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Book Reviews

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

One Mission: How Leaders Build a Team of Teams

By Chris Fussell with C. W. Goodyear

Reviewed by James P. Farwell, national security expert; associate fellow, Department of War Studies, Kings College, London.

Journalist Mark Urban credited a task force led by General Stanley McChrystal and his team, which included Chris Fussell, in Iraq for neutralizing more than 11,000 members of al-Qaeda. They employed an approach called “team of teams.” These unprecedented lines of communication broke down the silos of rigid command structures into a cooperative organization comprised of small, specialized teams. The approach created flexible, creative, adaptable groups that responded in real time to implement the notion of find, fix, finish, exploit and analyze. On retiring from the military, McChrystal and Fussell established a cutting-edge firm that has translated the lessons learned from their experience to the business world.

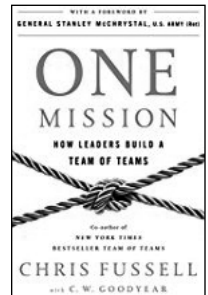
With his coauthor C. W. Goodyear, Fussell builds upon an earlier book that described the team-of-teams to increase business efficiency, creativity, and productivity. The goal is to cut through red tape and stove-piped bureaucracy to connect individuals and teams across traditional hierarchical lines of authority.

Their approach stresses the need to create networks through which individuals who might otherwise compete or pursue contradictory courses of action communicate, liaise, and align their actions with the organization’s prevailing mission. It offers a notion of “decision spaces” that define how decision-making can be devolved to the lowest tactical level, and yet create a shared consciousness that forges different teams into a cohesive team-of-teams.

Fussell and Goodyear adroitly draw upon the fascinating challenges that McChrystal’s team confronted in Iraq match a disciplined, cunning, fierce enemy that employed distributed networks and decision-making to threaten the Iraqi government and coalition forces. The authors relate the imaginative solutions devised so that a large organization could respond with the speed and agility of a small team.

At the core of their notion of “one mission” lies the maxim credibility = proven competence + integrity = relationships, which they persuasively argue applies equally to public and private sectors. In their view, complex missions succeed “when great teams interconnect with a powerful, one mission focus” (245). They reject as obsolete, and unable to keep up with rapid change, older models rooted in vertical bureaucracy in which people at the top ordain strategy, middle managers facilitate its implementation, and lower-rung tactical operators do what they are told.

Fussell and Goodyear avoid detailed case studies for companies such as Intuit Inc. and Under Armor, as well as government agencies such as emergency medical service responder MedStar Health and



New York: Portfolio, 2017

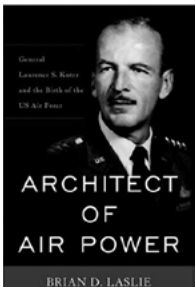
298 pages

\$27.00

the Oklahoma Office of Management and Enterprise Services. They describe how regularly-scheduled, well-tailored video teleconference forums—a commercial variation of the Iraq task force’s Operations and Intelligence forum—enable leadership to communicate.

Their approach entails creating horizontal alignment within an organization, opening dialogue among players, and properly contextualizing information and strategic guidance to its teams. Critical is identifying key influencers and colocating the right people to create productive synergies and an operating rhythm that works individually for each organization. Such action is vital to understanding how an organization’s external environment is changing, and what can be done to make a culture distinctive and efficient in processing, digesting, and projecting information to leverage emerging opportunities.

Fussell and Goodyear have made an excellent contribution to the literature on how strong, savvy leadership can apply concrete approaches rooted in strong values to increase efficiency, growth, and impact. The book is highly recommended



Lexington: University of
Kentucky Press, 2017
254 pages
\$39.99

Architect of Air Power: General Laurence S. Kuter and the Birth of the US Air Force

By Brian D. Laslie

Reviewed by Dr. Ryan Wadle, professor of comparative military studies at the Air Command and Staff College’s eSchool of Graduate Professional Military Education

In the annals of American airpower, Laurence S. Kuter (pronounced kyoo-ter) never became a household name like many of his contemporaries of the 1940s and 1950s because he only briefly saw combat and spent much of his career standing up new organizations. This lack of a notable public profile means that Kuter had heretofore been ignored in the historiography in favor of flashier subjects and flamboyant personalities. With his new book *Architect of Air Power*, Brian D. Laslie, the deputy command historian at both the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) and United States Northern Command, rectifies this gap with this efficient, engaging, and persuasive portrait of General Kuter as an unsung hero in the development of American airpower.

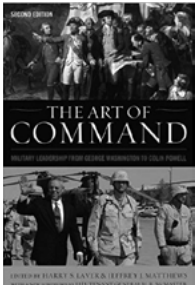
Born in Rockford, Illinois, in 1905, Kuter graduated from West Point in 1927 and joined the field artillery. Although he had been exposed to aviation during his time as a cadet, he moved into aviation initially to enhance the effectiveness of his native branch. Soon, however, he became a convert to airpower, and during his time at the Air Corps Tactical School as a student and a faculty member, he became part of the so-called “bomber mafia” and eventually served as a coauthor to the doctrine that laid the foundation for employing American airpower in World War II. The wartime expansion of the officer corps and Kuter’s innate talents led him to reach the rank of brigadier general by the age of 36; at that time, he was the youngest general in the US military since the Civil War. During the war, Kuter played critical roles

in building up American airpower in England, North Africa, and the Pacific, making him the rare officer to serve in every major theater of combat. In these postings, he often served as a deputy or helped to establish new organizations, which as Laslie argues, meant that Kuter's public profile remained low even as his service won him praise from his superiors and peers alike. This record of exemplary service continued after the war as Kuter, who had shifted into transport aviation in 1945, played a vital role in international civil aviation after the war before leading the new Military Air Transport Service. He later served as the head of Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base, and then as the first commander of Pacific Air Forces in 1957. He led NORAD until his retirement in 1962.

This impressive array of assignments makes Kuter an excellent subject of study, but Laslie's clean narrative makes it easy for readers to follow Kuter through the many assignments he had in the course of his career. Furthermore, Laslie wisely establishes the context surrounding the many noteworthy people, places, and events in Kuter's life so the learning curve for readers is very gentle. The wealth of personal papers left behind by Kuter and his wife, Ethel, at the United States Air Force Academy form the core of this biography and humanize Kuter by providing a complete picture of his home life, his personal interests, and the varied personal and professional relationships he maintained with others throughout his life. Thankfully, Kuter himself understood the value of history and set about preserving documents and even started work on his own memoirs in the last years of his life, but he died in 1979 before he and his wife could complete his ambitious project.

Architect of Air Power is a valuable addition to the literature for reasons that go beyond filling a gap in the historiography because it presents a pair of important lessons for military professionals. First, given the prevalence of bureaucracy and staffs in the modern-day Department of Defense, there is much to learn from studying Kuter's experience, skillset, and temperament to understand what made him successful in building up new organizations. Furthermore, even though Kuter identified with and adopted the positions of the dogmatic theory of strategic bombing, he demonstrated much intellectual flexibility throughout his career and modified his views to account for the importance of tactical airpower and air mobility. The ability to see beyond the needs of one's own organizational needs and culture was a valuable trait then, and remains so today.

This volume brings into focus a man who often stood in the historical shadow of men like General Henry "Hap" Arnold and General Curtis E. Lemay, yet played a vital role in creating the modern US Air Force. Laslie has done well to show why the air force and military historians should better appreciate Laurence Kuter's place in history, and this biography should help introduce military professionals to an officer whose career offers many useful lessons for the modern-day world.



Lexington: University of
Kentucky Press, 2017

364 pages

\$80.00

The Art of Command: Military Leadership from George Washington to Colin Powell

Edited by Harry S. Laver and Jeffrey J. Matthews

Reviewed by Lionel Beehner, assistant professor at the Department of Defense and Security Studies at the United States Military Academy at West Point

There is no one-size-fits-all definition of effective leadership. That goes in spades for military leadership as *The Art of Command* articulates convincingly. The book, edited by Harry S. Laver and Jeffrey J. Matthews and reissued ten years after its initial release, details what made a handful of military commanders great leaders, despite their diverse upbringings, temperaments, and styles.

Although written mostly by military historians, the book's lessons will apply to nonmilitary readers as well. What I appreciated was the narrative thread that binds together the lives of a disparate set of men—perhaps for the book's centennial rerelease, they will not all be men—who served our country yet all had very different backgrounds and upbringings. They were Indiana plowboys and Virginia-landed gentry, Pennsylvanian aristocracy, and descendants of Jamaican immigrants. Some, given either their lack of academic promise or lack of connections, had to cut deals to get admitted into the United States Military Academy. Each of the book's eleven chapters showcases an attribute of effective leadership—adaptive, innovative, etc.—told through a biographic vignette. George Washington led through integrity, Ulysses S. Grant through sheer will and determination.

There are leaders whose main strength was their charisma. Lewis B. “Chesty” Puller was famous—perhaps infamous—for his slavish devotion to those under his command, often giving any gifts of whiskey to them first, “Pass it around, just leave a sip for me.” Others led large institutions and were “organization men.” General George C. Marshall, for example, summoned his inner George Orwell in an attempt to make Army field manuals more legible, instructing his soldiers on the art of simple writing and to avoid military jargon or elaborate maps. Anyone who has sat through a Powerpoint presentation at the Pentagon will appreciate his advice, “Get down to the essentials.” Others were visionary. The phrase “American airpower” did not strike fear in our enemies until Henry H. “Hap” Arnold, through sheer will and determination, modernized our aviation capabilities and developed strategic air doctrine.

That leadership takes courage, grit, and the respect of one's peers and followers will not surprise most readers of this book. Leadership books tend to be chock-full of corner-office bromides or wistful war stories of derring-do. Thankfully, *Art of Command* is neither. The book lays out a set of generalizable attributes that made all the men profiled great leaders but more important, showcased their ability to tackle the challenges given them under pressing circumstances. We know General Dwight D. “Ike” Eisenhower defeated the Nazis in World War II. But readers may be less familiar with his uncanny ability to forge alliances with difficult foreign allies (think Charles de Gaulle), a lesson he first

learned in the Philippines in the 1930s. We know that “Unconditional Surrender” Grant defeated Lee in the American Civil War, but readers may be shocked to learn that he nearly called it quits after his hard-fought victory at the Battle of Shiloh.

Nobody is born a leader. It takes hard work, some luck, good fortune, and a deep reservoir of character. What each of these men shared were two key attributes: First, they all benefited from a mentor who guided their rise to the top. Second, they all sought out self-improvement.

All great leaders benefit from mentorship. Ike had Major General Fox Conner. Grant had Major General Charles F. Smith. A mentor provides a roadmap of how to foster untapped talent, how to behave under pressure, how to lead from the front. Self-improvement is not just learning from one’s mistakes. It’s going beyond what’s asked of them. General Matthew B. Ridgway, while teaching languages at West Point, taught himself French on the side.

There are many parallels between leading teams in battle and leading teams in business. Military leaders, not unlike corporate executive officers, should not only be able to inspire those beneath them, but they must also be adaptive and innovative. They should be thinkers, not just warriors. A good leader should be unafraid to remove underperforming subordinates. They are active learners as well as doers. Part of command is the art of improvisation. There are field manuals one can devour of course. But the best military commanders read their predecessors’ memoirs. “Warrior monk” has become a term of endearment in today’s military circles.

Military leadership does not only apply to those fighting along dangerous frontlines. It also extends into the labyrinthine maze of American political bureaucracy. The book’s strongest chapters reveal riveting accounts of leaders who dutifully mastered the interagency turf wars and civil-military relations. Without the sharp-wittedness of General Marshall, the US Air Force may never have emerged. Without the shrewd advice of General Colin Powell, Americans may have stumbled into more wars than they were prepared to fight. (I wish the chapter on Powell had been expanded into its own separate book on followership.)

There is a tendency to think that great leaders were able to succeed at every task given them—that everything they touched turned to gold. This is inaccurate. Nor should we assume that leaders are paragons of virtue or perfection. Almost all were flawed human beings. Washington had a quick temper. Chesty Puller could never fully shake some of his racist views. Leaders are complex bundles of many attributes both positive and negative. But these shortcomings do not diminish their leadership styles nor the imprints they left on the military.

The book has its flaws. Terminologies are not always clearly defined. The use of the term cross-cultural leadership to describe Ike did not always fully reflect historical reality and felt at times forced, given that the culturally similar British often gave him a harder time than our more culturally disparate allies. A better discussion of culture might have examined how these men left their mark on the institutional culture of the military. Another limitation of the book is its puffy celebration of American military leaders at the expense of showcasing military leaders from other countries. A complete book on military leadership would

showcase how commanders like Soviet Marshal Georgy Zhukov led, or to take a more modern example, what Brazil's Lieutenant General Carlos Alberto dos Santos Cruz learned from pacifying the slums in Haiti.

A final flaw with the book is its unblinking emphasis on "leading from the front," which in today's parlance contrasts the oft-scorned (yet misunderstood) phrase "leading from behind," referring to America's role in recent military campaigns. But what does "leading from the front" even mean? The authors never really define it, except to note that it should not be construed with seeking fanfare or glory. Good leaders shun the limelight. They let others share in their successes. Leading from the front means eating last.

The image of a leader is not Washington standing ramrod crossing the mighty Delaware in the dead of winter. It is of Ulysses S. Grant, slouching under a tree drenched in rain. "Well, Grant, we've had a devil's own day, haven't we?" his subordinate asked. "Yes," Grant responded. "Lick 'em tomorrow, though." Told like a true leader.

MILITARY HISTORY

The Allure of Battle: A History of How Wars Have Been Won and Lost

By Cathal J. Nolan

Reviewed by Major Nathan K. Finney, visiting fellow at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute



New York: Oxford
University Press, 2017
728 pages
\$34.95

Annihilation through battles is ephemeral; exhaustion is what wins wars. Therefore, war is a struggle based on matériel, not command of soldiers. Additionally, successful command is the thoughtful application of force to destroy enemy capability and morale, not based on an inherent genius of great captains. Or in more pithy words, war is “running a deliberate strategic and military marathon to its conclusion, not seeking to always fight marathons” (23).

These are the main elements of the argument put forth in Cathal J. Nolan’s *The Allure of Battle*, and they are compelling. This is true not only because the arguments resonate in our times, when strategic finality through tactical application of military forces is seen as the easiest and most effective approach to foreign policy challenges. Rather, the deliberate assessment of three thousand years of war that drives Nolan’s narrative systematically assesses conflicts that are historically taught as wars of annihilation and battle. Through his analysis, which focuses on the actual drivers of success and failure, he comes to the conclusion that despite the battlefield action that typically draws attention in history and military thought, it is the slow, long, devastating exhaustion of an entire nation at war that results in a war’s conclusion.

Allure of Battle is a fusion of history and military thought across time. Its clear prose and thoughtful organization make this book an easy, though not a quick, read. Its length is driven by a thorough drive across the military history of the wars of Western civilization—from the wars among the Greek states to World War II. In each of these national and global conflicts, Nolan traces the waxing and waning of battle’s place in war, how such military thought affected war, and how it was affected by war.

Allure of Battle shines in three areas. First, as a comprehensive narrative that describes Western wars and their impacts, it could easily be used in any undergraduate military history course or early professional military education opportunity to familiarize students with the arc of war in Western civilization. Second, this book thoughtfully and comprehensively challenges long-held assertions of military thought on the application of military power. It would be of significant value for military officers and thinkers on military affairs to balance their intellectual diet of Carl von Clausewitz and Napoleon I, particularly as midgrade leaders, by paring the former with *The Allure of Battle*. Finally, this book is a phenomenal example of the synthesis of many topics, across a large swath of time, addressing an extremely important topic. Academics and military historians would be well served to review the

ways Nolan weaves historical knowledge and strategic analysis into an easily digested narrative.

With those positive aspects in mind, *Allure of Battle* is by no means perfect. As alluded to above, Nolan only addresses popularly understood conventional wars viewed as critical to Western civilization. While one should not assess a book on what one may wish it had covered, his thesis would likely be bolstered further if it included non-Western conflicts and those less prone to focusing on battle as its central tenet. Also, while not a critique but rather simply an acknowledgement for those in the academic field, this book is based on secondary sources, with a noticeable lack of primary source research. This is understandable, given it is a work covering thousands of years of conflict across vast distances, cultures, and languages. The quantity and quality of source material Nolan uses, however, is an impressive feat in itself, indicating the knowledge the author possesses in the history of war.

I highly recommend *Allure of Battle* to all those interested in war, from undergraduate students to those wrestling with defense policy at the most senior levels. Nolan's book forces the reader to think deeply about strategy, the role of leadership, and the use of military force for political ends. His ideas on the strategic defensive as better suited to the enduring nature of war and on the requirement for national endurance to drive positive war termination should make all those classically trained in the Western way of war question themselves.

If such an approach is more successful than wars focused on annihilation, then there are many implications, none more so than those that affect civilian-military relations. If successful wars are dependent on national endurance, it clashes with the contemporary politics and processes of war making—short, cheap wars are easier to sell to a nation and its coalition partners. Who enters wars knowing they will drag on for years? That said, if Nolan is correct and a nation is prepared and supported for a long war, it may be possible to prevent national collapse based on a flawed focus on battle at the expense of strategy.



Athens: Ohio University Press, 2017

352 pages
\$79.95

From Disarmament to Rearmament: The Reversal of US Policy toward West Germany, 1946–1955

By Sheldon A. Goldberg

Reviewed by Dr. Raymond A. Millen, professor of security sector, Peacekeeping and Stability Institute, US Army War College

As the title signifies, Sheldon Goldberg's *From Disarmament to Rearmament* examines the history of allied policies regarding the demilitarization of the Third Reich and the eventual rehabilitation of Germany, leading to North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership. In the first chapter of the book, Goldberg addresses allied plans for the occupation of Germany and formal surrender. As the defeat and occupation of Germany was punitive in nature, the Allies implemented the complete demilitarization and denazification of Germany. The remaining chapters focus on US and British efforts to

incorporate Germany into the defense of western Europe during the first ten years of the Cold War.

As a caveat, this book might be confusing to the casual historian. The reader should have a solid understanding of allied occupation policy and planning for Germany during and after World War II. Specifically, Goldberg does not provide a comprehensive picture of allied preparations and planning for the occupation of Germany before he delves into the details of disarmament. His coverage of Operation Rankin is puzzling since Rankin was a series of contingency plans, which addressed a possible German military collapse, political collapse, or a deliberate withdrawal from occupied countries. Hence, Rankin (and its successor, Talisman) had virtually no impact on occupation policy and implementation. A greater discussion on Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive 1067 (which operationalized the Morgenthau Plan) and President Franklin D. Roosevelt's decision in 1944 to dissolve the German Country Unit (responsible for formulating occupation policy) would have provided a greater appreciation of the excessively punitive nature of allied occupation policy, which had a substantial impact on Germany's postwar recovery and rehabilitation.

Further, the author only touches lightly on the plan for military government, which included the training, preparation, and geographical assignment of military government detachments and headquarters in the allied zones of occupation. A greater discussion on the impact of nonfraternization and denazification policies would have set the stage for the problems associated with the rehabilitation and rearmament of Germany.

The chapters dedicated to rearmament efforts leading to Germany's admission into NATO in 1955 are more instructive. Still, the reader should have a firm foundation on early Cold War history beforehand. The series of conferences, meetings, private discussions, staff studies, and policy papers, stretching out over years, is particularly illuminating. Here, the author reveals the early attention by US and British defense planners regarding the defense of western Europe in the face of the growing Soviet threat. As such, while senior military leaders were cognizant of the political constraints and limitations regarding the rearmament of Germany, they helped shape policy and strategy behind the scenes.

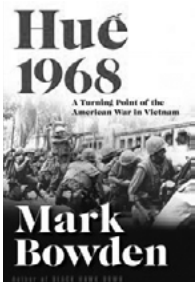
As Goldberg points out, the fear of resurgent German militarism proved the greatest obstacle for rearmament. US and European fears (including the Soviet Union) were justified. After all, Germany was a formidable adversary in both world wars, and Germany is justifiably blameworthy for the devastation of Europe. Germany's large population, advanced industry, wealth, and geostrategic position alone were a cause of grave anxiety. The vexing question for the Western powers was how to incorporate West Germany into the defense of western Europe without raising the specter of militarism?

Goldberg provides exhaustive details of the policy process, supplementing contemporary knowledge on the formation of the Brussels Treaty defense alliance, NATO, the European Coal and Steel Community, and the Western European Union. What is most illuminating in the book is the reasoning behind the European Defense

Community, its ultimate failure, and France's intractable resistance to German rearmament. Goldberg walks the reader through the plethora of discussions and documents leading to the incorporation of the West German military into NATO in May 1955—ironically, almost ten years to the day after Germany's surrender in World War II.

Goldberg's book relies on primary sources from government meetings, communications, staff papers, planning documents, conferences, and committee meetings from both sides of the Atlantic. For NATO scholars, Goldberg demonstrates the evolution of thinking regarding the necessity for and implementation of a German military contribution to the defense of Europe. Senior policymakers and military leaders were sensitive to France's morbid fear of a rearmed Germany and hence devised initiatives which acknowledged these sensibilities. But as Goldberg reveals, there was a limit to US and British patience, particularly when the French National Assembly rejected the European Defense Community. Nevertheless, the US and British governments ensured the German military remained subordinate to NATO, vetted its servicemembers, and trained the initial contingents.

From Disarmament to Rearmament is relevant to the US defense community, primarily because it describes the practice of strategic thinking for a complex problem. Further, the book demonstrates that complex problems like the German dilemma can take years to solve. For Cold War scholars and strategic thinkers, Goldberg's book deserves attention.



New York: Atlantic
Monthly Press, 2017
594 pages
\$30.00

Hue 1968: A Turning Point of the American War in Vietnam

By Mark Bowden

Reviewed by Dr. Russell W. Glenn, Director, Plans and Policy, G2, US Army Training and Doctrine Command

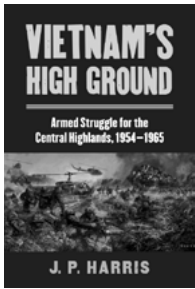
Mark Bowden's review of Tet Offensive fighting in Hue provides readers with another view of what has become a brutal hallmark of the Vietnam War. Personal memoirs, official histories, and others' earlier efforts to cover events on the same contested terrain include a few well done and acknowledged by Bowden: Nick Warr's *Phase Line Green*, Jack Shulimson and colleagues' official United States Marine Corps history *US Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968*, and Eric Hammel's *Fire in the Streets*. Bowden seeks to distinguish his new work by encompassing insights from all significant participant parties to an extent others have not. The task was not without challenges. The author notes the none-too-subtle self-injection of Vietnam government representatives into his interview process, as these individuals sought to ensure he was shielded from what Hanoi considered less pleasant truths, similarly experienced by this reviewer when he was teaching at the Australian Command and Staff College. So too, some of the participating parties featured are too little represented, notably those fighting with the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) in defending the city's citadel. Bowden might be forgiven in this regard. One imagines that the tumultuous events in the years following the end of the Vietnam War would make finding these veterans a difficult task. Regardless, it is in the weaving of these

participants' activities throughout the book that Bowden's popular history is at its strongest.

A complement to previous volumes regarding the Tet Offensive and an effective introduction to the battle for Hue for first-time readers on the subject, Bowden's pages additionally offer lessons of value as today's soldiers confront the ever-increasingly likelihood of combat in densely populated areas. That one commander ordered his men to leave their packs behind as "room on the choppers was tight" will surely cause some to recall equally unfortunate decisions to leave behind vital equipment—for example Mogadishu (October 3–4, 1993) night vision goggles and bulletproof plates for protective vests were sorely missed as the urban fighting exceeded its expected duration. The critical role played by tanks; 106mm guns that were the main armament of a virtually unarmored, six-gun, tracked vehicle; and liberal use of tear gas in turning the tide in favor of US Marines fighting in Hue reminds us that combat in cities is very likely to be costly in terms of soldiers' lives, and even more so of noncombatants' lives, particularly when such large caliber weapons and nonlethal agents might well be proscribed by rules of engagement. The fighting described in Hue 1968 took place only 23 years after the end of World War II, a time when expectations regarding noncombatant casualties were considerably different than is the case today. One might nonetheless question whether those restraints on firepower and other capabilities could survive during a similar battle in the future. It is an issue meriting consideration as our citizens' expectations regarding both soldier and noncombatant casualties are unlikely to change barring political leaders' addressing the public in that regard.

Hue 1968 is not without occasional shortfalls. The effective use of interviews makes the lack of an index more egregious. Readers hoping to refresh their memories regarding an individual's or a unit's appearance several pages or chapters before are burdened with having to wade through previously read material, a nontrivial task in a book of nearly six hundred pages. That red tracers signified US or ARVN rifle fire is recognized correctly on some pages while elsewhere they are confused with rounds from enemy weapons, their tracers being green. On occasion an interview response that begs to be questioned, if not discarded, appears undisputed: surely any US fighting man would challenge, if not refuse, an order "to shoot anything or anyone—even any Americans" who might appear to his front (459). Stating that there has been a "conspiracy of denial around Hue [that explains] why this terrible battle has remained . . . little known" for 50 years ignores the several excellent sources the author himself cites as does the statement that "for what we have known of it, we are indebted to the handful of journalists who braved those streets." Such gratuitous passages are unnecessary in good historical work.

As with *Black Hawk Down*, Bowden makes it only too clear that urban combat is often horrific. Training must prepare our military men and women to deal with the ambiguity when facing a woman cradling a child in one arm while grasping a rifle in the other or the potential of tens, hundreds, or thousands of refugees fleeing into friendly lines in search of safety. War is increasingly an urban phenomenon; Bowden's and similar histories can help our soldiers ready for its challenges.



Lawrence: University Press
of Kansas, 2016

552 pages
\$42.75

Vietnam's High Ground: Armed Struggle for the Central Highlands, 1954–1965

By J. P. Harris

Reviewed by Dr. Douglas V. Johnson II, research professor emeritus, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

This book is an historical account of the battle for control of the Vietnamese central highlands. It is unusual for the breadth and depth of the portrayal of the ethnographic details of its varied inhabitants and their responses to the forces that engulfed them. The Communists sought to enlist these populations in the fight for control of this area; the Vietnamese—not unlike land hungry American settlers—wanted the highlanders/savages out of the way.

Two years in Vietnam taught me almost nothing about the material contained in this very detailed book although I had been taught the outline of the story even as a cadet. The first 107 pages of this remarkable work are a roller-coaster of hope and hopelessness alternating with insight and stupidity. Throughout, at least to this reader, there is an undercurrent of inevitability.

One remarkable feature of this work is the sources the author has been able to use even though none, including those of the US military, are complete—and the source material is evidently the best available, even with the postwar, self-justifying writings of all sides. The author notes massive amounts of French-developed and compiled information of highlander life patterns were lost through American bureaucratic arrogance, leaving substantial gaps in understanding the highland peoples. The Communist materials are treated with care and reasonable analysis and are routinely evaluated against Vietnamese and American reports, which must also be treated with care. In short, the resources leave much to be desired, but provide enough to make the work credible and fascinating.

Stylistically, the constant shifting back and forth between dates and events is distracting. In several pages one gets an overall view of the actions of a year with qualifying adjectives, but a few pages later the adjectives shift from negative to positive and a few pages later back to negative again. As a consequence, the reader must pause, sort through what has been presented and search for a solid stepping stone into the next chapter or phase. Typical of this shifting is the marked tonal difference between chapter 4, which touts the remarkable success of the Buon Enao experiment in the Darlac Province, and then in chapter 5, the apparently total difference of a “flood of refugees” driven in extremis of Communist supply demands.

Organizational issues notwithstanding, it is refreshing to see the inclusion of as many elements as seem relevant to each situation—the personal, political, demographic, social, and military—and of each contending party—Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), local Communist cadre, North Vietnam Communist hierarchy, tribal leaders, Ngo Dinh Diem’s government, or other regimes, and Americans of

various attitudes and organizations. It was so much simpler to be out in the boonies where who shot first mattered most.

By page 159, it is clear that the initial sense of inevitability has come to fruition and the destruction of the very successful Buon Enao project, perhaps the only really solid attempt to hold the highlands through the efforts of its peoples, had begun. Faith had been betrayed, survival alone was the remaining motivational force.

The tragic stupidity of the Diem regime set the stage for the well-known Buddhist revolt which, in combination with the several senior military officers' plots, threw the ARVN off balance, thus forfeiting the successes of the first part of 1963. It must be noted, however, that those successes were evidently much less than had been reported, as the Communists were able immediately to resume antigovernment operations with significant levels of success. American military operations at that point underwent major changes as reorganizations, changes of personnel, and then President John F. Kennedy's assassination impacted an already chaotic scene.

It may not be too much to say that the author holds up the highlander's conduct as the principal measure of merit as opposed to the success or failure of operations in the field. Strongly opposed to any external government at first, many highlanders accepted participation in variants of the Strategic Hamlet Program as an acceptable middle-of-the-road path. At least it tended to keep the Republic of Vietnam Air Force from bombing them. With the abandonment of any real security for them by the South Vietnamese government, and apparent abandonment by the Americans, neutrality was a hope, albeit only a fond one with little substance. And as the author notes, "the Communists were quick to take advantage."

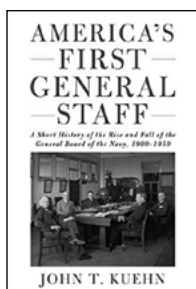
Yet-to-be-learned lessons are found on every couple of pages. Each is worthy of another book, and the author is not shy about highlighting many of them. One of the most salient is that old Sun Tzu quip, "Know your enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril." Despite massive intelligence efforts, the Communist forces seem to have been able to strike when and where they wished.

Insofar as this work is of use to US Army War College students, the first message is "hubris kills." The criticality of solid intelligence at all levels must be recognized, and with deference to Carl von Clausewitz, do not seek to make of a war something, which, by its very nature, it cannot be.

Vignettes of "important" combat actions are used to illustrate the success or failure of various programs or phases of the war, but most record the loss of fewer than twenty or so lives, and government successes in particular rest on the detailed counts of the capture of several small arms, a couple of ammunition clips, and a grenade, forcing the question again and again, what is success in this struggle supposed to look like?

Ending with a critique of the Battle of the Ia Drang, the author deftly describes the cost, in terms of full blown operational effectiveness, of the airmobile concept as experienced by the 1st Cavalry Division. Here are crucial lessons in logistics management.

I recommend this book to all professional leaders at every grade.



Annapolis, MD: Naval
Institute Press, 2017
310 pages
\$35.00

America's First General Staff: A Short History of the Rise and Fall of the General Board of the Navy 1900–1950

By John T. Kuehn

Reviewed by Captain Albert F. Lord Jr., USN Retired, Director of the Joint Warfighting Advanced Studies Program, US Army War College

The creation of the General Board of the United States Navy was one of many military reforms enacted by the US government after the Spanish-American War. From the origin of the Department of the Navy in 1798, the secretary of the navy was responsible for every facet of strategy and operations as well as shore facilities and ship design, construction, and maintenance. The advent of the American steam navy in the 1880's demanded more technical expertise and new tactical and operational concepts for fleet employment. Alfred Thayer Mahan's seminal work, *The Influence of Seapower Upon History*, created a "navalistic" faction of civilian and military leaders that understood the future of the country to be determined by seapower, which was defined as a combination of a powerful fleet, overseas bases to support worldwide fleet operations, and a merchant marine for trade.

At the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, Secretary of the Navy John D. Long, convened a group of consultants (including Mahan and Long's assistant secretary, Theodore Roosevelt) to assist with his responsibilities. After the war, the navy's uniformed leadership convinced Long that a standing body of senior advisors would be useful to direct the navy in its newfound global responsibilities. This advice led to Long establishing the General Board of the Navy. The board's purpose, as stated in General Order 544, was to "insure efficient preparation of the fleet in case of war and for the naval defense of the coast."

Presided over by the esteemed Admiral George Dewey (until his death in 1917), the board of nine officers included leaders from the US Naval War College and the Office of Naval Intelligence. Over time the board proved its worth by developing war plans, conducting extensive studies on a myriad of topics, and holding hearings on the important issues confronting an emerging navy with global responsibilities. The board's work greatly influenced warship design and fleet composition.

In 1915, Congress created the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OpNav) in order to provide a recognized uniformed head of the navy and to carry out day-to-day operational control of fleet movements and management of the burgeoning navy establishment. The General Board retained influence as a policy development body for the navy secretary. The creation of the OpNav staff initiated tensions between the uniformed advisors to the civilian secretary and the highest ranking naval officer. These tensions would wax and wane for the next thirty-five years until the General Board was disestablished in the wake of the creation of the Department of Defense. Much of the effectiveness of the board depended upon the personal relationships of the senior leadership within the department and the leadership style of the navy secretary.

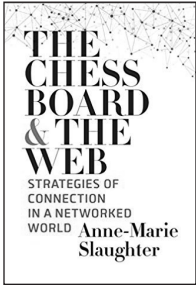
After World War I, and with the Washington Naval Conference of 1922, the board issued guidance for the annual shipbuilding programs

and thereby exercised considerable influence upon ship characteristics and ship design. The board also provided some “quality assurance” in war plan review and critique. One can say with confidence that the fleet that fought and won World War II was conceived by the interwar General Board. With the attack on Pearl Harbor, the board’s influence would recede as attention was given to OpNav’s direction of active combat operations. The towering personality of Admiral Ernest Joseph King, as chief of naval operations and commander in chief of the US Fleet, would simply not allow another power center in the naval establishment.

The board made somewhat of a comeback after the war’s end. Under the leadership of Admiral John Towers, and with significant talented membership seasoned by wartime service, the board was again very influential in fleet design, especially with respect to naval aviation. In 1949 the Revolt of the Admirals, which was precipitated by postwar cost cutting and the rise to prominence by the newly independent US Air Force, with its monopoly on the nuclear mission, caused the new secretary of the navy to disestablish the General Board. The author’s intent was to write a short history of an influential group of problem solvers that filled a need for professional advice to civilian leadership as the US Navy grew from a coastal defense force to one that could fight and win a simultaneous two-ocean war against formidable foes. To that end, the author has successfully filled a void in the popular history concerning the US Navy’s administration in the first half of the twentieth century. Although the term “general staff” has a negative connotation in naval circles that implies an overly centralized control of operations that would inhibit a local commander’s freedom of action, the General Board served the country exceedingly well.

There are lessons embedded in the story of the General Board that should not be lost on today’s national security leadership. Complex geopolitical problems are not unique to each generation. Serious study by a diverse group of educated and engaged professionals from different disciplines can be counted upon to provide a reasonable options and courses of action to leadership. There are times when leaders must understand when changing circumstances require new perspectives. President Abraham Lincoln said it best in his annual message to Congress when he said, “As our case is new, we must think anew, and act anew.” The General Board’s deliberation allowed the military establishment to change and adapt successfully to set the stage for victory in the crucible of World War II.

STRATEGY AND POLICY



New Haven, CT: Yale
University Press, 2017
269 pages
\$26.00

The Chessboard & the Web: Strategies of Connection in a Networked World

By Anne-Marie Slaughter

Reviewed by Dr. José de Arimatéia da Cruz, professor of comparative politics and international studies at Georgia Southern University and adjunct research professor at the US Army War College.

The world of the twenty-first century is more complex, more interconnected, and more complicated when dealing with foreign governments. This complexity in international affairs has been more profound with the democratization of technology and globalization. Thus, leaders worldwide are realizing governing has also become more complicated. For example, Anne-Marie Slaughter argues in *The Chessboard & the Web* that statesmen and foreign policy experts have long been trained to think of the world as a chessboard, analyzing the decisions of powerful states and anticipating rival states' reactions in the endless game of strategic advantage. That is the old way of thinking about international affairs.

Political science and international affairs has been dominated by the realist perspective. From this perspective, in which the state is the primary unit of analysis, state power is derived from its individual attributes, self-interests, and autonomous behaviors regarding other states in the international system. The emerging international system of the twenty-first century is characterized by what Slaughter calls the Web view or networked view. According to this view of the world, the primary unit of analysis is not the state but rather people, and state power is derived from relationships and connections.

In this networked world, digital technology is playing a major role in global governance. Disasters, political crisis, terrorist acts, coups, and other issues used to take months to be broadcast to the world. States, in essence, were able to get away with certain malfeasances due to the lack of transparency and accountability. But as Slaughter succinctly points out, "digital technology [is] shrinking the world in ways that allow[s] anyone to communicate information to and from anywhere instantaneously, bypassing traditional hierarchies and channels of authority" (8). The nation-state is more permeable.

As Richard Haass explains "the world is not to be confused with Las Vegas: what happens somewhere rarely remains there" (*A World in Disarray*, 2017, 226). In the network world, "different parts of government [are] peeling away from the chessboard model of foreign policy directed by the head of the state and the foreign ministry, and instead creating networks of both private and civic actors" (37). Given that the world is being transformed from one of a chessboard game to a networked game, one fundamental question of Slaughter's asks how actors are connected, how patterns of connections form, and how network ties determine power, influence, and the fragility of nodes.

Slaughter's core argument is that we can identify resilience networks, task networks, and scale networks, that can be created, shaped, and supported to address resilience problems, execution problems, and scale problems. Resilience networks are particularly relevant to foreign policy in three distinct areas: defense networks, response networks, and stabilization networks. Resilience is operationalized as "a system's resistance to change in the face of disturbance and its ability to recover" (97). Resilience networks "strengthen, deepen, react, and respond, bounce back, stability, and assist." And task networks "perform more precise and time-bound tasks" (111).

According to this notion, the power of task networks is in "aggregating knowledge and linking multiple problem solvers with different areas of expertise" (132). Scale networks derive power from their ability to connect and distribute information simultaneously. The power of a scale network is in seeking out a broad range of ideas and forming connections with people when making a decision. Regardless of the network (resilience, task, or scale) all require connecting the right people or institutions in the right ways: neither too many connections nor too few.

Given this radical transformation of the world from a chessboard approach to a network world of interconnectedness and globalization, how will power, leadership, and grand strategy be developed and implemented? Slaughter defines power as "the ability to achieve your goals either on your own or by getting someone or something to do what you want them to do that they would not otherwise do" (162). As the world becomes more networked there are several fundamental ideas that must be understood by foreign policymakers.

First, the nature of power is changing. In the networked world, power with "is the power of many to do together what no one can do alone" (173). From this prospective, power with "enables individuals . . . in connection with others" and power over "is closed, inaccessible, and leader-driven" (173, 178). In the interconnected world, any understanding of . . . as well as the deeper distinction between power over and power with, must be meshed with these older concepts of power" (181).

Leaders and their definitions of leadership will also be called into question in the networked world. They "determine or clarify goals for a group of individuals and bring together the energies of members of that group to accomplish those goals" (183). To be a catalyst in the networked world, leaders must understand that a chief attribute necessary to be persuasive is evidence and sincere willingness to be persuaded yourself. No one will buy into and follow an idea that the leader cannot first buy into and promote. Again, Slaughter argues, "an idea, no matter how good, will not spread if those in the network have high critical thresholds for change" (196).

The last issue Slaughter discusses is how a country defines grand strategy in the brave new networked world. She maintains that in the networked world, a grand strategy must be at least partly a strategy of connections between an open society, an open government, and an open international system. The first pillar, open society, means that any grand strategy's primary goal is the protection of its citizens and its allies. While an open society may invite a measure of insecurity, Slaughter insists

that insecurity is the “price of liberty and democracy” (208). An open government’s grand strategy is grounded on the notion of transparency, civic participation, and accountability.

In conclusion, Slaughter’s book is a must read for students at the US Army War College and practitioners of international relations. While some of the elements of the chessboard view of the world may still be relevant in the twenty-first century, the advance of the networked world will make it obsolete. In the networked world, connection, relationships, participation, sociability, and most important, adaptation will become ever more essential.



Andrew Mumford
**Counterinsurgency
Wars and the
Anglo-American
Alliance**
The Special Relationship on the Rocks

Washington, DC:
Georgetown University
Press, 2017

248 pages
\$104.95

Counterinsurgency Wars and the Anglo-American Alliance: The Special Relationship on the Rocks

By Andrew Mumford

Reviewed by Conrad Crane, Chief of Historical Services for the US Army Heritage and Education Center, US Army War College

There have been a number of writers who have questioned the existence of a unique diplomatic relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States, but few attack the notion as vigorously as Andrew Mumford, an associate professor at the University of Nottingham. Not only does he argue that there has been very little that was special about the ties between London and Washington since the end of the Second World War but that the shared experience with counterinsurgency (COIN) during that period has instead highlighted the primary roles of self-interest and mutual irritation. While the relationship has traditionally been defined based on sharing intelligence, nuclear cooperation, and the “mythologized unity of large-scale warfighting,” Mumford argues there has been a wide range of tensions on security issues, and especially in the management of counterinsurgency wars (10).

For Mumford, the effects of these COIN tensions on both countries have been extremely pernicious. The American military has been overreliant on overhyped Malaya for misinterpreted lessons. Cooperation with the British undermined anticolonial sentiment in the United States and turned that nation into anticommunist imperialists, most notably in Vietnam. On the other hand, America worked to undermine Britain’s policy on Palestine. The aftermath of the Suez Crisis and lack of American support in the Middle East led to British defeat in South Arabia and withdrawal from the region. The lobbying power of Irish Americans and their direct support for the Irish Republican Army (IRA) had significant impact on the Troubles in Northern Ireland.

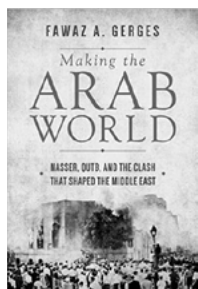
The recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan receive particular attention. The influence of the perception of a special relationship was evident in the decision-making concerning Iraq of both Tony Blair and George W. Bush in 2003, though the prime minister received much criticism later for appearing to be Bush’s lackey, but their subordinates did not work together as well. As the war deteriorated so did relations between America and Britain in the theater. But Mumford admits, “more often than not, the greatest obstacle to British action in Iraq was other Brits”

(167). Lack of resources from home and restrictive political direction contributed to a deteriorating security situation in the British sector around Basra. And in 2007, their forces withdrew to a controversial overwatch position at the airport. Just as the Americans were instituting a much more active counterinsurgency campaign with the surge, under the leadership of General David Petraeus, the British were going in the opposite direction. The Iraqi–American Charge of the Knights operation to regain control of the area in 2008 basically ignored the British altogether. Mumford does concede the importance of British involvement leading Sunni reconciliation efforts, but sees that initiative as contrary to other trends in the relationship.

The experience in Afghanistan further reinforced American frustration with British capabilities and highlighted how far ahead in learning and adapting US forces were. This time the British failed in the major poppy producing province of Helmand. Particularly galling was the fractious relationship that developed between troops on the ground, especially with US Marines. Mumford notes ironically that when the British finally ended combat operations in Afghanistan and handed over their last military base, the only speaker at the flag lowering ceremony was an American general. While the author acknowledges that the American military has now far eclipsed the British in COIN expertise, he also recounts the conservative backlash within the US Army that now threatens to expunge that knowledge, a return to historic patterns of “unlearning” about irregular warfare exhibited most recently after the unpleasant experience in Vietnam.

Although Mumford makes a strong case about the actually contentious course of American–British counterinsurgency cooperation, in the end whether a special relationship exists really depends upon whether decision makers and the public they serve believe it does. Much of the American disappointment with the British performance in Iraq was because better was expected. The United Kingdom remains one of only six NATO members (with Estonia, Greece, Poland, Romania, and the United States) who are spending two percent of their gross domestic product on defense. The fact that accounts like this one continue to be written demonstrates the persistence of the belief, justified or not. But decision makers on both sides would benefit from reading this book and understanding that, no matter how close allies are, in democracies like ours differing domestic politics and national interests will always interfere with close international relations.

REGIONAL STUDIES



Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018
528 pages
\$29.99

Making the Arab World: Nasser, Qutb, and the Clash That Shaped the Middle East

By Fawaz A. Gerges

Reviewed by Alma Keshavarz, associate, *Small War Journals-El Centro*

Fawaz A. Gerges takes a historical and sociological approach to assess the opposing forces of Arab nationalism and Islamists. In *Making the Arab World*, Gerges offers a biography of both Gamal Abdel Nasser and Sayyid Qutb to facilitate the discussion on how they shaped the divisions in the Middle East. Particular emphasis is on the Muslim Brotherhood, or the *Ikhwan*, throughout the book. Gerges does not seek to provide a mere history lesson; rather, he offers decades worth of interviews and archival research to present an alternative perspective on Egyptian history and how Nasser and Qutb were driving forces in the Arab world.

Gerges begins the book with a history of Egyptian sovereignty and its break from British colonialism. Throughout the twentieth century, Egypt experienced the rise of political movements that created divisions, which were the earliest signs of revolution in the country. The author fast-forwards to the World War II era and explains Egyptians' dissatisfaction with the country's politics. As the author explains, "The emergence of authoritarian social movements and parties reflected an increasing shift towards radical religious discourse in the politics of the 1930s and 1940s" (63). The war brought economic hardships not only to Egypt's middle class but to all North Africa and the Middle East. This population believed Europe had wronged the Arab world. Radical groups nurtured the plight of this community, and the Muslim Brotherhood rose to the occasion, establishing itself as a political and social movement in Egypt.

Gerges centralizes the importance of the 1952 coup d'état in Egypt by Nasser's Free Officers. Following the coup, deeper divisions in the country developed. The Free Officers found themselves in continual tension with the Muslim Brotherhood. Nasser wanted to demonstrate he was the authority and thus began to purge the country of Islamists—namely the Muslim Brotherhood—and communists. To understand this conflict, Gerges examines Qutb's prison years (1954–64). Despite the following Qutb developed while incarcerated, Gerges argues Qutb should not be perceived as a direct link to jihad ideology. Although leaders, such as Ayman al-Zawahiri, invoke Qutb's work as a means to justify their own ideology, it does not mean that Qutb is the single influencing factor.

After a backdrop of Egypt's early history, the author begins a biography of Nasser, including indirect associations with the Muslim Brotherhood in hopes of finding revolutionaries who would break Egypt from British imperial control. He argues that many Nasserists prefer not to discuss Nasser's involvement with the organization possibly because they do not want to hurt Nasser's image. Gerges references a

number of political organizations that Nasser was indirectly involved with throughout his life. Ultimately, Nasser developed an identity through associations with a number of political experiences living throughout Egypt. According to the author, Nasser was pragmatic, not ideological. Gerges then follows with a biography on Qutb to complete the juxtaposition. Interviews with his contemporaries and a deep study of his writings between the 1920s and 1940s reveal that Qutb was “deeply suspicious of mixing religion and politics” (181). In other words, Qutb’s early years were not of what is known of him today. His spiritual awakening occurred in 1953 when he formally joined the Muslim Brotherhood and altered his way of thought. The author argues that Qutb’s followers refer to his early years as the “lost years” because he was so different from what he is presently remembered (184).

Nonetheless, Gerges sees similarities between these two men who have profoundly different ways of thought. Nasser was deeply rooted in Egyptian patriotism blended with Arab nationalism. The author believes that Nasser has in large part been misunderstood. Nasser sought to “cleanse Egypt of the old corrupt ruling elite and imperial control” (211). From the 1950s onward, Qutb delved deeply into religious thought and Islamist thinking. Qutb’s involvement with the Muslim Brotherhood, however, was not without conflict.

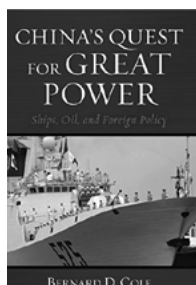
There was a split in the organization between the ideals of the Muslim Brotherhood’s founder, Hassan al-Banna, and that of Qutb. Nasser ultimately sentenced Qutb to death; he was hung in 1966. Nasser’s life took a shift as well. Following the defeat in 1967 during the Six-Day War, Nasser’s role in Egypt declined. The country’s revolutionary zeal dwindled. Nasser died of a heart attack in 1970. His death revived political Islam as well as the Muslim Brotherhood.

The author smoothly transitions into discussing a resurgence aided by Anwar Sadat. Sadat purged the country of all things Nasser, including loyalists within the government, and steered the country towards Islamist rule. Egypt quickly transitioned from Arab nationalism to Islamism. Both government and society would abide by political Islam, however, the Muslim Brotherhood remained divided between the ultraconservative linked to Qutb and those who viewed things differently. This division prevented the group from having an active role in society and politics.

To conclude, Gerges believes that the Muslim Brotherhood is at a breaking point with the regime of current Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, who has been dismantling the organization since the fall of Mohammed Morsi in 2013. According to the author, al-Sisi finds himself in a conflict similar to that of Nasser; he is trying to position himself as a leader who seeks to crush a powerful Islamist organization and express Egyptian nationalism.

Gerges seeks to understand the problem without restating what has been previously written on the subject. Decades worth of interviews with Nasser and Qutb contemporaries and others who were close with both men, as well as archival material helped formulate this book, however, the book lacks fundamental discussion on the Arab Spring. While the author discusses the fall of Hosni Mubarak and Morsi, more contemporary evidence to support the overarching theme of the book could have been added. Overall, this book is a must read for anyone who

seeks to understand Egyptian history and key players who helped shape the divisiveness of the Middle East. In an era where history is being glossed over, this book serves its purpose by telling the story of a nation with a rich past and figures who set the stage for what was to come in the Arab world.



Annapolis, MD: Naval
Institute Press, 2016

304 pages
\$34.95

China's Quest for Great Power: Ships, Oil, and Foreign Policy

By Bernard D. Cole

Reviewed by June Teufel Dreyer, professor, Department of Political Science,
University of Miami

As indicated by its title, this book examines three major intertwined elements of China's national security policy: naval power, energy security, and foreign policy, with an emphasis on the first. The author is superbly qualified to undertake the topic, capping off a distinguished naval career by becoming a professor at the National War College. This is his eighth book.

Cole first considers the geographic realities of China's situation, referencing British author Halford Mackinder's early nineteenth-century analysis that the country that rules the World-Island—the interconnected continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa, beginning with the Heartland of the Eurasian landmass—commands the world. Mackinder's formulation might, observes Cole, be reformulated for the twenty-first century as using sea power to control land power. He considers 2015 a watershed, with a military strategy released in that year by China stating that “the traditional mentality that land outweighs sea must be abandoned, and great importance has to be attached to managing the seas and oceans and protecting maritime rights and interests.” Nevertheless, the author notes, no seagoing force, whether naval or commercial, can operate without support from an extensive shore-based infrastructure. One might add that, by including a significant land component to its ambitious One Belt, One Road scheme—the belt stretching from eastern to western China and across central Asia to Europe—Beijing seems to be striving to dominate both the heartland and the sea at the same time.

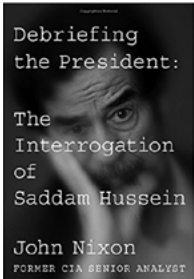
While giving due credit to the impressive achievements in Chinese naval power, Cole notes that the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) must find a way to secure a sufficient share of the country's budget to continue modernizing and expanding. Among other obstacles to this is overcoming the power of the country's army, which has historically been the largest and best funded of its services. There are also complicated organizational issues arising from President Xi Jinping's sweeping 2015 reorganization of the armed forces into five operational theaters while the navy retains control of its three fleets. An additional challenge is that recruiting qualified personnel into the increasingly technologically sophisticated navy entails competing with the country's burgeoning civilian hi-tech industries. The traditional Chinese belief that just as “one does not use good iron to make nails, one does not use good men for soldiers” adds another layer of difficulty, as does the recently abandoned, but decades-long, one-child policy—parents are reluctant to surrender their only child to a potentially dangerous profession.

With regard to energy, Cole predicts that, barring some major petroleum discovery, China's dependence on imported oil and natural gas will continue increasing annually, which will also increase the importance of the sea lines over which the petroleum products pass. Coal is plentiful but is low-grade and hence worsens the country's already appalling environmental pollution. China is estimated to have the world's second-largest shale oil reserves and its third-largest shale natural gas reserves, but access is a different matter: they are inconveniently located and the large amounts of water required for extraction would worsen the already severe water shortages facing the country.

Due to the continued need for energy imports, foreign policy takes on an added dimension of importance. China has gone as far afield as Africa, Latin America, and the Arctic to secure oil and natural gas, as well as asserting its claims over large swaths of the South China and East China Seas. The author first addresses the numerous players in China's foreign policy apparatus, describing it as a scrum rather than precision marching (174). This is a curious statement, given the commanding role Xi Jinping has assumed in foreign as well as domestic policy. Not everyone is as confident as Cole that the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea will be effective, since immediately after it was signed China's chief negotiator stated that the country would not necessarily observe it, depending on circumstances (211). A significant omission is mention of the PLA's Three Warfares (psychological, public opinion, and legal, aka "lawfare") and the part they play in strategy. It is misleading to say that Beijing is determined to "reunite Taiwan with the PRC" since Taiwan was never a part of the PRC but rather of Manchu dynasty China (167–68). And Tokyo did not cede Taiwan back to China in 1945: in a purposefully artful evasion, the Japanese government simply renounced its claim to the island (185). These quibbles, almost inevitable in a work of so broad a scope, should not be allowed to detract from the value of the volume.

Cole concludes that, if PLAN is to achieve its goal of having a world-class navy, and perhaps the world's most powerful navy, by the hundredth anniversary of China's founding in 2049, it must address serious shortfalls. Although the past eight years of deployments to the Gulf of Aden and beyond have taught the navy much about conducting distant deployments, PLAN continues to lack operational experience. Its employment of airpower at sea, and particularly that of ship-based helicopters, is still nascent. PLAN will also need to place more officers in the top command structure of the PLA as a whole. Like other branches, it must deal with widespread corruption. The dual political-operational structure inherited from Maoist days continues to blur lines of command, there is an overabundance of noncombatant headquarters, and the noncommissioned officer corps is still under development. Defense publications frequently reference shortfalls in training as well as issues involving the integration of naval forces with air and land power. Moreover, other countries' navies are also increasing their reaches, both singly and in concert with others, in order to ensure that they are able to counter challenges from the Chinese navy. All these must be dealt with before the PLAN can make the transition from a navy with regional capability to one with global capabilities.

DEFENSE STUDIES



New York: Blue Rider, 2016
256 pages
\$14.76

Debriefing the President: The Interrogation of Saddam Hussein

By John Nixon

Reviewed by Dr. Christopher Bolan, professor of Middle East security studies,
Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

John Nixon unexpectedly found himself at the forefront of Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) interrogation efforts immediately after United States forces pulled deposed Iraqi President Saddam Hussein from a cramped and dirty spider hole where he had been hiding near his hometown of Tikrit in December 2003. In a matter-of-fact tone, Nixon relays the personal story of his 13 years as a CIA senior leadership analyst who served multiple stints in Iraq.

As a whole, Nixon provides an insightful firsthand account of the search for, and subsequent debriefing of, this notorious and brutal Iraqi leader. The book was vetted and cleared by the CIA with some phrases and occasionally entire paragraphs having been redacted as a result. However, these minor deletions do not detract from the book's overall readability or diminish the strength of Nixon's narrative.

The book is best at providing insights into Saddam's perspectives of regional developments surrounding the US military intervention during 2003. According to Saddam's account, he was totally perplexed by shifting US policies toward his leadership in Baghdad—celebrated as an effective Sunni bulwark against the expansion of revolutionary Shiite Iran after the Iranian Revolution of 1978–79, vilified after his invasion of Kuwait in 1990, and then ultimately ousted by American military forces in 2003.

Moreover, in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Saddam was absolutely mystified that leaders in Washington did not see him as a useful, secular Arab ally in the fight against Islamic extremism. In this regard, Nixon observes that Saddam sounded especially prescient warnings about the scale of the threat posed by this radical Islamic ideology: "Wahhabism is going to spread in the Arab nation and probably faster than anyone expects. And the reason why is that people will view Wahhabism as an idea and a struggle . . . Iraq will be a battlefield for anyone who wants to carry arms against America. And now there is an actual battlefield for a face-to-face confrontation" (4).

Nixon also usefully fills in important details in Saddam's personal background—in particular, his self-aggrandizing perception of himself as a historical, valiant, and noble defender of the Iraqi people, and Arab nations more broadly; his superb ability to manipulate internal Iraqi politics for his own benefit; and his perennial and intense distrust of Iran and Israel.

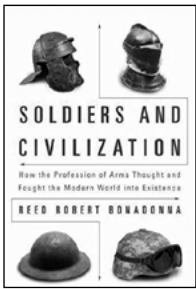
Unfortunately, readers will find that these debriefings of Saddam contribute little to understanding other important issues such as the extent of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs. On this issue,

Saddam refused to admit any substantive knowledge and repeatedly advanced unbelievable claims that he had delegated the authority to employ chemical weapons in attacks that killed tens of thousands of Iranians and Iraqi Kurds during the war with Iran from 1980–88 to local Iraqi commanders. Nixon admits Saddam’s silence on this score was likely intended to avoid indicting himself for war crimes. For some reason, however, Nixon appears wholly persuaded by Saddam’s rather unconvincing claims that he was increasingly disengaged from Iraq’s foreign policy decision-making, even as the crisis with international inspectors and the United States was peaking prior to the US invasion.

Nixon also gives a surprisingly substantive description of his White House briefings to President George W. Bush that many readers might well find entertaining and informative. Nixon recalls the weeks of research and preparations, paper drafting, and murder boards leading up to the Oval Office meeting itself as well as the production of an associated Presidential Daily Briefing that would be used as a read ahead for the president. This process will sound familiar to those who have been involved in senior-level briefings. Nixon also ably describes the personal pressures and strains he experienced when the president either confronted his assessment directly or when discussions veered from the narrow confines of the scheduled topic.

One of the least informative aspects of this book includes Nixon’s obvious disdain for the senior leadership of the CIA, as well as those of other government agencies. Perhaps inherent to an account written from the narrow perch of an individual working at a relatively low level of government, Nixon is quick to dismiss the perspectives of higher ups—for instance, the manager of the CIA Iraq team is characterized as a “schmooser” because he “provided simplified material that was easy for policymakers to understand . . . with the sycophantic touch of an experienced bureaucratic player” (37). But is providing digestible intelligence to US policymakers not the central purpose of the CIA analysis? Similarly, Nixon complains loudly about the cultural divide between the operational and the analytic arms of the CIA. Unfortunately, the accounts come across more as the sour grapes of a disgruntled employee rather than a thoughtful reflection on the need for internal CIA reforms to bridge this divide.

Ultimately, the book never convincingly fulfills its expressed purpose of examining “what the war accomplished and what it all meant” (9–10). Those calculations will need to be made by scholars, military historians, and foreign policy practitioners with deeper expertise and broader regional and international perspectives than Nixon can bring to bear. But this goal was never a realistic one. No number of interviews with a lone, deposed, and isolated Arab dictator was ever going to answer these wide-ranging questions from an American perspective. Nonetheless, Nixon makes a genuine contribution to the literature on the Iraq War (2003–11) by shedding light on the thinking and the attitudes of the ruthless leader who remained at the pinnacle of power in Baghdad and who managed to attract both the support and ire of the United States over the course of several decades.



Annapolis, MD: Naval
Institute Press, 2017

341 pages

\$27.95

Soldiers and Civilization: How the Profession of Arms Thought and Fought the Modern World into Existence

By Reed Robert Bonadonna

Reviewed by James D. Scudieri, PhD, chief, Military History Institute, US Army Heritage and Education Center

This work is vastly ambitious. It encompasses the accomplishments of armies as a profession from Classical Greece to today, including ethics, doctrine, organization, training, and societal contexts. The introduction explains military professionalism in seven elements: knowledge, cognition, beliefs, compensation, communication, leadership, and both trust and character. Eight numbered chapters examine soldiers and civilizations from the ancient Greeks to the twentieth century. The conclusion brings the story to the present. These are no superficial surveys.

Classical Greeks were amateurish, but fused soldier-citizens. The focus on the Persian Wars is a bit confusing and at the cost of the Peloponnesian War. Thucydides receives bare mention. The Macedonians appear as other Greeks. Alexander the Great garners very high marks in leadership and skills, but without any discussion of ethical and other professional shortfalls. The Macedonians were the exceptional professionals as were the Spartans.

Similarly, the Romans attained a very high degree of professionalism with unprecedented organization across three periods. Roman engineering skill was a strategic resource. Interestingly, the author sees an ethics of restraint related to the period of imperial defense. A timeless challenge is maintaining a balance between citizenship and high military skill. Rome's breakdown traced to leaders and their policies. Julius Caesar is "an exemplary military professional" without consideration of his dismantling of what was left of the late Roman Republic. Perhaps the chapter's greatest point is the centrality of the very idea of Rome.

"Late Antiquity" covers the traditional Dark Ages to 1000 CE, contrasting Western Europe and the Byzantine Empire. Charlemagne's reign facilitated the rehabilitation of the soldier from warrior to symbol of service and loyalty. The Middle Ages proceed from circa 1000 CE with professional Western knights, some with education, in the context of larger, more capable political units. Chivalry balanced reality and idealism. The text would benefit from a deeper analysis of castles.

The "Early Modern" chapter has an extended chronology. Aggressive international politics included societal changes in the form of revolutions in knowledge and belief. Other revolutions concern the changes which gunpowder wrought. The text integrates how the Reformation's lack of restraint degraded a soldier's status. They had to (re)discover restraint and show a new knowledge of the latest technology and characteristics of warfare. Central was the development of Westphalian states in Europe, allowing chivalric revival with an ethos of national service. The 1st duke of Marlborough here is a "model of a Restoration general" without reference to core professional, civil-military relations. Marlborough led the army to abandon its monarch, James II, in 1688. What were and are the ethical dimensions for the profession?

The eighteenth century was the heyday of the general notion of limited war during the Enlightenment. The text generally surveys it well, concluding with the legacy of a military profession close to modern form. Examples are a noncommissioned officer corps and the attributes of a “good officer.” Naturally, Frederick the Great looms large, without questioning his aggressive Silesian Wars. Unique is the inclusion of Empress Maria Theresa, highlighting her successes amid great challenges to streamline military reforms uniformly. But did she abandon limited war to wage the Seven Years’ War in 1756–63? Did Frederick face an unabashed existential threat to Prussia’s future? Finally, much of George Washington’s professional ethos is not discussed.

A single chapter on the nineteenth century is hard-pressed to range from the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars to the brink of the First World War. Napoleon’s focus on decisive battle within a single campaign enthralls; yet there is no discussion of its few successes beyond the battlefield. The text captures the attempts of military professionals to learn from Napoleon, to adapt to change, especially technical, and to institutionalize excellence. Unfortunately, it repeats old myths. The notion that popular frenzy forced politicians to wage an unnecessary Crimean War and that an atrophied British army under incompetent aristocrats bungled its way does not stand in the face of the evidence. The myths of the American Civil War as a first for technologies continue: “The use of trains . . . was pioneered in the Civil War” goes without reference to the thousands of French and Austrian troops moved by rail in 1859. Prussian coverage emphasizes the 1870 triumph over France, but not across the entire formative period. The chapter cites the attainment of full professionalism within the context of the times.

The twentieth century is covered in 55 pages. The First World War appears only on the “Western Front.” Unmentioned are the tensions between civilian political leaders who would not negotiate and the military professionals who sought victory over bloody stalemate. The discussion does not tap into the plethora of historical inquiries into the bona fide attempts to find technological, tactical, and operational solutions. There is also some confusion on relationships between WW I, the interwar period, and early World War II. The Axis and Germany are synonyms. A perpetual, inaccurate stereotype is that the French fought the Campaign of 1940 obsessed with the Maginot Line.

More importantly, why did the vaunted German blitzkrieg have so few successes—fewer than Napoleon’s decisive battles? This omission is significant in the context of an examination of military professionalism, despite the indictment for supporting Nazism. The American military scores high marks: rapid expansion with numerous leadership challenges, and unprecedented integration of scholar, scientist, and soldier. There is a look at the “new breed of special operations units,” strategic air warfare, and the United States Marine Corps amphibious warfare.

The post-WW II portion of the chapter covers the Cold War, changes in conventional warfare, and the need for counterinsurgency to combat wars of national liberation. The emphasis is the professionals’ ability to avoid nuclear war. There is no examination of American military professionalism by the end of the Persian Gulf War.

The conclusion on the twenty-first century leaves the reader with questions, such as a “race between learning and forgetting” and specific requirements to reform American officer education. Strains in civil-military relations spike during humanitarian assistance, but especially nation building. While the Marine Corps features often, the Army does not, despite larger successes. There is a narrow, shallow selection of sources regarding the profession’s excessive toleration of misbehavior and mediocrity. The mistaken notion that there was no planning for governance and stability in the Iraq War continues.

There is a lost opportunity to tie together the text as a whole and to pose a challenge. Professional militaries have trumpeted decisive battle, blitzkrieg, and AirLand Battle as war-winning strategies, but most have failed. Is the American military profession postured to face the challenges beyond 2020 with the Army’s espousal of unified land operations?

This review has proven quite frustrating. The author lacked sufficient space. Hence the book missed opportunities to focus more effectively on the theme of professionalism. The research is impressive, a concerted effort to feed a freewheeling inquiry. Unfortunately, several areas missed key sources, resulting in the perpetuation of certain, major stereotypes and misperceptions.

Its shortcomings notwithstanding, this work is important. Few would attempt such a sweeping analysis over two millennia with military professionalism as the central question. Fewer still will do so in the future. Try this one. Think on it—and add your thoughts to the discussion.



Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017
318 pages
\$27.95

Enemies Known and Unknown: Targeted Killings in America’s Transnational Wars

By Jack McDonald

Reviewed by Robert J. Bunker, adjunct research professor, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College

Jack McDonald, the author of *Enemies Known and Unknown*, is a research associate and teaching fellow at the Centre for Science and Security Studies, in the Department of War Studies, King’s College London. He also holds a PhD in War Studies from the same institution and has a research focus primarily on “the philosophical questions underlying the regulation of warfare both in the present and the past.” This work is his second academic book and is directly related thematically to his very recent *Ethics, Law and Justifying Targeted Killings: The Obama Administration at War* (Routledge, 2016). The research and writing of the book was supported by a grant provided to the author by the Economic and Social Research Council—a United Kingdom nondepartmental public body (ix).

The work addresses the post-September 11, 2001 world in which transnational war—specifically against elements of the al-Qaeda network—is being waged by the United States via targeted killings that are facilitated by the use of armed drones in an extrajudicial manner (7). The work contains a preface, an introduction—providing an initial vignette discussing Predator drone use in the Balkans—nine chapters of research and analysis, an afterword, an extremely well referenced

end notes section, and an index. The first half of the work concerns perspectives on transnational war and the second half looks at targeted killings and their effects (9). Chapters focus on (1) war, warfare, and law; (2) the political concept of war vis-à-vis the law of armed conflict; (3) law/legal argument impacts on politics/policy decisions relating to war/armed conflict; (4) the role of law and normative values related to attrition and targeted killings of al-Qaeda personnel; (5) America's pluralist views on liberal values and human rights obligations which are in variance with the opinions of many of its close allies; (6) the rule of law as a constitutive element related to the use of targeted killings by the United States; (7) the targeting of known and unknown individuals by means of "personality strikes" and "signature strikes" respectively; (8) civilian agency within areas of drone-strike operations and their attempts at protecting themselves from harm; and (9) an analysis of the preceding chapters as they relate to the war against the Islamic State.

Throughout the book chapters, which are both descriptive and analytical in nature, the author ties in his thematic arguments. These relate to the constructivist approach followed in the work related to the "the construction of categories of permissible violence, the role of knowledge and truth in these categories, and how they can inform our study of US strategy and warfare" (viii). The main argument derived from this approach is that the status quo use of violence embraced by the Obama administration—derived from an adherence to the rule of law—is in some ways more disturbing than that of the policies of the earlier Bush administration.

Critiques of the work are relatively benign and perhaps oblique. The first is that, even today, constructivism—with its European roots—represents an analytical approach that is in variance with more traditional American international relations perspectives formed around neorealism and neoliberalism. While each has a place, this focus of the work may not sit well with older military officers and scholars who still find realist—or perhaps a better term is rationalist—approaches in this area to have more resonance. Thus, it may be a hard sell to this audience.

A second comment relates to the author's two very similar books, based on his Obama administration research, published within the same time frame. McDonald is no doubt facing the "publish or perish" dilemma all career academics must contend with but it begs the question whether the nuanced emphases of his two books—the cohesive or hypocritical administration arguments related to the uses of armed drones and the paradoxes inherent in an administration promoting the rule of law and democracy vis-à-vis the undertaking of extrajudicial killings—require both to be read to gain a broader knowledge in this subject matter. Personally, I find this Oxford University Press work the stronger of the two and it may suffice unless one has a specialized interest in the topical areas.

In summation, *Enemies Known and Unknown* is a thoroughly researched, balanced, and well-written constructivist work that has utility for the student of war. It has immediate relevance for military officers and defense community scholars who must grapple with new forms of war and our enemies who utilize them as well as our conduct of military operations and emerging interpretations of international law related to armed conflict. Further, it leaves us reflecting upon the contradictions

and concerns of our ever-increasing reliance on stand-off drone strikes against shadowy transnational enemies:

We need the government to work in a legitimate fashion because the contemporary world has no shortage of people and states that are hostile to both democracy and its values. Defending a democratic way of life requires some organisations to work in secret, it requires political leaders to make life-and-death decisions on the basis of fragmentary evidence and it also sometimes requires violence. Where to set the standards for accommodating this within the rule of law is up to us (251).

In a world of rising nonstate radicalism and state authoritarianism, this passage underlines a key consideration of our age: how do we effectively defend our nation and its constitutional liberties without in the process becoming like the monsters, some real and some presumably constructed, striking us from the darkness.



Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017
282 pages
\$34.95

Soft War: The Ethics of Unarmed Conflict

Edited by Michael L. Gross and Tamar Meisels

Reviewed by C. Anthony Pfaff, research professor for the military profession and ethics, Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College.

In *Soft War*, Michael Gross and Tamar Meisels have assembled an important volume addressing aspects of military ethics that are underserved by standard just war accounts as well as international humanitarian law (IHL), which primarily address the use of lethal force by state and nonstate actors.

One way to think about the problem the authors pose is this: nonlethal means—whether cyber, economic, media, or others—have the ability to significantly disrupt civil life. While much of that activity is experienced as a nuisance, as Jessica Wolfendale observes in her chapter “Defining War,” once that disruption reaches a level that threatens civilians’ ability to meet basic needs, it has reached the level of war.

Certainly cybermeans raise such concerns, as George Lucas discusses in his chapter on state sponsored “hactivism.” But the authors in the volume address a much wider range of “soft war measures” including economic sanctions, restrictions on trade, propaganda, media warfare, lawfare, extortion as well as restrictions on liberty, including kidnapping and hostage taking. While such means can cause loss of life and damage to infrastructure as second and third order effects, such as coalition sanctions on Iraq in the 1990s, they do not have to in order to have the same coercive effect as lethal means normally associated with warfighting. In this way, soft war measures do not fall short of war as much as they are a part of, or in lieu of, “hard” war.

Moreover, as Lucas notes, while one single nonlethal attack would not likely rise to the level of war, effects of such attacks can accumulate until one has suffered “death by a thousand cuts.” Thus more concerning than an unlikely cyber “Pearl Harbor,” are the cumulative effects that things like theft of state and proprietary secrets, interference with trade,

commerce and finance, exploitation of domestic and international laws to constrain an adversary's response—all of which can be accompanied by an effective information campaign—can have on the outcome of a conflict, without a shot being fired. Such means raise a number of questions regarding their permissible use.

The fact such means are nonlethal raises questions whether the conventional rules of war apply. Gross and Valerie Morkevicius argue that even with “soft” means one should still discriminate between legitimate and illegitimate targets, limit collateral harm, and consider proportionality. However, both argue that what counts as legitimate, collateral, and proportional is different. For Gross, the employment of nonlethal means suggests civilians can be liable to nonlethal measures based on the contribution they make to the enemy's war effort. Morkevicius argues that intentional, nonlethal, targeting of civilians is morally preferable when the alternative is the use of lethal tactics that may still result in their deaths, however unintentional that may be.

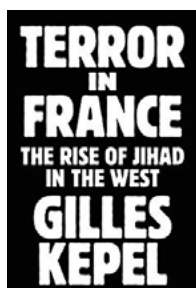
The chapters on economic measures are also informative. In general, the authors who took up economic sanctions, especially Joy Gordon, felt that indiscriminate sanctions that disrupted civil life were always wrong. However, sanctions on nonessential goods as well as “smart sanctions” that targeted organizations and individuals closely associated with causing or prosecuting the conflict were permissible, though she acknowledged their efficacy has historically been limited. Cécil Fabre's chapter on “conditional sales” offered an alternative to sanctions, where states may withhold or sell at a premium some kind of commodity an adversary state may need in order to compel it to address one's legitimate concerns.

Also of particular interest were Laurie Blank's and Sebastian Kaempf's articles on media in soft war. Blank notes the complementary effect media operations can have on how various audiences perceive the use of force. While not lethal itself, media operations can shape the narrative associated with the use of lethal force to enhance the legitimacy of one's own operations or the illegitimacy of the enemy's. Doing so, however, raises some concerns. To the extent a party to a conflict portrays otherwise compliant uses of force as noncompliant, they paradoxically risk eroding adherence to IHL or encouraging abuse of the law, such as the use of human shields, which exploits prohibitions on targeting noncombatants. Janina Dill, in her chapter on lawfare, poses a similar concern regarding the abuse of IHL, and notes such exploitation risks undermining adherence to those laws.

Kaempf's concern seems to be the mirror image of Blank's. Rather than the discouraging effect the media coverage can have on compliance, he is concerned about the sanitizing effect on the killing itself, which obscures the costs of war and sometimes covers up war crimes. Moreover, he observes, that while instantaneous nature of media coverage has had the effect of encouraging compliance with IHL by the United States and others, it also encourages downplaying the actual harm done. He further notes media has had the opposite effect on the Islamic State, which uses it to publicize its atrocities as a means to terrorize. Given the critical role media plays as a “soft weapon,” then it may be time to develop better rules for regulating its use.

The book also addresses the role nonviolence can play in shaping and resolving a conflict. As James Pattison, Christopher Finlay, and Cheyney Ryan argue, the employment of nonviolence, whether in protest of some injustice or as unarmed peacekeepers, conveys a legitimacy that may make these measures preferable to violence, and perhaps more effective. To the extent that efficacy can be demonstrated, then such means can become morally preferable, if not obligatory. Such an obligation would have a profound impact on how states organize for war.

Taken together, this volume addresses an aspect of national security that is underrepresented not just in military ethics and law, but in practical discussions regarding how to fight wars well. Thus, the concerns these authors raise expand the kinds of ethical considerations academics and practitioners ought to take into account when employing the means associated with soft war, whether integrated into a “hard war” strategy or used in lieu of lethal force.



Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017

217 pages

\$29.95

Terror in France: The Rise of Jihad in the West

By Gilles Kepel

Reviewed by Dr. W. Andrew Terrill, professor emeritus, US Army War College

Gilles Kepel is one of Europe’s leading scholars of radical Islamist groups, and interested readers can virtually always assume that his work is going to be compelling and valuable. In this notable volume, he addresses problems the French government has faced in fighting terrorism as well as governmental shortcomings in fostering the assimilation of Muslim immigrants and citizens. Muslims emerged as an important segment of the French population following the conclusion of the 1954–62 Algerian war, when many of these people fled Algeria, often becoming residents of impoverished French banlieues (suburbs) where their opportunities for employment or education were limited. New French-born generations of Muslims, unlike many of their parents, are French citizens and have often been especially angry over discrimination and the lack of opportunity within their society. Kepel also notes that various nationalist politicians, and most especially members of Marine Le Pen’s National Front, have been highly confrontational towards Muslim citizens. According to Kepel, this problem has been further compounded by some mainstream politicians such as former president Nicolas Sarkozy, whom he describes as willing to move his rhetoric and agenda closer to the extreme French right in the hope of siphoning National Front votes.

Kepel maintains that a milestone event in the rise of Islamic radicalism and terrorism in France was the December 2004 internet publication of the 1,600-page volume, *The Global Islamic Resistance Call* by jihadist theorist Abu Musab al-Suri. This work put forward a new strategy that viewed Europe’s “poorly integrated” younger generation of Muslims as the preferred instrument for waging war against the West (10). Although al-Suri had worked with Osama bin Laden, he had little use for his tactics of seeking spectacular attacks, which he saw as those of a leader “intoxicated by his own image in the media” (23). Rather than follow bin Laden’s lead, the Syrian ideologue sought to incite

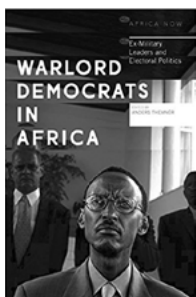
civil war in Europe by radicalizing and inspiring poor, marginalized, and rebellious Muslim youth who could be trained in basic terrorism skills, often over the internet. Many of the young Muslims successfully recruited by al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) knew very little about Islam, but they had developed a sense of victimhood over problems that they attributed to discrimination. Some of them had serious criminal records or lives of delinquency, gang culture, and petty crime. Such young and confused people can sometimes be influenced by the highly professional internet propaganda developed by ISIS, al-Qaeda, and their supporters. Kepel also states that many young, nominally Muslim criminals later became radicalized in French prison.

Kepel asserts, "France holds the absolute record for exporting jihad-ists from the European Union" to a variety of countries but most notably to Syria (189). Syria is sometimes especially alluring to jihadists because of its paramount place in radical Muslim eschatological literature, and it is currently a near perfect environment for nurturing violent extremism. Many contemporary jihadists view Syrian President Bashar al-Assad as representing al-Dajjal, who is sometimes described as Islam's version of the anti-Christ, and thus one of humanity's greatest enemies. In a possible preview of a forthcoming genocide (should ISIS win the war in Syria), Kepel quotes a popular jihadist internet propagandist as describing Assad's 'Alawite sect as "apostates more infidel than Christians and the Jews" who must be addressed by a "final solution" (129). It is difficult to be any clearer than that. Unfortunately for French Muslims who are inspired to travel to Syria by this rhetoric, ISIS often views them as too inexperienced to have much military value and sometimes assigns them to suicide missions, which they may perform with the aid of Captagon, an amphetamine in wide use by that organization. Nevertheless, those recruits who remain alive and manage to gain military skills sometimes return to France, where they are substantially more dangerous than when they left.

Kepel is caustically critical of the French government and security establishment for their failures to address or even understand the problems associated with radical Islam. He suggests that French leaders have often used a strategy that relies on their own prejudices and the advice of "pseudoexperts" and laments the decline of French universities from their once prominent position in the field of Islamic studies (189). He also maintains that Western intelligence was slow to recognize new modes of radicalization, which involved increasing reliance on well-produced action videos on the internet. French security forces instead focused on "traditional surveillance" and also "failed to see what was going on behind bars" (32). Kepel states that while the French security forces did well when jihadists were organized in a top-dominated "pyramidal" system, they are much less able to cope with a "net-based system" where planning is more diffuse and lines of authority are often unclear (157).

In sum, this book is so rich with useful information and valuable analysis, it would be a shame to overlook it. Importantly, Kepel notes that Islamic radicalism is likely to remain a problem in France so long as the government and society fail to improve the educational and employment conditions for young Muslims while avoiding overexcited French identity politics. He seems to view radical Islam as a vehicle

for opposition by confused youth, prison indoctrinated criminals, and various others at the angry margins of society. He even notes that the infamous terrorist known as Carlos the Jackal converted to radical Islam while serving a life sentence in a French prison, possibly because he viewed it as a stronger challenge to Western society than the Marxism of his youth. Still Kepel is focused on more than reform and demands that French security forces start to address the jihadist threat as it currently exists and not how it was structured and organized twenty years ago. Additionally, it is worth noting that Kepel's work provides many interesting insights important to non-French readers concerned with the problems of their own countries as well as the global terrorist threat.



Uppsala, Sweden:
Zed, 2017
254 pages
\$25.00

Warlord Democrats in Africa: Ex-Military Leaders and Electoral Politics

Edited by Anders Themnér

Reviewed by Whitney Grespin, peace operations analyst at the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) at the US Army War College

The collection of essays contained within *Warlord Democrats* examines ten transitions led by former combatants, or “warlord democrats,” of nonstate groups who struggled to establish themselves as viable political actors in postconflict and complex environments. Given public demand for regular, multiparty elections across the continent in the postcolonial era and the prevailing notion that democracy is “the only game in town,” participation in electoral competitions has become a popular route for ex-warlords to attempt to integrate into systems claiming to offer legitimate governance, thus allowing them to convert military power into political influence. Through this well edited volume, a diversity of case studies seeks to address whether these actors’ participation in societies after a civil war has positive or negative effects, and what the manifestations of those effects have been across seven African states.

From the 1990s on, the international community’s preference for using the democratic template in peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations sought to impose a governance structure that would enhance stability. Yet many former warlords and rebel leaders have struggled in their pursuit of legitimacy within a formal state structure of governance. The transition from illegitimate to credible power brokerage has ranged from efforts to address and mitigate the root causes of conflict, to those who merely seek to maintain the immediate postconflict status quo to preserve their own positions of power. Four main explanatory factors emerge across the seven chapters to explain the warlords’ freedom of action in a series of postconflict environments. These include electoral constraints, the capacity for warlords to misbehave, the expected cost of doing so, and personality traits that influence how they perceive and act on these considerations.

Each case study discusses these shaping factors via a structure/agency perspective, allowing the reader to observe the extent to which the individual exerts authority as either a free agent or within existing social contexts. In chapter 1, Judith Verweijen traces the postwar trajectories

of former leader of the Congolese Rally for Democracy-Kisangani-Liberation Movement Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi, who has showed unique prowess in quietly rekindling conflicts for the purposes of publicly resolving them. Chapter 2 sees Lars Waldorf focus on Rwanda's Paul Kagame and his quest to centralize power in Rwanda after the genocide. In chapter 3, Carrie Manning and Anders Themnér analyze the behavior of two Liberian former military leaders as they seek to navigate elections. Chapter 4 has Alex Vines tracing the country's transition from war to peace via a former Mozambican National Resistance Movement leader's efforts to ensure continued political relevance. In chapter 5, Henrik Vigh follows Guinea-Bissau's multifaceted João Bernardo Vieira before chapter 6's Mimmi Soderberg Kovacs and Ibrahim Bangura compare the experiences of three Sierra Leonean warlords after the civil war. Johan Brosche and Kristine Hoglund's chapter 7 investigates the political maneuverings of South Sudan's Riek Machar, who played a pivotal role in cementing his party's dominance in political and economic spheres after the signing of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement. This is followed by Anders Themnér's excellent concluding chapter, which compares the postwar experiences of the ten individuals analyzed in this volume and offers prescriptive commentary on how best to navigate the half decade following the conclusion of open hostilities, the period within which civil war relapse is most likely to occur.

As with many multiauthor volumes, there is some discontinuity in the collection's tone. Some chapters possessed more value-added analysis than others, which instead veered toward historical recitation. Out of necessity, the book also bore a proliferation of acronyms and actors, which sometimes made for dense reading. A density of acronyms and briefly introduced complex sociopolitical dynamics may preclude this book from acting as an introductory work to the case studies. To its credit, the book offers diversity of chapters from some providing background on well-known figures such as Prince Johnson of Liberia and Paul Kagame of Rwanda, to others providing apparently original analysis of the origins and motivations of lesser-known "strong men" such as Alfonso Dhlakama of Mozambique, Riek Machar of South Sudan, and João Bernardo "Nino" Vieira of Guinea-Bissau.

On the African continent, successful transitions to legitimate governance are rare. The essays document kleptocracies, criminalization of the political system, extractive exploitation, human rights abuses, and capitalization on social, political, and economic cleavages that already existed within their fragile states. Even reflecting on implications of leadership outside of the ruler's home territory, author Lars Waldorf recognized that Kagame's contribution to multilateral interventions on the continent was not wholly altruistic and notes that "for one thing, it keeps his soldiers busy outside Rwanda" (74).

A footnote reveals that Kagame has also used Rwanda's provision of troops as leverage within the international community when he threatened the withdrawal of 3,300 Rwandan peacekeepers from Darfur in 2010 after a United Nations report documenting Rwandan crimes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was leaked, undermining his own transformation into a peacelord by strong-arming the international community into capitulating to his wishes. Further, this book's detailed look at the aftermath of such engagements is both timely and salient to

other contemporary scholarship and touches on some of the follow-on repercussions of international sponsorship of foreign military training—both Rwanda’s Kagame and Liberia’s Johnson via the United States as well as Guinea-Bissau’s Vieira via China.

The volume does, however, offer a few glimmers of hope. One of the few successful transitions of power can be credited to Liberian politician and former rebel leader Sekou Conneh, who after losing an election was, “Gracious in defeat and acted in a statesmanlike manner when he called on the supporters of the opposition to accept the results and uphold peace. . . . After his electoral defeat Conneh left the political scene and went back to being a businessman” (109). Observing this rare, but exemplary behavior, editor Anders Themnér wrote in his concluding essay that “the best chance to support peace and democracy may be to transform ‘warlords’ into ‘peacelords’” (222). Although this catchphrase tells us little about facilitating such a transformation, there is recognition that many of these figures played on their wartime credentials to mobilize support for their political agendas. Understanding how they capitalized on their postelection accomplishments might also be useful to the design of postconflict political civil society engagement strategies.

Themnér’s editorial prowess in securing such diverse, thoughtful contributions is evident. So is the volume’s overall call for further attention to the role such transitioning “strong men” can play in shaping democratization and peacebuilding after civil war. This work’s examination of patron-client relationships is essential reading for any individual interested in postconflict stabilization and the reintegration of former state adversaries within state governing structures.

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