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## Book Reviews

Parameters Editors

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## Book Reviews

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**How Rome Fell: Death of a Superpower.** By Adrian Goldsworthy. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2009. 544 pages. \$32.50. Reviewed by Dr. J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr., Professor of Military History, US Army War College.

Adrian Goldsworthy, the prolific young Oxford-trained classicist, has produced yet another great book about the Roman empire, this one focused on its decline and fall. The subtitle, “Death of a Superpower,” is somewhat awkward, if not misleading. One expects a thesis—probably radical—on superpower demise using Rome as an example with perhaps advice (if only implied) for modern US policymakers; however, Goldsworthy expressly rejects that model. He believes the situations of ancient Rome and the modern United States are so radically different that lessons from Rome’s decline have little direct applicability today. In fact, as if to downplay the topic, the subtitle is not shown on the dust jacket or spine, although it is on the inner dust jacket flap and the title page. Likewise, it is significant that the title is *How Rome Fell*, not *Why Rome Fell*.

Instead of offering advice, the author explains in some detail the decline and fall of the western Roman empire. He dismisses debate regarding the utility or precision of terms, such as ‘decline’ and ‘fall,’ as academic nitpicking (my term, not his), and instead offers a fairly comprehensive review of the Roman empire in the third through fifth centuries. In that review Goldsworthy finds no single cause for the fall of Rome. Like George Pickett, who is reputed to have responded to a question about why the South lost the Civil War that he always thought the Yankees had something to do with it, Goldsworthy recognizes the barbarian invasions of the fifth century as the ultimate proximate cause. He is quick to point out, however, that Rome had faced barbarians for centuries, and that the invasions of the fifth century were no more threatening than earlier ones. Rome just could not respond as she had before. The reason for the fall of Rome is much more complicated than any single cause can explain.

Goldsworthy’s account in brief is that after the heyday of the empire in the first and second centuries, the internal political structure based on senatorial power that had sustained the republic and had been retained at least in form during the early empire began to change. As members of the equestrian class gained power they made conscious moves to limit the power of the senatorial class. Emperors became senators after becoming emperor, and later did not bother with the formality. They reduced the size of provinces so no governor controlled more than two legions and appointed equestrians more and more often to governorships. Eventually the senatorial class was marginalized to the point of impotence. This weakening was done primarily to place men the emperors trusted in positions of power, but limiting the power of the few in favor of the many had disastrous consequences.

In time, anyone who could win or buy the support of a couple of legions could have himself declared emperor, a significant expansion from the 10 to 12 senators who typically competed for the position. There was a series of civil wars as multiple usurpers and emperors vied for power. Many conflicts were very local and of short duration, but several lasted for years and ranged across the empire. In every case, Romans were

killing Romans and foraging off Roman territory. Also in every case, the protagonists recognized that their Roman opponent was more formidable than any threat that might develop on the borders and reduced border security to fight the civil war. All this combat weakened the political and leadership base of the empire.

Rome's advantage in the ancient world was its size in every respect: population, army, economy, etc. It never faced a serious external threat when it could tap that advantage. In the fourth and fifth centuries, Rome nullified its advantage—note that Rome nullified the advantage, not some action by an adversary. Division of the empire, first informally as three or four emperors ruled simultaneously and later formally into two distinct entities, reduced the ability to tap the total potential power. Simultaneously, bureaucracies grew up that were not especially efficient at anything except ensuring their own survival. Coupled with a cultural tradition of struggling for power through patronage, this led to corruption and sinecures without duties. Mature, experienced emperors could often offset the weaknesses of the bureaucracies, but young emperors, who were in the vast majority during the critical fifth century, became pawns of competing factions attempting to influence policy for their own reasons. All this turmoil led to a climate of paranoia, violence, and “ruthless personal ambition” that left the government too weak and too worried about internal problems to take external threats as seriously as it should.

Additionally, the empire became hollow. Many of the military units reflected on contemporary rosters probably were nonexistent; the ones that existed were greatly understrength. No Roman commander was willing to accept heavy casualties due to the difficulty of replacing losses. There certainly were not enough forces to handle multiple threats. As the Romans pursued one invasion, other tribes sensed weakness and exploited the situation. The result was that tribes that should have been easily handled roamed at will across Roman territory for years until they settled down and claimed what had been Roman for themselves. A downward spiral resulted; loss of land to barbarians led to loss of revenue, which led to a smaller army and thus to further loss of land. The western empire's resources were never sufficient to guard its long borders against multiple barbarian threats. It could not afford losses; the system failed.

Goldsworthy's book is a system analysis—parts of the system are related and actions have consequences for other parts of the system. It is very well researched and consequently convincing. As important, Goldsworthy exploits his ability as a storyteller to make it readable and interesting. The combination makes *How Rome Fell* essential reading for anyone with an interest in the ancient world.

**1848: Year of Revolution.** By Mike Rapport. New York: Basic Books, 2009. 461 pages. \$29.95. **Reviewed by Major Kevin Scott,** Instructor, International History Division, US Military Academy.

As “a right royal mess” is how Mike Rapport describes the epoch-changing events of 1848. *In 1848: Year of Revolution*, Rapport has shouldered the complicated task of explaining that mess as it spread across the European continent. He has created a readable general history that, although it presents no new arguments, provides a strong chronological narrative that contextualizes the events of that year in each major European state. This book is useful for both the amateur historian and the instructor looking for a survey of the period.

Rapport begins by stating that the events of 1848 were a response to the two major European revolutions that began in the late eighteenth century: the French and the Industrial. These momentous changes forced European leaders to seek responses to two basic challenges. Politically, they had to decide how to rule populations that had been exposed to new ideas of equality and nationalism. Socially, they had to contend with disruptions and increasing inequality caused by the increasing industrialization of their societies. Rapport's central argument is that the revolutionary movements of 1848 were a continent-wide experience that had a mixed effect on society. The revolutionary movements of 1848 ultimately failed to break the hold of Europe's conservative regimes, but they did give the middle and working classes a public space, or at least the memory of it, where they could actively participate in politics and society.

The book is broken into six chapters and focuses on the revolutionary events in France, Prussia, the northern Italian states, and the Hapsburg Empire. Rapport also discusses England and Russia to explain how the ideas of this period affected these states and why they avoided open revolt. The first two chapters introduce European society from the French Revolution and lead the reader through the beginning of the events of 1848. Rapport gives a detailed background of the Europe created by the Congress of Vienna in the wake of Napoleon's defeat. He deftly shows how the political and economic tensions brought about by monarchies fighting to keep the status quo left many segments of society primed for change.

The author demonstrates that, although there were significant regional variations, the revolution of 1848 was a Europe-wide phenomenon. He points out how revolutionaries in every state went through similar stages from the beginning of the revolts through their ultimate failure. His analysis of why the Liberals failed in 1848 draws on themes familiar to students of the era: the creation of ethnic nationalism that failed to protect the rights of all citizens; left-wing activism that created a wedge between the revolutionary groups; and the failure of the early revolutionaries to remove conservatives from state institutions, especially the armed forces. Rapport does not view 1848 as a complete failure for the Liberals, however. He argues that because conservatives were forced to deal with Liberal issues such as constitutionalism, civic nationalism, and civil rights for the rest of the nineteenth century, the revolution had some positive long-term results. This eventually allowed for increasing political participation, even if politics were still controlled by conservative elites. Although unsuccessful in creating sustainable Liberal regimes, the revolutions changed Europe and ultimately contributed to a freer and more open society.

Students of European history will have seen the bulk of Rapport's conclusions in well-worn classics. Like Sir Lewis Namier in *1848: The Revolution of the Intellectuals*, Rapport views the primacy of nationalism in the Liberal revolutionary program as a means to challenge the dynastic justification of conservative rule. He also asserts, however, that Liberal nationalism was not only a means to attack conservative government but also an ideology to subdue the working class, an argument that traces back to Priscilla Robertson's renowned *Revolutions of 1848*. Professor Rapport's general tenor is very similar to Jonathan Sperber's *The European Revolutions, 1848-1851*. In addition to agreeing on the function of nationalism, both authors effectively contextualize the revolutions of 1848 as extensions of the social agitation of the early 1840s. The difference lies in the books' organization. Whereas Sperber's work is thematic,

Rapport aims to address each development chronologically and provides a vivid general history of the period. Because this is his goal, Rapport relies on well-known material rather than new sources.

Professor Rapport tells the story of people who attempted to transform their societies by establishing new, more participatory governments. This account is relevant to military leaders as they ponder how to more effectively support the young democratic republics in Iraq and Afghanistan. As *1848: Year of Revolution* demonstrates, change is difficult to manage, especially as groups within society struggle to achieve their own goals and protect their own interests. Rapport also points out that even though adjacent states experience similar societal changes, each area has unique differences that must be accounted for when creating national governments. This book is simultaneously a cautionary tale about short-term societal dislocations caused in such situations and an optimistic view of the power of unshackled Liberal ideology.

**Beyond the Strait: PLA Missions Other than Taiwan.** Roy Kamphausen, David Lai, and Andrew Scobell, eds. Carlisle, Pa.: US Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, 2009. 398 pages. \$5.94 **Reviewed by Richard Halloran**, former foreign correspondent in Asia and military correspondent in Washington for *The New York Times* and onetime lieutenant of airborne infantry.

Sometime in the 1970s an Army intelligence officer was asked how far the Chinese could project military power. His answer was succinct: “About as far as their army can walk.” Today, that is no longer true as this well-documented, carefully reasoned, and altogether invaluable book asserts. With each passing day, the People’s Liberation Army (PLA), which encompasses all branches of China’s armed forces, becomes more capable. The critical and probably unanswerable question is when will the leaders of the PLA feel that their forces are strong enough to take on those of the United States and win. Therein lies the danger of miscalculation, history’s most frequent cause of war.

The editors and authors of this volume have defined distinct missions for the PLA, roughly in this order of priority:

(1) To maintain the Chinese Communist Party in power. The PLA, say authors David Lai of the Strategic Studies Institute and Marc Miller of the National Bureau of Asian Research in Seattle, is “directly controlled by and responsible to the Chinese Communist Party.” Chinese officers take an oath of allegiance to the party, not to a constitution or the national government, and party leaders regularly remind PLA senior officers that it is the party, not the PLA, that controls the gun. It is as if the US armed forces swore allegiance to the political party that was in power.

(2) To maintain internal order. The PLA was called out to subdue demonstrating students camped in Tiananmen Square in 1989. Because the PLA was not trained in riot control and relied on brute force to restore order around the square, civilian casualties numbered in the thousands. Later, the PLA relinquished some of that mission to the People’s Armed Police, but the PLA was still visible in Beijing to provide security during the Olympic Games in 2008.

(3) To defend the nation’s borders, a mission assigned to most armies around the world. The chapter by Robert Modarelli, of the US Center for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation staff in Seattle, notes that China’s frontiers “stretch over 22,000 kilometers

[13,200 miles] and border 14 different countries.” With several of those nations, such as Vietnam and India, China has fought border wars in the last six decades. The PLA recently moved large formations of forces from one corner of China to another to train for conflict on its frontiers.

(4) To deter the self-governing island of Taiwan, over which China claims sovereignty, from declaring formal independence. Failing that, Beijing has built a force intended to pound Taiwan into submission, then to invade the island before anyone else, namely the United States, can intervene. Andrew Scobell, a former scholar at Texas A & M, writes that “how China handles the Taiwan issue will inevitably affect not just the kind of national defense policy China adopts but how China deals with almost every other issue—foreign and domestic.”

(5) To forge a strategic nuclear deterrent aimed beyond Taiwan. “The central element of this posture,” says Brad Roberts, a researcher at the Institute for Defense Analysis in Washington, “is China’s force of ballistic missiles tipped with nuclear weapons.” Named the Second Artillery by the late Premier Zhou Enlai to distinguish it from conventional artillery units, Roberts quotes a Chinese official as saying the Second Artillery’s “targets are countries with nuclear weapons.” That means the United States, Russia, and India, at the least.

(6) To project conventional power beyond Taiwan. Mark Cozad, an intelligence officer at the Defense Intelligence Agency in Washington, says Chinese decision-makers have been engaged in a wide-ranging discussion that “encompasses a much broader array of national security themes than in the past and is heavily focused on determining critical PLA missions beyond Taiwan.” Among them: protecting access to energy and other resources, economic lifelines, and lines of communication.

This may be more of a revolution than most people outside China realize. The PLA, Cozad says, “remains a military dominated by the army” that has lacked experience in maritime and air operations. A central issue during the next decade, however, will be whether the PLA Navy and PLA Air Force will develop capabilities that will enable China to challenge regional powers and support territorial claims in Southeast Asia.

Recent discussions have centered on protecting the sea lines of communication in the Straits of Malacca and the South China Sea through which flow large amounts of oil and other resources to China. Military diplomacy, including exchanges with foreign armies and combined exercises with foreign navies, Cozad says, “are likely to become a key component of China’s power projection in both the East and South China Seas.”

For all its merits, *Beyond the Strait* has flaws, one of them serious. Like many collections with different authors, the chapters are uneven, with some better than others. A more firm editing hand could have trimmed out some of the repetition. Some material in the footnotes would have been better placed in the narrative and vice versa. Too many authors fall into the bad academic practice of quoting a presumably authoritative source without identifying him or her in the narrative. As the famously demanding editor of the *New Yorker*, the late Harold Ross, would have scribbled in the margin, “Who he?”

The vital flaw is the absence of an index. With three editors and 11 contributors all writing about a many-faceted and painfully complicated topic, an index would have eased the way for a reader or researcher to trace what everyone had to say about missiles or the South China Sea, for example. As it is, the reader is caught in a tangle of fact and analysis with no way to get out.



**Douglas Haig and the First World War.** By J. P. Harris. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. 652 pages. \$39.95. **Reviewed by Colonel James D. Scudieri**, Department of Military Strategy, Planning, and Operations, US Army War College.

This work focuses on Sir Douglas Haig's tenure as British Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C) on the Western Front. J. P. Harris' effort is a superbly balanced reassessment. He has dug deeply and widely in the sources. The book begins with a succinct survey of the more notable critiques of Haig, followed by an account of Haig's early life, military career, and doctrinal reform efforts. Harris also identifies Haig's increasing ambition; his sister Henrietta and wife Dorothy Vivian, a Maid of Honor at Court, ensured strong royal connections.

Coverage of Haig's early experience in France is straightforward. As commander of I Corps, Haig was an uncooperative colleague. Harris also delves into Haig's relative lack of confidence in the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), an attitude that the Battle of the Aisne changed by 14 September 1914. Haig as commander of First Army emerges with less credit. Even though he espoused technical innovation as a means of overcoming enemy defenses, Haig generally held the view that an attack could break through multiple German defense lines in a single day.

The bulk of the monograph concerns Haig as C-in-C. This review conveniently draws two, principal threads. The first concerns Haig's preeminent mission to defeat the Germans, and his belief that he could do so decisively. Harris has packaged an impressive depth and breadth of detail in his analysis. He masterfully examines the myriad complexities of the plans and their execution in the bloody and disappointing British offensives of 1916-17, including balanced perspectives on successes such as Cambrai and Messines Ridge. Harris clearly articulates the conflicting ideas and goals of subordinate Army commanders, Haig himself, Haig's superiors, and his French allies. The discussion of the German March 1918 offensives is refreshing. Haig's General Headquarters (GHQ) certainly looked out of touch with regard to Lt. Gen. Sir Hubert Gough's Fifth Army's extended front and the support required, combined with insufficient time to prepare properly.

Harris also reexamines Haig's supposed imperturbability. Ironically, Haig began the period of Allied counterattacks in 1918 positively, encouraging broader offensive action and supporting General Ferdinand Foch's general offensive in September. British civilian leaders were more circumspect. Chastened by Haig's over-optimism in 1916 and 1917, they doubted the changed conditions on the Western Front. Over time, however, Haig became pessimistic, even arguing for moderate armistice terms, during a period when he in fact had to exercise less control over his forces than ever.

Haig as C-in-C remains generally unflattering in this account. Perhaps Haig's greatest flaw was his preference for intellectual and psychological isolation. He simply did not foster healthy debate among GHQ staff officers or his Army commanders, which might have counterbalanced his over-optimism regarding the power of the offense. Hence, he still tended toward gross unrealism concerning what an attack could accomplish in a single day. Contrary to popular belief, Haig did not isolate himself physically. He spent most afternoons out and about, though these visits generally went no lower than division.

Harris demonstrates skill and verve in his periodic discussion of the second thread, deteriorating civil-military relations. He outlines succinctly the prerogatives, constraints, and restraints of a British C-in-C on the Western Front vis-à-vis the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for War. Moreover, and not surprisingly, this division of labor rested heavily upon personality. Haig enjoyed no harmonious relationship with Sir William Robertson, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, or his successor, Sir Henry Wilson. Incidentally, Robertson was the only likely contender as British C-in-C on the Western Front.

While still focused on the relationship between Prime Minister David Lloyd George and Haig, the chasm between the two grew wider and deeper, mostly against Haig. The controversial Calais conferences in February 1917 singularly provide insight into this crisis of confidence. It worsened following the dismal news from Passchendaele in the winter of 1917-18. Harris does a fine job examining this bitter controversy, including civilian insistence on changing certain BEF Army commanders and staff officers and reinforcing the Italian Front. The German 1918 "Peace Offensives" highlighted the senior, British schism over manpower and generated a larger, Allied crisis. The third conference at Douellens on 26 March 1918 granted General Foch greater authority to coordinate the actions of British and French armies on the Western Front, a result of both a sense of desperation and certain political agendas.

Integral to Haig's stormy civil-military relations was his rather halting, inadequate attention to the powerful British press. A major turning point in domestic public opinion followed Passchendaele. Haig first lost the support of Lord Rothermere, owner of the *Daily Mirror*. Worse yet was Lloyd George's ability to ally with Lord Northcliffe, owner of the *Times*, and Rothermere's brother against Haig.

In closing, Harris' work belies the efforts of past "engaged" historians. His commendable objectivity, grounded in mastery of sources and subject, has created both a quality biography and a fresh window to review this tragic period. This work will likely remain the definitive account for decades to come. Current senior leaders will find this book an analysis of a truly "wicked problem." Harris's work is not just another biography but a detailed case study of high command at war with unforeseen circumstances and the litany of issues which accompany such command. While Harris writes smoothly, this monograph's size and depth could prove daunting for the nonhistorian.

**Democracy Is a Good Thing: Essays on Politics, Society, and Culture in Contemporary China.** By Yu Keping. Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2009. 240 pages. \$34.95. **Reviewed by Dr. Larry M. Wortzel**, who served two tours of duty as a military attaché in China and is former Director of the Strategic Studies Institute at the US Army War College.

Yu Keping is deputy director of the Compilation and Translation Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and a professor of politics at Beijing University. He has written more than 80 articles and four books in the last decade. *Democracy is a Good Thing* takes its name from a lead essay by Yu that was published in *Beijing Daily*, the Communist Party-controlled newspaper, in 2006. The collection of essays is an excellent introduction to the way that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is responding to calls for a more open political system in China, and a good introduction to how CCP theorists approach what they call democratic reforms.



The Brookings Institution published this book as the initial volume in a series designed to translate into English the works of some of China's "most original thinkers" in the areas of political, economic, and legal affairs. The publisher's objective is to "help those in the English-speaking community of China studies understand some of the dynamic new thinking" in China regarding reform and democracy.

The introduction to the book is by Cheng Li of the Brookings Institution, who has excellent access to political theorists in China and a deep understanding of Chinese domestic politics. Reading his introduction is a must before tackling the nuanced Marxist-Leninist theory of Yu Keping. Cheng Li makes it clear there are incentives Chinese leaders seek in pursuing political reform, such as maintaining Communist Party power, and that there are obstacles to reform inside the CCP that would threaten the Chinese Communist Party's rule.

Truthfully, however, the reader needs a lexicon of Marxist-Leninist terminology to read the book. Yu Keping is not speaking of democracy as most Americans understand the term. For American democracy evokes Jeffersonian ideals of representative government where individuals and states have rights, limitations on the power of government imposed by citizens, and competing political parties. China, on the other hand, is a "people's democratic dictatorship" that follows a system of "democratic centralism" according to the CCP constitution. *PL Magazine*, published by the Progressive Labor Party, the reorganized Communist Party of the United States, explains democratic centralism as a [communist] party divided into cells that make suggestions regarding how to improve it and evaluate party positions to make suggestions for change. This approach conforms to the way that Yu Keping describes "intra-party democracy," which he advocates. Thus the reader has to be careful to distinguish between his or her understanding of the term "democracy," in the American or western European sense, and Yu's meaning. Yu is describing keeping channels of communication inside the CCP open for suggestions but is not ready to extend democratic reforms or rights to China's population.

If the reader had any doubt about how the CCP treats reform-minded political theorists, consider the 11-year jail sentence handed out in December 2009 to Liu Xiaobo by a Chinese court for "inciting subversion of state power." He is one of the authors of *Charter 08*, a 2008 document signed by some 300 Chinese thinkers calling for a military, police establishment, and security and intelligence apparatus responsive to the Chinese state, not to the Chinese Communist Party. After *Charter 08*'s publication, Liu was arrested on suspicion of seeking to subvert the state.

Yu Keping is an accomplished Marxist-Leninist theorist who has overseen the translation of many western political works into Chinese. He has worked with some of the foremost socialist and Marxist theorists in Eastern Europe. Yu believes that there should be an incremental process of democratic development in China that starts with intra-party democracy, i.e., a greater chance for CCP members to express themselves inside the party. He seeks more than anything stability for the nation and the party.

Keep in mind that the government and the Communist Party are one in China. Liu Xiaobo went to jail for suggesting they should be separate. In discussing "civil society organizations," Yu provides a taxonomy of the types of organizations that might exist in a society. He counsels caution in encouraging such organizations to develop, since "some [in China] view civic organizations as dissident forces that resist or oppose the

government.” Yu notes the role of civil society organizations in the “color revolutions” in Eastern Europe, which led to the end of Communist Party power there. Ultimately, he counsels the need for government approval and oversight to “prevent CSOs [civil society organizations] from becoming adversaries of the government.”

*Democracy Is a Good Thing* is an excellent book. The Brookings Institution has succeeded in introducing a nuanced, Marxist-Leninist political theorist in China to readers without ideological polemics. The reader should avoid, however, “mirror-imaging” the Jeffersonian concept when a Communist Party theorist discusses democracy. Those who follow domestic politics in China should read this book and the subsequent volumes on legal theory and economics. The theories have application for reforms that may follow in such countries as Vietnam, Cuba, and Laos.

**Normandy to Victory: The War Diary of General Courtney H. Hodges and the First US Army.** By William C. Sylvan and Francis G. Smith, Jr., John T. Greenwood, ed. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008. 575 pages. \$50.00. **Reviewed by Colonel (Ret.) James R. Oman**, Director, Senior Service College Fellowship Program, Defense Acquisition University.

*Normandy to Victory* is a must-read for serious students of military history, particularly those interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the US Army in World War II, its role in the European Theater of Operations (ETO) in general, and specifically the critical contributions made by the 1st US Army. Most assuredly, readers will recognize the often-cited and more familiar title of this work, the “Sylvan diary.” Until the release of John T. Greenwood’s edited and retitled work, the Sylvan diary was available to a limited audience, specifically those individuals who were conducting in-depth research since only the original and two copies existed.

As the senior aide and principal author, Major William C. Sylvan was responsible for capturing and transcribing significant events in the war diary he kept on behalf of General Courtney H. Hodges, the commanding general of the 1st US Army. Major Sylvan was assisted by Captain Francis G. Smith, Jr. As Greenwood notes, while Sylvan and Smith prepared the initial draft, Hodges maintained control over the content by reviewing and approving their collective work before entries were finalized.

John Greenwood is uniquely qualified to serve as the editor for the Sylvan diary. He has not only produced a masterful publication in *Normandy to Victory* but also is singularly responsible for giving new life to the manuscript by moving it from the restrictive domain of the researcher into a much wider readership within the general public. As demonstrated throughout the volume, Greenwood effectively uses his 36 years of experience as a military historian in combination with his unequalled skill as a researcher and author.

When one thinks of the ground campaign and the accomplishments of the US Army in the ETO during World War II, the 3d Army and its commander, General George S. Patton, quickly come to mind. The association of General Hodges as the commander of the 3d Army, preceding General Patton, is a connection often not made. Yet this was the case when Hodges handed over command of the 3d Army and became deputy commanding general of the 1st US Army, a position he held for seven months. On 1 August 1944 with the activation of the 3d Army on the European continent, General Omar

N. Bradley stepped up to become commander of the 12th Army Group, and Hodges replaced Bradley as commander of the 1st US Army.

While Hodges and the 1st Army never received the fame, press, and accolades that Patton and the 3d Army garnered, nonetheless their collective accomplishments are every bit as impressive. An examination of the panoramic accounts found in *Normandy to Victory* is especially illuminating and succinctly makes the case. The entries begin at the port of Plymouth, England, on 2 June 1944, several days before D-Day, and end on 7 May 1945 with the announcement from Bradley of the unconditional surrender of all German forces in Europe. Between these bookends, Sylvan and Smith, from their exclusive position and proximity to Hodges and other senior leaders, capture insightful conversations and record unique perspectives as well as document the many mundane activities of a commander in the field. Equally noteworthy are their entries that describe the major operations of the 1st Army as it fought across France, through northern Europe, and into Germany.

Greenwood has aligned the daily entries into nine chapters that provide a chronological and logical arrangement, following the operational framework used by 1st Army to document its movements. The chapters begin with the invasion of France in June 1944; include Operation Cobra and the breakthrough at St. Lo, exploitation of the St. Lo breakthrough, battle of Germany, German counteroffensive and the drive to the Roer River, crossing the Roer, crossing the Rhine, the exploitation of the Remagen bridgehead; and conclude with final operations in April and May of 1945. Greenwood's use of this framework is especially helpful in understanding the 1st Army's operations and activities in the larger context of their multiple roles and actions within the ETO.

*Normandy to Victory* is first and foremost a terrific book that provides new insight into the relatively overlooked 1st Army and the significant role played by its commander, General Hodges. It is therefore a welcome addition to the body of literature associated with World War II. Yet it is significantly much more. Sylvan and Smith's diary entries and Greenwood's excellent editing have produced a superb work which provides a window into the human dimension of war, command, and leadership at the strategic level. The underlying theme is that the vagaries of combat require strong leaders who are capable and comfortable in making tough decisions. Decisions that are made in dynamic situations consistently distinguished by an absence of fact predicated on an incomplete picture, and often culminating in unpredictable outcomes.

**Churchill.** By Paul Johnson. New York: Viking Press, 2009. 192 pages. \$24.95.

**Reviewed by Major Kirby R. Dennis,** Office of the Secretary of the Army.

Historians have wrestled with the life and reputation of Winston Churchill for decades and, with varying degrees of success, continue to reveal this monumental figure to an increasingly curious readership. Described by many to be the most important figure in twenty-first century history, the essence of Churchill has been the object of study and fascination for biographer and reader alike. In what is an incredibly easy book to read, author and Churchill champion Paul Johnson makes a determined effort to open, examine, and close the debate on Great Britain's greatest Prime Minister in an astonishingly short 166 pages. The brevity of this analysis is perhaps Johnson's greatest gift to the reader. Indeed, those who study history (particularly military history) should know and understand the major themes of Churchill's life, and through Johnson's account,

one can do so in a reasonable amount of time. While the importance of other epic biographies—one could describe them as Churchillian—such as Roy Jenkins's *Churchill: A Biography* or Carlo D'Este's *Warlord: A Life of Winston Churchill at War, 1874–1945* cannot be understated, the reality is that many are deprived of knowing Churchill the soldier and statesman not because of a lack of interest, but simply because of a lack of time. Johnson's book, while not capturing every subtlety of Churchill's rise to power, attempts to inform the reader of the major themes through clarity and precision.

In a biography that charts Churchill's course from small boy to aging politician, Johnson pays adequate tribute to a lesser known aspect of Churchill's life, that of a soldier. Describing his earlier service in far-flung areas such as Cuba, India, and South Africa, Johnson aptly describes Churchill's mantra during this time as "finding wars" and "getting special permission to visit or participate in them." To be sure, Churchill's personal love of soldiering and leading others in battle followed him into politics at the tender age of 26. Following a stint in Parliament and as the First Lord of the Admiralty, Churchill found himself the object of political scorn after Britain's resounding defeat at the Dardanelles. As a result, he soon retreated to the secluded life of a painter. The itch to go to the front lines persisted, however, forcing Churchill to drop his paints and canvases in order to command a battalion in the trenches of Flanders in 1915. According to Johnson, Churchill's role at Flanders was formative and proved to be a major asset in later years. Among other things, it enabled him to visualize the many dimensions of warfare through the eyes of the ordinary soldier, a gift few politicians, or indeed generals, possessed at the time. Practically, it resulted in a Prime Minister who brazenly led from the front in times of peril and who insisted on using personal interaction on the front lines as a method to judge the pulse of the war effort.

While replete with tales that illuminate the subject, Johnson's purpose is not simply to describe Churchill the man, but rather, to answer a central question: Did Churchill save Britain? The reader will find the answer both direct and to the point, and in doing so, will have the pleasure of discovering the rationale supporting the author's answer. Neatly packaged in 10 points, Johnson describes the qualities that served Churchill, Great Britain, and the Allied coalition well during World War II. Notable among these were Churchill's powerful gift of oratory, hyper levels of activity and energy, invaluable foresight, and ability to prioritize those things that mattered (in the case of World War II, a singular focus on destroying the enemy). All the while, Johnson seems to take pleasure in describing the man to whom he attributes so much by invoking his own personal experiences with Churchill as a young boy and adolescent. Additionally, Johnson adds color to the book by highlighting those areas of Churchill's life that, while not always serious, add weight to his persona: a penchant for writing lengthy volumes of history, an artistic skill that most professional painters could not attain over a lifetime of practice, an ability to hunt big game and race cars, and even a keen eye for fashion. While Johnson no doubt injects this into the narrative as a way of reinforcing his own personal view, he does so in a way that keeps the reader interested in Churchill's personal and professional story. More importantly, he does so without detracting from the overall purpose of the book.

For those who approach history with a skeptical eye, this book will most certainly not challenge the idealistic notions of Churchill we have become accustomed to. For those who consider themselves fans of Churchill, Johnson's elegant combination

of vignette, poetry, and historical fact will not disappoint. Whatever the cause for reading this book, readers should view the perceived shortcomings, namely the brevity and excessive adoration of the subject, in a different light. While the aforementioned Jenkins and D'Este works, along with countless others, have tried to capture the story of Churchill in wide-ranging biographies that require time, effort, and energy to digest, Johnson serves as the contrarian by delivering a sweeping, yet distilled, account of Churchill that leaves the reader satisfied. The favorable light Johnson casts on Churchill is necessary in answering the book's thesis. One quickly realizes that the point of this book is not to question, doubt, or detract from the multitude of decisions Churchill made as Britain's wartime premier. Nor is the purpose to delve into all of the specific details of his tenure as Prime Minister. Rather, Johnson seeks to illustrate the major things that Churchill got right and to draw general conclusions about him as a leader. In the end, this book is an accomplishment that richly describes a legacy that remains relevant to this day, and just as important, is a profile in leadership from which we all can learn.

**Until the Last Man Comes Home: POWs, MIAs, and the Unending Vietnam War.** By Michael J. Allen. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009. 448 pages. \$30.00. **Reviewed by Dr. Mark Moyar**, Professor of National Security Affairs at the US Marine Corps University and author of *Triumph Forsaken: The Vietnam War, 1954-1965*.

The American search for prisoners of war (POWs) and missing in action (MIA) during and after the Vietnam War reached proportions never seen with any previous conflict, in terms of scope and cost. Following wars involving casualties that have dwarfed American losses in Vietnam, other nations did far less to track down their tens of thousands of missing-in-action. In addition to consuming enormous US resources, the POW/MIA search influenced American foreign policy and domestic politics for decades. Although the experiences of individual prisoners have received exhaustive treatment in histories and memoirs, the larger political, social, and cultural issues surrounding the subject have not been heavily trodden, leaving them ripe for exploration.

Michael Allen voyages into this domain in *Until the Last Man Comes Home*. Covering the POW/MIA controversy from a variety of angles, Allen devotes particular attention to the role of the wives of the missing, the influence of POW/MIA concerns on American policymaking during the war, presidential involvement in POW/MIA affairs, and the impact of the MIA issue on postwar American relations with Vietnam. Roughly half of the book covers the war years, with the remainder covering the postwar period. Based on extensive research in published and archival sources, the book contains a great amount of previously undiscovered fact. Those interested in the details of Vietnam POWs and MIAs, and POW/MIA issues more broadly, will find the book informative.

The author's analyses, however, are less impressive than his presentation of fact. As with many authors of specialized studies, Allen exaggerates the subject's import in the grand scheme of things. Rather than merely recounting the POW/MIA issue as a significant and interesting component of the Vietnam War and its aftermath, Allen claims that it was "the dominant means through which Americans recall and respond to the Vietnam War." Although imprisoned and missing forces did garner a great deal of attention from the American people during the war, the killed-in-action number has always figured larger in American minds. Any American with elementary knowledge of



the Vietnam War knows the number of American fatalities, but very few Americans can recite the number of POWs and MIAs. This misconstruing of the subject's significance can be blamed to some degree on Allen's lack of interviews with veterans. During this reviewer's interviews and conversations with numerous Vietnam veterans over the past two decades, the POW/MIA issue has not approached any real level of dominance in remembrances and reactions, except for those few who were POWs. Veterans appear more focused on issues such as America's self-imposed military restrictions, media distortions of the war, draft dodgers, and the treatment of returning veterans.

At times, Allen provides serious and nuanced descriptions of individuals who championed the POW/MIA cause while supporting the war; most of them happen to be women. But he appears hostile to male MIA activists and other supporters of the war. Allen focuses inordinately on MIA activists who made the most outrageous comments and were most inclined to believe dubious stories of live MIAs still in North Vietnam. He then holds these individuals up as proof that the entire political right was stricken with fanaticism and paranoia.

In Allen's view, returned POWs and other prowar veterans who denounced antiwar protesters as enemies of the state had simply been corrupted by bitterness over their own experiences. He ignores actions by the war's opponents that provoked this animosity, instead portraying antiwar leaders as benign figures who cared deeply about the POWs and MIAs. While providing numbing detail on other issues, Allen fails to inform readers that antiwar leaders such as Dave Dellinger, Ramsey Clark, and Jane Fonda frequently declared that the North Vietnamese were treating American prisoners well, when in reality the North Vietnamese were torturing them and coercing them to make false statements. Allen also neglects to mention that antiwar protesters spit on returning veterans, branded all veterans as baby-killers, predicted enthusiastically that Ho Chi Minh would win, and denounced the United States as an evil nation.

Allen cites a small number of MIA activists who portrayed the MIAs as victims and then alleges that Vietnam veterans in general considered themselves aggrieved victims. In truth, those claiming victim status for veterans were usually opponents of the war, who used the victimization interpretation as evidence of the war's exorbitant human costs. Most veterans reject that interpretation. A Veterans Administration survey of Vietnam veterans in 1980, which Allen mysteriously ignored, found that 90 percent of combat veterans said they were glad to have served, and 69 percent said that they enjoyed their service.

Allen goes on to assert that any claims of POWs or MIAs to victim status were "unearned and immoral," because the war amounted to unprovoked American "aggression" that was intended to "subjugate" the Vietnamese people. Thus, President Ronald Reagan and others who portrayed the war as a "noble cause" were engaging in wild "fantasy." The author fails to back these assertions with evidence, a serious problem given the wealth of Communist sources showing that the war was one of North Vietnamese aggression. He makes no effort to explain away the North Vietnamese decision in 1959 to initiate an armed insurrection, the infiltration of entire North Vietnamese Army divisions into South Vietnam before American combat forces arrived, or North Vietnamese violation of Laotian and Cambodian neutrality.



Given its limitations, *Until the Last Man Comes Home* will be of use only to readers with a strong interest in POW/MIA issues and enough knowledge to separate fact from distortion. The rest of us will have to await a better book on this subject.

**America in Vietnam: The War that Couldn't Be Won.** By Herbert Y. Schandler. Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2009. 209 pages. \$39.95. **Reviewed by Dr. James H. Willbanks**, the General of the Armies George C. Marshall Chair of Military History/Director, Department of Military History, US Army Command and General Staff College, and author of *Abandoning Vietnam*.

In 1998 and 1999, Herbert Schandler, a retired Army colonel then serving as a professor at the National Defense University, accompanied a group of historians to Hanoi to participate in talks with former North Vietnamese leaders concerning the various perspectives of the two sides during the Vietnam War. These discussions resulted in the book *Argument without End: In Search of Answers to the Vietnam Tragedy* (1999), by Robert McNamara and other contributors. Dr. Schandler contributed a chapter titled "U.S. Military Victory in Vietnam: A Dangerous Illusion?"

It was the reaction to his chapter in the earlier book, which Schandler says was criticized for not going beyond the Tet Offensive of 1968, that led him to expand earlier thoughts, resulting in the publication of this new book. With that starting point, the author set out to more fully develop his original thesis, covering the entire war from the earliest days of US involvement to its conclusion in 1975. Schandler analyzes the events and policy decisions of those years from the vantage point of his two combat tours in Vietnam and his wartime service in the Pentagon informed by what he gleaned from discussions with the Vietnamese in Hanoi.

The book's stated thesis is that nationalism, not communism, was the driving motivation on the part of the North Vietnamese. Therefore, the American fear of a "massive Communist international conspiracy" was erroneous, and from that misguided fear, a myriad of mistakes flowed that ultimately resulted in America's failure in Vietnam. In developing his argument, the author begins with the question, "Could the United States have won militarily in Vietnam at a reasonable cost in terms of human life, both Vietnamese and American, and without an unacceptable risk of extending the war to China and Russia?" His simple answer to this complex question is a resounding "No!" According to Schandler, the possibility of a military victory in Vietnam was a "chimera," and American efforts to win the war were doomed from the beginning.

The book provides a fulsome critique of US policy and strategy, or lack thereof, in Vietnam. Schandler is unflinching in his criticism of both military leaders and civilian policymakers. He states that the fundamental underlying failure from which everything else flowed was the inability to translate understandable and limited political objectives into achievable military goals. In making this argument, Schandler takes on those who have maintained that constraints on the use of military force imposed by political leaders tied the hands of the military. On the contrary, he asserts, President Nixon tried everything that the military leaders had earlier advocated—invading Cambodia and Laos, bombing Hanoi, and mining Haiphong harbor—none of which altered the ultimate outcome of the conflict. Schandler concludes that "the preclusion of the unification of Vietnam could not have been accomplished by American military action and, indeed,

that this unity, promised by the Geneva Accords, was made inevitable by the willingness of the North Vietnamese to sacrifice in order to achieve it.”

The author's assertions and conclusions are nothing new, and he acknowledges that most of them have been explored much further and in greater detail in earlier secondary works. Schandler's assessment, however, seeks to engender a broader view by drawing heavily on his conversations with the former North Vietnamese leaders in Hanoi to provide some insight into their wartime thinking, motivations, and objectives. Herein lies both the strength and weakness of the book. On one hand, the reader is treated to observations and reflections from the other side that help put a face on our former enemy. The author suggests that these pronouncements can and should be taken as “original sources.” These reflections, however, are post-war ruminations by the ultimate victors that have the luxury of hindsight and border, in some cases, on propaganda. Some of their pronouncements made in 1998 and 1999 may be different from what they really felt at the time. For example, when those who met with the author intimate that they never saw themselves in any danger of being defeated militarily, the reader is left wondering what they thought following the monumental casualties sustained during Tet 1968, or after the failure to cause the collapse of the South Vietnamese army during the 1972 Easter Offensive, or even midway through the Christmas bombing of 1972. There have been sufficient revelations in recently released documents and published works from the other side to suggest that the North Vietnamese were not always so steadfastly confident of their eventual triumph. Therefore, the reader is well advised to view the quotes included in the book with a little more than the proverbial grain of salt.

That observation notwithstanding, even those who may disagree with Herbert Schandler's assessment and conclusion that the war could not be won will agree he has produced a scholarly and well-written book that provides a unique perspective not only on America in Vietnam, but also on what the other side was thinking (or says they were thinking). For that reason, this book is highly recommended.

**The Marne, 1914: The Opening of World War I and the Battle that Changed the World.** By Holger H. Herwig. New York: Random House, 2009. 391 pages. \$28.00. **Reviewed by Dr. Eugenia C. Kiesling**, Professor of History, US Military Academy.

Let no one be put off by oddities in the opening paragraph of Holger Herwig's *The Marne*; thereafter, this splendid history of the first six weeks of the Great War on the Western Front is difficult to put down. Herwig is a fine storyteller and thoughtful analyst, and evidence from newly available German records casts new perspective on a familiar narrative. The book reads well enough to suit those looking to enjoy a simple campaign narrative, and the scholar will find much to think about as well.

Herwig claims that the novelty of his work lies in his German sources, his breaking the “German” invasion of Belgium and France into separate Prussian, Saxon, Bavarian, and Baden efforts, his exploration of the six-week campaign as a whole, and his presentation of the voices of ordinary soldiers from both sides. He also promises to clarify myths about the battle, the most pernicious being that the outcome stemmed not from a miracle favoring the French but from gross and culpable failure on the German side. Although the work does not admit to much exploration of the “common soldier's” point of view, it succeeds on all points. The most significant achievement is the

presentation of the events of 3 to 9 September as the result not of a stunning, unpredictable Deus ex machine but of a series of remarkably poor German tactical choices.

Too many histories have presented the Marne campaign as a contest between elaborate German planning and the realities of logistics. One holds one's breath and wonders whether the trains will keep to schedule, the soldiers' feet hold out, and the commanders retain their nerve as the right flank swings farther and farther west. They never do, but could an army renowned for operational excellence have achieved the victory Alfred von Schlieffen's bold concept apparently deserved? Perhaps in an effort to deny a German commitment to logistical fantasies, recent historiography has moved from the viability to the existence of the Schlieffen Plan. Ignoring these sterile debates, Herwig offers a refreshing new approach. First, there was in fact a Schlieffen Plan. Second, rather than positing special German skill at the operational level of war, the author examines the actual performance of Helmut von Moltke's army.

Herwig's narrative supports a damning conclusion. Individual German commanders from Moltke on down performed badly; institutionally, the vaunted German officer corps proved to lack both clear command procedures and an ethic of professionalism and responsibility. Moltke repeatedly abjured the responsibility of giving orders while complaining impotently of "ordre-countreordre-désordre;" his subordinates proved unwilling to press for clarification. Lines of command and control were uncertain; communications were sketchy or nonexistent. Herwig tells of commanders operating in isolation, sometimes because they preferred not to share information, more often because they could not. Reconnaissance received little attention, and Moltke's headquarters had only one radio transmitter. Moltke's pathetic excuse for locating his headquarters far from the fighting, that it would be impossible to "drag" Kaiser Wilhelm to the front, is an apt comment on the chief of staff's competence.

The French Army was not, however, systemically superior to the German. Indeed, its understanding of German intentions, operational deployment, and tactical doctrine all proved faulty. But Joseph Joffre proved the more vigorous commander, ruthlessly replacing unsatisfactory commanders and determinedly shifting troops to shore up his beleaguered left wing. His leadership was matched by the extraordinary resilience of French soldiers even after a month of retreat. The British Expeditionary Force, incidentally, comes out quite badly.

Paralleling the book's theme of increasing entropy on the German side is a subtext of German atrocity. Violence against civilians was endemic and always preceded by German complaints in the passive voice at having been "shot at." Since the Germans made no effort to ascertain the identity of the shooters, neither, rightly, does Herwig. The result is a convincing picture of fearful and often drunken conquerors lashing out at an inchoate threat about which they had given far too little thought before invading countries occupied by civilians. Following John Horne and Alan Kramer's *German Atrocities, 1914* (Yale University Press, 2001), Herwig argues that the killing of more than 4,400 Belgian civilians represented policy, though not necessarily premeditation, a distinction again raising tacit questions regarding command structures and the nature of discipline in the German Army.

This is a grim story, lightened by good prose and occasional understated wit. But back to that disconcerting first paragraph, which speaks of a German cavalry officer's "broadsword" and describes the infliction of grievous bodily harm upon three

French soldiers before labeling the third the “first French casualty” of the war. Jarring editorial failures lead the reader to wonder in what possible sense the French army had a “plethora” of heavy artillery. Was Schlieffen a “foreboding” German or a “forbidding” one? British artillerymen are gunners, not “artificers.” Above all, one is fascinated by the novelty of “Hobbesian choice”—presumably “nasty, brutish, or short.”

A careful editor also would have noted that Herwig refers to Clausewitz’s “fog of uncertainty” at least seven times before finally quoting the relevant passage of *On War* in the epilogue. It is nice to be spared the less accurate “fog of war,” but repetition turns what might be an analytical tool into a cliché. There are other duplications in the text, and sometimes the full citation does not accompany the first iteration.

It seems a shame to belabor such defects, but they do distract the careful reader from an otherwise pleasurable reading experience. *The Marne* is highly recommended to anyone looking to understand the opening campaign of the Great War or seeking an example of operational history excellently presented. It ought to be required reading for all enthusiastic admirers of German “military efficiency.” Most of all, Herwig is to be congratulated for diverting us from the existential argument over the Schlieffen Plan and redirecting our attention to the details of this pivotal military campaign.

**An Introduction to Military Ethics: A Reference Handbook.** By Bill Rhodes. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2009. 224 pages. \$44.95. **Reviewed by Dr. Rebecca J. Johnson**, Assistant Professor of National Security Affairs, Command and Staff College, Marine Corps University.

Few people would contest the claim that contemporary war confronts today’s service members with complex, often difficult moral challenges. In response, the services have dedicated significant attention to preparing their members to face these challenges honorably. The counterinsurgency field manual added a chapter on “Leadership and Ethics for Counterinsurgency;” the Marines launched the Lejeune Leadership Institute in 2005 to promote ethical leadership development; and the Army stood up the Army Center of Excellence for the Professional Military Ethic in 2007, and has dubbed 2011 “The Year of the Army Professional Ethic.” The purpose of these efforts is to prepare US forces to face the complex moral challenges of today’s battlefield. *An Introduction to Military Ethics* provides a useful contribution to this cause. Bill Rhodes offers an accessible, concise primer for both those junior members of the armed forces who confront the moral challenges of combat daily and those more senior military and civilian leaders who are charged with preparing them to fight honorably.

*An Introduction to Military Ethics* is precisely that; Rhodes begins with a basic introduction to ethics, different approaches to ethical decision-making, and the various ethical tensions that surface within the profession of arms—the tension between freedom and necessity, one’s role as a soldier and family member, the imperatives to win and fight within restraints, and the sometimes inevitable tension between conscience and policy. Rhodes does not resolve these tensions in the first chapter but clearly identifies some of the main issues junior service members grapple with as they develop their understanding of the requirements of their vocation. There is plenty of grist in the first chapter alone to produce a robust discussion.

Rhodes’s ability to translate often intricate and jargon-laden concepts into language that a midshipman or cadet could read and understand (or that faculty could

walk into a classroom and teach) is one of this book's greatest strengths. One does not need to read far before being struck by how clearly and economically the author is able to communicate important issues of military ethics. With so much of the ethics literature hampered by overly academic language, this contribution alone is enough to commend the book.

*An Introduction to Military Ethics* then provides a useful history and overview of what Rhodes calls "Just War Thinking" (a nod to the disparate origins and continuing controversies within the field). These chapters cover a lot of ground quickly, so the review is necessarily cursory, but it is sufficient to provide context for the remainder of the book, which is a useful explanation of the ethics of the military profession—the moral nature of the profession itself, military virtues, and the subordination of self, among others—and the challenges this ethical standard faces today.

There is no new ground trod in Rhodes's review of these issues, but *An Introduction to Military Ethics* provides the necessary foundation on which to explore the more complex moral issues facing those in uniform: How does one prioritize between force protection and noncombatant immunity? Should we treat insurgents as our moral equals? What is a service member's obligation to both remain obedient and dissent when necessary? One will approach these issues with far greater depth and humility after having read Rhodes's book.

As with any book, *An Introduction to Military Ethics* has areas that are stronger than others. The chapter titled "Cultural Ethical Issues" does not address how warfighters might honor their moral code when it comes into conflict with allies and adversaries who operate in very different moral systems, arguably the greatest and least explored ethical challenge of those deployed today. Rather, it examines cultural differences within the US service community by discussing the ethical issues surrounding the challenges women, homosexuals, and evangelicals both face and pose with their service. While these are important issues for the profession, they are disconnected from the rest of the book and are not developed sufficiently in the chapter to have the same value as the remainder of the volume.

While one hopes a senior military professional would already be conversant in the topics Rhodes covers, this book still deserves a place on the bookshelf. It is useful not only as a quick reference guide but more importantly as a useful teaching and leadership tool for commanders and instructors who seek to instill an understanding and respect for why the American military fights with restraint, despite our adversary's best efforts to exploit our commitment to do so. This book is no rallying cry for "ethical warriors," but it provides the necessary explanations of what it means to fight and live honorably as a member of the profession of arms, in support of commanders' and instructors' efforts to shape the moral character of their subordinates.

Without question, *An Introduction to Military Ethics* should be required reading at the nation's service academies and ROTC programs. Discussing these issues as Rhodes presents them will not guarantee the proper moral formation of America's next generation of military leaders, but it will certainly prepare them to understand what is required of them morally as they enter and mature in their profession.



**Patton, Montgomery, Rommel: Masters of War.** By Terry Brighton. New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2008. 448 pages. \$30.00. Reviewed by COL (Ret.) Cole C. Kingseed, former Professor of History at the US Military Academy, and writer and consultant.

During World War II, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States each produced a battle captain who stood above the rest: Erwin Rommel, Bernard Montgomery, and George Patton. All three displayed varied traits of overpowering egotism, publicity-seeking, and military genius, and were personally flawed in their own right. Each commander viewed combat as a personal contest against his adversary and quite often against his senior headquarters.

In exploring the role of ego in war, Terry Brighton, the curator of the Queen's Royal Lancers Regimental Museum, meshes these diverse personalities into a well-written, lucid, triple biography that appeals more to the general reader than the serious student of military history. Set against the backdrop of the large tank battles in North Africa, Sicily, and northwest Europe, *Patton, Montgomery, Rommel: Masters of War* is the story of three remarkable military commanders.

Brighton sees more similarities among the three generals than differences. With the exception of a minor skirmish in northern Mexico in 1916 in which Patton shot three guerrillas by his own count, these future commanders received their baptism by fire during the Great War. They emerged from that conflict, however, with different perspectives, opines Brighton. While Patton and Rommel demonstrated a genius for forward action, Montgomery earned his battle spurs as a staff officer, convinced that future battles would be won or lost at headquarters before the engagement if the proper planning was conducted and sufficient resources accumulated.

During the interwar period and the opening stages of the next war, all three wore what John Keegan labels "a mask of command." Patton repeatedly perfected "his war face" to compensate for a shrill voice that he considered slightly effeminate. In North Africa, Rommel took to wearing his field goggles above his visor, while Monty donned a black Tank Corps beret. All such displays were deliberate attempts to develop a familiar persona to instill pride and esprit de corps within their respective commands. The three generals also advocated an expanded role of armored forces on the modern battlefield.

Fate brought the three combatants together in North Africa. This section of the book is probably the most interesting, as Brighton allows the commanders to enter "the same ring and to go at it." The author skillfully outlines both the impediments facing Rommel once he assumed command of the Afrika Korps and the constant problem of having to coordinate strategy with Hitler. Montgomery, on the other hand, built his reputation as the victor of El Alamein, and Brighton is careful to balance his personal assessment of Montgomery's subsequent "pursuit" of Rommel against Monty's own predilections for waging a cautious campaign to avoid the stalemate and slaughter that he had witnessed during the Great War.

Brighton's coverage of the war in northwest Europe is provocative, but he seldom takes the reader beyond the conventional interpretation of the war within the Allied High Command following the Normandy invasion. One chapter is labeled "Bulging Ambitions: Monty and Patton 'Win' the War." Such a title gives the reader the overall impression that Montgomery and Patton were peers and each coordinated



the movement of his respective forces directly with the Supreme Commander. General Omar Bradley, the commander of the 12th Army Group, seems to disappear from these pages aside from an occasional reference. Though Brighton corrects this misperception in the text, the reader is at best confused regarding the structure of the Allied command. The author is far stronger on his portrayal of Rommel, who commanded Army Group B in the defense of Normandy.

Montgomery emerges from these pages as a far more flawed commander than either Patton or Rommel. While Brighton sees Rommel as the best tactician, his admiration for Patton as an operational commander is quite evident. On the other hand, the author views Montgomery as a supreme egotist who more frequently than not disrupted the conduct and execution of combined operations. Whether it was with Patton in Sicily, where both Monty and Patton served as army commanders, or with Eisenhower in northwest Europe, Monty exercised a rather parochial view on how the war should be conducted. Montgomery's distaste for Eisenhower as the overall land forces commander during the last nine months of the war led to tremendous friction with the Allied High Command and almost caused Montgomery's relief from command.

On the debit side, Brighton spends an inordinate amount of time on sexual innuendo and is prone to exaggeration. He plows familiar ground with accusations of Patton's infidelity and Montgomery's estrangement from his mother, to say nothing of Monty's "predilection for the company of young men," as one biographer noted after Montgomery's death in 1976. Why Brighton includes this latter passage in the final page of text is anyone's guess and adds nothing to the book avowed purpose of examining three dynamic commanders and their mastery of war in the twentieth century. Nor is Patton's speech to soldiers on the eve of the D-Day invasion hardly the "greatest motivational speech of all time, exceeding the words Shakespeare gave Henry V at Agincourt."

A number of factual errors also sprinkle the text. The Tehran conference never witnessed a near-brawl between British Chief of the Imperial General Staff General Alan Brooke and Soviet leader Josef Stalin. Southwick House outside Portsmouth, England served as Admiral Bertram Ramsay's headquarters on the eve of D-Day, not Montgomery's. Robert Grow commanded the 6th Armored Division in Brittany, not the 4th Armored Division. The Yalta summit occurred in February 1945, not November 1944. The list goes on.

In the final analysis Brighton has produced a highly readable, but slightly flawed, portrait of three of their respective countries' more flamboyant commanders. He concludes with an interesting interpretation of how Carl von Clausewitz might have viewed Rommel, Montgomery, and Patton. The author then opines that if neither Patton nor Montgomery had been available to the Allies, and if Hitler's mental decline had not broken his trust in Rommel, Nazi Germany might well have won the war on the sandy beaches of Normandy. That is more contingency history than most authors would venture in a single volume.

**Why NATO Endures.** By Wallace J. Thies. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 321 pages \$90.00. **Reviewed by Dr. Stephen J. Blank**, Professor of National Security Studies, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College.

Today NATO is supposed to be in crisis due to its divisions over the contending perception of Russia and the organization's inability to do anything for Georgia in 2008.

The Transatlantic Alliance is regularly described as being torn by internal disagreements, by a refusal to provide sufficient support to the United States in Afghanistan, etc. To be certain, these are all accurate signs of challenges within the alliance and should not be minimized. But, in fact, as Wallace Thies points out, such predictions of crisis have a long and inaccurate pedigree going back 40 or 60 years. Despite these constant warnings of crisis or NATO's demise, as Galileo might have commented, "It still moves."

NATO's continued existence and presumed utility to its members, who have the right to leave at any time, seem to be a mystery, something that, according to supposedly the iron laws of the international relations, should not occur. In this masterful and excellently written account, Thies provides an answer to the mystery. He points out that NATO differs from every other alliance before 1939 and many since by being not just a military-political alliance as the others were, but also a community of values, even when members have contrary points-of-views. Even in the 1950s, there were significant differences regarding the issue we today call burden-sharing or assessments related to the power of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the alliance kept moving forward, and its power of attraction grew markedly following the events of 1989 despite 30 years of predictions of imminent demise.

None of this is to say that NATO is immune to the challenges that caused pre-World War II alliances or the Grand Alliance to fail. Rather, it is the nature of NATO and the bargaining that lies at its heart and forces the alliance to confront these challenges more or less openly with whatever degree of effectiveness the varying positions bring to the process, and ultimately overcome them. Indeed, it is this process of openly dealing with difficult challenges that has led pundits to regularly intone obituaries for NATO. Specifically, Thies cites three phenomena: the distribution of capabilities within the alliance and the international system as a whole; the changing nature of contemporary war; and the presence or absence of divisive ideologies as factors that can explain why NATO's cohesion, though challenged, has persisted.

This analysis is persuasive even if the current condition of the alliance appears to be one of worsening cohesion, something the author believes is more likely to occur in a multipolar international system, which is where we are apparently headed. But beyond this there are important lessons. It is arguable that since NATO's founding, its enemies have doubted the alliance's ability to endure as a cohesive unit, precisely because they saw it and still view it as nothing more than an old-fashioned military-political alliance. What Thies highlights and what NATO argues quite regularly is that NATO's enemies are chronically unable to understand the alliance in any terms other than the realpolitik of the past that NATO has both implicitly and explicitly surmounted. Russia and the Soviet Union before it, as well as many critics who believe now or in the past that NATO's doom is imminent, cannot conceive of the alliance in terms of interests other than those defined in terms of power. They deride the notion of a genuine community representing mutual values and cannot conceive that such a group has inner strength or sticking power.

This train of thought, of course, is part of why to the eyes of these critics NATO can be at the same time threatening and moribund, or moribund if not threatening. NATO certainly has repeated challenges, but they are problems that would have torn asunder any pre-1939 alliances. Thies admittedly points out that no member has exercised the

option of leaving NATO despite all its problems. To be certain, NATO may yet fall apart or there may be other explanations to supplant Thies's analysis. But until such time, this excellent book is a superb and required guide for anyone interested in European security and the mysterious persistence of NATO. After reading this book the reader will realize that, in fact, there is no mystery, only our inability to make sense of what is actually happening before our eyes.

**The Bonfire: The Siege and Burning of Atlanta.** By Marc Wortman. New York: Public Affairs, 2009. 430 pages. \$28.95. **Reviewed by Dr. Kevin J. Weddle**, Professor of Military Theory and Strategy, US Army War College.

One of the most misleading book titles of 2009 may be Marc Wortman's *The Bonfire: The Siege and Burning of Atlanta*. One-third of the 361 pages of text go by before the reader even gets to the Civil War. After another 80 pages, the siege of Atlanta finally begins. But this is not to say that this popular history is not excellent, because it is. Wortman has given us not a comprehensive history of the siege and burning of Atlanta, but a more wide-ranging look at the city from its founding, through its development as one of the most important economic centers in the South, to its traumatic experience at war, and finally its resurrection in the post-war years.

Wortman leads his readers on this journey through the eyes of a cast of fascinating individuals. They include Bob Yancey, an African-American slave who through his drive and entrepreneurial talent prospered and became wealthy in the oddly permissive (in some ways) racial atmosphere of pre-war Atlanta, and who may or may not have been the illegitimate son of the great northern Senator Daniel Webster. Bob's white master, Ben Yancey, "lawyer, politician, and plantation owner," plays an important role. Cyrena Stone, a Vermont native married to a prominent Atlanta attorney, was an unabashed Unionist, as were a surprising number of her southern neighbors. William Tecumseh Sherman, who spent part of his early days as a young Army officer in Georgia, is introduced early in the narrative. All of these individuals and many more add to the author's colorful narrative, but Wortman's muse for the story of Atlanta's rise, fall, and ultimate rebirth is James M. Calhoun, wartime mayor and cousin of the fiery defender of southern rights, John C. Calhoun.

Calhoun's journey from his humble roots in Virginia to one of the earliest residents of what Wortman calls "an instant city, one modern in character and mores, unlike anything the South had known," sets the stage for the rest of the book. Atlanta's enviable location as a major railroad junction led to its rapid growth into one of the South's most important cities, perhaps only second in importance to Richmond. The economic opportunities helped fuel a unique social structure between whites and slaves that was very rare in the South during the antebellum period. Slaves like Bob Yancey were able to mingle freely with whites and even run lucrative businesses catering to all races. Yancey, taking advantage of the entrepreneurial opportunities, became a successful barber and money lender and was one of the wealthiest men in Atlanta, white or black. Still, despite the generally more favorable circumstances enjoyed by Yancey and his fellow Atlanta slaves (at least compared to the plight of other southern slaves), they were most definitely still slaves. Racial enlightenment went only so far.

Once the war came, Atlanta prospered even more with lucrative government war contracts and the constant shuttling of troops through the vital rail junction. Its

economy and population boomed, causing challenges to the town's leaders, but especially for Mayor Calhoun. Increased crime arrived along with the Confederate soldiers charged with defending the city. Wortman does an excellent job describing the changes in relationships between the races and the panic that seized the population as Union forces began their inevitable advance toward the city in 1864. Slaves were used to prepare extensive fortifications, and many citizens fled from the advancing enemy. Once Sherman's army laid siege to Atlanta, the situation grew increasingly grim, but despite indiscriminate shelling, civilian casualties were light. The inevitable fall of Atlanta was a key Union victory and set the stage for Sherman's March to the Sea, which was instrumental in bringing the war to a close. Finally, Wortman does a nice job describing the aftermath of the war in Atlanta and the city's phoenix-like rise from the ashes of the most destructive war in US history. He wraps up the story by recounting the post-war lives of the key characters.

Wortman's rendering of this important story from the Confederate perspective is admirable. He is an excellent writer and storyteller. His accounts of the battles and military decisions are solid. *Parameters* readers, however, will certainly note that the author uses the terms strategy and tactics interchangeably. At one point he claims that "[Union Lieutenant General Ulysses S.] Grant was not a particularly imaginative strategist." He means, of course, that Grant was not a creative tactician. He also frequently imagines what his characters were thinking at critical times. Some of this conjecture is understandable, but Wortman's repeated application of the device is overused. His assessment of Grant as a commander is also questionable; to describe Grant as an uninspired plodder is simplistic and wide of the mark.

These minor quibbles aside, *The Bonfire* is a superb popular history that will appeal to specialists and buffs alike. The siege and burning of Atlanta was one of the pivotal events of the Civil War. If you want to read a purely military history of the city's destruction, this book is not for you. But *The Bonfire* is a worthy account that puts the military events in a larger social and political context, and it has the added virtue of being an exciting and engaging read.

**Press On! Selected Works of General Donn A. Starry.** Edited by Lewis Sorley. Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2009. 2 volumes. 1,341 pages. Reviewed by **Colonel Gregory Fontenot, USA Ret.**, Director of the University of Foreign Military and Cultural Studies, Fort Leavenworth.

Together, Generals William E. DePuy and Donn Starry produced much of the thinking that led the post-Vietnam renaissance of the US Army. Donn Starry, however, is the man who succeeded in shifting and focusing Army doctrine and related acquisition efforts to frame and ground the AirLand Battle concept, the unit structure, and much of the equipment to execute AirLand Battle. General Starry did as much as any man and more than most to create the Army that won the first Gulf War. He performed much of the analysis and worked alongside General DePuy to develop the Active Defense doctrine. General Starry's experiments and thinking about that doctrine while in command of V Corps led to his consideration of how to extend the depth of the battlefield to disrupt, delay, and defeat Soviet operational echelons. This is the chief inspiration that culminated in his personal supervision of the thought process that became AirLand Battle.

To these achievements must also be added his efforts in transforming the US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) into an “engine of change.”

General Starry may be said to be the exemplar of what it meant to be a Cold War soldier in Europe, which contrary to contemporary usage is not an apology. His career nearly spanned the duration of the defense of the Fulda Gap. Starry joined the 63d Medium Tank Battalion in Grafenwoehr in 1949 and moved with it to Mannheim until he returned to the United States in 1952. He served twice more in Europe, including a tour in the 3d Armored Division from 1960-64 during which he commanded 1st Battalion, 32d Armor in Friedberg. In his last tour in Germany he commanded V Corps for 16 months in 1976 and 1977. General Starry soldiered in Korea and completed two tours in Vietnam where he led the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment during its operations in Cambodia, fighting from the ground rather than from a command and control aircraft. He served twice in TRADOC, first as the commandant of the Armor school and then as commanding general. General Starry retired as C-in-C of US Readiness Command in June 1983.

An intellectually curious and prolific man, Don Starry produced an amazing and complex body of work, running the gamut from *Mounted Combat in Vietnam*, to letters on mundane matters of uniform, to thoughtful analysis on the rationale for light infantry, or reorganization of the Army division. Although Starry’s work was eclectic and voluminous, it is not without structure. Dr. Bob Sorley, the editor of *Press On*, takes advantage of this characteristic and organizes the collection thematically. Instruction on how to fight, how to organize, and how to equip runs throughout chapters ranging from airpower to Vietnam, but the overarching theme is how to defeat the Soviets in Europe. General Starry’s assessment of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War for General DePuy coupled with his insightful study of Soviet capability inspired him for the remainder of his career. In ten short years, he produced a compelling body of work, including contributing to the 1976 edition of Field Manual 100-5, *Operations*, and testing it during corps command. While serving as TRADOC’s commanding general from 1977-81, he completed his magnum opus, *AirLand Battle*, and the structure to fight it—Division 86.

The underlying theme in much of Starry’s thinking was what he termed the extended battlefield, the central battle, or the corps battle. The problem posed by the Soviet threat absorbed Starry. Because he understood technology and analysis and possessed a broad historical perspective, he ably served as General DePuy’s second in developing the Active Defense and defending it against all comers. In some ways, V Corps served as a proving ground for the concept of the Active Defense. In short, DePuy and Starry changed the culture of the Army from one that thought very little about doctrine to one that heartily debated it.

The resistance to the Active Defense surprised and bemused General Starry. The strident opposition seemed to him unwarranted and unmerited. He concluded that this resistance arose in part because of inadequate efforts to explain the doctrine to the Army at large. He sought to avoid a reprise of this problem and the acrimonious debate that had occurred during the development of the 1976 manual between TRADOC and the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth. Starry insisted that the replacement manual be written at Leavenworth by three mid-grade officers, Huba Wass de Czege, Don Holder, and Rich Henriques. General Starry and his writing team worked together exchanging drafts and thinking through the end result. He also sought to avoid debating



the caustic commentary pundits offered against the Active Defense. This he achieved with remarkable success by using Brigadier General Don Morelli to run what is now referred to as a strategic communication effort.

There is much more to this and other stories that emerge in just over 1,300 pages in two volumes. The depth of Starry's thinking served as the basis for much of what the Army is today, and it is more readily understood as a consequence of Sorley's first-class effort. Bob Sorley, a Vietnam-era tanker and historian, was the right man to edit General Starry's papers. A biographer both of Creighton Abrams and Harold K. Johnson, Sorley understands the Army of this era and is comfortable in knowing the men who led it.

General Starry's selected works are required reading for those who seek to understand the histories of the American Army in Europe, US armor forces in Vietnam, and the Army that fought in Operation Desert Storm. These two volumes also provide an introductory education on how large institutions function and transform. Donn Starry was a leading agent for much of that change, ending with the successful culmination of Desert Storm. Sorley has done a superb job in selecting what should be included in those two volumes, and his editing is superb. His prologue is a concise and riveting summary of Starry's career and establishes the context that permits his brilliant organization of General Starry's papers. This is a masterful effort and captures the essence of a great soldier and thinker.

**The Other War: Winning and Losing in Afghanistan.** By Ronald E. Neumann. Washington: Potomac Books, 2009. 245 pages. \$27.50. **Reviewed by Colonel Richard A. Lacquement, Jr.,** Director of Military History and Strategy, US Army War College, and author of *Shaping American Military Capabilities after the Cold War*.

This is an excellent book. Ambassador Neumann has produced an engaging and valuable memoir of the experiences of an ambassador at war. *The Other War* is a fascinating compilation of key events, policy analysis, and enduring themes that should command the attention of foreign policy and national security practitioners and scholars. It is a highly relevant book both for informing the continuing and immediate challenges of Afghanistan and for enriching the study of broad and timeless themes at the heart of diplomacy and war.

This is a story of a US ambassador posted to a major front in the United States' most significant military campaign of the young millennium. Ambassador Neumann presents an authoritative account of major events of the US enterprise in Afghanistan while he was Chief of Mission from July 2005 to April 2007.

The author's account highlights American choices regarding policy and strategy toward Afghanistan and its place as a theater in a larger conflict—sometimes the main effort but other times not (as was the case during Ambassador Neumann's tenure). He weaves together threads of his work with military leaders (especially then-Lieutenant General Karl Eikenberry), Afghan leaders (especially President Hamid Karzai), other Coalition partners, and, most extensively, his participation in the processes to shape policy and ensure that it is coupled with effective policy implementation (particularly the resourcing of military forces and funding). The book also provides an accessible account of strategic leadership. Ambassador Neumann describes his choices in running



the embassy, working with Washington, taking care of his people, getting out in the field, and leading by example (with vignettes ranging from high-level diplomacy to participation in staff volleyball games).

Ambassador Neumann's perspective on Afghanistan should be of profound interest to national security professionals in the United States and other countries. The book powerfully illuminates an event worthy of study for both present-day policy relevance and for lessons learned that can inform refinement of US national security processes, programs, and education for years to come.

Although explicitly mentioned only a few times in the body of the book, the backdrop of the entire account is highlighted in the title. Afghanistan is the other war, the war other than Iraq. Although the ambassador's efforts unrelentingly focused on trying to win in Afghanistan, a key subtext is the degree to which the Iraq War sucked much of the oxygen out of the room for policy consideration, and most of the resources. This context accounts for many of the frustrations that dog his attempts to help obtain the necessary resources for policy implementation.

There are few senior leaders who can offer such a rich and relevant background in rendering an important account of diplomacy and war. Ambassador Neumann's personal authority derives from his expertise as a diplomat and his extensive experience in nations facing insurgency (Vietnam as a junior Army officer and Algeria, Iraq, and Afghanistan as a diplomat). An interesting part of his personal connection to Afghanistan is that his father was US Ambassador there from 1966-73. Ambassador Neumann's book, with its perceptive analysis, is yet another laudable contribution in a long career of valuable service to the nation.

The book does not just offer a description or history of the author's tenure in Afghanistan. He is mindful of continuing American and international efforts to win the war in Afghanistan. The book's description of bureaucratic struggles concerning policy and strategy in Afghanistan feed what the author knew were ongoing debates as the book hit the street (and is given credence by the May 2009 preface penned by Bruce Riedel, an important leader of President Obama's initial review of Afghanistan policy). These debates still have great currency today, almost a year after the book was published, but will likely affect the book's contemporary relevance. The vignettes that support themes such as the inadequacy of financial and military resourcing have immediacy to contemporary policy debates in which Ambassador Neumann clearly takes sides. He makes a compelling argument that has to be taken seriously. Quoting his closing paragraph, "I still believe that success is possible if we have the vision to persevere and the will to resource our vision. America can lead the international effort if it does so with patience, an understanding that it cannot make all the decisions come out our way, and a willingness to fill the gaps that allies will not cover. We will need the honesty to report accurately what is happening, the good and the bad, if we are to maintain credibility over the long-run. And it will be a long-run, but it can be done."

This book is the 32d volume in the Diplomats and Diplomacy book series of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and Diplomatic and Consular Officers, Retired, Inc. "The series seeks to demystify diplomacy by telling the story of those who have conducted our foreign relations, as they lived, influenced, and reported them." Ambassador Neumann fulfills this charter splendidly.