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## **Editorial**

The past two years were challenging years for the *Global Military Studies Review* (GMSR). It is our sad duty to inform our readers that two members of our scientific board, Dr. Andre Gerolymatos and Dr. Dennis Showalter, have passed away. On behalf of the editors, the Scientific Board, as well as our readers we extend our deepest sympathies to their families.

The second challenge that the journal faced is one with which you are certainly acquainted with: COVID-19. Unfortunately, the challenges imposed by the global pandemic postponed our compilation of the latest edition. In several instances, circumstances related to COVID-19 delayed our shipment of books, and reviewers often faced new challenges brought on by the restrictions imposed by various governments due to the spreading of the virus. Fortunately, as the world adjusts to the ongoing pandemic and (hopefully) post COVID-19 environment, so have we at the GMSR. We are happy to announce that the journal, having overcome these challenges, will return to its regular format in offering reviews of the latest material in military studies in a timely manner.

Military studies is a term over which scholars continue to debate its precise meaning. While some argue for a narrow definition that focuses specifically on the battlefield, however one may define it, others argue for a more encompassing definition that examines how conflict shapes the society and cultures that create it. This ambiguity in definition is at the same time the greatest strength as well as weakness of the field, allowing individuals to approach the subject from a variety of perspectives. GMSR does not seek to pronounce judgement on this debate. Instead, our review journal, by taking an interdisciplinary approach to military studies, seeks to further the lively debates that enrich our field. All perspectives on military studies, are welcome here at the GMSR.

Finally, the editorial staff would like once more to re-emphasize our commitment to making this a truly global endeavor. Too often, the field emphasizes specific geographic and chronological periods. The goal of the GMSR is not only to publish reviews of pertinent texts in the field but also help connect scholars from a variety of different geographic and chronological contexts who might not otherwise be in contact. It is our hope that GMSR can serve as a forum to continue these invaluable conversations across geographic and chronological boundaries.

## 1.

**Jeffrey Rop, *Greek Military Service in the Ancient Near East, 401-330 BCE* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 265, ISBN: 978-1108499507.**

Sabine Müller (Philipps-Universität Marburg, Germany)

Paid professional soldiers and commanders played an important role in ancient warfare, particularly in the fourth century BC. In contrast to its high relevance for political and military history, studies on this subject are rare. Hence, Rop's monograph on Greek professional soldiers and *strategoí* serving abroad in Persia and Egypt is a welcome and important contribution to research on warfare in classical times. The book contains eight chronological chapters, a final conclusion, a useful timeline, and five maps of high quality. Chapter 1 introduces Rop's two aims. First, he argues against the so-called 'Greek Thesis' (a term coined by Pierre Briant, an expert on the Persian Empire), meaning the idea that Greek military superiority, particularly of the Greek hoplite, explains the rise of Greek military service in the East. Critically re-examining the Greek and Roman literary sources, Rop points out that the impression of Greek military superiority (accompanied by the image of Eastern deficiencies, inability, or decline) was a literary *topos* created by Greek authors with their biased views on Eastern politics and warfare: it is not valid and did not mirror the facts (pp. 1-18). Second, he points out that the term 'mercenary' for the Greek soldiers serving abroad is anachronistic and misleading: while they received wages, they were not necessarily available to the highest bidder. Rop identifies them as political agents who served within the context of formal and informal international alliances, *xenia* relationships and *philia* networks in the interests of their Greek hometowns (pp. 19-29). As a result, he characterizes the rise of Greek professional soldiers in Eastern service as a sign of Eastern political actors' involvement in Greek politics and networks. The same argument has already been brought forward by Franca Landucci Gattinoni in the 1990s.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, her articles are missing from Rop's bibliography. The first two chapters discuss Xenophon's biased view of the superiority of

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<sup>1</sup> Franca Landucci Gattinoni, "I mercenari nella politica ateniese dell'età di Alessandro: Parte I: Soldati e ufficiali mercenari ateniese al servizio della Persia," *Ancient Society* 25 (1994): 33-61; Franca Landucci Gattinoni, "I mercenari nella politica ateniese dell'età di Alessandro: Parte II: Il ritorno in patria dei mercenari," *Ancient Society* 26 (1995): 59-91.

the Ten Thousand in the service of Cyrus the Younger in the *Anabasis* and include a rehabilitation of Artaxerxes II as a strategist (pp. 30-87). Chapter 4 is devoted to Greek *strategoi* such as Konon, Chabrias, and Iphikrates serving in the East. Rop stresses that they were recruited for their specialized knowledge and background regarding their personal networks (pp. 88-118). Chapter 5 re-examines the enigmatic revolt of the Phrygian satrap Artabazos (pp. 119-147). Rop rejects the traditional date of the revolt (357/6 BC), dating it to 353 BC. According to him, Artabazos was a loyal satrap until his exile; his conflict with Artaxerxes III was caused by Artabazos' attempt to overcome his isolation in Anatolia by relying on his Greek relationships. While it is surely correct that Artaxerxes' 'Mercenaries Decree' (Rop rejects as a whole as a fabrication of the Demosthenes Scholiast) will not have been the reason for the conflict, the idea of Artabazos' isolation in Anatolia is not really convincing. His influential Lydian neighbour Autophradates supported his accession to satrapal rule against Artabazos' predecessor Ariobarzanes. While, later on, they got into conflict and Autophradates imprisoned Artabazos, he chose to set him free shortly after (although he could have harmed him). In addition, the argument that Mausolos of Caria's turn against Ariobarzanes was proof of Artabazos' isolation (p. 141) is not convincing: Artabazos substituted Ariobarzanes and thus profited from his troubles. In consequence, the reasons for Artabazos' revolt remain an enigma. Chapter 6 examines the Persian reconquest of Egypt under Artaxerxes III and the role of Mentor of Rhodes (pp. 148-175), and chapters 7 and 8 (pp. 176-230) focus on the Macedonian campaigns in the East under Philip II and Alexander III. In the case of Memnon of Rhodes, Dareios III's central commander of the Persian defence against the Macedonian invasion, Rop's critical attitude towards the sources leads to a certainly unjustified downgrading of Memnon's importance as a commander and strategist (pp. 182-206). While the sources, particularly Diodoros, provide a very positive portrait of Memnon and exaggerate the consequences of his early death for Dareios' cause, the reports about Memnon's achievements cannot be treated as purely stylistic devices. His successes in reversing the Macedonian conquests are telling. In addition, when Memnon, appointed commander-in-chief in the Aegean, started to lead a naval counterattack, the Macedonians quickly reconstituted their already dissolved fleet and even took measures to secure the Euboian border. Their reaction is another sign that Memnon's position as a key figure in the Persian defence cannot be doubted. In sum, this is a highly reflective, very profound, thorough, and immensely critical study that offers an abundance of important perspectives, fresh

results, and inspiring thoughts and stresses the bias of Greek and Roman sources in the reports on the East. As a most relevant contribution to a central subject that deserves to attract more scholarly attention, the book is recommended to all who are working on the political and military history of the fourth century BC.

## 2.

**Nicholas Morton, *The Crusader States and Their Neighbours: A Military History 1099-1187* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), pp. 320, ISBN: 978-0198824541.**

Sean McGlynn (University of Plymouth at Strode College, UK)

The military history of the crusades has seen considerable scholarly activity in recent years in book form. Gregory Bell's *Logistics of the First Crusade* and Steve Tibble's *The Crusader Armies* and *The Crusader Strategy* come instantly to mind (the last of these having special relevance but published too late for any discussion in the book under review here).<sup>2</sup> It is all a very long way from R. C. Smail's classic book *Crusading Warfare, 1097-1193*,<sup>3</sup> a ground-breaking work not only for crusading studies but also for the study of warfare in medieval Europe. Nicholas Morton has made his own significant contributions to the genre over the last few years in numerous articles and books, and now we have his excellent *The Crusader States and Their Neighbours: A Military History 1099-1187*.

Morton presses the point on just how complex was the military and strategic situation faced by Crusaders and the Latin Kingdom: Kurds, Turks, Armenians, Arabs, Byzantines and, of course, the Crusaders themselves; as Morton rightly states from the onset, "These wars pitted a bewildering array of military traditions against each other" (p. 1). All protagonists, including the newcomers from Christian Europe, were prone to internal divisions in addition to multiple external pressures, adding to the combinations of both threats and opportunities. The Latins had to adapt swiftly to ancient but changing fault-lines, not least the fresh ones brought about by their own irruptions. The geopolitical fluidity of the region, where enemies today are allies tomorrow, had all manner of implications for the Latins as they grappled with the ethnic, religious, dynastic and commercial interests of various groupings. Morton ably dispenses with the Crusader-Muslim binary antagonism with which the Crusades are understandably associated. Despite the constantly shifting geopolitical sands, Morton never lets his main focus

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<sup>2</sup> Gregory Bell, *Logistics of the First Crusade: Acquiring Supplies Amid Chaos* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2019); Steve Tibble, *The Crusader Armies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018); Steve Tibble, *The Crusader Strategy: Defending the Holy Land* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> R. C. Smail, *Crusading Warfare (1097-1193)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956).



drift from the warfare that shaped events as he nimbly guides the reader through the tangled complexity of the region.

Having taken Jerusalem in 1099 – a truly astonishing achievement – the Crusaders were immediately beset by the challenges that were to dog them throughout their time in the Holy Land, the chief of which was manpower; if it could not be secured from Europe, it needed to be procured from the region being contested. The Crusaders therefore initially undertook “an almost frantic level of military activity” (p. 22) to continue their momentum and to keep their Turkish, Arab and especially Fatimid enemies off balance. Interestingly, this reminded me of the similar strategy undertaken by Simon de Montfort’s minimal forces after the initial success of the Albigenian Crusade.

Over the next three decades, a long, grinding and exacting strategy of gaining towns and land was punishingly pursued, and opportunities were seized by pushing eastwards into Transjordan as the Crusader kingdoms expanded while defending gains, all four states and their actions being examined closely by Morton. Strategy was a combination of exigency reaction and long-term, the latter focused on securing the Levantine coast. With the Turks very much on the backfoot in the north and the east, under constant pressure from both Crusader operations and local rebellions against the Turkish hub in Damascus, it was the well-resourced Fatimids to the south that presented the most immediate threat in the first decade, until pressure from that area gradually relented, the Crusaders having proved very successful at rebutting incessant attacks on their territory. Outnumbered and out-resourced, the Crusaders effectively deployed the famous shock charge of their heavy cavalry, against which the Fatimids “proved unable to devise an effective answer” (p. 62). However, at Aleppo in 1119 (the subject of Morton’s well-received book in 2018), this finally failed them; the ensuing defeat, argues Morton, stalled the Crusader momentum which was never to be recovered.

Now faced by resurgent Turks under Zangi and the added complication of deeper Byzantine involvement, the Crusaders lost Edessa in 1144, prompting the launch of the Second Crusade with the objective of taking Damascus. Morton’s close analysis of its huge failure is especially absorbing and intriguing, revealing the extent of the Crusaders’ internal politics and differing military viewpoints; he concludes that “it defied the region’s military logic” and was “decidedly rash” (p. 117). The Crusading States’ problems had been compounded, as Christopher Tyerman has suggested, by perceptions in Europe that they were by now functioning, stable entities and could fend for themselves.

The ascendancy of Nur al-Din from 1149 to his death in 1174 afforded some short-term respite as he contested with fellow Turks and Muslims in augmenting and consolidating his power and his own Seljuk dynasty. Morton uses the opportunity here to spend considerable attention on army sizes and the use of mercenaries before returning to the campaigns that led to the fall of Jerusalem in 1187 at the hands of Saladin and the consequent advent of the Third Crusade. Here Morton challenges a number of orthodoxies, not least Guy of Lusignan's military leadership being reassessed positively, explaining the rationale behind his actions that led to crushing defeat at Hattin in 1187. Saladin's invasion of the kingdom of Jerusalem in 1187 marked "the major shift in the region's strategic balance" (p. 172), during a period when some Crusaders diverted energy into war against the Armenians.

Throughout and in the last chapter, Morton offers much perceptive analysis of strategies and tactics in battles, skirmishes, raids, sieges and rebellions. On the whole medieval battle avoidance debate, he states that "the Franks were cautious about fighting battles" while "the Fatimids and the Turks were much more willing to risk their forces" in engagements (p. 197), as one would expect with numerically superior armies. Nevertheless, engagements were frequent: the Crusaders were able to judge when circumstances required them. But (as in the West), "the wars of the twelfth-century Near East were centred on castles and fortified towns/cities" (p. 217). On balance, Morton judges the Crusaders to have been very successful and, despite their disadvantages, the military struggle was a "close-run thing" (p. 263). Amidst all this a strategy of sorts was developed by the Crusader States but, as Tibble also shows, it was largely reactionary and exigency-based. This is not surprising given the overwhelming problems of distance and manpower that they faced. Their strategic options were necessarily constrained.

Morton ambitiously sets out to offer a comprehensive analysis of all the military activity of the region in the twelfth century, with as many military episodes considered as possible, from the smallest to the largest. In this, he has succeeded impressively. The results of his extensive research have led to not only an invaluable book on warfare in the Middle East in the twelfth century, but one which also contributes notably to our understanding of medieval warfare in general. It is a thoroughly engrossing read.

### 3.

**Kerstin von Lingen, “Crimes against Humanity”: Eine Ideengeschichte der Zivilisierung von Kriegsgewalt 1864-1945, Krieg in der Geschichte 102 (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schoenigh, 2018), pp. 386, ISBN: 978-3506787750.**

Marcel Berni (Swiss Military Academy at ETH Zurich, Switzerland)

This brilliant new book by Kerstin von Lingen studies the history of a radical idea. In somewhat teleological fashion, the author traces the concept of crimes against humanity from the 1860s until 1945. Since the idea of holding states liable for crimes against civilians was not new in 1945, von Lingen’s historical investigation closes an important gap in the existing research. Although scholars like Mahmoud Cherif Bassiouni, Elizabeth Borgwardt, Mark Lewis, Dan Plesch and Daniel Marc Segesser, among others, have touched on the topic of crimes against humanity before, von Lingen’s study adds a lot to the existing literature. It was during the 20th century that crimes against humanity gained global resonance in the moral and legal discussions. Accordingly, von Lingen situates this “protracted internationalisation and juridification process” (p. 11) in the context of a more or less familiar framework of knowledge. The late 19th and early 20th century was a period in which the influence of the public in general and more or less transnational organisations of civil society in particular expanded and thus became more and more influential. Already in 1899, the high contracting parties of the Hague Convention introduced the juridical dogma called the Martens Clause that lies at the heart of the first part of the book (pp. 33-192).

Methodically, von Lingen seeks to weave together an *intellectual history* of crimes against humanity that goes beyond a merely political, military or legal history. The main actors in her book are mostly politicians and jurists, carefully situated in their historical setting. Central intellectual characters include Sheldon Glueck, Hersch Lauterpacht, Raphael Lemkin, Herbert Pell, Egon Schwelb, and, of course, Marcel de Baer and Bohuslav Ecer. Institutionally, von Lingen focuses on the United Nations War Crimes Commission that was, according to the author, paramount to the institutionalisation of crimes against humanity as a *corpus delicti*. Established in October 1943 by the Allies, this commission quickly became a dominant player in articulating and realising procedures for the punishment of war crimes. Von Lingen also connects intellectual theory and juridical practice. Accordingly, the author links the emerging idea of crimes against

humanity to the struggle for the abolition of slavery and refers to the wide debates about the laws of war in the Anglo-American world.

These observations and the explanations offered are not new. They have been analysed before in studies of warfare and legal history and thus complete a much-discussed legal angle of historical research. Commendably, the author quotes sources from diverse archival collections. She studied, among others, relevant collections in the National Archives in London, the London School of Economics Library, the National Archives of Australia, the UN archives, the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington and Maryland, the Peace Palace Library in The Hague, the National Archive in Prague as well as the private papers of Marcel de Baer. The archival research on the Belgian Marcel de Baer and the Czechoslovakian Bohuslav Ecer, two crucial players in the “London hub”, forms the most original part of the book. De Baer and Ecer were both crucial players of the United Nations War Crimes Commission. They together encouraged the creation of an international tribunal for the prosecution of war crimes. Their efforts resulted in the framework of the London charter. Using de Baer and Ecer as hitherto understudied legal experts, von Lingen demonstrates that it was thanks to them that the concept of crimes against humanity was used especially after the Second World War. It is this very prehistory to Nuremberg and Tokyo that lies at the heart of von Lingen’s book. Thus, her book clarifies how it became possible for the Allies to include this new charge against accused war criminals. Additionally, von Lingen also demonstrates that women, not least because of their language skills, played a massively underestimated role in this process. But these women remain all too often quiet.

Nevertheless, von Lingen’s study serves as an important starting point for further intellectual histories of a similar nature. The book is therefore of great importance for the international history of modernity and should be translated into English soon. Future research could focus on the following questions: How did the representatives of the United Nations War Crimes Commission shape the concept of crimes against humanity? How did transnational networks of legal experts form, matter, and evolve? And last but not least, how did juridical knowledge and ideas flow and gain relevance across time and space? In answering these questions, we should, step by step, gain a more complete picture of the evolvement and codification of international criminal law. Kerstin von Lingen has made an important step in this direction.

#### 4.

**Michael Geheran, *Comrades Betrayed: Jewish World War I Veterans under Hitler* (Ithaca, NY/London: Cornell University Press, 2020), pp. 294, ISBN: 978-1501751011.**

Nathaniel Parker Weston (Seattle Central College, USA)

Michael Geheran's study of Jewish World War I veterans in Nazi Germany begins with the fascinating story of Julius Katzmann. Having served in the Great War and repressed communist agitation in the postwar era in his hometown of Würzburg, Germany, Katzmann advocated political conservatism and was a well-respected member of the community among Jewish and non-Jewish people alike. Following the 1933 Nazi seizure of power, when Jewish Germans fell under increasing persecution, Katzmann's textile business remained untouched and he continued to lead a relatively normal life, that is, until the Kristallnacht pogrom of November 1938 led to his arrest and internment in the Buchenwald concentration camp near the city of Weimar in central Germany. Geheran explains that twenty-five of the Jewish veteran's employees petitioned for his release, and they included members of the SA, the Nazi party militia, and the SS, the Nazi security organization later responsible for implementing the Holocaust. Katzmann was soon freed, and all former servicemen from World War I of Jewish ancestry were too thereafter. The author uses these examples and others to illustrate certain exceptions to the prevailing historiography of Jewish people in Germany under Nazism, which portrays the increasing isolation of most. The book presents an interesting examination of Jewish World War I veterans and their responses to the rise and expansion of National Socialism up to and during World War II and the Holocaust. Geheran offers a particularly effective viewpoint with his analysis of these former soldiers' notions of masculinity and their relation to comradeship. He rightly recognizes the diversity of the Jewish German community and his study expands this perspective, allowing readers to consider the places of the approximately 80,000 Jewish veterans of the Great War in the overall population of around a half million in 1933, the year Hitler was appointed chancellor of Germany and began to consolidate power within the state. The author mobilizes an impressive array of archival and published primary sources to build an intriguing narrative.

The first chapter looks at Jewish soldiers' experiences in World War I, using their diaries and letters to suggest that the impacts of antisemitism were less than previous historians have shown and that the Jewish soldiers'

commitment to the national cause was actually greater. The diaries of Jewish veterans continue to serve as compelling source material throughout the book. Chapter two traces the years of the Weimar Republic, in which antisemitism increased to an unprecedented level and frequently called Jewish military service into question. At the same time, tens of thousands of Jewish war refugees from Eastern Europe entered Germany, causing fear among many Jewish and non-Jewish Germans alike due to their religious, linguistic, and historical differences. Jewish veterans' organizations fought against antisemitism as it denigrated their war service and increased in non-Jewish German veterans' organizations.

Chapter three examines the first years of the Nazi regime up to the passage of the 1935 Nuremberg Laws. Some Jewish veterans actively resisted the April 1933 boycott of Jewish businesses by standing in front of their shops clad in their military uniforms. The 1933 Civil Service Law banning "non-Aryans" from government positions made exceptions for Jewish frontline soldiers from World War I as well as their sons and fathers. While Jewish veterans had some protections, Geheran shows that they gradually diminished. In chapter four, the author demonstrates the continued efforts by Jewish World War I veterans to resist the individual and institutional discrimination and segregation they encountered.

The following chapter looks at the period from Kristallnacht in November 1938 to the first deportations of Jewish Germans in October 1941. Unlike earlier situations, Jewish war veterans were not protected from the violent pogrom nor the mass internment in concentration camps that followed. As was shown in the introduction, Jewish veterans were eventually released from their internment, which was not the case for others of Jewish ancestry. Privilege did not protect them from the expulsions out of Germany to the East, but Geheran reveals how some subsequently joined the ranks of ghetto police, while certain individuals attempted to shield a number of Jewish veterans from deportation. Their status spared several hundred from deportation out of the Lodz ghetto to the Chelmno death camp in 1942. At the same time, some 10,000 Jewish Germans were murdered, illustrating that Jewish war veterans represented exceptions to a much larger rule.

The sixth chapter begins with the ominous Wannsee Conference held in a Berlin suburb where, in January 1942, the planning of the so-called Final Solution, the Nazi euphemism for the genocide of Jewish Europeans, took place, even though the mass killings were already underway. A few protections remained for Jewish German World War I veterans, but ultimately, they did not last as the Holocaust enveloped Jewish Europeans

on the whole. This chapter is the most captivating as the author recounts the fates of many individuals who had been part of the narrative earlier and skillfully discusses the larger context of the mass murder of Jewish people. The epilogue describes the attitudes of Jewish veterans of World War I who survived the Holocaust and still held onto a sense of German identity and nationalism despite the policies implemented and actions carried out under Nazism.

The study is an important contribution to the historiography of Jewish Germans and Jewish soldiers in the World Wars. It is best suited for graduate students and scholars in those fields. The book succeeds at emphasizing the complexity of Jewish German experiences, depending on different levels of privilege, leading up to and during the National Socialist era. Future work might fruitfully examine Jewish veterans who served in the military of the Habsburg Empire during World War I to see how their positions were impacted by Nazi rule.

## 5.

**Stephan Jaeger, *The Second World War in the Twenty-First-Century Museum: From Narrative, Memory, and Experience to Experientiality* (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2020), pp. 354, ISBN: 978-3110661064.**

Christopher Thorsten Sommer (Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg, Germany)

Stephan Jaeger is Professor of German at the University of Manitoba. His monograph *The Second World War in the Twenty-First-Century Museum. From Narrative, Memory, and Experience to Experientiality* sets out to analyse “the semiotic, aesthetic, and narrative techniques of Second World War representations in permanent exhibitions” (p. 10) in European and North American museums. Jaeger’s work differentiates itself from others by applying the novel concept of ‘experientiality’, with the goal of categorising and analysing the narrative structure of twelve exhibitions established this century in six countries.

His work is divided into nine chapters; however, three major sections emerge: a discussion of museum media and how it relates to the concept of ‘experientiality’; a close reading of the permanent exhibitions selected; and, finally, a very instructive meta-discussion of representing highly contentious topics, such as the Holocaust and its perpetration or the air war. Here Jaeger also offers an earnest exhortation to use art in Second World War museums to provide visitors with opportunities for reflection.

Central to Jaeger’s considerations is that museums cannot reproduce past worlds or historical experiences; accordingly, all quasi-mimetic effects are simulated and constructed in exhibitions (p. 49). As Jaeger follows Monika Fludernik’s definition of experientiality as a “quasi-mimetic evocation of a real-life experience” (p. 48), it becomes apparent that the question at the core of his work is how museums perform or simulate historical realities, and, by extension, how these realities are perceived by visitors. However, by design, Jaeger’s study cannot answer this last question: based on archival research, interviews with museum staff and on-site visits (p. 37), he performs a close reading “of the potentialities of semiotic meanings and of cognitive, aesthetic, ethical, and emotional effects that an exhibition can have on different visitors” (p. 38). Instead of combining this well-established approach with empirical visitor research, Jaeger employs an “aesthetic response theory in analyzing [...] potentialities of the museum space that an ‘ideal’ visitor can evoke” (p. 43). This suggests that Jaeger’s findings are based on his own perspective with its individual bias. Accordingly, his



assumptions remain theoretical and need the corrective of being tested against actual visitor perceptions.

This does not diminish Jaeger's methodological contribution to museum studies. He successfully transfers and extends the concept of 'experientiality' to a museum context and defines three forms of experientiality encountered in museums: restricted, primary and secondary experientiality. Museums that do not leave visitors room to mediate between museum space and history create restricted experientiality (p. 61). Primary experientiality is defined as "a simulation of actual historical events or of historical situations that demonstrates how members of a group could have experienced the past as such. It includes forms of empathy and reenactment that claim to mimetically bring the visitor close to historical experiences" (p. 53). In contrast, secondary experientiality "produces the effect of a collective historical experience without any equivalent that could be mimetically approached in the past; it is a simulation of abstract structures" (p. 53). All three forms can overlap and constitute different sections of a single exhibition.

In essence, this concept grades the ability of exhibitions to reveal their simulation character and not succumb to emotional manipulation or single-voiced master narratives that propagate a 'correct' version of events. An inherent hierarchy is present in Jaeger's considerations that suggests that secondary experientiality is always preferable, as it is more likely to lead to reflection and reveal the simulation character of exhibitions. From an academic standpoint, polyphonic exhibitions that show visitors the constructed nature of history are currently best-practice; however, it remains unclear if this inherent hierarchy in Jaeger's concept would be realised in visitor perceptions. Simply put: if visiting a museum is a leisure activity, usually connected with enjoyment or spending time with family or friends, is an exhibition that elicits deep reflection on the nature of war as effective as one with a singular, affective narrative in binding visitor attention?

While these questions remain unanswered, Jaeger's study provides a thought-provoking close reading of contemporary war exhibitions that pinpoints several issues with western modes of representing war. On occasion, the sparing use of photographs makes it difficult to follow Jaeger's arguments and, in addition, a subdivision of the chapters would have improved orientation. While his selection spans the USA, Canada, Poland, England, Belgium and Germany, it would have been interesting to integrate contemporary Japanese, Chinese or Russian exhibitions into the analysis. Jaeger's prosaic style avoids value judgements; nevertheless, by categorising the twelve museums according to the three forms of experientiality, they are

inevitably, tacitly, 'graded'. The argument moves from restricted (chapter 3), over primary (chapter 4) to secondary experientiality (chapter 5), and finally to exhibitions that are transnational in design (chapter 6).

According to Jaeger, exhibitions that create restricted experientiality tend to establish a master narrative that does not leave much room for interpretation, reflection or a critical questioning of events. Primary experientiality is more likely to allow visitors to recognise exhibitions as simulations or performances. However, Jaeger assumes that the danger lies in overpowering visitors with immersive reconstructions, in effect rendering them unable to recognise the exhibitions as simulations. The creation of secondary experientiality seems most likely to elicit reflection in visitors, exemplified by the Bundeswehr Military History Museum in Dresden, which appears several times as a model museum in the study. Jaeger hypothesises that it allows visitors to appreciate structural aspects of war (p. 140), a strategy strongly preferred by him.

The most elucidating examples in Jaeger's study are the transnational exhibitions of the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk and the House of European History in Brussels. Both allow him to extend his concept across national borders, but also to show how political interference can easily subvert narratives. He shows the slow transformation of a more forward-thinking, anti-heroic transnational exhibition based on secondary experientiality at Gdańsk into a heroic and propagandistic exhibition that relies more on restricted experientiality (pp. 186, 202). This is mirrored in Brussels: the exhibition falls short of offering a balanced narrative of the gestation of a unified Europe. Instead, a biased master narrative is created that omits contemporary challenges of European cohesion and rising rightist sentiments (p. 217). Here, the potential of Jaeger's concept is fully realised and allows an instructive meta-analysis across national borders, without negating local differences in memory production.

Instead of focusing on singular exhibitions, the last three chapters deal with overarching themes and thus provide a very readable synthesis. The preceding chapters had to employ a more descriptive, prosaic style by necessity. The book's culmination, however, rewards the reader with insightful discussion.

Jaeger categorizes functions and representational strategies of Holocaust exhibitions, with a preference for structurally networking the Holocaust, that is, representing it in its larger historical context as part of modern Second World War exhibitions (p. 243). This addresses the questionable strategy in contemporary exhibitions of separating the Holocaust spatially from the

Second World War, and I agree with Jaeger's sentiment that visitors should instead be encouraged to understand the structures that connect it to war (p. 263). A comparison with the musealisation of genocide, especially in non-European contexts, would have been instructive. The Nanjing massacre comes to mind, as does the Armenian genocide. In both cases, the perpetrator nations deny the genocide or its extent. Do museums in these countries use restricted experientiality to promote these narratives or is there a desire to subvert public opinion and political agendas, creating secondary experientiality?

Another notable finding of Jaeger's is that the air war is "one of the most morally, politically, and representationally restricted topics" (p. 291) in contemporary museums. Indeed, the debate about if strikes against civilian targets were militarily necessary or effective is seldom found in exhibitions. Especially in this case, visitor perceptions would be valuable: the Bundeswehr Military History Museum is again mentioned as a positive example for representing the air war and its controversies, but what effect the installations featuring objects, artwork and audio-visual media have on visitors needs to be determined.

Jaeger's work is an important methodological contribution that shows how useful the concept of experientiality applied to a museum context can be. His approach is sensible for a meta-analysis. Nevertheless, in combination with qualitative visitor interviews, Jaeger's results could be validated, considering the group dynamics, time constraints and pre-knowledge of visitors. I recommend this book to museum scholars, professionals, and students alike, as it is very accessible and thought-provoking. I also commend that the book is available as a digital open access publication and will thus hopefully find wide dissemination.

6.

**Helen Fry, *MI9: A History of the Secret Service for Escape and Evasion in World War Two* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020), pp. 352, ISBN: 978-0300233209.**

Kevin T. Hall (Ruhr-Universität-Bochum, Germany)

Following the underlying philosophy that Prisoners of War (POWs) represented one of the most important sources of intelligence (for both Allied and Axis powers), British intelligence units, such as MI5, MI6, and MI9, meticulously fostered the escape and evasion of POWs from continental Europe during World War II. Bold and daring accounts of the resistance in Western Europe celebrate and honor the sacrifice of the countless helpers, many of whom remain unidentified, who sought to do their part to combat fascism. Adding to this rich historiography, historian Helen Fry's newest book, *MI9: A History of the Secret Service for Escape and Evasion in World War Two*, provides a detailed organizational history of the British MI9 and its operations, as well as presents the relatively unknown intelligence gathering carried out by the department and emphasizes the significant role of women interrogators.

Supplemented by vivid and captivating personal accounts of espionage, along with daring and heroic escape and evasion reports of POWs, Fry further underscores the critical role of "ordinary" individuals of occupied Europe who risked their lives and the well-being of their families to assist in the successful escape of Jews and safe return of Allied servicemen on the run from Nazi officials. Combing through the vast records of British intelligence agencies, Fry interweaves these detailed escape and evasion reports, historical MI9 bulletins, unit histories, personal memories and biographies of underground members, escapers and evaders, along with unpublished works and family papers into a captivating prose that keeps the reader eager to know more.

Until now, the history of MI9 has remained rather obscure, overshadowed by the better-known MI5, MI6, and Bletchley Park. Yet, as Fry demonstrates, MI9 was far more than a subordinate to these other departments. Rather, MI9 was also significantly involved in espionage and intelligence gathering during the war and was a critical piece of the British intelligence community. In addition to providing preliminary training for British soldiers, MI9 issued news bulletins to servicemen that included crucial advice, especially for airmen shot down behind enemy lines. These bulletins offered tips from successful evaders who had managed to return to Allied control. Further,

MI9 produced ingenious gadgets and escape aids, known as “Q,” for escapees. These included, for example, blood chits, maps, compasses, and saws, all of which were designed to be easily hidden in the flyer’s clothing. With the aid of these items and the sacrifice of countless helpers, as many as 35,000 Allied servicemen made their way back to Allied lines, the majority of whom were escapers. While Fry’s estimate that “90 percent of those who evaded capture were successfully rescued by MI9” (p. 281) is surprisingly high, the impact of MI9 and other British intelligence agencies in assisting escapers, evaders, and combating Nazi Germany is unmistakable.

For those servicemen captured and interred in a POW camp, their duty to escape continued as every German soldier ordered to look for escapees meant one less soldier to fight the Allies on the front. MI9 actively sought to remain in contact with the Allied servicemen in each POW camp through coded messages in letters or radio broadcasts, which they received via radios smuggled into the camp either by guards who had compassion for the prisoners (or who were easily bribed) or by being snuck into the camp in packages by MI9.

Fry ventures to further explain not only the escape and evasion incidents and tactics in Western Europe, which are rather well-known, but also expands her scope to include examples in Italy, in particular in the Vatican and the role of a few select priests. This is of particular interest as relatively little research has focused, for example, on the Rome Escape Organization and the role of the Vatican. With the recent (2020) release of records related to Pope Pius XII by the Vatican Archives, perhaps this will permit a re-evaluation of the Vatican’s role during the war. Further, Fry includes a few brief examples of evasion by British servicemen in the Far East, which also remains a relatively unexplored topic. Overall, Fry’s study provides a fresh look at MI9 by outlining its interworking with the more well-known British intelligence agencies during World War II and its support of resistance networks in Europe and the Far East.

## 7.

**Sönke Neitzel, *Deutsche Krieger: Vom Kaiserreich zur Berliner Republik - eine Militärgeschichte*, 2nd edition (Berlin: Propyläen 2020), pp. 816, ISBN: 978-3549076477.<sup>4</sup>**

Frank Jacob (Nord Universitet, Norway)

Sönke Neitzel's impressive *longue-durée* study of the German Army from the foundation of the German Empire in 1871 until the contemporary Berlin Republic counts more than 800 pages. In it, the author attempts to "track down the continuities of the German military" and therefore takes a closer and detailed look at the *Bundeswehr* and the *Nationale Volksarmee*, which "have often been strangely decoupled from their predecessors in historical research" (p. 14) so far. Neitzel therefore intentionally crosses the year 1945, which has often been considered as a caesura in previous works. The referential frame of his work is consequently already defined in the book's title, i.e. *Deutsche Krieger* (German Warriors), which "describes [the] archaic side of the soldier's profession. Its *raison d'être*, war, is, so to speak, the fixed point of the present study" (p. 21). Neitzel does, however, not only intend to describe continuities and breaks within Germany's military history, but also wants to show that "a national German military culture actually [could have] existed" (Ibid.) in this long period from 1817 to the second decade of the 21st century. Neitzel's study in this regard is not only to be understood as a historical one but also as one that intends to stimulate a debate on the role of the military in current times, especially since the end of the Cold War, in contrast to a general kind of expectation, did not cause military considerations and questions to become obsolete, especially from a German, i.e. Central European, perspective. Due to the "the fierce fighting in Afghanistan from 2008 to 2011 [...] the warriors [returned] back into the self-image of the troops, [and] with the Ukraine crisis in 2014 also the Cold Warrior" (p. 15).

In the six chapters of his book, Neitzel analyzes three main aspects that influenced the history of the German military in the respective time periods – the focus is deliberately "only" on the land forces, since "the army has always been the largest and most important military force in German military history" (p. 20):

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<sup>4</sup> This review is in part a translation of a German version of this review that will be published in the *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 69, no. 7 (2021).

1. The framing conditions as they were set by politics and civil society for the armed forces,
2. The “inner structure of the armed forces,” including the existence of so-called *tribal cultures* and
3. The “craft level (*handwerkliche Ebene*) of the military,” that is, the question of how war was conceived and, above all, waged (pp. 18-20).

In his first chapter, Neitzel discusses the military of the German Empire (pp. 23-82), in which “the primacy of politics [existed] despite the legal framework prescribed by the constitution and tailored to the emperor” (p. 25) so that the military was not independent but, in contrast, often acted with the support of the political representatives, e.g. the Social Democratic Party (SPD) (p. 26). The German military historian consequently correctly highlights that “the image of a state forged with blood and iron, in which the military has taken possession of civil society, [is] but all too one-dimensional” (pp. 27-28).<sup>5</sup> Instead, as Neitzel continues, there is “evidence that makes the idea of the dominance of the military in German Empire’s civil society appear questionable” (p. 28). Furthermore, he argues that continuations of genocidal violence from the German colonies to the Holocaust cannot be proven, but that they were rather caused or evoked by different parameters related to the respective context of such violent and genocidal acts: “The German colonial warfare was certainly brutal and cruel. It reveals that the escalation or containment of violence was determined by an interplay of constitutional frameworks, dispositions of the men on the spot, military doctrines and, above all, a situational dynamic of violence” (p. 36). It was violence that furthermore determined the daily routine of the troops, as the soldiers were often suffering from violence from their superiors (pp. 47-48).

The already-mentioned *tribal cultures* were predominant in the cavalry, where their existence, however, was obstructive for its transformation into a more up-to-date mounted infantry (p. 55). It was the First World War that changed the position of the military, when the German High Command (*Oberste Heeresleitung*, OHL) turned the “primacy of politics into a primacy of the military,” yet did not establish a dictatorship (p. 61). The war

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<sup>5</sup> There has been a debate about the political nature or character of the German Empire related to the publication of two new books by Hedwig Richter, namely *Demokratie: Eine deutsche Affäre* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2020) and *Aufbruch in die Moderne: Reform und Massenpolitisierung im Kaiserreich* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2021).

nevertheless also caused the end of the “old army” because it “perished on the battlefields of the world war” (p. 63). At the same time, “the [former] tribal cultures of the old army ... [lost] its contour on the battlefields” (p. 67), and it was its defeat that would determine the further story of the German military because, as Neitzel emphasizes, “without the First there would not have been a Second World War” (p. 81).

The second chapter focuses on the relationship between the end of the First World War and the changing tribal cultures when it analyzes the role of the Reichswehr during the years of the Weimar Republic (pp. 83-109). While the troops were demobilized after the end of the First World War, which created some problems, the military’s importance increased quite fast: “The fact that the republic still existed in November 1923 was also due to the Reichswehr and their helpers. But the price was high” (p. 84). It was the “excesses of the government’s troops” (Ibid.) in 1919, e.g. when they violently suppressed the Berlin March Battles and the Munich Soviet Republic, that led to an “alienation of the Reichswehr from the Republic,” as the SPD distanced itself from the military, while the army’s representatives felt “insufficiently appreciated by the Republic” (p. 86). A continuity of the 20th century, which, however, is not consequently traced or followed in the further parts of the book, was also quite visible in the early 1920s, namely the perception of Bolshevism and Soviet Russia or later the Soviet Union as “enemy no. 1” (p. 86). Regardless of the initial solidarity between political and military decision-makers, the Reichswehr would not become a pillar of the republican order. The army, according to Neitzel’s evaluation, was not responsible for the end of the Weimar Republic and should not be considered to have been an “anti-democratic state within the state” (p. 90): “To assume this misjudges the character of the Weimar state. There were many who quarreled with the republic, and the Reichswehr was by no means an isolated group in a sea of law-loyal democrats” (p. 91).

During the Third Reich, the time period the third chapter focuses on (pp. 111-248), the role of the troops was undisputed from the start. For the National Socialists, the army was a “mystified community of front fighters ... the corporate form of the future (p. 111), and due to the anti-pacifist stand of the regime, the army was considered essential, an attitude that would become even more intensified after 1939 when the Second World War began (p. 114). In consequence of the self-alignment (*Selbstgleichschaltung*) after Hitler’s so-called “seizure of power” in 1933, the Reichswehr “smoothly integrated into the National Socialist state” (p. 116) and the latter became the referential frame of the army. The war eventually caused totally different



experiences for the soldiers. While the early years were determined by the fast victories in the east and west of Europe, these were later no longer possible because “experienced warriors who were able to cope with the extraordinary nervous strain of the fighting were increasingly in short supply” (p. 158). As much as the quality of the troops declined, the level of violence increased, which is also discussed by Neitzel, who considers it to be a process rather than a single act: “The Wehrmacht undoubtedly had a strong affinity for violence, even if prisoners were not shot and civilians not murdered everywhere and all the time” (p. 221). During the invasion of Poland, i.e. the “overture to a war of annihilation,” the crimes of the Wehrmacht were, according to Neitzel’s evaluation, determined by the following four factors:

1. the “referential frame of the NS state,”
2. the “organizational culture of the Wehrmacht,”
3. the “disposition of the soldiers on the local level,” and
4. the “specific situation” (pp. 216-222).

Furthermore, the German military historian explains the crimes of the Wehrmacht with the fact that “the coordinate system of legitimate and illegitimate, appropriate and excessive use of force had shifted considerably since the First World War” (p. 219). It was the war of annihilation against the Soviet Union (pp. 225-231) in which “the Germans” finally “crossed the Rubicon to a war of extermination” (p. 225). In the Second World War, and as part of the limitless violence, the Waffen-SS established its strong *tribal culture* in which leading SS members used to depict themselves as the “essential power of the land war” (p. 207), very much to the displeasure of the Wehrmacht. Finally, Neitzel argues that “the Wehrmacht was an army of extremes” (p. 247) which was, due to its history between 1939 and 1945, depicted as “professional and criminal” (p. 241), especially in English works. In the years of the West German republic in Bonn (*Bonner Republik*) that are analyzed in the fourth chapter (pp. 249-208), this stigma remained and influenced the history of the Bundeswehr. Neitzel excellently reconstructs this history and shows how far the “building up [of] armed forces [...] was one of the levers with which the Federal Republic would be able to achieve integration into the Western community of states and the regaining of sovereignty” (p. 249). Due to the Korean War, the “general political weather” (*politische Großwetterlage*, *ibid.*) had changed, and Konrad Adenauer could cleverly use the fear of the Soviet Union to exchange “German division for the state’s sovereignty” (p. 250). The armed forces would be controlled by Parliament in the future, and the value system of the

soldiers would be re-defined according to democratic values. The military and its new role were consequently first and foremost defined according to factors related to internal and external policies, as well as to political factors determined by Germany's past: "The bloc confrontation, the division of Germany, the nuclear threat and the experience of two lost world wars formed completely new and highly ambivalent frameworks for the development of the Bundeswehr" (p. 402).

In contrast to the events and trends in West Germany, the National People's Army (National Volksarmee, NVA), which Neitzel discusses in the relatively short fifth chapter (pp. 409-439), developed quite differently when compared to all other armies discussed so far. The leadership of East Germany did not adopt a lot from previous military organizations, but was rather oriented towards the example of the Soviet Union (p. 437). Although most officers were party members of the Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands (SED), Neitzel argues that the "NVA was no party organization" but rather one with "institutional self-interest" (p. 438). One 'advantage' would, in contrast to West Germany, be that there was "at least in the official discourse [...] no civil-military discrepancy, [as] state and army were on the same line" (p. 438).

After 1990, the Bundeswehr and the NVA had to grow together into one army, although the troop's numbers needed to be initially decreased to secure a structural rebuilding of the forces (pp. 441-442). The sixth chapter follows the development of the Bundeswehr in the last three decades and poses critical questions (pp. 441-582). While Helmut Kohl was still able to prevent the Bundeswehr's participation during the Gulf War, "the Bundeswehr ... would grow up at the Hindu Kush. For the first time in its history, she was confronted with not only playing war, but also waging it" (p. 559). However, the army could only act within a limited frame that had been set by Parliament, which is why military necessities needed to be politically accepted first so as to better the situation of the fighting soldiers.

Related to such considerations is Neitzel's resume: "The Bundeswehr still does not even have enough ammunition to fight a well-armed enemy; it is hardly capable of close combat, has too little artillery and no functioning anti-aircraft defenses. It is still too inefficient in arms procurement and in its entire structure, not least in the ministry [of defence], too ineffective and irresponsible [*verantwortungsschwach*]" (p. 597). Neitzel considers the "structural pacifism of the Bundesrepublik" to be obstructive, and considering the reluctance of Parliament and existent problems, a question needs to be asked: "Why have military forces at all?" (*Wozu überhaupt*

*Streitkräfte?*) (Ibid.) The listed problems, e.g. the apparent military insignificance of the EU, Neitzel continues, are consequences of the fact that the “security-related pressure [...] is simply not strong enough [and] the dangers are too abstract to induce the divided Europeans to make real progress in [their] defense policy” (p. 599).

All in all, Neitzel has written an important study about the history of the German military that will inspire many (military) historians, as it offers many aspects that deserve further research. It is nevertheless a pity that the six chapters show a certain imbalance – the ones on the Weimar Republic (27 pages) and the German Democratic Republic (31 pages) are much shorter in contrast to those on the armies of the Bundesrepublik (160 pages) and the Bundeswehr since 1990 (142 pages). Due to this imbalance, the comparative perspective cannot always be very accurate, something that weakens not only the latter but also considerations for a *longue durée* conclusion. Regardless of this fact, and the sometimes too martial phrasings, Neitzel’s work is without any doubt a “must-read” for all those whose work focuses on the numerous continuities and discontinuities of the history of the German military between the German Empire and the Berlin Republic.

8.

**Pablo de Orellana, *The Road to Vietnam: America, France, Britain, and the First Vietnam War* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2020), pp. 258, ISBN: 9781784538972.**

Michael Holm (Boston University, USA)

Like the American Civil War and the Second World War, the wars that engulfed Vietnam between the 1940s and the 1970s continue to inspire an ever-widening body of scholarship. Particularly, the historiography of the war in Vietnam is among the most complex in our field, in part because its timeline overlapped with dramatic changes within academia. Partially these changes involved theoretical frameworks as postcolonial studies, postmodernism, and gender and race studies rose in stature while military and diplomatic history declined. In recent years, much of this scholarship, especially on gender, has added new and often welcome dimensions that broaden our understanding of the war and its impact on the ground in South East Asia and beyond.<sup>6</sup>

Despite these forays and the new perspectives they often provide, it is pertinent to remember that in the cold light of day, political and military factors drive wars. In that sense, Pablo de Orellana's *The Road to Vietnam: America, Britain, France, and the First Vietnam War* is a refreshing reminder of the importance of diplomacy and national security concerns. As the title implies, the author explores the emerging postwar perceptions of Vietnam in Washington, Paris, and London. He balances this with effective discussions of the Vietminh's ideational makeup to create a truly internationalist approach to the period between 1945 and 1948. The result is a commendable transnational balance that is often absent in American Vietnam War scholarship. None of this is to say that the book is free from modern theoretical frameworks. Rather, de Orellana takes a poststructuralist approach as he sets out to examine how the United States, France, and Great Britain interpreted the changing postwar situation in Indochina.

The author divides *Road to Vietnam* into three sections. The first part sets out his methodological framework and explores some of the historiographical debates that link studies of race and culture to

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<sup>6</sup> Among these recent works are Gregory A. Daddis, *Pulp Vietnam: War and Gender in Cold War Men's Adventure Magazines* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021) and Elizabeth Becker, *You Don't Belong Here: How Three Women Rewrote the Story of War* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2021).

poststructuralism. The second part introduces and examines a series of diplomatic cables from the principal parties. Through textual analyses, the author assesses how emerging western perceptions and constructions of identity tied the Vietminh to communism and the Cold War. The final part counter-chronologically examines the period between the American determination to contain communism in Indochina in the fall of 1948 to the Vietnamese Declaration of Independence in September 1945 upon the conclusion of the Second World War.

On the surface, de Orellana's key claims are hardly novel. He argues that because of their racial and cultural preconceptions of South East Asia, westerners misunderstood the importance of independence to Vietnamese identity-building. In the postwar confusion that accompanied the Japanese surrender in Indochina and the heat of the Cold War that followed, Washington in particular overestimated communism's influence among those who actually sought to establish a new Vietnam. De Orellana highlights how French and British diplomats pushed a narrative that found fertile ground among American counterparts already concerned with the threat of communism in Europe and Malaya during this period. These traditional arguments are strengthened by his research into how and why this western construction of Vietnamese identity occurred. Building on the extensive works by Mark Phillip Bradley and Mark Atwood Lawrence, *The Road to Vietnam* examines the evolution of western perceptions of the Vietminh and how, once filtered through imposed Anglo-French racial and cultural perceptions, the movement appeared ripe for U.S. misinterpretations of exaggerated communist influence.<sup>7</sup>

The book is most effective when the author seeks to tease out these developments through the analysis of western diplomatic correspondence, especially when he contrasts those views with the arguments made by Vietnamese officials. Each of the chapters in part 2 opens with extensive excerpts of correspondence sent by representatives to or from the relevant delegations or ministries in either Washington, Paris, London, or Vietnam. In a nice twist, de Orellana has kept these in their original font. This gives the reader a feeling of authenticity reminiscent of the archival experience. He follows each cable with an extensive textual breakdown, leading to very

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<sup>7</sup> Mark Philip Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America: The Making of Postcolonial Vietnam, 1919-1950* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Mark Attwood Lawrence, *Assuming the Burden: Europe and the American Commitment to War in Vietnam* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005).

effective arguments about both the western construction of the Vietnamese as underdeveloped and susceptible to outside threats, as well as the increasing threat of destabilization in the region by the Vietminh. Throughout, he makes some interesting references to misplaced Vietnamese hopes that the United Nations would live up to its wartime promises in the Atlantic Charter and San Francisco Conference. There is an unavoidable and at times annoying degree of repetition both across and within these chapters as lines from the cables are repeated for the purpose of analysis, but his overall point about western interpretations of the Vietnamese as inferior and their unwillingness to consider the country's independence emerge effectively. De Orellana also makes legitimate arguments about the ways officials on the ground write and the way particular trigger words – such as communism, fascism, Moscow, etc. – in cables determine the importance with which they are treated in Washington, London, and Paris.

As he combs through these cables, he skillfully traces the British impact on American Asia policy. This serves as an important reminder that the situation of South East Asia extends beyond the traditional U.S.-French role. It may be doubtful if British influence was as decisive as the book suggests but it is clear that London helped cement the flawed perception of communism as monolithic and all the consequences that followed from that belief.

De Orellana's poststructuralist framework presents certain advantages enabling him to explain emerging western perceptions of the Vietminh and the Vietnamese people. His textual analysis persuasively illustrates that preconceived ideas on race and postwar colonial questions proved endemic to policymaking in foreign missions and helped officials make sense of the region. Even so, as is the case with all theoretical systems of thoughts, this one creates pitfalls that the author mostly seems unaware of throughout the book. Simply put, while there is no denying poststructuralism's influence on international relations theory in the past several decades, there are ample reasons why diplomatic historians' enthusiasm for the theory remains muted. Too often, de Orellana's arguments appear fixed in advance and evidence is only introduced when it aligns with his preconceptions. Details and context that do not conform receive short shrift. For example, his decision to explore events in reverse to establish what he calls "the incarnation of each idea" by the diplomats and the context in which it occurred (p. 8) might have the effect of highlighting the cause of certain policy decisions. However, more often than not, it instead tends to pigeonhole logic because the backwards trajectory provides an already illuminated path to later events that the key protagonists obviously did not possess at the time.

Such an over-reliance on theoretical frameworks proves unpersuasive. One of the book's key arguments is that the west constructed Vietnamese communism. In contrast, the author characterizes the Vietminh as "anti-colonial, revolutionary, republican, nationalist as well as communist" (p. 19) and principally dedicated to independence. This may be a reasonable argument but a limited one as well. As William Duiker's scholarship, which surprisingly is entirely absent in this volume, demonstrates, communist influence was not negligible among Vietminh.<sup>8</sup> Americans may have overestimated the strength of Vietnamese communism, but they did not construct its existence. Nor is there any reason to believe that western perceptions of cultural superiority were a prerequisite for believing that the Vietminh might be susceptible to Soviet influence. Undue Soviet influence did not require the total allegiance of the public or even the political leadership. It just required communism to possess enough clout with key individuals and effective pressure and leverage. Moscow likely did not possess that with Vietminh officials and certainly not with Ho Chi Minh, but the idea that Americans simplistically believed that this influence would fester because they thought the Vietnamese too underdeveloped or inferior does not pass muster. Greater historical awareness would have led de Orellana to consider the simultaneously occurring situations in Eastern Europe, an issue of which American diplomats were keenly aware. Here it was evident that while the political left in Czechoslovakia and Poland considered themselves reasonably independent, as illustrated by their interest in the European Recovery Program, Moscow still proved able to force them behind the Iron Curtain.<sup>9</sup> The point is not that Vietnam was bound to suffer the same fate as Eastern Europe or that Americans did not vastly overestimate international communism's sway in the region. It is merely that even if the Vietminh considered itself free from outside influence, there was, *pace* Duiker's works, plenty of circumstantial evidence to indicate that unstable movements might not be able to prevent the influence from first Moscow and, after 1949, Beijing. In light of all this and the well-established historiography of the issue, it is therefore unsatisfactory that de Orellana in the end dismisses any actual presence of communism in Vietnam as insignificant simply because he is principally concerned with how westerners constructed the belief in this influence.

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<sup>8</sup> William J. Duiker, *Ho Chi Minh: A Life* (New York: Hyperion, 2001).

<sup>9</sup> Robert Gellately, *Stalin's Curse: Battling for Communism in War and Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013)

This latter point connects to the author's decision to limit his focus to the period from 1945 to 1948. While he correctly asserts that it was during these years that Americans formed the idea of a communist threat in South East Asia, the chosen periodization nonetheless has consequences for the conclusions de Orellana draws. At the very least, this choice of time frame provides his logic with an artificial push because it finishes with an era in which communist influence was still in its infancy in the region, and therefore any American assertion seems exaggerated, if not fabricated. One wonders if he would have reached different or at least more nuanced conclusions had he extended his analysis through 1950. By then, the threat of communism in Asia, including Vietnam, appeared far more real, and it is hard to argue that these developments came about exclusively because of misguided cultural or postcolonial mindsets in the west. However, these are not the conclusions that he wishes to reach. Instead, he determines that had Americans not been driven by cultural and racial interpretations, they could have stood down in Vietnam and, consequently, South East Asia would not have become a Cold War battleground. Like Algeria, he insists, it could have remained a localized crisis. It is a disprovable counterfactual argument. Even so, for historians principally concerned with time, geography, ideology, and people, that is to say primarily concerned with context, such simplistic analogies are unpersuasive. Simply put, the French war in Algeria took place at a different moment in time and, most importantly, in a region without a clear regional communist threat. The two are hardly comparable.

In the end, one wishes that de Orellana had been more attentive to the historical context. Especially because the primary source research is often so meticulous. Had he confined himself to telling the story of the diplomats and the world they observed and experienced, his work would have added greater, more persuasive originality to the scholarship on this period than it manages it to do in its present state. Instead, the poststructuralist framework overpowers the narrative and the main diplomatic and military protagonists appear plastic and structured rather than the products of education, ideas, or their environment. They emerge through cables but hardly ever as people. As these individuals recede and theory takes center stage, the book becomes repetitious and often confusing as the author relies on a slew of figures, boxes, and tables. Too often, he falls victim to theoretical compartmentalization of behavior and thoughts that are placed into synthetic ideas of systems, models, and structures that appear increasingly disconnected from context and evidence.



Despite these reservations about the book's originality and framework, the meticulous interpretation and breakdown of diplomatic cables is often insightful and persuasive. Few scholars have attempted so thorough a read of a period that still remains largely misunderstood by many Cold War scholars. When all is said and done, Pablo de Orellana reminds us of the power of words and arguments in diplomacy and how these ultimately can set nations on the road to war.

9.

**John-Mark Iyi and Hennie Strydom, eds., *Boko Haram and International Law* (Cham: Springer, 2018), pp. 429, ISBN: 978-3319749556.**

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Insurgency has become one of the global security threats that undermine both human and national security. Consequently, affected states are struggling to maintain their social contract and guarantee the rule of law despite receiving international support with active involvement in regional security regimes for stability operations. Boko Haram, an insurgent group that originated in Nigeria, epitomizes war, violence, extremism and destruction. This book edited by Iyi and Strydom is divided into five parts, namely: Violence and Statehood: International Law and New Insurgencies in Africa; Terrorism, Boko Haram and the Classification of Armed Conflicts in International Law; Boko Haram and Radical Ideology in Islamic Jurisprudence and International Law; Whither International Law? Women, Children and Girls in the Boko Haram Insurgency; and Responding to Insurgency: Boko Haram and the (In)Adequate Reach of International Law.

As an insurgent group that uses guerrilla and terrorist tactics to attack state security providers, foreigners and civilians, the Boko Haram sect operates with lethal violence, creating anarchy, and it shares similar goals to Al Qaeda and the Islamic State (IS), which all operate with the motivation of establishing a global Islamic caliphate. The transnational dimension of Boko Haram jihadist insurgent terrorism shows how the group undermines territorial stability in Chad, Cameroon and Niger using some parts of Nigeria as a safe haven. The issue of border porosity presented by the authors is making it challenging for state security providers to consolidate the achievements recorded through clearance operations in their bid to neutralize the insurgents, and this dimension explains why it is easy for the fleeing insurgents to regroup and retake communities earlier held by the special operations forces. The areas not covered by the book are the significance of military psychology and the use of kidnapping by the insurgents to fund their campaign.

Africa's instability is evidently traceable to the proliferation of self-determination and violent non-state groups. This raises the question of sovereignty across the continent. The multiplicity of regional organizations has not translated to conflict prevention through early warning and third-party intervention to discourage armed conflicts.

The main argument linking all the chapters in the five sections is the operational, tactical and strategic capabilities of Boko Haram, which manifest in the use of terrorism and ambushes to rout military forces within and outside barracks. Such insurgent-centred strategic threats point to the need to urgently contain insurgents in view of the national and transnational consequences of Boko Haram's existence. This group undermines Nigerians' right to freedom of movement.

The book addresses the use of terrorist tactics by extremist groups to launch cross-border attacks. These attacks have escalated beyond the country of origin, thereby making Boko Haram a transnational insurgent group in the Sahel. How and why the Multinational Joint Task Force has not been able to dismantle the so-called bases along the Nigeria-Cameroon, Nigeria-Chad, Nigeria-Niger, and Nigeria-Mali-Mauritania border routes remains a critical issue (p. 122). This may not be unconnected from the sophistication of the group, which manifests in its affiliation with cross-border insurgents. It is difficult for Africans to enjoy sustainable peace in this kind of scenario.

Moreover, the main ideology linking Boko Haram to groups like Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Al Shabaab in Somalia is the establishment of an Islamic caliphate using lethal violence to intimidate people and governments. Individuals, entire societies and security agencies have the responsibility of ensuring that extremist activities are curbed in the latent phase and condemned through the swift response of the criminal justice system.

Socioeconomic deprivations have contributed greatly to radicalization, which continues to show early warning signs of state failure in Nigeria. The book stresses that colonialism cannot be separated from the killing culture that has become an aspect of daily life in Africa. This is evident in the insurgencies that undermine state sovereignty within the context of Fanon's theory of violence. This theory offers insight into why people exhibit "frustration, grievances and anger" against their neighbours (p. 58). Leadership, cadres and networks are key elements that strengthen insurgent groups in Africa.

The international community is involved in policy collaborations to form a formidable front against insurgency. Commendable efforts of regional and international organizations are noteworthy. While the United Nations Security Council has taken steps beyond recognizing the existence of violent non-state armed groups as a threat to global stability, by initiating sanctions regime targeting states that were found to have links with terrorist organizations such as Libya, Sudan and persons or groups implicated in acts

of extremism including Taliban, Al-Qaida and Islamic State; the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism, and the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism adopted by Organization for African Unity in 1999 are some of the significant responses to insurgency and other activities of violent non-state armed groups. The Security Council also stepped up counterterrorism engagements while calling on states to collaborate in countering terrorist financing and criminalize acts of extremism through Resolution 1373, and also that states promote the implementation of international conventions aimed at containing extremist groups. However, global intervention cannot be complete without the International Criminal Court investigating reports of crimes against humanity that Boko Haram and counterinsurgent groups have committed in Nigeria.

Because of the breach of international humanitarian law that characterizes the insurgency and counterinsurgency in Nigeria, civilians have remained victims. They lack adequate food and healthcare, as the insurgents continue to destroy public infrastructure, including schools and hospitals (p. 143). This situation has led to concerns about sustainable development in the affected areas in Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon. More worrisome is the fact that Boko Haram has attained conventional military status with the capability of compelling special operations forces to retreat; sometimes, these operations forces have been outgunned in the asymmetrical combat.

The book categorizes the Boko Haram insurgency as “non-international armed conflict” (pp. 169, 196). This is understandable, as the armed conflict is not between states; the insurgency is homegrown, but it crosses into other countries. All the chapters agree that insurgency violates human rights and international laws; torture, rape and decapitation are Boko Haram’s major ways of punishing their victims. These constitute crimes against humanity under international laws.

Similarly, law enforcement agencies have responded in a retaliatory manner by engaging in extrajudicial killings of insurgents and the decapitation of their commanders. This is where federal governments in Africa are failing to live up to expectations and their responsibility of protecting the populace and de-escalating the humanitarian crisis associated with insurgency. This points to the collapse of the social contract, with implications for international law. There are now states with contested territories, and they are struggling to uphold the rule of law. The international community is implicated in its poor response to transnational threats until they escalate and become humanitarian concerns. This is where UN counterterrorist measures need to look beyond

the Middle East and consider countering the threats of violent non-state armed groups in Africa. Such measures, according to chapters in the book, would strengthen states' capacity to evolve the defence intelligence required to respond to emerging threats of insurgency.

Islamic *jus in bello* on the conduct of war reveals that Boko Haram neglects some sections of the Qur'an, which states, among other issues, "fight them not at the Sacred Mosque, unless they (first) fight you there; but if they fight you, slay them" (p. 223). This negligence manifests in the group's proclivity for attacking religious places of worship, schools and markets that are not even military targets. *Jus in bello* also outlines the principle of proportionality that should be adhered to as far as military necessity, combat and retaliation are concerned. But the insurgent group rather chose to weaponize women and children, using them as foot soldiers in a bid to desperately sustain its campaign against states around the Lake Chad area. Consequently, women are not only targets of the group but function as operatives, sex slaves and war booty in the Jihad against infidels and as procreators for the insurgents. This explains why women are the primary victims of kidnapping by Boko Haram, who also use them to collect ransoms for the funding of their activities.

The fact is that the domestication of the 2009 Kampala Convention on internally displaced persons leaves much to be desired in the government's response to assisting the victims of insurgency. However, anti-corruption, good governance and multi-stakeholder engagement remain critical for the insurgent containment and security governance that are needed to reposition the Nigerian state for it to live up to its responsibility to protect. It is better for the government to focus on the de-radicalization and reorientation of communities to make recruitment less attractive rather than anti-terrorism. A glaring gap in the book is the lack of intersection between theories of victory, social control, ungoverned spaces and territorial right-holding and how they impact the government's counterinsurgency initiatives in the current war of movement phase of the transnational insurgency. This is based on the strategic significance of the theories to the explanation of Boko Haram insurgency which took advantage of ungoverned spaces, determination of insurgents, state weakness and poor social control measures to create security governance crisis in affected areas. However, the book is relevant and highly valuable to scholars in conflict studies, international relations, military history, diplomacy, development studies, sociology, security and war studies.