horn (Canadian Forces), a Ph.D. candidate in the War Studies program at the Royal Military College, Kingston, Ontario. He previously served in the Canadian Airborne Regiment.

The realm of the paratrooper and the cult of the "Airborne Mystique" generally arouses the interest of the enthusiast in or out of uniform. The mystique portrays fearless, hardened fighters committed to accomplishing their mission despite overwhelming odds and regardless of the costs. Within this exclusive cadre of warriors there are few organizations as well known or respected for their perceived martial capabilities as the German Fallschirmjäger of World War II fame and the postwar paratroopers of the French Foreign Legion. These organizations earned their reputations on blood-soaked battlefields, often against desperate odds and in hopeless situations. These conditions fostered the widely held sentiment that the organizations embodied, if not personified, the élan, steely courage, and aggressive spirit which are the hallmarks of airborne troops.

The first two books in this review examine airborne organizations in a common informal approach. Both authors respect and admire their subjects, and their books provide some insight into the respective airborne organizations. However, overall both books are only "light reading" and cannot be considered as serious historical works. Howard

Simpson's *Paratroopers of the French Foreign Legion* in particular uses a personal approach which combines a superficial history of the paratroopers with a retrospective of his past associations with them in varying capacities: correspondent, US Consul General, and writer on defense matters.

Simpson's easy flowing narrative combines a historical account with a present-day profile of both the Legion and its paratroopers, who belong to the 2^{ième} Régiment Étranger de Parachutistes (2^{ième} REP). His rudimentary history of airborne development and the French experience before and during the Second World War provide the foundation for the French involvement in Indochina. General de Negrier's brutally frank message, "You Legionnaires, you are soldiers in order to die and I'm sending you where one does," became the basis for using the airborne arm of the Legion as a rapid reaction force to counter regular Vietminh units of regimental and divisional strength.

The loose, unconnected, and incomplete history provides no insight into the actual campaigns of the 2^{ième} REP, fails to fully explain how the paratroopers were used, and omits a final assessment of their effectiveness. In one of the book's most frustrating passages, Simpson states, "Some officers had used their time in the Vietminh prison camps to reflect on the battle [Dien Bien Phu] and its results. They had also been able to observe the strengths and weaknesses of their revolutionary enemy," without elaborating on his assertions. The remainder of the history remains superficial and incomplete. His technique of wandering from the past to the present often confronts the reader with trivial detail at the expense of detailed analysis of the Legion's recent operations in Chad, Lebanon, Rwanda, the Gulf War, Somalia, and Bosnia.

However, the book does provide some excellent insights into the fate of the Legion in the days after the failed "Generals' Putsch" in April 1961. Equally enlightening is Simpson's description of how the 2^{ième} REP evolved from a normal parachute unit to an "extraordinary flexible air-commando regiment" as part of France's Rapid Action Force. The effectiveness of this force became apparent in 1978 during its deployment to Kolwezi, Zaire, to rescue foreign nationals from rampaging Congolese rebels. The author provided a comprehensive account of this successful action which brought out the strengths as well as the unknowns and weaknesses of airborne operations.

The author of *Green Devils* uses a large book pictorial format combined with first-person accounts to tell the story of World War II German Fallschirmjäger. The book is both a technical and literary disappointment. The text is patchy and incomplete, and quickly descends into a collection of pictures which fail to tell a coherent story. The chapter on parachute training consists of a sketchy text and a collection of interviews. More dissatisfying still are accounts of the invasion of Norway and the Low Countries, and the failure to contribute any details or first-person accounts on the capture of the Belgian Fortress of Eben Emael. Deployment of paratroopers to the meat-grinder of the Eastern Front is covered briefly and with few details. The remainder of the history covering Crete, Normandy, and Italy is similarly incomplete. The book is marred as well with technical problems.

The airborne enthusiast will nonetheless discover some rare material here. A central theme emerges from the survivors who tell of their experiences, and a sense of discipline, courage, camaraderie, and professionalism permeates the stories. The veterans never speak of despair, desperation, or defeat, despite being overwhelmed by Allied might. The reader can understand the shared collective pride and identity of the German paratroopers; as General Alexander observed, "There are no other troops in the world who would defend their positions with the same obduracy and courage."

Kommando, by Leo Kessler (aka Charles Whiting), does not deal expressly with an airborne organization, but rather examines the closely related realm of special operations. The fast-moving, riveting text reads like fiction and yields a captivating glimpse of Hitler's Secret Service.

The book starts with operations during the opening days of World War II conducted by the Brandenburg Regiment, the specially trained commandos of the German Abwehr (Secret Service). Initial operations in Poland, Holland, and Belgium demonstrated the utility and strength of specially trained men in modern warfare and reinforced Admiral Canaris's pre-war model for all special forces: "brave, ruthless men, who could lie in deep cover for a long time, self-reliant and self-sufficient, who in small groups efficiently carried out tasks that would have been impossible for larger groups." Of equal interest to the actual operations in Europe and Russia is the bevy of little-known operations planned throughout the world. Kessler recounts plots and operations to attack Gibraltar, destroy the Suez and Panama canals,

create havoc in Cairo through the assistance of Egyptian officers of strong "nationalist" conviction, as well as a daring diamond robbery in South Africa designed to disrupt England's war economy.


Another theme permeates the book, namely the rivalry between the Abwehr and the parallel Secret Service apparatus of Himmler's SS organization. The struggle provides an interesting insight into the political intrigue of the period; it also portrays the depth of the anti-Hitler movement within the Abwehr.

Expansion from regiment to division size in late 1942 marked the end of covert operations and the transformation into a conventional formation that was to be destroyed on the Eastern Front. With the fortunes of the Brandenburgers on the wane, the Friedenthal organization, a special SS Commando unit, was established in April 1943 to operate behind enemy lines in a manner similar to the British SAS. Its commander, Otto Skorzeny, would become renowned for his four-minute raid at Gran Sasso, high in the Italian Alps, to rescue the deposed Italian dictator, Mussolini. The coup earned even the praise of British Prime Minister Churchill, who declared in the House of Commons, "The stroke was one of great daring and conducted with heavy force. It certainly shows there are many possibilities of this kind in modern war."

Skorzeny's other achievements are covered, including the capture of the Hungarian Regent, intended to ensure the continued participation of an unwilling ally in the war. The infamous work of Panzer Brigade 150 during the "Battle of the Bulge" is also well detailed. Although Skorzeny's commandos, who infiltrated behind Allied lines dressed in American uniforms, failed to contribute substantially to the German offensive in the Ardennes, the author notes the psychological effects of their presence. Kessler points out how fewer than 200 commandos "created confusion and alarm through the Allied camp, not only in Belgium and Luxembourg, but in France and even Britain." General Eisenhower became a virtual prisoner in his own quarters during the period 20-26 December 1944, and General Omar Bradley stated, "Half a million GIs were forced to play cat and mouse with each other each time they went on the road."

At the end of the book the author notes the existence of a national resistance movement, the Werewolf Organization, established to conduct a guerrilla war in Allied occupied Germany. Discussing its only action, the author illustrates how a group of Werewolf operatives assassinated the Allied-appointed mayor of Aachen, an act which he states led Eisenhower to change the focus of his advance from Berlin to Bavaria to hunt down the rumored "National Redoubt." The author contends, "During the last weeks of the war, the Werewolf Organization . . . determined in part Allied future war strategy and, as a result, helped to change the face of Europe for nearly half a century." This contention underscores a glaring weakness: none of the exploits recorded in the book are substantiated. Although it is implied through the acknowledgments and introduction that the book is largely the product of collaboration by the actual participants, references to the sources would have been helpful. The skeletal bibliography is also disappointing.

Paratroopers of the French Foreign Legion and *Green Devils* provide some insights into the respective organizations, but neither can be considered a serious academic or historical work. They will provide the odd gem to the academic, military professional, or enthusiast, but should only be considered as supplements to comprehensive histories. *Kommando* can serve as a primer on some of Germany's special operations during the Second World War. Despite its riveting and detailed text, however, the lack of documentation and references limits its value.

 **OSS In China: Prelude to Cold War.** By Maochun Yu. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1996. \$35.00.
Reviewed by Lieutenant Gene J. Del Bianco, A Co., 2d Bn., 19th Special Forces Group (Airborne), Rhode Island Army National Guard.

In late June 1944, as World War II was entering its final year, General William Donovan, head of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), decided it was time to undertake a general history of the agency. Initially conducted and supervised by agency historians, this project was intended for "the future of the OSS." However, when it came time to chronicle OSS operations in the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theater under the leadership of General Joseph Stilwell, General Stilwell substituted his own historian and insisted the material collected would be for official use only. Upon its completion, material compiled on OSS activities in China, along with almost all other official information concerning OSS operations during World War II, would remain sealed in the nation's archives. Not until the mid-

1980s, when federal agencies opened up OSS files, including raw data that had been collected nearly four decades earlier, did a full accounting of OSS operations and activities become possible.

Maochun Yu's book *OSS in China: Prelude to Cold War* is easily the most comprehensive examination to date of OSS activities in China during World War II. Yu, an assistant professor of history at the United States Naval Academy, relies on newly available and previously untapped source material to outline the OSS's initial involvement in the region. By allowing these materials to speak for themselves, Yu repeatedly illustrates how over time--and despite the best intentions--the OSS became mired in bureaucratic turf battles of varying intensity and viciousness with nearly every Allied organization in the region. For myriad reasons, OSS attempts to set up intelligence networks while planning and participating in behind-the-lines operations against the Japanese in China and Burma were neither wanted nor appreciated. Many of the players in the region firmly believed, apparently with good reason, that OSS success in the short term could lead to serious complications in the long term.


The French and British considered the OSS hopeless amateurs and intended to retain control of their former Asian colonies after the war. The Chinese Nationalist government, fully distrustful of the British and French and somewhat distrustful of the Americans, was more frightened of Mao Zedong's Communist army than it was of the invading Japanese. Meanwhile, the Chinese Communists knew, and would be able to confirm by their productive infiltration of the Nationalists' espionage establishment, that there was a better than even chance the Americans would side with the Nationalist government at the war's end.

To add to OSS problems with Allied nations, US military services were less than pleased with OSS operations in the region and less than helpful in conducting those operations. The US Navy had previously established a working relationship with the Chinese Nationalist government's espionage network and had serious reservations about the OSS role in the region. The theater commander, General Stilwell, tolerated the OSS and used it on various missions, but never fully trusted the OSS because he lacked operational control of its activities.

By using this once sealed official data and cable traffic, Yu avoids the maze of dueling memoirs that previously plagued researchers dealing with this sensitive topic. His serviceable prose brackets these documents in a straightforward presentation of nationalistic rivalries and service parochialism that constantly thwarted OSS operations in the theater. In addition, not only does Yu cite American archives, but he also often refers to original source material recently released by the Chinese government regarding the nascent Chinese Communist Party's contacts with both the American and Nationalist Chinese intelligence communities. In an ironic example of mirror-imaging, the internal politics of both countries during the 1950s and 1960s would keep their respective documents regarding this period of history from being made public. Both nations, albeit for vastly different reasons, eventually destroyed the careers of those whose participation in these events would become a reason to question their loyalty.

Yu's use of official documents to chronicle OSS activities and missions to China breaks much new ground. Unfortunately, the book may also be vulnerable for the same reason. The most serious concern is the perception of occasional overreliance on official source material, not only to describe OSS activities in China, but as the exclusive criteria to interpret why or how certain events did or did not transpire. Another problem is that characters are introduced into the narrative with little preparation and disappear just as quickly without explanation. The sheer numbers of names mentioned only briefly risks more than a little confusion. While it is never easy to compose a history of a diverse organization that availed itself of the talents of more characters than a Tolstoy novel, the author at times allows the documents to override the individuals who created them.

Minor concerns notwithstanding, Professor Yu's *OSS in China: Prelude to Cold War* is easily the most complete and comprehensive volume to date examining World War II operations of the OSS in China.

 **The Pennsylvania Militia: The Early Years, 1669-1792.** By Samuel J. Newland. Annville, Pa.: Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, 1997. 173 pages. \$8.95. **Reviewed by Chaplain (Colonel) John W. Brinsfield, Ph.D., US Army War College.**

Professor Sam Newland has written a fascinating historical monograph which will be of value to anyone interested in

the history of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in American colonial history, or in the relationship between political and military history in general. He tells a story of strategic leaders and leadership on the American frontier, containing timeless lessons clothed in knee breeches and buckles.

This book deals effectively with at least three interwoven and complementary motifs. The first includes attempts by the early settlers of Pennsylvania to find a way to answer requests by the British Crown for military appropriations and forces for the security of the colony. The second, which follows logically from the first, is the formation and development of the Pennsylvania Militia in the 17th and 18th centuries as the forerunner of the Pennsylvania National Guard. The third motif is a wonderful collection of stories and anecdotes about famous citizens of Pennsylvania (and other famous Americans) and their contributions to the development of a native American militia in the colonial era.

The Pennsylvania Militia: The Early Years, 1669-1792 surveys the political and organizational steps in developing a militia force to protect the colony from armed attack by French and Indian raiding parties as well as from internal civil insurrection and even British armies during the American Revolution. The book consists of eight short, readable chapters highlighted by personalities, debates, battles, defeats, and victories. The style is engaging and the illustrations, many of which are published here for the first time, are beautifully presented in color.

This text fills a scholarly gap in Pennsylvania history and provides a model for analyzing similar topics in the history of the colonial period. Even though many aspects of Pennsylvania's history are well understood and well documented, the role of the colonial militia has not received proper attention--until now. Other than Major William Clarke's *Official History of the Militia and National Guard in Pennsylvania* (1909) and Frederic Godcharles's *Pennsylvania: Political, Governmental, Military and Civil* (1933), few other histories on the Pennsylvania Militia and Guard are available. Articles have been written on significant personages, key battles, and Pennsylvania military units and campaigns, but solid general histories on specific periods of the history of the Pennsylvania Militia are lacking. This history helps fill that void.

Newland's monograph is not merely the study of a period of American history. It is also the study of forms that present options to today's strategic leaders who may be concerned with the organization of citizen militia forces from Bosnia to the Middle East. The lessons one may learn from history are without number. Dr. Newland's work provides many for the casual as well as for the serious reader.

Reviewed 27 May 1998. Please send comments or corrections to carl_Parameters@conus.army.mil