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Between Disruption, Violence, and Accommodation: The Quartering Process in Palermo (1580–1650)

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Aitor Aguilar Esteban

Abstract

In the modern era, it was common for military contingents defending a territory to be quartered among the local population, until authorities recognized the importance of keeping the military physically separated from civilians. In early seventeenth-century Palermo, the quartering of troops shared both similarities and differences with other Italian cities. The viceregal authorities' aim to separate soldiers from the population unfolded within a complex historical, political, and economic context. Accustomed—and at times compelled—to live in private homes through a rental system that left both soldiers and civilians dissatisfied, the troops frequently clashed with the city's inhabitants, leading to brawls and various forms of violence. The viceregal government, which spearheaded the quartering process in response to the impossibility of peaceful coexistence, faced institutional and social obstacles that curtailed its plans. These challenges were further compounded by the plague of 1624, which halted all efforts to establish proper garrisons. This article examines the entire process of garrisoning in Palermo, from the initial recognition of its necessity to the construction, reform, and formal establishment of barracks by 1650.

Introduction

In the modern era, it was common for contingents of troops defending a territory to be quartered among the local population until authorities recognized the importance of keeping the military physically separated from civilians. The quartering of troops in the city of Palermo shared certain similarities with, as

Aitor Aguilar Esteban, historian and independent researcher, specializes in the sociological analysis of military structures in the Spanish monarchy (sixteenth–seventeenth centuries). Holding advanced degrees from the Universities of Valencia and Palermo, he has published in leading military history journals and contributed to digital humanities projects integrating archival research with AI technologies.

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well as notable differences from, practices in the rest of Italy at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Assessing the state of the Kingdom of Sicily's defenses requires a comprehensive analysis of the various actors shaping the island's political, social, and economic life from the onset of the *titolati spagnoli* period to the mid-seventeenth century. The epistemological framework for examining the island's political, institutional, and military evolution highlights the profound influence of viceroys and lieutenants on decision-making processes.

Sicily, a key component of the Spanish monarchy, was inherited from the Crown of Aragon in 1492, following centuries of complex geopolitical developments. The consolidation of Aragonese authority over the island can be traced to King Alfonso "the Magnanimous," who, in 1446, succeeded in bringing both Naples and Sicily under his control.[1] This achievement came after prolonged struggles with the Angevin empire and the pivotal Sicilian Vespers Rebellion of 1289, marking Sicily as a contested space of Mediterranean power.

The island's distinctiveness lies in its urban character, as noted by Bruno Pomara, who describes Sicily as a "land of cities."[2] Urban centers such as Messina and Palermo epitomized this dynamic, sharing the role of capital since the establishment of the Aragonese viceroyalty. These cities wielded significant autonomy, shaping the sociopolitical landscape and acting as hubs of economic and administrative power within the kingdom.[3]

The viceroyalty, a hallmark of Spanish governance, held particular significance in Sicily. As the monarch's direct representative, the viceroy exercised authority over military, financial, and political affairs. To ensure effective administration, viceroys were provided with royal instructions and *avvertimenti*—practical treatises intended to prepare them for the specific challenges of ruling Sicily. These directives placed strong emphasis on the military strategies required to maintain control over an island marked by internal tensions and external threats.[4]

Central to Sicilian politics was the *baronaggio*, a powerful baronial nobility deeply committed to preserving its privileges. The baronaggio frequently clashed with the viceroys, exerting influence over both local and kingdom-wide affairs. The persistent tension between viceregal prerogatives and baronial autonomy, combined with the economic volatility of the period, had significant implications for Sicily's military policy. Efforts to centralize authority and enforce royal directives often encountered resistance, fostering a dynamic interplay of negotiation, conflict, and adaptation.[5]

1. Louis Mendola, *The Kingdom of Sicily 1130–1860* (Trinacria Editions, 2015), 160–65.

2. Bruno Pomara, *Bandolerismo, violencia y justicia en la Sicilia Barroca* (FEHM, 2012), 98–102.

3. Rossella Cancila, "Palermo e Messina: residenza viceregia e questioni dei Tribunali nel dibattito secentesco," in *Capitali senza re nella Monarchia Spagnola. Identità, relazioni, immagini (secc. XVI–XVIII),* ed. Rossella Cancila (Ass. Mediterranea, 2020), 123–29.

4. Manuel Rivero, *La Edad de Oro de los virreyes. El virreinato en la Monarquía Hispánica durante los siglos XVI y XXVII* (Akal, 2011), 139–45.

5. Orazio Cancila, *Baroni e popolo nella Sicilia del grano* (Palumbo, 1989), 10–12.

Sicily's military policies during the early modern period were thus inseparable from its unique sociopolitical context. The competing interests of urban centers, the viceregal administration, and the baronial elite created a multifaceted framework that profoundly shaped the development of military strategies within the kingdom. This dynamic underscores Sicily's strategic importance within the broader Spanish monarchy and its role as a microcosm of early modern military governance.[6]

The exercise of royal prerogative, embodied in the actions of the monarchy's representatives or viceroys, was influenced by two main factors. First, the emergence of an incipient baronaggio—a noble class deeply rooted in the island's legislative and institutional traditions—played a pivotal role.[7] This aristocracy maintained significant control over land and the economy, shaping key decisions and limiting the scope of royal authority. Second, the island's strategic vulnerability to potential invasion by the Ottoman Empire necessitated considerable political and military efforts.[8] This perceived threat strained the royal treasury and dictated the priorities for a rational defense of the island.

Economically, the Kingdom of Sicily presented marked contrasts. On the one hand, it served as a critical supplier of grain to Europe and, in times of crisis, even to other territories of the Spanish monarchy, such as the Kingdom of Valencia during the famines of the seventeenth century. On the other hand, the island's economic stability often depended on the willingness—or reluctance—of local parliaments to approve financial contributions to the royal administration. This dynamic underscores the complex interplay between local governance and royal authority in shaping Sicily's defense policies and its broader sociopolitical landscape.[9]

The historical development of the Kingdom of Sicily cannot be understood without considering the longstanding institutional rivalry between the cities of Messina and Palermo, which jointly served as the kingdom's capital and compelled the viceroy to maintain an itinerant court.[10] While Palermo tended to be more cooperative in parliamentary matters and in making donations to the crown, Messina often showed resistance, at times leading to significant political and institutional instability. In 1616, Viceroy Osuna faced opposition from Messina when he sought to assert his authority to suppress banditry in the region.[11]

6. Valentina Favarò, "La Sicilia fortezza del Mediterraneo," *Mediterranea. Ricerche Storiche* 1 (2004): 35–39.

7. Orazio Cancila, *Baroni e popolo nella Sicilia del grano,* 10–15.

8. Onur Yildirim, "The Battle of Lepanto and its impact on Ottoman History and historiography," in *Mediterraneo in armi (secc. XV–XVIII)*, ed. Rossella Cancila (Ass. Mediterranea, 2007), 533–39.

9. Manuel Rivero, *Felipe II y el gobierno de Italia* (Sociedad Estatal, 2010), 211–16.

10. Giuseppe Giarrizzo, *La Sicilia dal Vespro all'Unità d'Italia* (IBS, 1992), 283–90.

11. Bruno Pomara, "Sicilia no consiente medianía en el que gobierna: la dura prova di Osuna come viceré di un'isola," in *Cultura della Guerra e Arti della Pace,* ed. Encarnación Sánchez (Tulio Peronti, 2012), 169–79.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the city of Palermo—known as *la Felice*—stood out for its opulence and size, reflecting its prominence within the Kingdom of Sicily. The Spanish monarchy, recognizing Palermo's strategic value as a major city of approximately seventy-five thousand inhabitants, sought to establish a rational defensive system aligned with the principles of military humanism to safeguard its capital.[12] Military humanism emerged as a Renaissance discipline that integrated mathematical knowledge with a new conception of the state as an organic body, in which each component fulfilled a specific and essential function. This intellectual framework, deeply rooted in Renaissance thought, shaped military theory and governance across Europe, including within the Spanish monarchy.

In Sicily, these principles were actively applied by the viceroys to shape and guide military policy. The adoption of military humanism enabled them to rationalize and systematize governance, aligning military reforms with the broader conception of the state as an organic structure.[13] This approach emphasized the interdependence of Sicily's military, administrative, and social systems, reinforcing the viceroy's prerogatives while addressing the kingdom's strategic and defensive needs within the framework of the Spanish empire. At the same time, the quartering of troops presented significant challenges for the authorities, who oversaw a complex process involving multiple stakeholders, including soldiers, property owners, and local populations.[14]

The authorities sought to concentrate soldiers in designated areas to exert greater control over them, as troops were widely regarded by viceroys and scholars as violent, quarrelsome, and difficult to govern. The initiative to quarter troops in Palermo began when the viceregal administration recognized the unsustainability of coexistence between the military and the civilian population. However, the establishment of permanent barracks took nearly fifty years, delayed by obstacles such as the plague epidemic of 1624.

The defense of the Kingdom of Sicily was of paramount importance, as the territory served as a "center of the periphery," in Valentina Favarò's words.[15] Between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, various viceroys led efforts to implement a coherent and rational defense strategy grounded in virtue, military

12. Valentina Vigiano, *L'esercizio della politica: la città di Palermo nel Cinquecento* (Viella, 2004), 8–9.

13. Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution and the Rise of the West, 1500–1800* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 56–67; Antonio Luís Cortés Peña, "Alojamientos de soldados y levas: dos factores de conflictividad en la Andalucía de los Austrias," *Historia Social* 52 (2005): 19–22.

14. Manuel Rivero and José Martínez Millán (eds.), *La corte de Felipe IV (1621–1655). Reconfiguración de la Monarquía católica. Cortes virreinales y Gobernaciones Americanas* (Polifemo, 2018), 1571–75.

15. Valentina Favarò, "Sugli alloggiamenti militari in Sicilia tra Cinque e Seicento: Alcune riflessioni," *Mediterranea. Ricerche storiche* 20 (2013): 459–79.

humanism, and practical efficacy.[16] Over the course of a century, numerous military corps were created to meet the island's evolving defense needs.[17]

In the late 1530s, the Sicilian infantry *tercio*—known as the *Tercio Viejo de Sicilia*—was established. It consisted of twelve companies of 150–200 men each, including pikemen, arquebusiers, and musketeers, and took part in key campaigns of the Spanish monarchy, particularly against the Ottoman Empire.[18] Initially numbering nearly 3,000 men, the tercio's strength had declined to around 1,700–2,000 by the early seventeenth century.[19]

In 1549, the *Nuova Milizia* was created to bolster the kingdom's defenses with 10,600 infantrymen and 1,600 knights, all Sicilian-born. This corps was reformed in 1595 by Viceroy Olivares, who established the *Milicia Ordinaria*. Although maintaining similar troop numbers, this new force was designed to expand in times of need.[20] These reforms solidified the kingdom's defense system, combining the rapid response capabilities of the *Tercio Viejo de Sicilia* and the *Milicia Ordinaria* with the support of galleys and fortresses in the event of an Ottoman offensive.[21]

Approximately 1,200 soldiers from the infantry tercio and around 2,000 militiamen were stationed in the city of Palermo, although the available sources do not provide completely precise figures.[22] Even with possible fluctuations, the coexistence of soldiers with the local population posed significant challenges for the viceroys. By the late sixteenth century, authorities began considering the possibility of quartering all soldiers, following models implemented in northern Italy, particularly in Naples.[23]

The positioning of the militia in areas such as Monreale and Castellamare, the largest fortress in the city, mitigated some tensions, as it was seen by authorities as

16. Aitor Aguilar, "'No tan en orden como debería estar': La correspondencia entre el Duque de Osuna y Felipe III sobre el Tercio de infantería del Reino de Sicilia," *Rivista di Storia Militare (NAM)* 19 (2024): 209–15.

17. Domenico Sella, *Italy in the Seventeenth Century* (Routledge, 1997), 160–72.

18. Valentina Favarò, "Dalla Nuova Milizia al Tercio Spagnolo," *Mediterranea. Ricerche storiche* 2 (2005): 235–40.

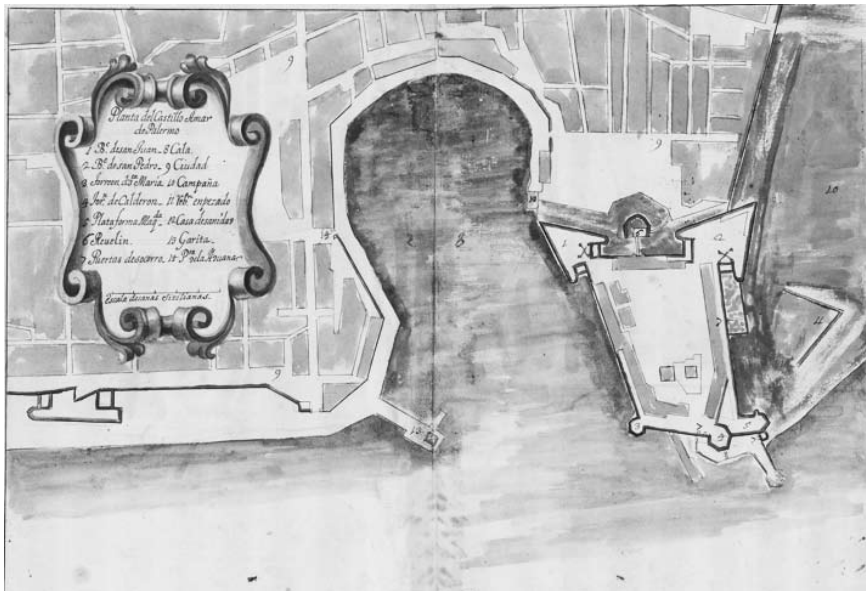
19. Favarò, "Dalla Nuova Milizia al Tercio Spagnolo," 240–46.

20. Favarò, "Dalla Nuova Milizia al Tercio Spagnolo," 245–46.

21. David Parrott, "The Utility of Fortifications in Early Modern Europe: Italian Princes and Their Citadels, 1540–1640," *War in History* 7 (2000): 134–39.

22. Copia de la relación de la infantería que hay en el Reino de Sicilia, in *Colección de Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España* (Collection of Unpublished Documents for the History of Spain, hereafter CODOIN), XLIV p. 95. The number of soldiers in Palermo reached its peak in 1574 under the command of the field master Lope de Figueroa, with 2,773 soldiers, of whom 708 were pikemen and 353 were musketeers. See CODOIN, XLIV p. 98.

23. Raffaella Salvemini, "'Que ningún español vaya pidiendo limosna'. Evoluzione di un progetto economico-assistenziale per gli spagnoli nella Napoli del Viceregno," in *Redes hospitalarias: historia, economía y sociología de la sanidad,* ed. Concepción Villanueva Morte and Raúl Villagrasa Elías (Institución Fernando el Católico, 2018), 175–80.



Plan of the Castle of Castellamare in Palermo [extract from Joseph Fromenti, *Description of the Coasts of the Kingdom of Sicily*, 1635]

a "lesser evil." Nevertheless, billeting in Palermo frequently led to the emergence of violence, an issue authorities had to navigate carefully.[24] During the modern era, under the Spanish monarchy, residents of cities and towns were obligated to house and feed troops, a practice often used by the authorities as a means of coercion. However, this arrangement was frequently accompanied by violence, disputes, and even murders, complicating the soldiers' prolonged stays.[25] In Palermo, the Kalsa and Quattro Canti neighborhoods were primary destinations for soldiers. By the late sixteenth century, several rental houses were established for their accommodation, complementing the properties requisitioned from private individuals, which alleviated some of the burden but did not eliminate the associated conflicts.[26]

The construction of a rhetoric associated with the "backwardness of Italy" gave rise to various conceptions regarding the defense of Sicily, engaging both viceroys

24. Vittorio Sciuti Russi, *Il governo della Sicilia in due relazioni del primo Seicento* (Jovene, 1984), 14–17.

25. Mark Hewitson, "Introduction: Military and Political Violence in History and Theory," *History* 101, no. 3 (July 2016): 345–51.

26. Maurizio Vesco, "Un nuovo assetto per il quartiere della Kalsa nel Cinquecento: l'Addizione urbana del pieno di Porta dei Greci," in *Atti del ciclo di conferenze e attività di aggiornamento per docenti* (Galleria interdisciplinare Regionale della Sicilia di Palazzo Abatellis, 2012), 47–52.

and scholars. These ideas were crystallized in treatises known as avvertimenti.[27] These compendiums of warnings and instructions for future viceroys supplemented the private directives issued by the king in Madrid and served as essential guides for viceroys, many of whom were nobles unfamiliar with Sicily's institutional, economic, political, and military realities. Assessing the role of viceregal authority involves analyzing how viceroys asserted their prerogatives, navigating three key dimensions: their aspirations as nobles seeking to assert dominance over Sicilian institutions and a frequently resistant baronaggio; adherence to the king's private and public instructions; and reliance on the advice provided in the avvertimenti.[28] Sicily was strategically conceived as a forward fortress (*antemurale*) for the Italian peninsula, serving as a critical defensive outpost against potential Ottoman invasions. This role gained prominence during the sixteenth century as fears of Ottoman expansion prompted urgent calls for military reforms. The island's geostrategic position and its vulnerability to naval incursions made it a focal point of defensive planning within the Spanish monarchy.[29]

The looming threat of Ottoman troops provided a compelling rationale for viceroys to assert their authority over the Sicilian parliament. Leveraging the argument of imminent danger, viceroys justified the imposition of military prerogatives and reforms as necessary measures to safeguard the kingdom and, by extension, the Italian peninsula. This strategic urgency not only reinforced the centralizing tendencies of viceregal governance but also underscored the critical role of Sicily in the broader defensive architecture of the Spanish monarchy during the early modern period.[30]

In these treatises, Palermo emerged as a pivotal city, acting as the organizational and preventive hub for the island's defense. Scholars and former viceroys consistently emphasized its pre-eminence in the defensive framework, underscoring the need to concentrate troops in specific locations to alleviate the burden of billeting on the population. By the early seventeenth century, Palermo's military population, comprising some 1,200 soldiers of the tercio and around 2,000 militiamen, faced significant logistical and financial challenges. Sustaining such a military force required considerable annual expenditures from the Spanish crown.[31]

27. Manuel Rivero, *Felipe II y el gobierno de Italia* (Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2010), 39–44.

28. Manuel Rivero, *La Edad de Oro de los virreyes: el virreinato en la Monarquía Hispánica durante los siglos XVI y XVII* (Universitaria, 2011), 212–16.

29. Valentina Favarò, "Monitioni, vettovaglie et dinari. Il contributo della Sicilia alla politica Mediterranea di Filippo II," *Mediterranea, Ricerche Storiche* 11 (2007): 439–41.

30. Juan Fernández de Velasco y Tovar, *Representación a Su Majestad sobre los medios para el mejor gobierno del Reino de Sicilia* (1609), Biblioteca Nacional de España (hereafter BNE) *Cervantes*, MSS/956, f. 65^{v}.

31. *Noticias del Reyno de Sicilia y Govierno para los virreyes*, anonymous manuscript, Biblioteca Comunale di Palermo (hereafter BCP), Qq. E. 63, f. 42^{v}.

Economic Difficulties Affecting Soldiers' Salaries

The monarchy's system of economic rewards, designed to ensure troop welfare, especially for those meriting promotions, included monetary incentives known as *entretenimientos* or *ventajas*.[32] These measures entailed an annual expenditure of 4,000 escudos and were crucial for maintaining troop morale. Soldiers receiving such rewards were highly valued by their captains and by Viceroy Osuna, who repeatedly petitioned Philip III to ensure their financial stability and safety. Notably, in 1616, Osuna sought to integrate veteran soldiers from Flanders into Sicily's forces, offering them more peaceful assignments and economic incentives.[33]

This reward system had limitations, however, including frequent delays in payment. The slow and inconsistent payments to military personnel by the Spanish monarchy were a product of bureaucratic inefficiencies and persistent debates over funding sources. These financial challenges, exacerbated by the economic difficulties of the late seventeenth century, became a recurring topic of contention in Sicilian parliamentary sessions. Institutional disagreements over whether funding should come from local revenues or royal coffers frequently delayed resolutions.[34] Despite its financial hardships, the monarchy was ultimately compelled to assume responsibility for these payments, at least in the case of the infantry tercio. This decision underscored the critical importance of maintaining military cohesion and discipline in a strategically vital territory like Sicily, even amid broader fiscal constraints within the Spanish monarchy.

For instance, Miguel Milo, a soldier who had served for ten years in Sicily, complained on 20 September 1616 that he had not received his *entretenimiento* after being wounded by an arquebus shot on 3 April 1611. Following an investigation, the authorities ordered that he be justly compensated. Such cases highlight the inefficiencies of a bureaucratic system that struggled to meet its objectives, not only in accommodating veteran troops from Flanders but also in addressing the needs of soldiers stationed within Sicily's fortresses.[35]

To address delays in troop payments, a series of Reformation Orders were issued to regularize salaries. These measures proved ineffective, however, due to the monarchy's military authorities' inability to manage the administrative challenges of bringing soldiers from northern Europe.[36] This inefficiency highlighted a

32. E. de Mesa Gallego, "Soldados de 'naciones' para el Ejército de Flandes: el Tercio de irlandeses, 1605–1620," *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna* 45, no. 1 (2020): 145–56.

33. Copia de carta original del duque de Osuna a s.m. fecha en Palermo el 22 de mayo de 1614, in CODOIN, XLV, p. 133.

34. Davide Maffi, "Tiempos de calamidades. Las haciendas de Milán, Nápoles y Sicilia frente a la crisis (1630–1660)," *Studia Historica, Revista de Historia Moderna* 41 (2019): 45–52.

35. Archivio di Stato di Palermo (hereafter ASPa), Real Segreteria (hereafter RS), Dispacci, Guerra, b. 103, f. 33. Carta de Pedro de Echavarría al conde de Castro. Mesina, 20 September 1616.

36. Orden de Reformación de 1616, ASPa, RS, Dispacci, Guerra, b. 103, ff. 22–26. Palermo, 9 April 1617.

shift in the perception of Sicily's role in the defense of the Spanish monarchy as pecuniary compensations became entangled in bureaucratic failures.[37]

Economic difficulties among soldiers and officers became evident when they began requesting less-demanding positions and more favorable assignments to alleviate their financial struggles, a practice that authorities often tolerated. In Palermo, the companies of the tercio were strategically distributed; two defended the city walls, one served as the viceroy's personal guard, and another protected the quay. These accommodations reflected a deliberate effort by the authorities to confine troops to specific spaces, minimizing their disruptive impact on the civilian population.[38]

Despite these efforts, poverty among military personnel posed significant challenges, particularly the erosion of prestige and morale, especially among officers. Recent historiographical debates on high command in the Spanish monarchy have emphasized that officers did not receive the social prestige or salaries commensurate with their roles, undermining meritocratic aspirations.

If officers faced difficulties in obtaining financial compensation, the plight of ordinary soldiers was even more severe.[39] For instance, Private Pedro García, who served in the company of Sancho de Melgar for eight years, was reported in September 1616 to suffer from an illness affecting his kidney and urinary system, rendering him unable to perform his duties. As a result, he was denied his pay and reassigned to the dock in Palermo, where his responsibilities were less demanding, reflecting the precarious conditions faced by lower-ranking soldiers.[40]

These circumstances suggest that many soldiers lived hand-to-mouth, with their monthly salaries barely sufficient for survival. This dire need is evident in the language used in payment claims, such as in the case of German Franco de Ayala, an ensign whose debt was lamented in a memorial written by the viceroy, detailing the maravedís owed to him.[41] On 12 May 1617, Pedro de Echavarría, overseer general of the Kingdom of Sicily, drafted a report addressing the issue of unpaid soldiers' wages. Directed to Treasurer General Paulo Ansalon, the document urged expedited payments directly to captains, officers, and soldiers, bypassing intermediaries. This issue was prevalent across all companies in Palermo and Milazzo.[42]

The island's economic challenges also undermined compliance with the dictates of the Order of Reformation of 1616. For instance, cavalry captains in

37. Favarò, "Sugli Alloggiamenti," 459–61.

38. Copia de la relación de la infantería que hay en el Reino de Sicilia, in CODOIN, XLIV, ff. 95–98.

39. Antonio Jiménez Estrella, "Mérito, calidad y experiencia. Criterios volubles en la provisión de cargos militares bajo los Austrias," in *Oficiales reales. Los ministros de la Monarquía Católica, siglos XVI–XVII,* ed. Juan Francisco Pardo Molero and Manuel Lomas Cortés (Departament d'Història Moderna, Universitat de València, 2012), 241–64.

40. ASPa, RS, Dispacci, Guerra, b. 102, ff. 23–24. Mesina, 20 September 1616.

41. ASPa, RS, Dispacci, Guerra, b. 103, ff. 23–24. Palermo, 19 April 1617.

42. ASPa, RS, Dispacci, Guerra, b. 104, f. 67. Palermo, 30 May 1621.

Sicily were paid only five escudos instead of the stipulated eighteen. Similarly, in 1620, two infantry companies from the Kingdom of Naples arrived in Palermo with their officers unpaid. In response, the viceregal authority ordered a thorough resolution of the salary discrepancies, underscoring the persistent administrative failures linked to military finances.[43]

Early Efforts to Separate Soldiers and Civilians

The precarious situation of the military prompted authorities to physically separate them from the civilian population to provide targeted assistance and mitigate violence stemming from unpaid wages or subsequent begging. In early modern European cities, violence was often an intrinsic aspect of daily life in armed societies. The coexistence of soldiers, guild members, small artisans, and even universities within the same urban space frequently led to disturbances.[44] The presence of soldiers, who were militarized and accustomed to war, clashed with a civilian population that, though minimally armed, was often impulsive and prone to conflict.[45] These dynamics resulted in frequent clashes that went beyond accommodation issues, highlighting the tension between professionalized military groups and civilian society.[46] Soldier begging revealed not only the shortcomings of the Spanish monarchy's reward system but also the economic precarity faced by soldiers, the unfulfilled ideals of the "good soldier," and the failure to achieve financial stability.[47]

When comparing the economic conditions of soldiers in Palermo with those in other Mediterranean cities, Milan and Naples offer contrasting examples. In Naples, as detailed by Raffaella Salvemini, a comprehensive welfare initiative materialized with the construction of the Opera Pia di San Giacomo degli Spagnoli, described as the genuine "center of a system of aid and credit activities."[48] Originally designed to serve the needs of Spaniards in Naples, the military became the primary beneficiaries of this institution. In contrast, Palermo relied on the royal patrimony and existing hospitals to fulfill similar functions at the beginning of the seventeenth century, reflecting a less structured approach to soldier welfare.[49]

43. ASPa, RS, Dispacci, Guerra, b. 105, f. 6. Palermo, 6 May 1621.

44. María Torremocha Hernández, "Ciudades universitarias y orden público en la Edad Moderna," *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna. Anejos, III* (2004): 137–62.

45. Antonio Jiménez Estrella and Francisco Andújar Castillo (eds.), *Los nervios de la guerra: estudios sociales sobre el ejército de la monarquía hispánica (siglos XVI–XVIII): nuevas perspectivas* (Comares, 2007), 59–88.

46. Alessandro Buono, *Esercito, istituzioni, territorio. Alloggiamenti militari e «case herme» nello Stato di Milano (secoli XVI e XVII)* (Firenze University Press, 2009), 143–46.

47. Geoffrey Parker, "Mutiny and Discontent in the Spanish Army of Flanders," *Past and Present* 58 (1973): 40–42.

48. Salvemini, "'Que ningún," 180: "va diventare un vero centro di un sistema di pluriattività assistenziale e creditizio."

49. Elisa Novi Chavarria, *Il governo delle anime: azione pastorale, predicazione e missioni nel Mezzogiorno d'Italia: secoli XVI–XVIII* (Editoriale scientifica, 2001), 231–40.

The separation of civilians and soldiers was authorities' preferred approach to reduce violence stemming from economic difficulties and delayed payments. The practice of renting private houses was common in both Palermo and Milan and occurred contemporaneously.[50] The intention to segregate soldiers and civilians was theorized in treatises such as the avvertimenti and implemented through the adaptation of existing defensive constructions.[51] For instance, a 1638 report notes that since the early seventeenth century, the General Audit Office, tasked with military judicial matters, repurposed the fortress of Castellamare as a prison.[52] However, the limited resources of the Sicilian treasury constrained the viceregal authority's ability to enforce such accommodation policies.[53]

Other measures also indicate efforts to achieve physical separation. During the first half of the century, viceroys secured financial contributions from the Ordinary Parliament of Palermo, which convened biennially in most cases, to fund fortress maintenance and guard towers.[54] Approximately 30,000 escudos annually were allocated for repairs and upkeep of fortresses, with an additional 24,000 escudos designated for arsenal improvements. The deteriorating state of fortresses compelled the Duke of Infantado in 1654 to request 50,000 escudos annually from the Ordinary Parliament in Messina.[55]

The Parliament of Sicily functioned as a critical assembly, bringing together the island's various estates and power structures to assert their prerogatives and safeguard their jurisdictions. This institution served as a forum for negotiating the balance of power between Sicily's traditional autonomy and the overarching authority of the Spanish monarchy. Historians have highlighted the parliament's role in fostering *concordia*—a form of cooperation aimed at harmonizing Sicilian institutions with those of the Spanish crown.

This balance was increasingly challenged during the early seventeenth century, however, particularly under the viceroyalty of the Duke of Osuna (1611–1616). During his tenure, as well as under subsequent viceroys, efforts were made to impose royal initiatives, particularly in military policy. These efforts were frequently justified through the doctrine of *raison d'état* (reason of state), a principle extensively employed by early modern monarchs to legitimize centralizing measures and override local resistance.

50. The authority in northern Italy was also involved in initiating the process of quartering in regions such as Pavia and Lombardy. Davide Véase Maffi, "Alloggiamenti militari e comunità locali: Pavia e il suo contado nel '600,'" *Annali di Storia Pavese* 27 (1999): 325–33.

51. Aguilar, "'No tan en orden,'" 215–23.

52. Archivo Histórico de la Nobleza (hereafter AHNo), *Osuna,* CT. 16, D. 6, f. 3^{r}.

53. Domenico Ligrest, *Sicilia Aperta (secoli XV–XVII). Mobilità di uomini e idee* (Quaderni Mediterranea, 2006), 134–45.

54. Loris De Nardi, "The ceremonial of the Sicilian general Parliament through an inedited report of the 17th Century," in *Culture parlamentari a confronto: modelli della rappresentanza politica e identità* (Centro Universitario di Bologna, 2016), 29.

55. *Noticias del Reyno de Sicilia y Govierno para los virreyes*, anonymous manuscript, BCP, Qq. E. 63, f. 68^{v}.

The use of *raison d'état* in Sicily reflects broader trends in early modern governance, where the tension between local traditions and centralized authority often played out in military and political spheres. The viceroys' attempts to enforce military reforms and centralize power within the context of parliamentary negotiations underscore the complexities of integrating Sicily into the Spanish monarchy's broader imperial framework. These dynamics highlight the interplay between institutional collaboration and conflict, which shaped the island's military governance and its role within the monarchy.

By the late seventeenth century, the mounting costs of maintaining fortresses and military personnel strained the Sicilian economy. In response, the Duke of Uceda, during the Ordinary Parliament of 1687, proposed alleviating fiscal pressure by transitioning to triennial payments, acknowledging the increasing debt.[56] By the end of the 1680s, expenditures on the Spanish infantry alone amounted to approximately 174,657 ducats over three years, reflecting the significant financial burden of military maintenance.[57]

The challenging economic conditions in Sicily did not entirely prevent the separation of the military from civilian society. Beginning in the 1570s, projects aimed at creating structures exclusively for military use were tied to the monarchy's desire to compensate soldiers for their service. In the 1590s, the Count of Olivares proposed a 75,000-escudo project to create barracks in Messina and Palermo, inspired by earlier examples in Trapani (1582) and Syracuse (1589). These initiatives did not involve new constructions but rather the acquisition and adaptation of existing private houses.[58]

This approach was implemented in Palermo, although more recent research indicates that the process of quartering soldiers across Sicily slowed as European war dynamics shifted and the Kingdom of Sicily's strategic importance diminished. Historians like Valentina Favarò argue that this stagnation led viceregal authorities in cities such as Palermo and Messina to continue housing troops in private residences.[59]

Two key factors explain the slow progress of soldier quartering in Palermo, despite significant military expenditures and efforts to adapt existing spaces. The 1624 plague and the rise in urban violence associated with billeting disrupted the process of consolidating soldiers into barracks, which had begun with the construction of new quarters modeled on Milan's *case herme*.

Civil disturbances, characterized by violence and brawls, are essential for grasping why the quartering process in Palermo progressed so slowly and lacked a concrete initiative, further highlighting the interplay between economic precarity and social instability in shaping the city's military-civilian dynamics.

56. Giovanni Evangelista Di Blasi, *Storia dei vicerè, luogotenenti e presidenti del Regno di Sicilia* (Palermo, 1842), 257–60.

57. ASNo, *Frías*, C. 75, D. 37, f. 1^{v}.

58. Favarò, "Sugli Alloggiamenti," 461–62.

59. Favarò, "Sugli Alloggiamenti," 462–63.

Clashes Between Soldiers and Civilians

The historiographical debate on the problem of violence associated with soldier accommodation has deepened significantly over the past two decades. While early studies brought a social perspective to these events, particularly in the Mediterranean context, more recent research has redefined key concepts to address the topic with greater scientific rigor.[60]

In Italy, the process of quartering soldiers has not been comprehensively studied, though there is notable research on specific regions such as Lombardy and Milan. In Sicily, however, analysis of troop quartering has largely been limited to examining the violence associated with billeting soldiers in private homes. Addressing the quartering process requires an evaluation of its sustainability and broader implications. In Palermo, between the 1580s and early 1600s, authorities recognized the need for a barracks to house soldiers within the capital.[61] However, the barracks initiated by Viceroy Filiberto of Savoy represented additional geographical space for soldiers to reside rather than a fully functional barracks with strategic importance.

In Sicily, the concepts of coexistence, daily life, and the tension between military treatises and the lived experiences of soldiers housed in civilian homes have been central to understanding this conflict. As Valentina Favarò notes, "the theme of *alloggiamenti* [accommodation] holds particular relevance as it reflects the social, economic, and financial implications of a military presence within individual communities."[62]

Since the 1580s, Sicily's ongoing military reconstruction, its transformation into a strategic "backward," and the improvement of fortifications across the island had made soldier accommodations essential for maintaining a large military presence.[63] The growing number of troops defending the island, driven by the demands of Viceroy Osuna, placed immense strain on the kingdom's economy. As active defense functions of infantry companies in and around Palermo diminished, military expenditures increased, leading to a reliance on private individuals capable of housing soldiers as a pragmatic, if imperfect, solution.[64]

The population's coerced participation in territorial defense through the forced billeting of troops in their homes, coupled with increased military

60. Navarrim and Castellano, *Violencia*, 227–35.

61. Vesco, "Un nuovo assetto," 55.

62. Favarò, "Sugli Alloggiamenti," 460: "il tema degli alloggiamenti assume una valenza di particolare rilievo, in quanto espressione delle implicazioni, sociali, economiche e finanziarie che derivano dalla presenza degli eserciti nelle singole comunità."

63. Francesco Benigno, *L'isola dei Vicerè: potere e conflitto nella Sicilia spagnola (sec. XVI–XVIII)* (Palermo University Press, 2017), 25–31.

64. Favarò, "Sugli Alloggiamenti," 459–61, and Gaetano Sabatini, "La spesa militare nel contesto della finanza pubblica napoletana del XVII secolo," in *Gastos de guerra y economía en el reino de Nápoles en el siglo XVII*, presented at Guerra y sociedad en la Monarquía Hispánica, Política, Estrategia y Cultura en la Europa Moderna (1500–1700), Madrid, 9–12 March 2005, 594–98.



Plan of the City of Palermo [National Library of Spain, Rare Books Collection, MSS/18417, f. 89^{r}]

expenditures and the challenges of coexistence, contributed significantly to rising violence.[65] Sporadic brawls and riots, already present in Palermo, were similarly common in other Mediterranean cities.[66] Authorities' attempts to control these disturbances often exacerbated public disorder, as they repressed unrest caused by local communities while showing greater leniency toward violence perpetrated by soldiers.[67] This selective enforcement served as a mechanism for imposing their prerogative, as soldiers—described as "men without scruples, violent beyond any measure"—benefited from the complicity of captains and officers, who were often corrupt and disinclined to administer justice.[68]

The avvertimenti literature frequently addressed these issues. One notable example is a report by Juan Fernández de Velasco y Tovar, the brother-in-law of the Duke of Osuna, urging the completion of barracks in Palermo to consolidate

65. Rossella Cancila, *Mediterraneo in armi*, 326–28.

66. They are recorded in the transcriptions of Gioacchino Di Marzo or diaries such as that of Agostino Inveges, which recounted the daily life of the city of Palermo. See Gioacchino Di Marzo, *Diari della Città di Palermo dal secolo XVI al XIX* (Palermo, 1869).

67. Navarrim and Castellano, *Violencia*, 106–7.

68. Favarò, "Sugli Alloggiamenti," 461: "uomini senza scrupoli, violenti fuori ogni misura, trovavano avallo nella complicità di capitani e ufficiali, facilmente corruttibili e poco inclini all'applicazione della giustizia e alla somministrazione delle pene."

troops in one location and mitigate violence. The problem of violence associated with soldier lodging, which had been a concern since the viceroyalty of Juan de Vega (1547–1557), became increasingly pressing by the 1580s and reached critical importance in the early seventeenth century. Its multifaceted nature challenges historians, as judicial sources—such as those studied by Carlos Belloso—reveal gaps and ambiguities in records of criminal trials involving soldiers, particularly within the Sicilian context.[69]

The violence stemming from soldier lodging also acquired a jurisdictional dimension, particularly with the light cavalry. The cavalry's establishment faced significant challenges due to Sicily's geography, resistance from the baronaggio, and exemptions granted to some universities, which limited their duties to specific valleys and roads.[70] As a result, analyzing lodging-related violence in Palermo and its surroundings requires considering the historiographical distinction between tolerated violence and that which authorities sought to suppress entirely.[71]

Scholars like Pedro Celeste idealized ancient Palermo as a peaceful place for Spaniards, suggesting that street violence in Palermo was rare.[72] However, archival documentation paints a different picture, revealing Palermo as a city with frequent and bloody clashes, comparable to other major Mediterranean urban centers.

One contributing factor to the challenges in Palermo was the significant increase in troop numbers on the island from the second decade of the seventeenth century. In 1614, the Duke of Osuna doubled the city's garrison, warning of the potential repercussions for the territory.[73] On 22 October of that year, the viceroy further increased the number of musketeer companies to address a shortage of troops for the galleys.[74] He cautioned Philip III that insufficient funds were available to sustain these soldiers long-term, urging the king to relocate them to another kingdom after their service ended. Osuna also informed Philip III of the rising number of infantrymen since his arrival, highlighting the financial strain this created.[75]

In 1617, a debate arose over the recruitment and organization of four infantry companies in Palermo, composed of soldiers from the Italian peninsula, to serve in the galleys. These companies, formed earlier that year, faced significant payment delays,

69. Carlos Belloso Martín, "Justicia y jurisdicción militar en el nuevo sistema de los tercios creado en el reinado de Carlos V," *III Congreso Carolus*, 48–51.

70. Rossella Cancila, *Mediterraneo in armi*, 330–32.

71. Juan Cruz López Rasch, "El monopolio de la violencia en el feudalismo como problema historiográfico," *Anuario de la Facultad de Ciencias Humanas* 10 (2013): 12.

72. Sciuti Russi, *Il governo della Sicilia*, 10–11.

73. Maffi, "Alloggiamenti militari e comunità locali," 385–92; Emilia Salvador Esteban, "Poder central y poder territorial. El virrey y las cortes en el Reino de Valencia," in *Simposio de sociedad y cultura en Italia y España (siglos XV–XVIII)* (Valencia University Press, 1982), 17–21.

74. "Copia de carta original del Duque de Osuna a S.M fecha en Mesina a 22 de octubre de 1614," in CODOIN, XLV 185.

75. "Copia de carta original del Duque de Osuna a S.M fecha en Mesina a 22 de octubre de 1614," in CODOIN, XLV 191.

leaving many officers without wages. Intended to participate in the Montferrat War (1613–1617) in northern Italy, their situation prompted the general overseer of Sicily, Paulo Ansalón, to pressure the new viceroy, Francisco de Castro, in May to disburse funds allocated by the court to pay these personnel and prevent further unrest.[76]

Ansalón's urgency stemmed from disturbances caused by these soldiers in prior months, leading to the issuance of three *bandos* on 17, 23, and 31 May. The first bando addressed nighttime violence, attributing it to soldiers forming gangs and assaulting local residents.[77] Authorities sought to prevent such gatherings, instructing in one bando that no soldier should walk within the city walls unaccompanied after midnight.[78] This bando underscores the authorities' primary concern; while a suitable place for the soldiers to congregate was lacking, they aimed at the very least to prevent their nighttime dispersal, which made it more challenging for city marshals to maintain order. These measures reflect the broader difficulties of accommodating an increased military presence within an already strained urban environment.

The bando of 23 May addressed the issue of street violence involving weapons, explicitly prohibiting soldiers of the Italian companies from carrying arms to prevent further brawls and conflicts.[79] The problem persisted, however, necessitating a third bando on 31 May, which imposed even stricter measures. Soldiers were ordered to remain confined to the houses they had rented starting Friday, 2 June, and were forbidden to leave areas under their officers' supervision under threat of a three-year sentence rowing in the galleys. This escalation suggests that earlier measures, such as the first bando, had proven ineffective.[80] The officers, tasked with maintaining discipline, appear to have struggled to enforce order among the troops. The bandos repeatedly emphasized the need for captains and ensigns to adhere to the rules of their profession, highlighting a lack of effective oversight.

Palermo functioned as a logistical hub for military personnel en route to other kingdoms or the king's galleys, creating challenges with transient companies not part of the permanent garrison. This is evident in a proclamation issued in January 1617, which addressed issues with "seamen" on the capital's docks. The document highlighted problems such as escapes, desertions, and the use of improperly maintained boats as shelters for thieves and troublemakers. In response, the authorities decreed that any vessel found in disrepair, out of place, or lacking proper equipment would be confiscated.[81]

76. ASPa, *RS, Dispacci, Guerra,* b. 103, f. 90. Palermo, 12 May 1617.

77. Bando: the Italian companies soldiers' violence, ASPa, *RS, Dispacci, Guerra,* b. 104, f. 18. Palermo, 17 May 1617.

78. Bando: the Italian companies soldiers' violence, f. 19.

79. Bando: the violence of Italian companies' soldiers, ASPa, *RS, Dispacci, Guerra,* b. 104, f. 12. Palermo, 23 May 1617.

80. Bando: to accommodation of soldiers in our own houses, ASPa, *RS, Dispacci, Guerra,* b. 104, f. 12. Palermo, 31 May 1617.

81. Bando: from the problems caused by the galleys' troops, ASPa, *RS, Dispacci, Guerra,* b. 104, f. 80. Palermo, 30 September 1617.

While the arrival of new troops exacerbated disturbances, the violence in Palermo often assumed a sporadic and diffuse nature, further complicating the already challenging process of soldier quartering. Street violence, particularly brawls and fights, emerged as the authorities' primary concern.[82] Historical records, such as Gioacchino Di Marzo's transcriptions of Palermo's newspapers, provide vivid examples of such incidents. On 13 April 1597, Easter Sunday, the city celebrated the feast of Saint Francis of Paola. Amid the crowds moving between the port and the church, a notorious Spanish criminal—a veteran soldier accused of multiple murders—was scheduled for execution at the quay. Seizing the chaos, the man escaped into a house sheltering other petty criminals, barricading himself inside with a gun. He resisted capture by firing at the marshals and soldiers besieging the house. Authorities, reluctant to use a cannon to breach the residence due to the growing crowd, eventually waited until the fugitive exhausted his ammunition before apprehending him.[83]

This incident, emblematic of Palermo's recurring public disturbances, underscores the challenges faced by authorities in managing violence and maintaining order in a city burdened by both transient military populations and endemic social unrest. This incident reflects a significant challenge for the authorities, highlighting multiple factors that disturbed public order. The first issue was the use of a firearm during the altercation. Historiographical studies on violence in regions like Andalusia reveal that most weapons used in urban and rural disputes were adapted from work tools.[84] The fugitive soldier's possession of a firearm represented an additional aggravation, compounding the severe crime of escaping a death sentence.

Soldiers also faced risks while performing tasks such as escorting important figures. At one o'clock in the morning on 5 May 1608, the Count of Racalmuto was assassinated while traveling in a carriage on the "Descent of the Ferraris," escorted by two soldiers. Two men ambushed the count under the cover of darkness and fired an arquebus at him.[85] Both attackers escaped, and only one soldier from the escort survived. Although the trial of the criminals does not appear in historical records, the murder of a nobleman constituted a *notorium factum*—a grave crime under Castilian tradition.[86] This prompted the authorities

82. Simon Pepper, "Sword and Spade: Military Construction in Renaissance Italy," *Construction History* 16 (2000): 18–24.

83. Gioacchino Di Marzo, *Diari della Città di Palermo dal secolo XVI al XIX* (Palermo, 1869), 1:300–1.

84. Ricardo Córdoba de la Llave, "El homicidio en Andalucía a fines de la Edad Media," *Clío & Crimen: Revista del Centro de Historia del Crimen de Durango* 2 (2005): 326–28; Emilio Cabrera Muñoz, "Crimen y castigo en Andalucía durante el siglo XV," *Meridies: estudios de historia y patrimonio de la Edad Media* 1 (1994): 14–32.

85. Di Marzo, *Diari della Città di Palermo*, 1:150–51.

86. The consideration of a crime as *notorium factum* originated in the laws of early medieval Castile in an attempt to give notoriety above all to crimes committed against nobles and important

to initiate judicial proceedings, as the murder of a member of the wealthy class threatened the social order. The crime may have been related to a feud between rival noble houses in Palermo. In such contexts, the role of an escort was critical, not only for the protection of the individual but also for providing key witnesses to support the pursuit of justice.[87]

Domestic disputes were another frequent cause of altercations. In September 1608, soldier Diego Giardino sought revenge against Santo Rocco, who had earlier assaulted his house and fought with his younger brother. During the confrontation, Giardino's younger brother fired a shot at the assailant but missed. Giardino then entered the house and physically subdued Rocco, intending to kill him. The fight attracted the attention of the authorities, who intervened to prevent further violence.[88]

Such domestic conflicts posed ongoing challenges for the authorities. In 1615, the Duke of Osuna, following several letters to Philip III, succeeded in closing a tavern near Castellamare that had become a hotspot for violent altercations involving soldiers and local residents.[89] This demonstrates the authorities' growing concern with maintaining public order in spaces prone to violence, particularly in urban areas frequented by soldiers.[90]

An illustrative case is that of Captain Antonio Quiñonez, from the city of Licata, who reported an attempt on the life of a sergeant in his company to the viceroy's court. On the night of 22 February 1622, while in Palermo, the sergeant was shot with an arquebus while patrolling the city walls. This crime, committed with a firearm, heightened concerns among the authorities, who had been aware of the dangers posed by portable weapons since the late sixteenth century. Firearms, with their accessibility and lethality, were increasingly used by criminals.[91]

Antonio Espino López has analyzed the impact of the widespread use of firearms, such as the *pedreñal*, on the early-seventeenth-century Catalonian justice system's ability to address crime. In the Kingdom of Sicily, firearms similarly played a critical role in criminal activities, particularly in the rise of armed gangs. Cases like that of Captain Quiñonez's sergeant underscore the broader implications of firearm proliferation in Sicily, highlighting its significance not only in violent altercations but also in the evolution of crime and the challenges it posed to maintaining public order.[92]

persons. In this case, as María Paz Alonso pointed out, the consideration of the gravity of the crime remained in force until the beginning of the Enlightenment, not only in Castile but in all the territories of the Spanish monarchy. María Paz Alonso Romero, *El proceso penal en Castilla, siglos XIII–XVIII* (Universidad de Salamanca, Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 1982), 310–14; Juan Carlos Domínguez Nafría, "Conflictos de competencias entre la jurisdicción ordinaria y la militar en el Antiguo Régimen," *Anuario de historia del derecho español* 67 (2012): 1547–48.

87. Alonso Romero, *El proceso penal en Castilla,* 314–16; cf. note 96.

88. Alonso Romero, *El proceso penal en Castilla*, 320.

89. Aguilar, "'No tan en orden,'" 226.

90. ASPa, *RS, Dispacci, Guerra,* b. 107, f. 8. Palermo, 5 April 1622.

91. ASPa, *RS, Dispacci, Guerra,* b. 106, f. 6. Palermo, 4 March 1622.

92. Pomara, *Bandolerismo, violencia y justicia*, 98–102.

Early Efforts to Build Barracks in Palermo

The limited sources on the construction of barracks in Palermo indicate that Emanuel Filiberto de Saboya, viceroy from 1622 to 1624, initiated the viceregal authority's plans by building a barracks alongside the San Giacomo degli Spagnoli hospital, modeled after its Neapolitan counterpart.[93] The barracks likely occupied an annex structure designed to house a substantial number of soldiers, possibly the company serving as the viceroy's personal guard, while the German Guard—an elite unit of approximately eighty halberdiers whose origins remain uncertain—resided in the viceregal palace or in nearby houses. This corps not only provided physical protection to the viceroy but also held strong symbolic value, reinforcing his prestige and authority.[94]

Seventeenth-century accounts and descriptions of Palermo confirm that the city's quartering process combined traditional methods with the construction of a dedicated barracks. This hybrid approach involved the *ex novo* creation of a military building alongside the strategic reorganization of Spanish soldiers across various city quarters.[95] Palermo's planned and rational urban growth reflected architectural, spatial, and defensive priorities, particularly given the persistent threat of Ottoman attacks during the sixteenth century. Similarly, the orderly distribution of soldiers into private homes adhered to this rational intent.[96] The tercio employed an officer, the *furriel mayor*, to oversee lodging arrangements, maintain discipline, and coordinate troop supplies. This officer, often valued for mathematical and accounting skills, rented and prepared private houses for soldiers.[97]

The 205 designated houses were situated in the Quartieri degli Spagnoli (Spanish Quarter), near the viceregal palace and the newly constructed barracks of 1622. Recent studies suggest that the barracks coexisted with the ongoing practice of renting houses for soldiers. This dual approach raises questions: did establishing a barracks demand more resources than initially anticipated, or was it intended as a complement to the existing system? These inquiries gain clarity from evidence showing that several city neighborhoods, such as Sant'Anna, were already accommodating Spanish soldiers before the seventeenth century.[98]

93. Vincenzo Auria, *Historia cronologica delli signori vicere di Sicilia dall'anno 1409 sino al 1697* (Pietro Coppola, 1697), 82–83.

94. Copy of the list of the infantry in the Kingdom of Sicily, in CODOIN, t. XLIV, ff. 95–98.

95. Maurizio Vesco, "Disegnare il baluardo di fronte al Turco, Sicilia e Malta," in *La Sicilia dei Viceré nell'età degli Asburgo (1516–1700),* ed. Stefano Piazza (Edizioni Caracal, 2016), 260–65.

96. Maurizio Vesco, "Un piano di espansione per Palermo nel secondo Cinquecento: Guglielmo Fornaya e la fondazione del borgo di Santa Lucía," in *Storie di città e architetture. Scritti in onore di Enrico Guidoni,* ed. Guglielmo Villa (Kappa, 2014), 157–59.

97. René Quatrefages, *Los Tercios* (Ministerio de Defensa, 2016), 268–70.

98. J. M. Lozano, "¿Extranjeros dentro de su imperio? Españoles en la ciudad de Palermo durante el siglo XVII" (PhD diss., University of Valencia, 2024), 151–53.

Housing tercio soldiers in private homes involved rhetorical and ideological considerations tied to the concept of the "good soldier," influenced by military humanism. This arrangement required consistent oversight by officers tasked with ensuring discipline, reflecting the broader cultural and administrative effort to integrate military personnel into the urban fabric while maintaining order.[99]

The influx of soldiers during the Monteferrat War (1613–1617), particularly transient companies occupying spaces in Palermo, led to the establishment of the Quartieri dei Tedeschi (German Quarter) as a new lodging area. This neighborhood housed the approximately fifty German halberdiers serving as the royal palace guard, along with other captains and officers residing nearby.[100]

The spatial distribution of lodgings was deliberate. Centered around the royal palace, neighborhoods to the northeast, southeast, and southwest were selected for Spanish soldiers and officers, creating a configuration that allowed for better monitoring of their behavior. This arrangement contrasts with the sporadic and diffuse nature of violence in the city, which, as previously noted, lacked a defined geographical origin or focus. Soldiers, like other residents, moved freely through Palermo, interacting with civilians and other military personnel stationed at locations such as the quay or fortresses like Castellamare.[101]

The clustering of military lodgings near the barracks site prior to its construction in 1622 reflects the viceroyalty's intention to implement a more controlled and organized system. This approach aligns with the strategies outlined in the avvertimenti decades earlier, highlighting the persistence of administrative efforts to manage the integration of soldiers into Palermo's urban environment while addressing the challenges posed by their presence.[102]

The Plague of 1624 –1626

The comparison between Milan and Palermo regarding soldiers' hardships due to unpaid wages reveals a unique dynamic centered on the barracks system and the 1624 plague in Palermo. In Milan, the emergence of *case herme* or dwellings for soldiers, as Alessandro Buono notes, reflected the challenges of coexistence between soldiers and civilians and served as precursors to formal barracks.[103] Authorities favored separating military personnel from the general population to mitigate violence stemming from economic hardship and payment delays. However, as Buono points out, achieving physical separation between the military and civilian society

99. Fernando González de León, "'Doctors of the Military Discipline': Technical Expertise and the Paradigm of the Spanish Soldier in the Early Modern Period," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 27 (2018): 39–44.

100. Lozano, "¿Extranjeros dentro de su imperio?," 155.

101. ASPa, RS, Dispacci, Guerra, b. 104, f. 205^{r}; Bando contra el desorden de la tropa por la noche, Palermo, 9 January 1617.

102. *Relatione del Magistrato Placido Ragazzoni del Regno di Sicilia,* BNE*, Cervantes,* MSS/12923, f. 67^{v}.

103. Buono, *Esercito,* 143–46.

was not the sole approach, though it was often considered ideal.[104] The renting of private houses, sometimes entire neighborhoods, occurred in both Milan and Palermo during the same period,[105] though the coercive nature of billeting soldiers in private homes was criticized even in Renaissance literature.[106]

The 1624 plague interrupted this phenomenon in both cities. In Milan, the gradual transition from renting private houses to housing soldiers in barracks occurred between 1615 and 1627.[107] In Palermo, however, the struggle with military-civilian coexistence persisted. The epidemic is documented in numerous diaries and memoirs, including Michele Leone's *Relazione di quello che fece la città di Palermo per il male contagioso di peste*, which contains references to military welfare efforts and highlights differences from the Milanese experience.

In Palermo, the plague arrived aboard a merchant ship from Tunisia in 1624, and as the disease spread, soldiers were enlisted to assist with relief efforts.[108] The infantry tercio companies were soon infected despite efforts such as guidelines drawn up by Geronimo di Plagiari, a priest from Termini, to manage an outbreak within one company.[109]

Quarantine measures and attempts to isolate soldiers further delayed the development of barracks during the epidemic.[110] Sanitary conditions in areas like the docks and Castellamare were comparable to those in soldiers' residential neighborhoods, necessitating daily cleaning teams of nine men to maintain the quarters.[111] These public health challenges underscored the difficulty of implementing a structured barracks system during such a crisis.

The military played a crucial role in organizing strategies for isolating and quarantining infected groups during the 1624–1626 plague. As Geltrude Macrì highlights, these efforts centered around *lazarettos*, which served as the primary facilities for treating and disinfecting those afflicted by the plague. Palermo's hospital system, subordinate to the lazarettos as the main coordinators of the response, was quickly overwhelmed by the severity of an outbreak that spiraled out of control.[112]

Soldiers of the tercio were initially vital in managing the mental, cultural, and social repercussions of the outbreak. Authorities sought to avoid a repeat

104. Buono, *Esercito*, 152–60.

105. For the Milanese case, see Buono, *Esercito*, 154–56. For the case of Palermo, see ASPa, *Delegazione della Capella Palatina*, b. 96, ff. 16^{r}–18^{v}.

106. J. Lozano Navarrim and J. L. Castellano (eds.), *Violencia y conflictividad en el universo barroco* (Comares, 2010), 95–118, and Rossella Cancila, *Mediterraneo in armi*, 236–40.

107. Buono, *Esercito,* 160–62.

108. Michele Leone, *Relazione di quello che fece la città di Palermo per il male contagioso di peste, che afflisse detta città da' 7 maggio 1624, sino a 6 giugno 1626*, cc. 2–8.

109. Leone, *Relazione,* cc. 9–10.

110. Geltrude Macrì, "Quarantena e isolamento domiciliare. Palermo durante la peste del 1624," *Rivista dell'Istituto di Storia dell'Europa Mediterranea* 9 (2021): 11–41.

111. Macrì, "Quarantena e isolamento domiciliare," 30–34.

112. Macrì, "Quarantena e isolamento domiciliare," 35–36.

of the 1575 plague, during which superstition and fear led to widespread social instability in the city.[113] In addition to maintaining public order, soldiers carried out measures influenced by scholar and physician Nicolò Serpento, including the controversial decision to eliminate all dogs in the city, except those owned by the wealthy, who were urged to leave Palermo.[114]

The welfare investments initiated in the late 1570s and during the Count of Olivares's government (1591–1595) were aimed at addressing these crises, particularly through projects such as the San Giacomo degli Spagnoli hospital, which provided health and economic support to mitigate soldiers' reliance on begging. As Valentina Favarò points out, serious efforts to implement a quartering system in Sicily would have required a reduction in the number of tercio soldiers and a diminished role for the light cavalry.[115]

The plague, which persisted until mid-1626, effectively halted the quartering process for decades. While similar efforts in Milan progressed from 1615, Palermo's initiatives stagnated and did not resume until after the rebellion of 1647.[116] The outbreak also paralyzed the efforts of Viceroy Filiberto, who struggled to manage the crisis. The military's response, informed by the ideas of various theorists, focused on preserving the health and organization of their home corps, reflecting the adaptation of theoretical principles to practical challenges.[117]

Comparing the cases of Palermo with those of Milan and Naples reframes questions about the documentation discussed earlier. The first issue is whether soldiers' unemployment stemmed from a flawed bureaucracy incapable of managing economic challenges or whether specific events, such as the arrival of companies from Naples or the 1624 plague, served as aggravating conjunctural factors. Examining individual soldiers' cases offers a more humanized perspective, emphasizing the unique challenges faced by each soldier and providing observation parameters to better understand the issue of begging. The concept of need, arising from the economic hardships caused by unpaid salaries and the challenges of living in a city like Palermo, emerges as a critical factor in understanding the outbreak of social unrest.[118]

Conclusion

The quartering process in Palermo was characterized by a hybrid approach, combining traditional methods with new strategies. The viceregal authority sought to physically separate troops from the civilian population by constructing an *ex-novo* barracks, inspired by Milan's *case herme*. This initiative was complemented

113. Macrì, "Quarantena e isolamento domiciliare," 37–40.

114. Nicola Cusumano, *La stagione inquieta. Combusti mostri folli in età moderna* (Palermo University Press, 2022), 122–25.

115. Favarò, "Sugli Alloggiamenti," 459–61.

116. Giuseppe Giarrizzo, *La Sicilia dal Vespro all'Unità d'Italia* (Turín, 1992), 283–90.

117. See Buono, *Esercito*, 122–25.

118. Buono, *Esercito*, 268.

by voluntary separation methods that aimed to maintain a tolerable relationship with a Palermitan population increasingly weary of the violence associated with billeting. While military violence served as a tool to enforce viceregal prerogative and secure the compliance of reluctant Sicilian juries and institutions, the avvertimenti advised viceroys to avoid overburdening certain towns with troops.[119] Regions such as Mazara, Val di Noto, and Girgento supported the passage of light cavalry, militia, and transient companies, but scholars cautioned against excessively straining these communities.[120]

In Palermo, the quartering process was formalized in 1622, but it did not progress in the same manner as in Milan, Lombardy, or Pavia, where more effective administrative control allowed for greater success. Unlike these northern territories, Naples and Sicily experienced slower advancements in barracks development, with comprehensive barracking of troops not achieved until the nineteenth century, following the rational and systematic French model introduced after revolutionary reforms.[121]

The Palermo barracks were renovated in 1650 by Viceroy Juan de Austria, who expanded the facility with additional rooms to accommodate more soldiers. Interestingly, both Emanuel Filiberto de Saboya and Juan de Austria refrained from fully informing their respective monarchs about the barracks' progress, despite its importance.[122] The 1650 refurbishment responded to King Philip IV's directive to increase Sicily's troop capacity. On 31 January 1650, the king issued a report emphasizing the need to fortify Palermo, including the barracks near the viceregal palace.[123] He specifically urged the placement of quality artillery and the completion of construction, highlighting the strategic significance of the barracks near the San Giacomo degli Spagnoli hospital in the city's overall defense plan.[124] The renovation of the military barracks by Viceroy Juan de Austria was part of a broader military policy aimed at reform and economic efficiency. Despite the potential financial burden, the viceroy increased the kingdom's infantry by seven hundred men, demonstrating a commitment to enhancing military readiness.

To fund these reforms, revenues were drawn from *gabelle* taxes and adjacent levies, reflecting a strategic allocation of fiscal resources. Simultaneously, the viceroy reduced the number of infantrymen in the *Milicia Ordinaria* by over three hundred men, aligning the reforms with a calculated balance between military effectiveness and economic sustainability. The *gabelle* were indirect taxes, often levied on essential goods such as salt, grain, or wine, and constituted a significant

119. Juan Fernández de Velasco y Tovar, *Representación a Su Majestad sobre los medios para el mejor gobierno del Reino de Sicilia* (1609), BNE, Cervantes, MSS/956, f. 76^{r}.

120. Relación de las cosas del Reyno de Sicilia, BNE, Cervantes, MSS/2460, f. 76^{r}.

121. John A. Davis, *Italy in the Nineteenth Century 1796–1900* (Oxford University Press, 2000), 34–46.

122. Di Blasi, *Storia dei vicerè*, 262.

123. AHNo, Osuna, CT. 15, D. 18, f. 2^{r}.

124. AHNo, Osuna, CT. 15, D. 26, f. 3^{v}.

source of revenue for the royal treasury. In Sicily, they played a crucial role in financing military and administrative initiatives, as their collection was relatively stable and predictable compared to other forms of taxation. These measures highlight the interplay between fiscal policy and military modernization within the governance of early modern Sicily.[125]

The barracks in Palermo had to be expanded to accommodate the increased troop numbers ordered by Philip IV, who sought to bolster the city's tercio from approximately twelve hundred to three thousand infantrymen.[126] This directive reflected the broader concerns of the Spanish monarchy in the post-Thirty Years' War era, particularly following the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, which marked a shift in European geopolitics and diminished Spain's hegemony.[127] As a peripheral territory, Sicily became a focal point for reinforcing the monarchy's military apparatus, despite the weak Sicilian treasury's inability to fully support such measures.

In 1687, following the Palermo earthquake, some members of wealthy families temporarily took refuge in the barracks, further illustrating its dual role as a military and emergency space.

The quartering process in Palermo was slow and disjointed, shaped by external factors such as economic constraints, public fatigue, and recurring plague outbreaks.[128] The viceregal desire to physically separate soldiers from the city's population emerged in response to the Ottoman threat, which necessitated maintaining a large garrison. The existing fortifications—Castellamare, city bastions, and the royal palace—were insufficient to house the increasing troop numbers, leading to the widespread renting of houses in Palermo. This stopgap measure preserved the viceroy's defensive priorities but introduced new tensions.[129]

Beginning in the 1570s, the coexistence of soldiers and civilians gave rise to widespread violence. Taverns, city walls, streets, and markets became hotspots for clashes, both among soldiers and between soldiers and the local population. These tensions were exacerbated by Palermitans' growing resentment, which often culminated in retaliatory violence. The desire to separate soldiers from civilians became a recurring theme in the avvertimenti from the 1580s onward, coinciding with barracks construction in smaller towns like Termini and Syracuse, though progress in major cities like Palermo was slower.[130]

125. Ignacio Ruíz, *Don Juan José de Austria en la Monarquía Hispánica: entre la política, el poder y la intriga* (Dykinson, 2007), 87–95.

126. AHNo, Osuna, CT. 15, D. 26, ff. 4^{r}–5^{v}.

127. David Parrott, *The Business of War: Military Enterprise and Military Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), 27–41.

128. Parrott, *The Business of War,* 260–79.

129. D. Carrió-Invernizzi, "Gift and Diplomacy in Seventeenth-Century Spanish Italy," *The Historical Journal* 51 (2008): 883–89.

130. Tomasso Abate, "La fortezza perduta: due ipotesi ricostruttive sul Castellamare di Palermo," *Riconstruire* 1 (2016): 34–41.

In 1622, Viceroy Filiberto de Saboya initiated the construction of barracks in Palermo, coinciding with the completion of Naples's Opera Pia di San Giacomo degli Spagnoli, which had a welfare focus. However, the plague of 1624 halted the barracks' development and triggered an economic crisis that delayed the broader project of concentrating soldiers in designated spaces. The subsequent decline in Sicily's military significance within the Spanish monarchy, coupled with the monarchy's focus on northern Europe, further constrained the quartering process. Military housing during this period relied heavily on rented properties near the royal palace, and troop numbers on the island gradually decreased.[131]

This decline is documented in a 1638 report by the overseer general of Sicily, Diego Bernardo de Eraso, who informed Philip IV of worsening conditions due to the dwindling number of troops. Eraso suspended return licenses to the Iberian Peninsula to address shortages, noting Palermo as one of the cities most affected by this decrease.[132]

The quartering process in Palermo during the first half of the seventeenth century was marked by confusion and lack of rational planning, with the construction of the barracks in 1622 standing as the only significant initiative. Viceregal authority faced persistent limitations due to the 1624 plague and the violence arising from tensions between soldiers and the city's inhabitants. These factors underscore the complexities of military-civilian dynamics in early modern Palermo.

131. Favarò, "Sugli Alloggiamenti," 463.

132. Archivo General de Simancas, EST, LEG, 3594, 216, ff. 2^{v}–3^{r}.

"Freedom of the Hills": The Tenth Mountain Division and the Opening of the Vertical Frontier

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Margaret Sutton Berry[1]

Abstract

When Frederick Jackson Turner proclaimed that the American "frontier has gone" in 1893, he did more than impose an ethnocentric history on land that had never been "open" in the first place. He also forgot to look up. In the century following Robert P. Porter's 1890 Census Bulletin and Turner's seminal musings, middle- and upper-class Euro-Americans increasingly turned to vertical landscapes in response to the socioeconomic and cultural shifts of modernity, thereby claiming new frontier space for their discovery. This paper situates the U.S. Army's Tenth Mountain Division at the center of that story, arguing that the narrative of America's "ski troopers" captures the enduring potency of the frontier for modern Americans. By writing their pioneering narrative into the peaks they trained and fought in, the Tenth helped establish the mountains as purportedly open space into which Americans could expand and in which they could reimagine their freedom.

In his commencement address to Dartmouth College classmates on 14 June 1941, alpine ski racer Charles Bancroft McClane reflected on the nature of American freedom and called upon his audience to defend it in battle overseas. "I believe in my own growth and development," McClane mused. "And as far as I see, the strength and assurance of democracy lies in your being able to believe in and being willing

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to fight for such things, too."[2] McClane's confident patriotism belied his fear. Even though it was months before he would enlist in the army and before his country would officially enter World War II, McClane already anticipated the struggles of joining the United States military. "It will not be natural," he admitted later in the speech, "to take orders without question from men in peacetime we would not obey, nor to feel like cogs in a wheel turned by people we never see."[3]

One imagines that millions of American men between the ages of 21 and 36 felt similarly when required to register for the draft by the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940.[4] They, too, likely recognized the gap between the high ideals of freedom and democracy and the hierarchical realities of military service. But the idea of soldierly submission and social anonymity struck a particular chord with McClane and his classmates. Since the early twentieth century, Dartmouth students had come to pride themselves not only on their elite education at a "pioneer institution" but also on the free spirit and "hardihood" they developed by embracing "Nature's … wide spaces" on ski, foot, and sled.[5] Dartmouth Outing Club founder Fred Harris celebrated as much in a 1920 *National Geographic* article, praising outdoor recreation for affording privileged enthusiasts an experience of liberty "wholly unknown to those who gain their sole idea of a snow-clad landscape through the windows of an automobile or swift-flying train."[6] Applications to Dartmouth nearly quadrupled after the release of Harris's essay. McClane, in other words, held a captive audience when he spoke of his commitment to democracy and the threatening monotony and conformity of military life. Dartmouth men had grown accustomed to a fair degree of autonomy "skiing over the New Hampshire hills," climbing the Carriage Road on Mount Moosilauke, and scaling peaks in the Alaska Range.[7] This meant that they also had a lot to lose.

help and support. I would also like to thank the late Eighty-Sixth Mountain Infantry Regiment veteran Donald G. Dunn, who inspired my interest in the Tenth.

2. This article's title is a phrase from the standard mountaineering textbook: The Mountaineers, *Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills*, 9th ed. (Mountaineers Books, 2017). Charles B. McClane, "Address to the College," *The Dartmouth,* 14 June 1941.

3. McClane, "Address to the College,"

4. "Selective Training and Service Act of 1940," S. 4164, 76th Cong. (1940), available at ProQuest Legislative Insight. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, this act was amended to require all male citizens between the ages of 18 and 65 to register for the draft.

5. Fred Harris, "Skiing Over the New Hampshire Hills: A Thrilling and Picturesque Sport Which Has a Thousand Devotees in the Dartmouth Outing Club," *National Geographic* 32, no. 2 (1920): 158.

6. Harris, "Skiing Over the New Hampshire Hills," 158. See David Hooke, *Reaching That Peak: 75 Years of the Dartmouth Outing Club* (Phoenix, 1987).

7. When the Dartmouth Outing Club (D.O.C.) was founded in 1909, several students joined and formed the first collegiate ski team as part of the club; by the mid-1920s, 73 percent of the student body were members of the D.O.C.; and in 1936, Jack Durrance organized the Dartmouth Mountaineering Club for D.O.C. members interested in rock climbing. See Hooke, *Reaching That Peak*; William Rotch, "With the Outing Club," *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine,* November 1936.

Understanding this context—and specifically, these anxieties—is crucial to understanding the origins and historical significance of the U.S. Army's Tenth Mountain Division. When the War Department teamed up with the National Ski Patrol to recruit for America's first and only mountain warfare unit on 15 November 1941, McClane was the first to sign up. Soon, 118 Dartmouth students and scores of other collegiate skiers, mountaineers, and outing club members followed, jumping at the opportunity to join an outfit that enabled them to serve their nation alongside the masses but retain their elite status in the process.[8]

Even as the Tenth ameliorated male fears about subordination and conformity in the military, it also gave national form to a pre-existing culture of mountain recreation built on anxiety, exclusivity, and the myth of limitless, "untrammeled" land.[9] When Frederick Jackson Turner proclaimed that the American "frontier has gone" in 1893, he did more than impose an ethnocentric history on land that had never been "open" in the first place.[10] He also forgot to look up. In the decades following Robert P. Porter's 1890 Census Bulletin and Turner's seminal musings, upper-class Euro-Americans increasingly turned to vertical landscapes in response to the social and environmental uncertainties of the fin de siècle, straining to find new frontiers to assert their individuality and pioneering spirit.[11] Anxious to distance themselves from the pollution of mass industrialization, the growing population of urban centers, and the influx of diverse immigrants, New England elites like Harris and McClane found such a "field for … exercise" in the mountains.[12] By the end of World War II, millions of middle-class Americans had come to embrace a similar vision. In this transitional moment, alpine spaces emerged as reimagined Turnerian terrain, a seemingly endless frontier generative of the "American energy … strong in

8. Edward Nickerson, "Mountain Men," *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine,* Jan/ Feb. 2001, 52.

9. Harris, "Skiing Over the New Hampshire Hills," 158.

10. Frederick J. Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (Henry Holt, 1920), 38. Turner read this paper at the meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago on 12 July 1893, and, with it, established a pivot in the periodization of American history and the historiography of "frontiers." As many historians have since recognized, such a pivot was misleading for several reasons. Most significantly, Turner's U.S. Census-based definition of the frontier—where population density fell below two people per square mile—only counted humans of European ancestry, thereby erasing the histories of millions of American Indian individuals who had peopled western lands for centuries and continued to call the Euro-American frontier their home.

11. Several historians have written about the rise of hiking, mountaineering, and other mountain sports in nineteenth- and twentieth-century America. For more on the emergence of hiking clubs and culture, see Silas Chamberlin, *On the Trail: A History of American Hiking* (Yale University Press, 2016); for a broadscale overview of American mountaineering, see Maurice Isserman, *Continental Divide: A History of North American Mountaineering* (W. W. Norton, 2017); and for more on the environmental consequences and social exclusivity of rock climbing culture, see Joseph E. Taylor, *Pilgrims of the Vertical: Yosemite Rock Climbers and Nature at Risk* (Harvard University Press, 2010) and Ruth Alexander, *Democracy's Mountain: Longs Peak and the Unfulfilled Promises of America's National Parks* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2023).

12. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 38.

selfishness and individualism, intolerant of administrative experience and education, and pressing individual liberty beyond its proper bounds."[13]

The Tenth Mountain Division played a crucial role in this historical development. Even before the outfit's official inception as the First Battalion, Eighty-Seventh Mountain Infantry Regiment, the "ski troopers" joined New England outing, ski, and mountaineering club members in actively writing themselves into Turner's frontier narrative. In doing so, they captivated the attention of an American media already intent on assuaging contemporary fears of urban degeneration, social atomization, and other perceived effects of "an ever more automated, mechanized civilization."[14]

Beyond the myriad films and articles published about the troop's elite training and trailblazing acts during World War II, the Tenth has received much attention from directors and historians in recent decades. With the exception of cultural historian Annie Gilbert Coleman, who analyzes the division within the context of twentieth-century mass media, consumer culture, and gender, scholars have effectively solidified the story of the Tenth as a band of heroic mountain warriors and symbol of the American spirit.[15] In *Climb to Conquer* (2003), for example, adventure writer Peter Shelton emphasizes the bonding effect of the Tenth's mountain training and the division's revolutionary contributions to the postwar outdoor recreation industry. English professor and historian of the conservation movement McKay Jenkins highlights the fortitude of "America's First Mountain Soldiers" in *The Last Ridge* (2004), foregrounding the horrors they faced and overcame on the Italian front. More recently, American historian Maurice Isserman has built on Shelton's and Jenkins's work in *The Winter Army* (2019), placing the National Ski Patrol at the heart of the Tenth's evolution, and the Tenth at the heart of the 1945 Allied breakthrough of Germany's final line of defense in Italy.[16]

Themes of rugged individualism and rags-to-riches progress frame the backbone of all of these histories: a grassroots organization pioneering the first

13. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 32.

14. Evan Berry, *Devoted to Nature: The Religious Roots of American Environmentalism* (University of California Press, 2015), 65, 73.

15. For the purposes of this article, I use the designation "Tenth" to refer to members of the original Eighty-Fifth, Eighty-Sixth, and Eighty-Seventh Regiments that merged into the Tenth Light Division (Alpine) in 1943, and the redesignated Tenth Mountain Division in 1944. For a more technical report of the U.S. Army and War Department's experiments in mountain and winter warfare training from 1940 to 1944, see Captain Thomas P. Govan, "The Army Ground Forces Training for Mountain and Winter Warfare, Study No. 23," 1 September 1945.

16. See Peter Shelton, *Climb to Conquer: The Untold Story of World War II's 10th Mountain Division* (Scribner, 2003); McKay Jenkins, *The Last Ridge: The Epic Story of America's First Mountain Soldiers and the Assault on Hitler's Europe* (Penguin Random House, 2004); Maurice Isserman, *The Winter Army: The World War II Odyssey of the 10th Mountain Division, America's Elite Alpine Warriors* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2019); Lance Blythe, *Ski, Climb, Fight: The 10th Mountain Division and the Rise of Mountain Warfare* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2024).

American mountain troop; cowboys and college dropouts transforming into self-sufficient ski troopers through rigorous maneuvers on some of America's highest mountains; Tenth soldiers courageously taking control of German-occupied Riva Ridge, scaling a cliff in the middle of the night and pushing Hitler's "Gothic Line" out of Italy; veterans continuing to live out their troops' motto after the war, moving "always forward" as they helped found over sixty-two ski resorts, started businesses, and served as senators and environmental activists.[17]

The Tenth's passion for fighting, the mountains, and each other, however, is only one dimension of their history. In addition to revealing soldiers' courage, fraternity, and postwar accolades, the story of the ski troopers captures the underlying anxieties and enduring potency of the frontier imaginary in modern America, a potency which the pre-existing histories of the Tenth evince.[18] Addressing the very fears Turner had voiced at the World's Columbian Exposition—namely, increased dependency on modern institutions and a lack of "open space" for the formation, expansion, and immortalization of the American character—the Tenth exposed the promises of liberty and belonging afforded above ground. In stressing Tenth volunteers' symbolic reimagination of mountainous landscapes, this article fills a crucial historiographical gap; rather than focusing exclusively on what the Tenth Mountain Division achieved during and after World War II, it reveals the sociopolitical concerns many of its members used the mountains to navigate—and the social and environmental consequences of doing so.

This study enters into a growing body of literature on the relationship between mountains and nation-building during World War I and II. Specifically, it builds on Tait Keller's *Apostles of the Alps: Mountaineering and Nation Building in Germany and Austria, 1860–1939* (2015) and Chris Pearson's *Scarred Landscapes: War and Nature in Vichy France* (2008). While Keller's focus is the Central Alps and Pearson's the rugged plateaus of southeastern France's Vercors massif, both environmental historians attend to the emergence of vertical landscapes as sites of national resistance, identity, and expansion in the first half of the twentieth century. Keller, for example, argues that the rise of mountain tourism in fin de siècle Hapsburg Austria and the German Reich—as well as the militarization of the Dolomites during the Great War—transformed the Alps from sites of freedom from the conditions of middle-class existence into sites of exclusion, exploitation, and national conquest. In the process, the mountains became "landscapes of

See also Annie Gilbert Coleman, *Ski Style: Sport and Culture in the Rockies* (University Press of Kansas, 2004), 97–107, and Coleman, "Culture, Landscape, and the Making of the Colorado Ski Industry" (PhD diss., University of Colorado, 1996), 151–72. For a more comprehensive list of books and films centered on the Tenth, see Coleman, "Culture," 151.

17. Excerpt from General George Price Hays's speech to the Tenth Mountain Division on 16 February 1945, prior to their attack on Mt. Belvedere, as cited in Isserman, *Winter Army,* xii.

18. Here, I refer to the story as shaped by the Tenth through letters, songs, and diaries during World War II, and now, as preserved in archives, oral histories, memorials, and memoirs.

paradox," at once symbols of democracy and despotism, industrial escape and expansion, social progress and conservatism.[19]

Pearson describes a related dynamic. During the German occupation of France between 1940 and 1944, he argues, France's forests, foothills, and mountains became "places of refuge and resistance" for young, working-class Frenchmen (*maquisards*), Jews, communists, rebel army officers, and foreign nationals.[20] The Vercors massif was an especially fraught battleground: it served as a sheltered enclave for *maquisards* to escape conscription and German factory work, an outpost for them to fight Nazi occupiers, and a spiritual bastion for the Vichy regime and French resistance alike.

This article touches on similar themes. The Tenth reveals, however, that in the United States, mountainous landscapes functioned as "resistance environments" even for those operating under the auspices of their dominant political regime and its military. The ski troopers presented themselves as viable emblems for the American people in large part because they blended service to the nation with aversion to institutional authority. Likewise, they positioned American mountains as promising national symbols because of their appearance as "unending frontiers" in which all civilians could be trailblazers.[21] Building on environmental historian William Cronon's argument that visions of the national frontier were rooted in the imaginary of untouched "wilderness," this article reveals how the Tenth helped popularize the mountains, specifically, as a wilderness frontier in the American imagination. As with Turner's frontier, the mountains' status as sacred wilderness space depended on their separation from human history, and they were sullied once humans populated them.[22]

At the same time Tenth members extended Turner's frontier fantasy into the mountains, they projected its embedded tensions onto the peaks they climbed and skied down. Just as Turner's conception of "Americanization and liberation" depended on the erasure of American Indians and the colonization of uncivilized

19. Tait Keller, *Apostles of the Alps: Mountaineering and Nation Building in Germany and Austria, 1860–1939* (University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 2. See also Marco Armiero, *A Rugged Nation: Mountains and the Making of Modern Italy* (White Horse Press, 2011).

20. Chris Pearson, *Scarred Landscapes: War and Nature in Vichy France* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2008), 175. For more on the Vercors as a site of resistance and memory during the Vichy Regime, see Pearson, "Remembering Resistance: The 'More-than-Human' Memorial Landscapes at the Vercors and Larzac, France," *Cultural History* 2, no. 2 (2013): 199–212; H. R. Kedward, *In Search of the Maquis: Rural Resistance in Southern France, 1942–1944* (Oxford University Press, 2003). Just as the American mountain troopers defined themselves relative to the mountains they trained and recreated in, French rebels in the Vichy Regime named themselves after the *maquis*—thick, spiky vegetation in the Mediterranean hillsides on which they established their outposts.

21. See John F. Richards, *The Unending Frontier: An Environmental History of the Early Modern World* (University of California Press, 2006).

22. William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness: Or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," *Environmental History* 1, no. 1 (January 1996): 7–28.

"nature," the Tenth's freedom and unity depended on the heteronomy of others: run-of-the-mill soldiers, urban crowds, and even the mountains themselves.[23] The rise of the postwar outdoor industry acutely revealed this paradox. As ski troopers successfully expanded access to national forests, climbing routes, and ski resorts, the very mountains they promoted as limitless appeared increasingly congested by corporate colonization and middle-class masses. The mountains ultimately became "landscapes of paradox" not only for European alpinists but also for Tenth soldiers and the broader American public. The mountains were "free," but only so long as they remained exclusive; the mountains were "open," but only so long as they remained discoverable.[24]

The first section of this article tracks the ways in which founders and members of the ski troop leveraged their mountain skills to carve an elite place within the ranks of the U.S. Army and American society writ large. The second section analyzes how the troopers' exclusivity enabled them to establish a patriotic community founded on democratic ideals of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."[25] And the third shows how the Tenth used the mountains to immortalize themselves as American "pioneers."[26] Through ski resorts, hut systems, and memorials, the ski troopers encouraged others with the socioeconomic privilege and physical ability to do as they had, taking to the mountains to resist conformity and experience belonging, to break free from the constraints of modern institutions and find themselves born again on the vertical peripheries of society.

The Making of a Military Elite

When the Tenth's eventual founders—Charles Minot "Minnie" Dole, Roger Langley, Robert Livermore, and Alex Bright—first conceived of an American mountain troop in February 1940, they imagined an exclusive unit made up of men similar to themselves in stature, status, and spirit. All four were members of the New England elite: Dole, a graduate of Yale and founder of the National Ski Patrol System (NSPS); Langley, the president of the National Ski Association; Livermore, a Harvard graduate and member of the 1936 U.S. Olympic ski team; and Bright, the architect of Boston's Ski Club Hochgebirge. Each, too, was a self-proclaimed mountain man and pioneer of American skiing, made possible by the privilege their wealth and education afforded.[27] Taking to the activity in their youth and founding ski clubs along the East Coast, Dole and his Ivy League companions embodied an emerging trend on both sides of the Atlantic. Between the winter opening of St. Moritz, Switzerland, in 1864 and the opening of Sun Valley, "America's First Destination Ski Resort," in 1936, skiing had evolved from a means of transportation

23. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 36.
24. Turner, preface to *The Frontier in American History*.
25. Thomas Jefferson et al., "Declaration of Independence," 4 July 1776.
26. Charles Minot Dole, *Adventures in Skiing* (J. Lowell Pratt, 1965), 30.
27. Isserman, *Winter Army*, 1.

and local pastime into a fashionable pursuit for elites and celebrities.[28] The arrival of Austrian and German ski instructors and the 1932 Lake Placid Olympic Games only heightened the allure of the sport in America. Even in the aftermath of Wall Street's 1929 collapse, ski apparel lined Saks Fifth Avenue walls, and artificial ski slopes decorated shops; European immigrants performed live ski shows for urban audiences at Madison Square Garden; and railroad tycoons and financiers teamed up with Tyrolean farm boys and Norwegian ski jumpers to develop ski resorts and schools across the country.[29] In the process, as Coleman explains, skiing came to be regarded as its own status symbol; with the exception of mountain town locals, it was an activity reserved for those who had the money and time to travel.[30]

Dole's insistence on an American *Gebirgsjäger* or *Alpini* owed as much to this context as it did to fear of an impending altercation with the Nazis on American soil.[31] He not only wanted to defend American liberty but also hoped to assemble a corps of accomplished mountain men to do so. On 22 June 1940, Dole communicated as much to Langley. "We have got to show [the War Department] that they are dealing with a possible half million volunteers and not just a bunch of haphazard skiers," he wrote.[32] "The best thing that can happen to a country in the state that ours is, is to get the backing of sportsmen" and make "soldiers out of skiers."[33]

At the same time Dole leveraged his Ivy League connections to gain an audience for his proposal, he leveraged his ski expertise to make the army listen.[34]

28. Men such as Snowshoe Thompson had relied on skis to carry mail to and from remote alpine villages in the Colorado Rockies and Sierras throughout the mid- to late 1800s. For more on the rise and development of skiing in the United States and Europe, see Andrew Denning, *Skiing into Modernity: A Cultural and Environmental History* (University of California Press, 2014); Coleman, *Ski Style*; Michael Childers, *Colorado Powder Keg: Ski Resorts and the Environmental Movement* (University Press of Kansas, 2012); John B. Allen, *The Culture and Sport of Skiing: From Antiquity to World War II* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2007); Jack A. Benson, "Before Aspen and Vail: The Story of Recreational Skiing in Frontier Colorado," *Journal of the West* 22 (January 1983): 52–61.

29. See Otto Lang, *A Bird of Passage: The Story of My Life* (Pictorial Histories, 1996).

30. See Coleman, *Ski Style*, 73–81, for more on the cooperative and localized culture of Colorado skiing in the early to mid-1900s.

31. Shelton, *Climb to Conquer*, 11. The *Gebirgsjäger* and *Alpini* were the German and Italian mountain troops, respectively. Dole and others were also inspired by the efforts of the Finnish ski troops in the Russo-Finnish War and came to base many of their ideas for an American mountain division on the Finns' example. See "Finns Beat Back a Quarter of Million Russians in Biggest Offensive in the War," *Burlington Free Press,* 8 February 1940. See Denning, *Skiing into Modernity*.

32. Dole to Langley, 22 June 1940, Charles Minot Dole Papers [hereafter CMDP], box 3, folder 32 [hereafter box and folder number separated by period], Denver Public Library [hereafter DPL].

33. Dole to Langley, 22 June 1940, DPL; Dole to Captain Christian H. Clarke, 26 June 1940, CMDP, 9.27, DPL.

34. Dole's fellow Yalie, Stu Symington, put him in touch with Symington's father-in-law, Senator James Wadsworth Jr.; another Bulldog, Hayden Smith, arranged a meeting between

In a letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt on 18 July 1940, Dole identified the basic problem that his unit would address: "Our army is both psychologically and as a result of training, a tropical army," Dole wrote. Referencing American alpinists' dependence on German gear, he continued, "Commendable serious attempts at training winter troops by the regular army have been taken more or less as a lark, and good equipment, which is essential, has been lacking." Now, such training and equipment were more necessary than ever, as "the helplessness of trained mechanized troops called suddenly into snow country has been proven"—specifically, by the 1939 "Winter War" between the Soviet Union and Finland.[35] Dole did not sugarcoat his point; the federal government needed help from those with actual experience on snow, and the NSPS could provide it.

Dole went to lengths to prove his organization's readiness for the job of mobilizing and training a mountain troop, championing the organizational and experiential aptitude of the NSPS, which in just the previous two years had "287 hand-picked and carefully chosen skiers … based on personality, skiing ability, and qualities of leadership." Dole stressed the correlation between the attributes of a good skier—good fitness, self-sufficiency, and knowledge of equipment and weather patterns—and the attributes of a good mountain soldier. He also juxtaposed "trained mechanized troops" with the "specialized [mountain] troops" he would help knit together, who "must be able to act as self-supporting units … working independently of centralized masses and mechanized transport, without contact with the senior commands."[36] Variable alpine terrain and climates did not lend themselves to the army's traditional approach to training and combat: strict military formations and hierarchical chains of command. Rugged backcountry environments demanded radically autonomous Americans prepared to fend for themselves. Likewise, those most suited for officer candidacy in Dole's ski troopers were not seasoned veterans with institutional knowledge of the military but skiers and climbers with experiential knowledge of the mountains. "Skiing is an art not learned in one winter," Dole emphasized in his letter to Roosevelt, and these men "are obviously officer material."[37]

While reflecting an earnest concern for national defense, Dole's correspondence also exposed his deeper skepticism about and resistance to institutional authority. Having briefly served in the army at the end of World War I, Dole was struck by the unnecessary discipline of sergeants, who forced him "to shave every day for the simple reason that I didn't need to."[38] The ski troop, he insisted, would be different. It would not just "operate in the same way as horse cavalry would," as the

Dole and the military aide of Secretary of War Stimson, who ultimately opened the door to a meeting with Marshall. See Dole, speech at the 10th Mtn Division Reunion, 1970, pp. 10, 11, CMDP, 9.17, DPL.

35. Dole to Franklin D. Roosevelt, 18 July 1940, CMDP, 9.27, DPL.

36. Dole, Operations of Canadian Army in Winter Training, CMDP, 9.27, DPL.

37. Dole to Roosevelt, 18 July 1940, DPL.

38. Dole, *Adventures in Skiing*, 15.

War Department insisted.[39] It would be "a real coherent, self-sustained military outfit," satisfying what Dole saw as modern people's "need for adventure" and allowing individual men to play a role in "struggles" increasingly "taken care of by the organization of the nation."[40] After two years of networking and petitioning the federal government, what Dole and his ski companions created was not far afield from their initial vision. From its establishment in 1941, the Eighty-Seventh Mountain Infantry Regiment was a unit conscious of and insistent upon its exceptionality within the ranks of the U.S. Army, and in American society.

Once President Roosevelt and General Marshall realized the need for a mountain combat unit—driven by the skiers' petitions, the American Alpine Club (AAC)'s support, and new developments on the European front—Dole promised that he and other civilian recruiters would gather the necessary troops.[41] "Where do we get the men familiar with winter living?" he asked Marshall and Secretary of War Henry Stimson. "You cut the red tape and the NSPS will find them."[42] Dole capitalized on his connections and the novelty of mountain sports to make good on his promise. Drawing on the talent of American mountain guides such as Paul Petzoldt and European immigrants like filmmaker Otto Lang as well as climbing and ski instructor Hannes Schneider, Dole curated an image of the ski troop that was both rustic and glamorous, self-sufficient and fraternal. For one of the Tenth's training films, *The Basic Principles of Skiing*, John Jay and Lang assembled a crew of "good looking" men to model ski maneuvers on the slopes of Sun Valley and, in the process, attract "city folk" to volunteer for the unit.[43]

Because of the mountain troop's status as a "distinct and separate organization" that encouraged men to have "initiative and self-reliance" in battle, the NSPS had little trouble recruiting suitable young men.[44] World-class skiers and mountaineers,

39. Dole, *Adventures in Skiing*, 106.

40. Dole, *Adventures in Skiing*, 106, 1.

41. AAC members played a crucial role in the creation and development of the Tenth. After witnessing Swiss mountain troops while on a 1939 climbing trip in the Alps, Bob Bates and H. Adams Carter joined Dole in lobbying Marshall and honorary AAC member Henry Stimson for an American equivalent. Aware of American climbers' dependence on German gear, AAC members also petitioned the War Department to fund and procure American-made climbing and cold weather gear for the nascent outfit. Bates, Brad Washburn, Bill House, and other AAC members helped develop and test this gear—notably, on a 1942 expedition to Mount Denali. See Isserman, *Continental Divide*, 262–68; Albert H. Jackman, "The Tenth Mountain Division," *American Alpine Journal* 6, no. 2 (1946): 187–92.

42. Dole, speech at the 10th Mtn Division Reunion, 1970, p. 2, CMDP, 9.17, DPL.

43. For the quoted phrases, see Lang, *A Bird of Passage*, 226. John Jay, a volunteer for the First Battalion, Eighty-Seventh Regiment and the Tenth's first official historian, also helped produce recruitment footage for the division. In the fall of 1943, his recruitment film *Ski Patrol* attracted around seventy-five thousand viewers. See John Jay, *Ski Down the Years* (Crown, 1966).

44. David Bradley to Dole, 18 February 1941, CMDP, DPL, as cited in Isserman, *Winter Army*, 15. The army began experimenting with mountain training in the winter of 1940–1941,

students from Harvard and outing club leaders from Dartmouth all rushed to join "Minnie's Ski Troops," as the *New Yorker* called it.[45] When the magazine featured mountain soldiers on its cover in February 1942, it bolstered the ski troopers' exclusive reputation and captured the attention of young men in America's middle and upper classes.[46] It also helped that the application process mirrored that of college admissions; candidates had to submit three letters of recommendation that spoke to their outdoor experience, leadership, and intelligence.[47] Students, workers, and athletes from all corners of the country embraced the challenge. At one juncture, Dole's organization mobilized thirty-five hundred men in sixty days.[48] The NSPS recruitment team, a group that professed to be "run by skiers for skiers," quickly captivated the attention of men who had "lived and worked in the mountains, such as rock climbers, trappers, packers, guides, prospectors, timber cruisers."[49] More significantly, though, it succeeded in attracting otherwise inexperienced outdoorsmen who were enthralled by the regiment.

Recruits welcomed the chance to avoid the "monotony and drudgery" of "working on an army assembly line" while acting on their "patriotic conscience."[50] Veteran Sam Meiselman recalled his experience first seeing a recruitment sign for the Tenth: "Volunteers Wanted! Ski Patrol for the Army." At that time, Meiselman "was sick of the grimy Bronx, working on Lexington Avenue for an engineering company, designing oil and gas pipelines." He remembered thinking, "I'm going to get into something tougher than the Marines" and "the guys from the 87th were macho men."[51] Another veteran, Robert J. Nordhaus, joined Meiselman in recalling that "being a skier was a very glamorous idea" and that he "was excited by the equipment

when soldiers from preexisting infantry divisions were sent to Mt. Rainier, the Olympic Mountains, Lake Placid, and elsewhere to develop mountain skills. In 1940, the War Department also created a Winter Warfare Board with the goal of testing equipment and gathering army skiers. It was only on 22 October 1941, however, that Marshall agreed to form a separate alpine unit. This came on the heels of Greek mountain troops' successful repulse of Mussolini's army in Albania. See Isserman, *Winter Army,* and Dole, *Adventures in Skiing*.

45. Eugene Kinkead, Russell Maloney, and Harold Ross, "The Talk of the Town," *New Yorker,* 21 February 1942, 9.

46. Isserman makes a similar point. See *Winter Army*, 20.

47. H. N. Oliphant, "'We Climb to Conquer' Is Motto of Army Alpine Unit: Tricks of Living and Fighting Studied the Hard Way at Camp Hale, Colorado," *Baltimore Sun*, 15 April 1943.

48. Dole, *Adventures in Skiing*, 118.

49. National Ski Patrol Recruitment Advertisement, WH1001, Western History Collection, DPL, as cited in Justin J. Chabalko, *Forging the 10th Mountain Division for War, 1940–45: How Innovation Created a Highly Adaptive Formation* (U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Press, 2020), 23; Dole, "Mountain Forces to be Enlarged, Bulletin 10C," *American Ski Annual* (1942–43), 108, as cited in Coleman, "Culture," 153.

50. Lang, *A Bird of Passage*, 231.

51. Laurie Gwen Shapiro, "The Greatest War Story My Ski Trooper Uncle Ever Told," *Forward,* 28 May 2023.



Still from the Warner Brothers film, "The Mountain Fighters." Soldiers from the Tenth Mountain Division, 87th Mountain Infantry Regiment, execute an about face on skis. [Courtesy of the 10th Mountain Division Resource Center, Denver Public Library, call no. TMD-389]

[and] couldn't wait" to join the ski troopers.[52] Despite the recruits' range of prior outdoor experience—some famous for their ski mountaineering exploits and others, like Meiselman and Nordhaus, having never set foot on snow—one thing bound all of the volunteers together: each wanted to join the mountain troop.[53]

When the Eighty-Seventh relocated from Washington to Colorado and expanded into a multi-regiment division in 1943, Dole continued to lean on the media to attract more volunteers. Journalists and filmmakers promoted his vision of the "skiing, mule-cussing, cliff-scaling mountain troops," carrying out warfare that "could never again be left to conventional troops [and] was a job for experts."[54] Within the year, the U.S. Army had contracted with Warner Brothers Pictures to make a 21-minute recruitment film featuring the mountain troop's training at Pando, Colorado's Camp Hale. Like Jay's instructional film, *The Mountain Fighters*

52. Robert J. Nordhaus, "Battle on the Slopes: World War II's Ski Troops," interview by Joe Richman, *All Things Considered*, hosted by Melissa Block, National Public Radio, 21 September 2007.

53. Isserman, *Winter Army*, 20.

54. Frank Sturdy, "Only Toughest Survive Ordeal of Ski Troops: Zero Weather Is Mild for Trainees in Rockies," *Chicago Tribune,* 4 March 1943.

featured troops alongside strapping actors and contributed to a broader cultural fascination with the soldiers of the Tenth.[55] Written sources increasingly spoke of the camp in dramatic terms, calling it the "finest camp in the United States," unmatched "in climate and scenery."[56] They praised the troops in a similar manner. One 1943 *Chicago Tribune* article, entitled "Only Toughest Survive Ordeal of Ski Troops: Zero Weather Is Mild for Trainees in Rockies," reflected Dole's success in attracting public attention to the troops.

Overlooking the ten thousand workers who constructed their camp and the near-death of thousands of soldiers unequipped for winter living, the media idolized the "Pando Commandos" who trained in the "jagged peaks" of Colorado, overcame the "tremendous depths" of snow drifts, and withstood "one of the coldest and most rugged sections of the Rocky Mountains at an elevation that puts a premium on the mere pitting of man against the elements."[57] The piece did exactly what Dole wished it would, representing the ski troopers not only as courageous—"learning to live a new life in which carelessness means … possibly death"—but also as distinctly self-reliant, as "control is notoriously difficult in mountainous terrain and men who fight there operate in smaller groups, more independently than flat-land soldiers."[58] In rugged mountainscapes and unpredictable climates, a soldier did not and could not simply carry out commands; he had to be his own agent.

Thanks in large part to this attention, Tenth volunteers came to internalize a certain status: as members of the first American alpine unit, as recruits of "the only civilian agency ever entrusted by the Army with the authority to assign men to a particular service or unit," and, most of all, as mountain soldiers.[59] While the army's original Eighty-Seventh Infantry Mountain Regiment continued to morph over the course of the early 1940s in location, substance, and name, its members fiercely clung to this distinct identity.[60]

This identity was as fragile as it was distinct. The early days of training at Camp Hale made this especially evident. The NSPS and War Department had envisioned Pando, Colorado, as an ideal training ground for the Tenth largely

55. Isserman, *Winter Army*, 82.

56. J. A. Chase, "Two Farewells," *Camp Hale Ski-Zette,* 30 September 1944.

57. Sturdy, "Only Toughest Survive Ordeal." For more on the construction of Camp Hale, see Rene L. Coquoz, *The Invisible Men on Skis: The Story of the Construction of Camp Hale and the Occupation by the 10th Mountain Division: 1942–1945* (Johnson, 1970). For more on the role that women played in Camp Hale—specifically, the more than two hundred members of the Women's Army Corps Detachment—see Colorado Snowsports Museum Hall of Fame, "Women at Camp Hale," 13 October 2021.

58. Sturdy, "Only Toughest Survive Ordeal."

59. National Ski Patrol Recruitment Advertisement, WH1001, DPL.

60. The mountain troops trained in numerous places and more than tripled in size between their inception in 1941 and their commission to Italy in 1944. For a helpful timeline of these shifts, see David T. Hoople, *Up Here …* ; *A 10th Mountain Soldier's Letters Home 1943–1945* (Margaret G. Hoople, 2020).

because of its rugged landscape and seclusion. As Dole noted, the Tenth would benefit from the decision-making and anti-institutional freedom afforded by the remote location of the "Shangri La of the Rockies."[61] By the time the camp was ready to host soldiers, however, the valley appeared neither rural nor remote. Between 1942 and 1943, army construction workers had transformed the town from an abandoned mining camp along the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad into a military machine. Within seven months, the Pando Constructors had built thirty-three administration buildings, a hospital, a post office, horse and mule barns, grain and coal storage, a stockade, vehicle facilities, three fire stations, and five churches and chapels.[62]

In large part because of this development, many soldiers expressed disappointment at the gap between the army recruitment films and the reality of military camp. Day-to-day life in Camp Hale was often bleak. Tents, sleeping bags, and other gear regularly failed to withstand the demanding climate, and many volunteers struggled with skiing, finding it more an exercise in humility than in masculine agility. The combination of altitude, vehicle exhaust, cold air, and smoke sickened hundreds of volunteers with the "Pando Hack" and made Camp Hale feel more like inner-city Pittsburgh than Sun Valley, more like London than Mürren, Switzerland. As Austrian ski star and Tenth instructor Friedl Pfeifer recalled, Camp Hale "sure didn't look much like the training movies."[63] As a result, he noted, "Even with the talent the Tenth recruited, it got off to a rough start."[64] Ski champions and novices alike complained of working menial jobs in camp instead of training their bodies in the mountains. This was especially true for Pfeifer: "My first few weeks of training had little to do with mountains and more with dirty dishes, filthy floors, and grimy garbage cans."[65]

In response, Tenth soldiers looked above and beyond Pando and the neighboring town of Leadville for new frontiers in which to maximize the independence promised by membership in the division. They did so specifically in the nearby town of Aspen, where they spent much of their free time skiing, climbing, and drinking. Rotating between the slopes above town and the Jerome Bar below, the troopers found they could blend patriotic service and play, rule-following and -breaking. The dramatic imagery and thrilling footage from Tenth volunteers' weekend excursions made it easier for troops to see themselves in the light that journalists and filmmakers represented them: heroic mountain frontiersmen.

Non-volunteer division members and bureaucratic army officials also threatened the Tenth's elite status. In written reflections, volunteers of the Tenth

61. Abbott Fay, *Ski Tracks in the Rockies: A Century of Colorado Skiing* (Cordillera, 1984), 29.

62. Flint Whitlock and Eric Miller, *10th Mountain Division at Camp Hale* (Arcadia, 2023), 25.

63. Friedl Pfeifer, *Nice Goin': My Life on Skies* (Pictorial Histories, 1994), 107.

64. Pfeifer, *Nice Goin'*, 105.

65. Pfeifer, *Nice Goin'*, 109.

expressed this fear by repeatedly claiming the mountains as evidence of their exceptionality relative to run-of-the-mill commanders and soldiers. Walter E. Howard's diary provides one useful example. Describing the infiltration of Camp Hale by flatland soldiers in July 1943, Howard noted that "it was exciting but also very frustrating," as "many of the officers and enlisted men were not true mountaineers." Taking matters into his own hands, Howard detailed how he "wrote a list of suggested improvements on how troops should operate in the snow" and went on to "hand the brilliant recommendations to my first sergeant, who probably had the lowest IQ in the company."[66] Second Lieutenant Earl E. Clark, a founding member of the Chicago Mountaineering Club and accomplished alpinist in Wyoming's Teton Range, was another soldier who prided himself on his mountaineering expertise. Upon returning from multi-day maneuvers in the mountains, he begrudged the army for not appreciating his "greatest strength": "My mountain knowledge does not mean a thing" to senior officers "because it interferes with the fact that they do not know a damn thing about it and refuse to accept the knowledge of a lesser rank."[67] Minnie Dole applauded the sort of insubordination demonstrated by Howard and Clark. He, too, believed that the army ignored "the advice of the real experts" and was too "rank happy, with rank at the top and brains at the bottom."[68]

The vulnerability of troopers' identity as mountain warriors was perhaps best revealed in the late spring of 1944 when troops were told they had to engage in flatland training at Texas's Camp Swift. Those who considered themselves veteran mountain troops made a point of distinguishing themselves from transfers coming from flatter and more tropical lands, drawing a line between those who had been assigned the Tenth and those who, of their own accord, had chosen to enter its ranks. Glen Dawson, in particular, juxtaposed the ski troopers with "regular Army soldiers" during his time in Texas. Unlike those of the Tenth, these men "probably never graduated high school" and "had no use for mountains. We called them 'pineapple boys'."[69] Dawson, like Howard and Clark, called upon the mountains to distinguish himself from the non-volunteers and non-mountaineers within the army. In doing so, he contributed to the burgeoning self-image of the troops as men whose volunteer status and shared alpine training made them different from the rest.

The ski troopers' reflections reveal what Study #23 of the U.S. Army Ground Forces Report noted; that they saw themselves as a select group of men who were

66. Walter E. Howard Papers, TMD349, 10th Mountain Division Papers, DPL, as cited in A. B. Feuer, *Packs On! Memoirs of the 10th Mountain Division* (Praeger, 2004), 20.

67. Earl E. Clark to his mother, 29 August 1943, Earl E. Clark Papers, TMD8, 10th Mountain Division Papers, DPL, as cited in Isserman, *Winter Army*, 90.

68. Dole, "Birth Pains of the 10th Mountain Division," 1946, unpublished speech, 10th Mountain Division Resource Center, DPL, as cited in Isserman, *Winter Army,* 63, and Shelton, *Climb to Conquer,* 64.

69. Glen Dawson diary, 10th Mountain Division Personal Papers, TMD309, 10th Mountain Division Papers, DPL, as cited in Feuer, *Packs On*, 71.

chosen because of their mountain skills.[70] Beneath its confident veneer, though, their writing exposed members' deeper anxiety. To justify their "elect" status, they had to prove and maintain their difference. Tenth volunteers' shared consciousness as mountain soldiers rested on their simultaneous resistance to and assertion of authority. Such a tension was baked into the Tenth from its inception. On the one hand, the wartime demand for mountain troopers expanded access to the mountains. It allowed men of different classes and geographies to enter an otherwise upper-class world. Similar to the Dartmouth Outing Club, however, Minnie's Ski Troop was founded on elite connections and was bent on remaining an exclusive group. The very freedom and superior rank in which it took pride depended on maintaining distance from others in the army and broader society. If not in wealth or social status, one had to have the "physical fitness obviously needed" to be a member of this elite group of alpine patriots.[71]

The Making of a Mountain Brotherhood

In the late afternoon of 24 February 1944, Richard Rocker peered over his skis into a rock-strewn gully above Camp Hale. Well-aware of the fleeting sun and swelling wind, the thirty-three-year-old and the thirty-two men who accompanied him faced grim choices: inch down the couloir and hope to arrive in the cloud-veiled valley below or retreat down the crest of the Williams Mountains, away from the group's final destination. Completing the forty-mile traverse from their military base in Leadville to Aspen was a test of Tenth members' "training and experience in route finding, group cooperation, safety, [and] self-sufficiency."[72] And it was one they were not going to fail. "Better to risk it," Rocker reflected later, "than stay where we were."[73] One by one, the men dropped into the chute.

The 1944 recon mission was just the sort of adventure that young men dreamed of when they volunteered to join the Eighty-Seventh Mountain Infantry Regiment and that members of what became the Tenth Mountain Division prided themselves on during and after the war. Not long after the soldiers slid down Hunter Creek drainage into Aspen and completed their traverse, the Tenth's own newspaper spread word of the skiers' impressive feat. Glossing over past failures at

70. Govan, "The Army Ground Forces Training for Mountain and Winter Warfare, Study No. 23."

71. Minnie Dole, "National Ski Association of America, Consultant to War Department for the Selection of Specialized Personnel for Mountain Troops," Bulletin No. 10D, 1942, CMDP, 2.11, DPL.

72. "Recon, MTG, and Petzoldt Make Rugged 50-Mile Ski Trek to Aspen," *Camp Hale Ski-Zette,* 3 March 1944. William Philpott describes a similar expedition that the Tenth Recon took in June 1943. See Philpott, *Vacationland: Tourism and Environment in the Colorado High Country* (University of Washington Press, 2013), 25–26.

73. Richard Rocker, "Trooper Traverse: 1944 First Person Account Richard Rocker," annotated condensed and lightly edited account (Wildsnow.com). Complete text for this account can be found in the 10th Mountain Division Collection at the DPL.



Campsite of the 41st Division Ski Patrol, 10th Mountain Division [Courtesy of the 10th Mountain Division Resource Center, Denver Public Library, call no. TMD 406]

the traverse, *The Camp Hale Ski-Zette* reinforced the division's rustic and romantic nature. "Taking off into the real wilderness … all covered with deep and powdered snow," making bivouacs "with improvised shelters," and donning upwards of 50–60 pounds of gear as they trekked up and skied down thousands of snowy feet across the continental divide, the ski troopers were a pioneering group.[74] Skiing not just out of necessity but by their own free will, not just taking commands but carving their own path, they were more than just soldiers. The ski troopers were modern American frontiersmen.[75]

74. "Recon, MTG, and Petzoldt."

75. Despite the *Camp Hale Ski-Zette*'s talk of "real wilderness," and as was true of Turner's "frontier," these mountains were neither uninhabited nor untraveled space before the Tenth skied over them. Ute peoples had been hunting, fishing, and living in and around the towns that would be called Aspen and Leadville for over 800 years prior to the arrival of white settlers in the mid-nineteenth century. Trappers and prospectors, geologists and surveyors had also traveled over these peaks in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the mid- to late nineteenth century, coal, gold, and silver mining, railroad construction, and other mineral-based industries brought immigrants and businessmen deeper into the mountains of this region. See Isserman, *Continental Divide*; Mark Fiege, *The Republic of Nature: An Environmental History of the United States* (University of Washington Press, 2012); Thomas Andrews, *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War* (Harvard University Press, 2010).

The more the soldiers wrote and talked about their exceptional nature, the more they came to adopt a shared identity as American mountain soldiers.[76] Gordon Lowe remembered a formative moment while deployed on Alaska's Kiska Island to fight the Japanese in August 1943.[77] When the troops were sent to the ocean to practice descending rope ladders, his compatriots apparently turned to one another, each with the same thought: "What in the world are we doing that for? We're ski troopers!"[78] Bob Traynor of the Eighty-Fifth Regiment recalled another story in which the troops were told they had to engage in flatland training at Texas's Camp Swift. "Morale went right down through the basement," he admitted, going on to share that the troops' attitude shifted again when beloved Lieutenant General George Price Hays returned from commanding the Second Infantry Division's artillery in France. The "first thing he said is that we could put 'mountain' on our patch and morale went right up through the roof."[79] Volunteers expressed the same fears as Otto Lang; they worried about being part of a "forced and artificial … feudal environment" and wanted the "feeling of exhilaration in belonging" to a community of mountain lovers.[80]

Throughout their training and active combat, Tenth recruits forged this sense of belonging through the act of singing about their connection to the mountains. Between the Eighty-Seventh Regiment's birth in Fort Lewis, Washington, and Tenth members' return from the Italian front in 1945, soldiers wrote and performed dozens of songs, among them "The 87th is Best By Far."[81] Minnie Dole recalled how men of the Eighty-Seventh "would form a singing group and get out guitars … after a day's drill" on Mount Rainier, repeatedly centering their words on the mountains that bound them together.[82] The lyrics of W. T. Levitt's popular "Song of the Mountain Infantry" offer one example:

Men of steel and songs of Mars,
Under freedom's stripes and stars
We are ski men

76. Coleman and Isserman each emphasize this point in their books: Coleman, *Ski Style*; Isserman, *Winter Army*.

77. Isserman, *Winter Army,* 26. In June 1942, Japan conquered the Aleutian Islands of Attu and Kiska following their attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 and their conquest of the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, the Solomon Islands, and Singapore. By the time the Eighty-Seventh Mountain Infantry was deployed to the Aleutians alongside forty thousand other American soldiers in August 1943, the Japanese had left. Eighteen Tenth soldiers suffered deaths from "friendly fire," booby traps, and other accidents during their time in Alaska.

78. Gordon Lowe, "Vermont WWII 10th Mountain Division Veterans—2003 Inductees," posted 7 July 2020 by Vermont Ski & Snowboard Museum, YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jvUFxGqLr_Q).

79. Bob Traynor, "Vermont WWII 10th Mountain Division Veterans."

80. Lang, *A Bird of Passage*, 63, 27.

81. George F. Earle, *History of the 87th Mountain Infantry, Italy, 1945* (Bradford Robinson, 1945), 7.

82. Dole, *Adventures in Skiing*, 111.

We are free men
And mountains are our home …

They call us white clad G.I. Joe
We're the phantoms of the snow,
On our ski boards we're the mountain,
Happy go lucky free
And from Kiska to the Alps [83]

In associating the mountains with freedom, the Tenth projected ideas of superiority onto the mountains and shaped a collective identity as spirited Americans.

This was the case at Camp Hale as on Mount Rainier. In the winter and spring of 1944, when several ski troopers began to feel that they were merely "fighting the battle of Colorado" and wasting their elite mountain training, many soldiers continued to turn to the mountains for a renewed sense of purpose.[84] Chuck Hampton recalled how many Tenth members "spent precious weekends skiing and climbing instead of or in addition to pursuing the more common military sports."[85] After climbing two Colorado "Fourteeners" on skis, for example, Mountain Training Group instructor Glen Dawson proudly recounted that he had climbed the "second and third highest peaks in the U.S. (not counting Alaska)."[86] If their alpine skills were not going to be used in battle, the men of the Tenth would at least join other mountaineers in building a community around the peaks they ascended.

Before long, the ski troopers were called upon to do both. Heading from their training in the Colorado Rockies to active combat in Italy's Apennines in January 1945, the men finally had the chance to test their shared alpine expertise against Hitler's "Gothic Line."[87] The Tenth's deployment evoked different responses. Though it was the division's raison d'être, Minnie Dole looked upon the troop's forthcoming engagement with a sense of defeat. No longer even "know[ing] where the Tenth had gone" and having to depend primarily on the War Department for updates, he felt "as though I had lost my best friend."[88] Enlisted men such as Lieutenant Colonel Paul Townsend wrote in similarly demoralized terms. The "crowded troopship" on their transatlantic voyage to Naples was a harsh contrast to the "Happy go lucky free" troopers in Camp Hale, and the "gloomy city" they

83. W. T. Levitt, "Song of the Mountain Infantry," as cited in Hoople, *Up Here*, 5.

84. Corporal Arnold Holeywell, "Stick to the Fight," *Camp Hale Ski-Zette,* 10 March 1944, 2.

85. Charles M. Hampton Papers, TMD228, 10th Mountain Division Resource Center, DPL, as cited in Shelton, *Climb to Conquer*, 97.

86. Glen Dawson diary, 10th Mountain Division Personal Papers, TMD309, 10th Mountain Division Papers, DPL; "10th Recon, MTG Make Ascents to Mts. Elbert, Massive, second and Third Highest Peaks in This Country," *Camp Hale Ski-Zette,* 7 January 1944.

87. For more on Hitler's Gothic Line and the Italian Campaign, see Christian Jennings, *At War on the Gothic Line: Fighting in Italy, 1944–45* (St. Martin's Press, 2016).

88. Dole, *Adventures in Skiing*, 127.

experienced upon arrival hardly resembled America's Rockies.[89] Tenth soldiers on the front also faced a humbling scene, as members of other army divisions dubbed soldiers the "Ski Club Boys" and questioned their capacity to fight.[90] The Tenth's experience in Italy initially tested the self-image they had developed as a cohesive group of self-sufficient soldiers. Ultimately, though, their time in combat helped ski troopers strengthen the links they had forged between mountains and freedom, and between mountain warriors and Americanism.

This is in large part because of the outfit's success in battle. Scaling the 1,700- to 2,000-foot west flank of Riva Ridge on the night of 18 February 1945 and claiming Mount Belvedere from the Germans in the following days, they proved that they were no longer "playing at soldiering."[91] Unlike the Tenth's experience on Mount Rainier and on the ridgelines above Camp Hale, in Italy, there was hardly "time to rest or … think," let alone to distinguish status within the unit.[92] "We had a common dress and a two-fold purpose in life," E. P. Motley recalled, "To live and to kill."[93] Some soldiers were luckier than others. During the spring of 1945, the Eighty-Fifth, Eighty-Sixth, and Eighty-Seventh Regiments suffered their greatest losses as they joined other army outfits in pushing the Germans north through the Po River valley. By the time General Fridolin Rudolph von Senger surrendered to General George Hays on 2 May 1945, the Italian Campaign had cost the Tenth 975 soldiers, or around 7 percent of the 13,365 sent overseas. An additional 3,871 men were wounded, and twenty were taken prisoners of war.[94]

Soldiers and media commentators were quick to emphasize the regenerative nature of this sacrifice. They praised the Tenth's mountain skills for enabling the immediate liberation of Italians and helping accelerate the victory of the "free world." As Philipp Winter recalled, they were the "first American soldiers" to witness it in Italy: "Liberated people cheer, kiss, shake hands … It is a triumphal ride through [a] liberated country."[95] The Tenth's frontline experience also had a profound effect on the soldiers themselves. Many men romanticized how the elemental struggle of warfare—fighting against a common enemy, a common

89. Hoople, *Up Here*, 5; Paul Townsend, as cited in Dole, *Adventures in Skiing,* 127.

90. Dole, *Adventures in Skiing*, 129.

91. Dole, *Adventures in Skiing*, 14.

92. Melvin Borders Jr., *King of the Mountain*, Minigraph #MG-706 (Merriam, 1982), as cited in Feuer, *Packs On*, 86.

93. E. P. (Preble) Motley, "Memoirs of Six Months," 15, 1990, box 1381, 10th Mountain Division Collection, DPL.

94. For a more detailed account and chronology of the Tenth Mountain Division's engagement in Italy, see John Imbrie, *Chronology of the 10th Mountain Division in World War II* (National Association of the 10th Mountain Division, Inc., June 2004).

95. Philipp Winter, "Rockies Apennines, and Alps. A Short History of the Only Mountain Clearing Company from Camp Hale to Lake Garda, 1945," TMD5, DPL, as cited in Florian Traussnig, *Militärischer Widerstand von außen: Österreicher in US-Armee und Kriegsgeheimdienst im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Böhlau, 2016), 200.

mountain, a common death—deepened their connection to each other. Having "learned to overcome the psychological fears that mountains often create in men" and with "no profit motives or politics to create tensions," veterans like "Preb" Motley found that a "bond of unifying friendship penetrated the front."[96]

Just as the Tenth's successful assault on German forces in the Po valley strengthened their reputation as an "outfit so completely mountainized," it also further solidified the mountains' reputation as Turnerian frontier space.[97] Foregrounding the "virtually sheer ridge" and the division's "ability to conquer rugged terrain … when a battalion scaled the five-mile-long 3,500 foot ridge," the press glorified the inaccessibility of vertical landscapes and the ability of Tenth soldiers to confront them.[98] In praising the Tenth for having captured an "Italian Peak and Ridge," news reporters attributed the troopers' heroism to their battling of alpine elements as much as their battling of enemy forces. The publicity of the "Famed Skiers" enhanced a message that Dole had long communicated; mountains could be battlefields, and mountain sports could be an "art of war."[99] Those who embraced "the struggle to stay alive" could reap the benefits of the Tenth—namely, self-betterment and group solidarity.[100]

After the war, members of the Tenth worked to further establish a shared narrative of the mountains as spaces capable of fostering independence, patriotic devotion, and even transnational unity. Their vision was not groundless. In several instances, Tenth volunteers had experienced the power of the mountains to transform national ideals into concrete realities. Joining the division afforded some men the opportunity to literally become American. Around five hundred men, including St. Anton am Arlberg's Toni Matt, Luggi Foeger, and Herbert Schneider, as well as Sun Valley's Florian Haemmerle and Friedl Pfeifer, earned citizenship by volunteering for the mountain troops.[101] In 1943 and 1944, the shared hardships of training in the Colorado Rockies knit together a group of socioeconomically and culturally diverse ski troopers from Norway and Austria, Massachusetts and Texas. Amid and in the immediate aftermath of the war, the Central Alps provided soldiers the chance to build connections with their international allies and perceived enemies: the Italian families who hosted them in the mountain village of Catigliano; the Slovenians who witnessed their divisional

96. Motley, "Memoirs of Six Months," 15, 80.

97. Sid Feder, "Famed Skiers Among Captors of Italian Peak and Ridge," as cited in Pfeifer, *Nice Goin',* 124.

98. Pfeifer, *Nice Goin',* 124.

99. Dole, *Adventures in Skiing,* 2. This link had already been established for members of the German and Austrian Alpine Association who fought on the Alpine front during the Great War. For more on the militarization of the Alps and mountain climbing in Germany and Austria post-World War I, see Keller, "The Mountains Roar: The Alps During the Great War," *Environmental History* 14 (April 2009): 253–74.

100. Dole, *Adventures in Skiing*, 1.

101. Coleman, *Ski Style*, 101. See also Fay, *Ski Tracks in the Rockies*, 29.

ski race on Mt. Mangart on 3 June 1945; and even the German and Austrian mountaineers they befriended during their mid-hike stays at the *Oberwalderhütte* and other alpine refuges.[102] And on 24 May 1985, long after the war had ended, the mountains became a space where Tenth veterans worked with those of several European mountain divisions to create the International Federation of Mountain Soldiers (IFMS), an organization intended to build peace and friendship among mountain and skiing soldiers.[103]

The founding of the federation marked a fitting conclusion to the ski troopers' story, cementing their shared identity as mountain warriors. It also furthered their legacy as men whose affection for the mountains had the capacity to generate national and international solidarity through "the comradeship especially marked in mountain troops."[104] Fifty years after the Tenth Mountain Division had broken through Hitler's "Gothic Line," veterans from the Italian, German, and American mountain troops met in the Apennine Mountains once again, symbolically climbing the "now tranquil Riva Ridge" together and "dedicating the International Peace Path" on 18 February 1995. As one participating veteran recalled, "It makes me feel very proud to have been a part of it. We did something good. Liberty is here. Freedom is here. I can't tell you how moving it is to come back and to realize that this has been part of my life."[105]

Through the IFMS, the mountain troopers made manifest their idea that mountains were free and flexible spaces with the potential to bring people together in the face of loss, division, and war, to "conserve the memory of fallen comrades," and to "create a world of lasting peace, brotherhood and justice."[106] Speaking of the IFMS's annual "Alpine" meeting in 2019, affiliate member Mario Rumo wrote of this potential:

> the event was again a chance to get soldiers of different Nations together, soldiers who have a common denominator: the slant of the slopes, the weariness and sweat that the mountain imposes, the

102. For more on each of these examples, respectively, see John Fitzgerald's memoirs in Feuer, *Packs On*, 96–103; Shelton, *Climb to Conquer*, 182, 221–23; and Chris Anthony's documentary film, *Mission Mt. Mangart: An Untold 10th Mountain Division Story of WW2* (Warren Miller Productions, 2021).

103. Imbrie, *Chronology*.

104. Gregor Kastelic, "25 Years of International Federation of Mountain Soldiers (IFMS)" (https://zvgs.si/images/mednarodno-sodelovanje/IFMS_E_14A.pdf).

105. *Fire on the Mountain*, directed by Beth and George Gage (1996; First Run Features, 2003), DVD.

106. Kastelic, "25 Years of IFMS." The Tenth were hardly the only soldiers to secure their memory to the mountains. Mountains also functioned as places of memory for members of the English Lake District's Fell and Rock Climbing Club who mourned the loss of their friends in World War I. See Jonathan Westaway, "Mountains of Memory, Landscapes of Loss: Scafell Pike and Great Gable as War Memorials, 1919–24," *Landscapes* 14, no. 2 (2013), and Veronica della Dora, *Mountain: Nature and Culture* (University of Chicago Press, 2016).

> cursing that sometimes slips, in different languages but with equal commitment and meaning, the sense of duty, the equal pride of belonging to an extraordinary group.[107]

Even before their division's formal initiation, the mountain troopers came to see themselves as such an "extraordinary group," and they used the mountains to lay claim to this elitism.

In large part because of the shared trauma of war, however, the men of the Tenth increasingly reimagined the mountains as shared landscapes, symbolic of peace, brotherhood, and democracy. More importantly, they reimagined themselves as custodians of these free spaces, men who had fought to safeguard "the Blessings of Liberty" and cherish them in the mountains.[108] The more they returned to the peaks of Colorado and the massifs of the Alps, the more they secured their place in a distinct community of skiers, adventurers, and soldiers, all of whom asserted their democratic identity on the vertical frontier.

The Making of a Mountain Pioneer

In his 1895 article "Mountains and History," historian Edmund Alden referred to peaks and ranges across the globe as "conservators of the past, as aids in the development of freedom, [and] as powerful stimulants of imagination."[109] The Tenth Mountain Division labored to actualize Alden's proclamation. Through contributions to the postwar outdoor industry, the building of alpine memorials, and the act of backcountry skiing, veterans used the mountains not only to remember their experience in the Tenth but also to be remembered as alpine pioneers. Abundant evidence suggests that they succeeded.

Upon returning home, Tenth veterans joined millions of others in reaping the benefits of postwar economic expansion. Through the G.I. Bill—and the privileged loans that their predominantly white skin allowed them—Tenth veterans could get an education, buy a car, marry, purchase a detached home in the suburbs, and find a white-collar job in the city.[110] Many of the former ski troopers, however, expressed a desire for more than the standardized life of an "Organization Man" who followed the rules of his employer just as he had his superior in the army.[111] In training and battle, Tenth members had prided themselves on their

107. Mario Rumo, "International Federation of Mountain Soldiers at Alpini's meeting for centenary celebration," 22 August 2019 (https://www.mountainsoldiers.org/international-federation-of-mountain-soldiers-at-alpinis-meeting-for-centenary-celebration/).

108. U.S. Const. pmbl.

109. Edmund Alden, "Mountains and History," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association* (Government Printing Office, 1895), 521. Also cited in Keller, *Apostles of the Alps*, 11.

110. Though the vast majority of Tenth members were white, there were three hundred Mexicans and American Indians who also served in the division. For more on the experience of Eighty-Seventh Regiment, Company K volunteer Cruz F. Rios Jr., see Val Rios, "My Father's War: WWII through the Lens of a Latino American Soldier," *Folklife,* 18 July 2017.

111. William H. Whyte, *The Organization Man* (Simon and Schuster, 1956).

relative independence. Now, they collectively resisted subordination at the hands of the corporate state. Ralph Lafferty captured the emotions of most veterans when he remembered "want[ing] to hold onto the feeling they had had in the mountains."[112] Though several traumatized veterans refused to speak of their wartime experiences for decades—and others never returned to the Rockies or Apennines—a disproportionate number found the mountains to be sites of joy and healing in their post-1945 lives. Despite having witnessed death by shrapnel and machine gun fire on Riva Ridge and having experienced near-death by frostbite, rock fall, avalanche, and exhaustion during maneuvers in Colorado's Elk Mountains, many veterans felt an intimate bond with vertical landscapes. They regarded the mountains not just as backdrops of battle but as living presences that had shaped their bodies, friendships, and souls.

Though many men of the Tenth went on to play leading roles in American society, most did so on their own terms. Channeling the very qualities they had written into the Tenth's character, they "continued to innovate … and put their love of the outdoors to work."[113] Their hall of fame is indeed staggering: Paul Petzoldt, founder of the National Outdoor Leadership School; Robert Dole, U.S. Senator; Bill Bowerman, founder of Nike; David Brower, Sierra Club Executive Director.[114] Hundreds of Tenth veterans also poured their energy into the burgeoning ski world, relocating to mountain towns across the country. Whether serving as resort founders or gear developers, ski instructors or directors, college or Olympic coaches, Tenth veterans have been rightly recognized for playing a foundational role in the expansion of the postwar ski industry.

As they rose to fame as outdoor recreationists, conservationists, politicians, and businessmen, the veterans of the Tenth effectively solidified their collective narrative as Americans with "dominant individualism, working … withal [sic] that buoyancy and exuberance which comes with freedom."[115] They also went to lengths to memorialize it in the mountains. Soon after its genesis in 1958, the Tenth Mountain Division Foundation erected several monuments in honor of the Tenth, the first of which was on Tennessee Pass in Colorado, near the Tenth's ski training area at Cooper Hill. In the 1980s, veteran Fritz Benedict also spearheaded an effort to develop an honorary Tenth Mountain Hut System that would trace the route troops had skied from Leadville to Aspen in the winter of 1944. After five years of petitioning the U.S. Forest Service, the former ski trooper finally realized his dream of an American hut-to-hut *Haute Route* to "help preserve a kind of simple

112. *Fire on the Mountain*, dir. Beth and George Gage.

113. *The Last Ridge: The Uphill Battles of the 10th Mountain Division in World War II*, produced by Abbie Kealy (Janson Media Studio, 2007), DVD.

114. Newc Eldredge, "Battle on the Slopes: World War II's Ski Troops," interview by Joe Richman, *All Things Considered*, hosted by Melissa Block, National Public Radio, 21 September 2007.

115. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 37.

enjoyment in the mountains."[116] In claiming the land on which the Tenth once trained, the thirty-eight structures continue to function as sites of memory; whereas they were once places for veterans to remember their time together, now they are places where American recreationists can remember the Tenth.

The recent surge in attention to the Tenth is a testament to the ongoing appeal of their story for many Americans. Since the reactivation of the division in 1985, over thirty historical accounts have been written about the unit and numerous documentary films have been released, many of which have received acclaim. There have been thousands of sold-out screenings of Chris Anthony's *Mission Mt. Mangart* (2021) in mountain towns and alpine clubs around the world, and more than ten thousand students have seen the award-winning film.[117] *Alpinist* co-founder Christian Beckwith's podcast *Ninety-Pound Rucksack*—which heroizes the Tenth as anti-authoritarian, radically free Americans—is also popular in mountain towns across the American West.

President Joe Biden's designation of the ski troopers' training grounds as a national monument on 12 October 2022 only further solidified their status as American frontiersmen, and the mountains' status as American frontier space.

> These peaks and valleys forged the elite soldiers of the famed 10th Mountain Division … which helped free Europe from the grip of Nazi control in World War II … [and] who, after their return from World War II, applied the skills they learned in the Camp Hale and Tenmile Range area to establish America's skiing and outdoor recreation industry.[118]

Biden's proclamation on "Camp Hale–Continental Divide National Monument" reaffirmed that the Tenth was a group tied together by "the great common love of the mountains" and "endowed with the best qualities in the American character: individualism and cooperation, independence and entrepreneurship, inventiveness and a need for freedom."[119] It emboldened the identity that Tenth founders and soldiers fashioned, and that American authors and recreationists continue to applaud; in looking upwards rather than outwards in pursuit of individuality and freedom, the ski troopers became exceptional promoters of democratic progress, "continuing to move forward, always forward, always forward."[120]

116. Fritz Benedict, as cited in Shelton, *Climb to Conquer*, 250. The *Haute Route* (High Route) is an established mountaineering traverse between Chamonix, France, and Zermatt, Switzerland. The military version of the *Haute Route*, the *Patrouille des Glaciers*, is now a ski mountaineering race organized by the Swiss armed forces that continues to see American participation to this day. See Patrouille des Glaciers (https://www.pdg.ch/en/).

117. Chris Anthony, *Mission Mt. Mangart: An Untold 10th Mountain Division Story of WW2* (Warren Miller Productions, 2021; https://www.chrisanthony.com/mission-mt-mangart).

118. Proclamation No. 10476, 87 Fed. Reg. 2022 (12 October 2022).

119. *Fire on the Mountain*, dir. Beth and George Gage; Shelton, *Climb to Conquer*, 240.

120. General George Price Hays, as cited in Isserman, *Winter Army,* xii.

In one sense, this legacy is well-deserved. Just as the division expanded access to the mountains during the war, they played a crucial role in doing so after it. Millions of postwar Americans joined the Tenth in looking to the mountains for freedom from the constraints of modern society. Middle-class citizens with newfound wealth, in particular, welcomed alpine tourism as an avenue for reimagining their status and autonomy, flocking to the national parks in the summer and to ski resorts in wintertime.[121] Between 1945 and 1947, national forest visitation more than tripled in Colorado alone, and by the 1950s, over half a million Americans had newly taken to the sport of skiing.[122] "Godmother of powder skiing" Dolores LaChapelle (1926–2007) personified this trend.[123] Following on the heels of the Mountain Division, she purchased Tenth skis at an army surplus store for $8.59 and took to the snow with fellow Denverites.[124] LaChapelle recalled how she "never thought we'd ski" because "Back in the 30s, skiing was for rich people."[125] Thanks to the wartime mobilization of the ski troopers, though, she too could "experience in powder [snow] … the original human self … still undamaged despite what our present culture tries to do to us."[126] Albeit wishing to escape the arbitrary wall of separation between humans and nature that Turner presumed, LaChapelle projected the same sorts of Turnerian promises as the Tenth had onto the alpine backcountry. In untracked powder snow, she suggested, individuals could break free from modern society, lose themselves in nature, and ultimately, find themselves born again in the process. Even better, one need not experience the trauma of alpine warfare to reap the transformative rewards of intense alpine exercise.

As is true of most stories, however, there was a gap between narrative and reality. First, skiing and climbing remained highly inaccessible, primarily white activities in post-World War II America.[127] Second, while the popularization of mountain

121. See Bernard Augustine DeVoto, "Let's Close the National Parks," *Harper's Magazine,* October 1953, and Andrew Denning, "How Skiing Went From the Alps to the Masses," *The Atlantic,* 23 February 2015. See also Coleman, *Ski Style,* 117–46, for a discussion of the ways that postwar consumer culture and technological advancements shaped the ski industry.

122. Coleman, *Ski Style*, 125.

123. Julia Case, "The Godmother of Powder Skiing," *Wasatch Magazine,* 13 February 2021.

124. Dolores LaChapelle, journal, 22 November 1943, Dolores LaChapelle Papers, San Juan Historical Society, Silverton, CO.

125. Dolores LaChapelle, as cited in Rob Story, "Between Earth and Heaven," *POWDER* 28, no. 4 (9 November 1997).

126. Dolores LaChapelle, *Deep Powder Snow: Forty-Years of Ecstatic Skiing, Avalanches, and Earth Wisdom* (Kivaki Press, 1993), 94. LaChapelle ultimately resented the anthropocentric and Cartesian principles underlying Turner's vision, becoming an enthusiastic proponent of "Deep Ecology," a radical environmental movement that defended the rights of nonhuman beings to life. But LaChapelle still joined thousands of other postwar backcountry skiers in spending much of her life chasing fresh snow and untracked terrain to experience communion with nature.

127. See Annie Gilbert Coleman, "The Unbearable Whiteness of Skiing," *Pacific Historical Review* 65, no. 4 (1996): 583–614.

recreation reflected the context of postwar economic recovery and reinforced the Tenth's self-image as American trailblazers, it also threatened the frontier myth that shaped and sustained the ski troopers' attachment to the mountains.[128] As veterans went on to shape and witness developments in the outdoor recreation industry, the mountains they had defined as free became filled with the very crowds and industry from which they had wished to escape. In the process of taking to climbing as a subversive act of liberation, droves of young adults colonized big walls across the country with expansion bolts and human traffic.[129] Where there were only an estimated twelve thousand climbers in the United States before World War II, by 2000, there were approximately 5.7 million.[130] The ski resorts that the Tenth founded also rapidly transformed their beloved mountains into commodified landscapes—or, in the words of environmental historian William Philpott, "products: manufactured, packaged, branded, and marketed like so many consumer goods."[131] Despite the ski troopers' attempts to escape the reality of state-sponsored and corporate imperialism, it proved their constant shadow. By the end of their lives, many Tenth veterans found that they had played a considerable role in accelerating the sort of modern change they had resisted.

The postwar experiences of Tenth veterans Friedl Pfeifer and David Brower are especially telling. Once Pfeifer recovered from battle wounds, he pursued a project he had dreamed of since training in the Colorado Rockies: founding a ski resort in the former mining town of Aspen. Pfeifer partnered with Container Corporation of America CEO Walter Paepcke to do so. Pooling their financial resources, business connections, and mountain knowledge, the men transformed the remote town into an international destination and celebrity hotspot. The success of their efforts threatened the ski utopia and "serene and exclusive intellectual enclave" they had envisioned, though.[132] Between the 1945 founding of Aspen Skiing Corporation and Aspen Resort's opening on 11 January 1947, developers mapped plans for ski lifts and runs, and workers and volunteers bulldozed the trees necessary to put them in place. In the 1950s, highways such as U.S. 40 and U.S. 6 cut through the mountains to bring tourist-packed cars to the slopes, and postwar air travel increased access to the Rockies.[133]

128. Andrew Denning, "Alpine Modern: Central European Skiing and the Vernacularization of Cultural Modernism, 1900–1939," *Central European History* 46, no. 4 (December 2013): 854.

129. Isserman, *Continental Divide*, 270.

130. Christian Beckwith, "State of the Art: Episode 02, Part 2," 16 October 2022, in *Ninety-Pound Rucksack* (https://christianbeckwith.com/the-state-of-the-art-climbing-part-2/); "Trend Spotting," in *State of the Industry Report 2000*, ORCA, Michael Hodgson and Therese Iknoian outdoor industry collection (UUS_ORA 005), box 1, folder 3, Special Collections and Archives, Utah State University Merrill-Cazier Library, Logan, Utah.

131. Philpott, *Vacationland*, 5.

132. Sally Barlow-Perez, *A History of Aspen* (Who Press, 1991), 46.

133. Coleman, *Ski Style*, 125.

Facing an explosion of visitation in the 1960s and 1970s, Pfeifer lamented how "residents like myself found the crowding over-powering and very stressful."[134] As Twentieth Century Fox, Aetna Life Insurance Co., and other corporations capitalized on the investment potential in the region, the St. Anton native found that "Resort policy was now decided in distant board rooms by faceless people who had no personal connection to the community."[135] By the 1980s, Pfeifer increasingly expressed disgust with the resort town whose economic colonization he had helped fuel.

In response, Pfeifer "decided to pursue another dream" and searched for new frontiers to realize it. Trading "some land I still owned at the base of Buttermilk Mountain," he retired on a six-hundred-acre ranch in St. Ignatius, Montana.[136] The benefits were plentiful: "beautiful trees and surrounded by majestic mountains," and perhaps most importantly, a nearby "big mountain where skiers were few and the snow ran deep."[137]

David Brower and other veterans took a similar approach. Seeking new means to escape and differentiate themselves from the masses, they looked beyond the lift lines and slalom courses to the "winter frontier," where they could once again feel like "a pioneer."[138] In the 1947 *American Ski Annual*, Brower articulated the promises of the "sky-land" in a world where skiing had become so popular that "a fresh fall of powder snow would hardly last more than a matter of hours before the lift-riding throng, riding and sliding repeatedly, would pack the fluffiest powder into a substance resembling concrete."[139] To the Californian environmentalist, ski mountaineering was more than an experience of human pleasure; it was a means of actualizing American freedoms:

> And what a playground you have!—America's wilderness—shriveling, yes, but still broad enough and unexplored enough to be a winter frontier for many … Head high for the open, untracked slopes where the powder lasts the longest. … Look down on the world![140]

Unlike sliding down a groomed piste, backcountry skiing afforded individuals the chance to experience the agency of carving new paths—or "first tracks"—into the snow, a feeling increasingly hard to come by as Colorado resort visitation skyrocketed to over eight and a half million skiers by the mid-eighties.[141] Fresh snowfall cloaked otherwise travelled slopes with a pristine veneer, making it easier

134. Pfeifer, *Nice Goin'*, 206.

135. Pfeifer, *Nice Goin'*, 209.

136. Pfeifer, *Nice Goin'*, 206.

137. Pfeifer, *Nice Goin'*, 207.

138. David Brower, "Skiing the Sky-Land," *American Ski Annual* (1947), 50, Joyce Sports Research Collection, University of Notre Dame Rare Books & Special Collections.

139. Brower, "Skiing the Sky-Land," 52.

140. Brower, "Skiing the Sky-Land," 50, 59.

141. Fay, *Ski Tracks in the Rockies*, 71.

for skiers to claim that they had realized "the possibility of a creative way of life in harmony with our world."[142] Such was the persistent dissonance embedded in the ski troopers'—and many other alpine recreationists'—vision of the mountains: they offered individual liberty, but only so long as they remained private; they offered the potential for fusion with nature, but only so long as they remained nonhuman.

Here, as with Turner's thesis, the narrative of the Tenth exposes anxiety as much as it does conquest and triumph. In a rapidly changing world with an indistinct line between war and peace, individual and mass, these men were conscious of their fleeting selves. This was the case in military camps and on the Italian front of World War II. Rather than accept death—literally, in battle, or figuratively, as anonymous bodies within the army and nation—the men of the Tenth bound their identities to the mountains and strained to immortalize themselves as American pioneers. Facing the "sale and disposal of public lands" and "the lack of a highly developed civic spirit," veterans also struggled with the same question as their predecessors; if American freedoms depended on the existence of "open space," where was one to go when land even as ostensibly enduring as the mountains proved limited and fragile?[143]

The Tenth does not offer a clear answer, but their narrative forces us to expand our understanding of the places and activities where America "happens," where Americans construct and question their existence. It reminds us to take Turner's thesis seriously, not because of its accuracy but because of the enduring—though oft-hidden—forms of "incessant expansion" in this country.[144] Tenth members, like all individuals and groups who went west, do not fit neatly into Turner's waves of settlement. They were not part of the farmers' advance or the ranchers' exploitation of virgin soil; they were no more pioneers than they were settlers. Yet paying attention to who the Tenth thought they were reveals the ongoing centrality of "open space" in American culture and debunks the myth that the frontier was ever closed. For veterans and their followers, the ideal and "love of wilderness freedom … drew the frontier ever onward."[145] And upward.

142. Bela Vadasz, foreword to *Wild Snow: 54 Classic Ski and Snowboard Descents of North America,* by Louis Dawson (Mountaineers Books, 1998), xxii.

143. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 41, 36.

144. Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, 37.

145. Turner, *The Frontier in American History,* 35, 36.

When "Lives Were as Cheap as Chickens": Dark Histories of the Barrio during the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines, 1942–1945

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Greg Bankoff, Marie Beatriz D. Gulinao, David Lozada III, Camille Silva

Abstract

There are dark histories in every nation's past, stories that for one reason or another are best left out of official narratives. World War II is full of such "uncomfortable" histories. The political context in Southeast Asia, however, was more complicated than in Europe, the only other major world region almost entirely under the control of an occupying power during the war. Here collaboration involved "defecting" from one colonial power to another. In the Philippines, there has been limited scholarship on the many individuals accused of "treason" during Japan's occupation of that country between 1942 and 1945. Only the activities of the national and regional elites have received serious consideration, and scant attention has been given to what life was like in rural areas, to the people living in the thousands of villages or barrios across the archipelago. Their lost stories, however, can still be recovered from the previously inaccessible records of the Historical Data Papers, the village histories mandated by President Quirino in 1951. The more than forty-eight thousand pages of this unique source offer a grassroots account of the Japanese occupation told from the viewpoint of the barrio residents that challenges the previous wartime historiography of the islands.

There are dark histories in every nation's past, stories that for one reason or another are best left out of official narratives. They are dark because they do not conform to the correct nationalist narrative and often deal with distasteful events in the past or with people wished forgotten. The past is liberally peppered with such episodes and their victims; colonial narratives, in particular, are filled

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with them.[1] World War II provides numerous examples of these histories, as militaries across the globe oppressed civilian populations in occupied territories. Some are seen as heroes, others as villains. Many people, for example, will know of the French Resistance and their clandestine war against the German occupation of their country; many fewer, however, will have heard of the paramilitary *Milice* that assisted the occupiers in fighting the resistance. The exploits of one are celebrated, while the actions of the other are purposefully forgotten.[2]

The dark histories of wartime Southeast Asia are even less well-known, unless their victims were Europeans. The Japanese treatment of Allied POWs is the subject of numerous histories and memoirs. The building of the notorious Thai-Burma "death" railway, for instance, has merited much attention, and is even the subject of a popular 1957 film.[3] But who has heard of the two hundred thousand *rômusha* or Thai paid laborers put to work on the Siam-Burma railway, thirty-three thousand of whom never returned home?[4] The rather dubious wartime history of Thailand after it signed a mutual offensive-defensive alliance with Japan in 1941 has largely been swept under the rug.[5] The same is true of the even larger numbers

1. Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (Houghton Mifflin, 1998); David Olusoga and Casper W. Erichsen, *The Kaiser's Holocaust: Germany's Forgotten Genocide and the Colonial Roots of Nazism* (Faber and Faber, 2010); Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954–1962* (Viking Press, 1978); Shashi Tharoor, *Inglorious Empire: What the British Did to India* (Hurst, 2017).

2. Matthew Cobb, *The Resistance: The French Fight Against the Nazis* (Simon & Schuster, 2009); Robert Gildea, *Fighters in the Shadows: A New History of the French Resistance* (Faber and Faber, 2015); Michèle Cointet, *La Milice Française* (Fayard, 2013).

3. Clifford Kinvig, *River Kwai Railway* (Brassey's, 1998); Tilak Raj Sareen, *Building the Siam-Burma Railway During World War-II: A Documentary Study* (Kalpaz, 2005). The celebrated film, *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, directed by David Lean, is an almost entirely fictional account of the construction of the Burma Railway in 1942–1943 based on the novel of the same name written by Pierre Boulle (René Julliard, 1952).

4. Kevin Blackburn and Karl Hack, eds., *Forgotten Captives in Japanese-Occupied Asia* (Routledge, 2008).

5. M. R. Seni Pramoj, "Thailand and Japan," *Far Eastern Survey* 12, no. 21 (1943): 204–8;

stand how societies, both past and present, have learned to normalize risk and how communities deal with misfortune. He is a Research Fellow at Ateneo de Manila University.

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of forced laborers in Indonesia recruited by the Japanese with the assistance of Sukarno and shipped to Java and Burma to work and die.[6] Sukarno is now remembered as foremost among the independence leaders against the Dutch and the country's first president, not for his wartime collaboration.[7]

Overlooked almost entirely in these histories is the fate of ordinary people, especially those living in rural villages, and the hard choices they were forced to make just to survive. Worse still, many of them were subsequently accused of collaboration and prosecuted for their "crimes." Those found guilty faced fines, imprisonment, and even death.[8] Again, most of this literature focuses on Europe, with significantly less attention given to Southeast Asia, the only other major world region almost entirely under the control of a wartime occupying power.[9] Here, too, the political context was more complicated, as collaboration involved "defecting" from one colonial power to another, from European or American to Japanese. It is difficult to define what constitutes "treason" under these circumstances. After brief and half-hearted attempts at retribution, public opinion in many newly independent postwar states concluded that it was best to forget the issue.[10] Other crimes have been reassessed with time, and what was considered treasonous in the aftermath of war has undergone re-evaluation. "Comfort women" are a case in point. Women who were forced into prostitution with enemy soldiers were initially labelled as collaborators, and some were even prosecuted. Now they are seen as the victims of grave injustice.[11] In fact, many East and Southeast Asian states have adopted what Jie-Hyun Lim calls "victimhood nationalism" around which to frame a contemporary national narrative.[12]

A similar shift in attitudes is evident in the postwar reassessment of collaboration in the Philippines.[13] In his 1946 book, *Betrayal in the Philippines*,

William L. Swan, "Thai-Japanese Relations at the Start of the Pacific War: New Insight into a Controversial Period," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 18, no. 2 (1987): 270–93.

6. Paul Kratoska, ed., *Asian Labour in the Wartime Japanese Empire: Unknown Histories* (M. E. Sharpe, 2005).

7. George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Cornell University Press, 1970).

8. Shane Darcy, "Coming to Terms with Wartime Collaboration: Post-Conflict Processes and Legal Challenges," *Brooklyn Journal of International Law* 45, no. 1 (2019): 75–137.

9. István Deák, *Europe on Trial: The Story of Collaboration, Resistance, and Retribution during World War II* (Westview Press, 2015).

10. Daniel Schumacher, "Asia's 'Boom' of Difficult Memories: Remembering World War Two Across East and Southeast Asia," *History Compass* 13, no. 11 (2015): 560–77.

11. Yoshiaki Yoshimi, *Comfort Women: Sexual Slavery in the Japanese Military During World War II* (Columbia University Press, 2000); George Hicks, *The Comfort Women: Japan's Brutal Regime of Enforced Prostitution in the Second World War* (W. W. Norton, 2011).

12. Jie-Hyun Lim, "Victimhood Nationalism in Contested Memories: National Mourning and Global Accountability," in *Memory in a Global Age: Discourses, Practices and Trajectories*, ed. Aleida Assmann and Sebastian Conrad (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 138–62.

13. On definitions of what constitutes collaboration, see Timothy Brook, *Collaboration:*

author and eyewitness Hernando Abaya condemns the actions of prominent "puppet" politicians such as Jorge Vargas, Jose Laurel, and, most notably, Manuel Roxas. Abaya unequivocally labels them as collaborators and traitors. He compares them to Vidkun Quisling of Norway and Marshal Pétain of France, both of whom were sentenced to death for their leadership roles in German-controlled puppet states during the war.[14] The narrative is different, however, forty years later. Teodoro Agoncillo, the most respected historian of his generation and eyewitness to the occupation, depicts the actions of these Filipinos as a sincere effort to protect the civilian population from the worst abuses of the Japanese military. In *The Burden of Proof*, he argues that these men deserve the nation's gratitude and dismisses their trials for treason as unjust, the product of a "prevailing war psychosis."[15] In fact, these men's rehabilitation had long been underway with the election of Roxas as president in 1946 and the recognition of Laurel as one of the republic's former presidents in the 1960s.[16]

At the bequest of the Americans, a People's Court and an Office of Special Prosecutors were established on 25 September 1945 to indict individuals accused of committing crimes against national security during the war.[17] People from all walks

Japanese Agents and Local Elites in Wartime China (Harvard University Press, 2005). See also Henry Dethlefsen, "Denmark and the German Occupation: Cooperation, Negotiation or Collaboration?" *Scandinavian Journal of History* 15, nos. 1–2 (1990): 193–206.

14. Hernando J. Abaya, *Betrayal in the Philippines* (A. A. Wyn, 1946). Jorge Vargas was chairman of the Japanese-created Philippine Executive Commission from 1942 to 1943, and Jose P. Laurel was president of the Second Philippine Republic, a puppet state established by the Japanese from 1943 to 1945.

15. Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *The Burden of Proof: The Laurel-Vargas Collaboration Case* (University of the Philippines Press, 1984). The only other significant study on collaboration, authored by a non-Filipino, takes a more objective approach. David Steinberg explores how the rift among the nation's elite during the occupation—between supporters of Sergio Osmeña and Roxas, and between those who resisted the Japanese and those who collaborated—was eventually reconciled. Steinberg argues that this reconciliation was achieved by placing a "quarantine of silence" around the issue of wartime collaboration. David Joel Steinberg, *Philippine Collaboration in World War II* (University of Michigan Press, 1967), 164. Sergio Osmeña, who served as vice president of the Philippine Commonwealth government, assumed the presidency following Manuel Quezon's death in 1944 but lost to Roxas in the 1946 election.

16. Laurel was elected as a senator in 1951, and his presidency rehabilitated during the administration of President Diosdado Macapagal (1961–1965). Teofilo del Castillo and Jose del Castillo, *The Saga of Jose P. Laurel (His Brother's Keeper)* (Associated Authors', 1949); Rose Laurel Avancena and Ileana Maramag, *Days of Courage: The Legacy of Dr. Jose P. Laurel* (R.L. Avancena, c1980). See also his autobiography: Jose P. Laurel, *War Memoirs of Dr. Jose P. Laurel* (Jose P. Laurel Memorial Foundation, 1962).

17. Commonwealth Act No. 682 a People's Court on 25 September 1945. "An act creating a People's Court and an office of special prosecutors for the prosecution and trial of crimes against national security committed during the Second World War, and for other purposes," The Lawphil Project (https://lawphil.net/statutes/comacts/ca1945/ca_682_1945.html).

of life who had aided and abetted the Japanese by rendering them political, economic, cultural, or military assistance were arrested and charged with treason. About fifty-six hundred cases were filed, many fewer brought to trial, fewer still convicted, and only a handful sentenced to death. Most cases were dismissed from lack of evidence and/or granted amnesty by President Roxas on 28 January 1948.[18] Even those convicted and imprisoned were later released by executive clemency on 4 July 1953.[19]

Despite the broad definition of collaboration in the 1945 legislation, there has been limited scholarship on the many individuals accused of it. Most studies have focused on the national politicians who governed the country from 1942 to 1945. Provincial politicians as well as their followers and henchmen have received some attention in the significant works on Leyte and Negros by Satoshi Ara and Justin Bulado.[20] Much less, however, is known about the men and women in the barrio or village who acted as informants, the minor functionaries and municipal leaders responsible for administration and security, or those who joined pro-Japanese political organizations and militias. What limited research there is on such people is based on the records of the People's Court.[21] These case studies provide important details about the level of rural violence and the individuals who were its perpetrators. Ma. Florisa Tan's work on the *Makapili* and other pro-Japanese paramilitaries stands out. Tan shows that members of these organizations terrorized local communities and committed horrendous acts of cruelty against barrio residents.[22] Using the same records, Florina Orillos reveals that an important minority of collaborators were women who did more than just cook, sew, or entertain Japanese soldiers, acting as spies, military procurers, and even paramilitaries.[23]

18. "Proclamation No. 51, A Proclamation Granting Amnesty by the President of the Republic, signed January 28, 1948," *Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines* (1948) (https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1948/01/28/proclamation-no-51-s-1948).

19. On the trials, see Steinberg, *Philippine Collaboration*, 147–63, and Ma. Florisa Syjuco Tan, *The Makapili, Other Paramilitary Groups, and Filipino Informers During the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines* (Philippine World War II Memorial Foundation, 2019), 88–123.

20. Satoshi Ara, "Resistance and Collaboration: The Japanese Occupation of Leyte, Philippines, and the Role of the Masses in Wartime Violence," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 53, nos. 1–2 (2022): 253; Satoshi Ara, "Filipino Collaboration and Atrocities in the Japanese-Occupied Philippines and Their Unjust Judicial Consequences: A Case Study of Sagay, Negros Occidental," *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 71, no. 3 (2023): 381–412; Justin Bulado, "Political Collaboration During the Japanese Occupation of Dumaguete: The Case of Mariano Perdices, Wartime Mayor (1942–1945)," *PRISM* 20, no. 2 (2015): 51–67; Justin Bulado, "Political Collaboration During the Japanese Occupation of Negros Oriental: The Case of Representative Jose E. Romero," *Journal of Local History and Culture* 7, no. 1 (2021): 47–70.

21. The People's Court Papers, the historical records of the trials, along with the investigations of the U.S. Army Counterintelligence Corps are deposited at the main library of the University of the Philippines.

22. Tan, *The Makapili*.

23. Ma. Florina Yamsuan Orillos, "A Preliminary Profile of Women 'Collaborators' in the People's Court Records," *Philippine Social Science Review* 57, nos. 1–4 (2005): 181–220.

Absent from these reports is anything about the choices barrio residents were forced to make just to survive, whether to collaborate with the Japanese or aid the guerrillas, how to secure enough food to feed their families, and how to protect themselves and their loved ones from the pervasive violence all around. These events took place far from the capital city and the limelight of history, in thousands of rural villages dotted up and down the archipelago. They involved people that the state, not always successfully, has tried to ignore or marginalize.[24] And, as Ara notes, what happened in these barrios was not always a "black and white matter" of either resistance or collaboration with the occupying power.[25] It was more complex. There is a need, therefore, "to expand the rather narrow, fixed locus and focus of study characterizing the field to date."[26]

What happened in the barrios can be retrieved from a previously untapped source. The Historical Data Papers (HDP) constitute a record of the notable events and customs of each municipality and its barrios across the archipelago. The survey was mandated by President Elpidio Quirino in 1951 to provide a resource for those interested in documenting "the history of the community."[27] It was compiled mainly by local schoolteachers who interviewed "old folks and other persons who have authentic knowledge of facts and other events, past and present."[28] As a result, the quality of the data varies with the aptitude and interests of those asking the questions, leading the HDP to be too readily dismissed for not adhering to a prescribed format, for being incomplete or damaged, or for appearing generally unreliable.[29] Whether these critiques are justified very much depends on the type of information elicited. While the chronology at times might be a little hazy, the geographically extensive insights provided by the HDP on social customs and organization, community interactions, and local events are unparalleled.[30] Although their tone may at

24. Reynaldo Ileto refers to people who lived "beyond the pueblo center" as "surplus data" whose pasts can be reclaimed and used to write alternative histories. Reynaldo Ileto, "Outlines of a Nonlinear Emplotment of Philippine History," in *The Politics of Culture in the Shadow of Capital,* ed. Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd (Duke University Press, 1997), 98–131.

25. Ara, "Resistance and Collaboration," 253.

26. Ikehata Setsuho, "The Japanese Occupation Period in Philippine History," in *The Philippines under Japan: Occupation Policy and Reaction*, ed. Ikehata Setsuho and Ricardo Trota Jose (Ateneo de Manila Press, 1999), 2.

27. "Executive Order No. 486 Providing for the Collection and Compilation of Historical Data Regarding Barrios, Towns, Cities and Provinces," *Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines* (1951) (https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/downloads/1951/12dec/19511207-EO-0486-EQ.pdf).

28. Aurora, Municipality of Baler, Preface, 1, Historical Data Papers (hereafter HDP).

29. Ryan A. Pawilen, and Bernardo Arellano, "The Historical Data Papers and the Geographical Information System as Tools for Mapping Settlement and Migration in the Ilocos Region," *The Cordillera Review* 13, nos. 1–2 (2002): 184–86.

30. As of August 2025, there are fifty-one entries on the NLP HDP database (the site is

times appear a trifle over-romanticized—as might be expected from local people talking about their own communities—the authenticity of the practices they describe is not in any way devalued.[31]

To address these shortcomings, an inclusive approach was taken to the material; all provinces were systematically examined and analyzed rather than selecting a few as representative samples. This methodology emphasizes common experiences over exceptional cases and captures the collective life memories of rural populations rather than focusing on the narratives of a small, predominantly urban elite. Wherever possible, the sources have been allowed to speak for themselves and explain practices in their own words. Not surprisingly, recent events like the Japanese occupation remained foremost in people's memories.

Until now, access to this resource has been limited, but the nearly complete digitization of the files allows for a systematic examination of their contents. Using the newly available data of the HDP, this article explores the dark history of rural barrios during World War II. Its over forty-eight thousand pages are filled with records on those who joined village neighborhood associations, municipal officials, spies and informers, members of nonpartisan political organizations, and those who enlisted in paramilitary forces. They also record the sentiments of those who were spied upon, mobilized, brutalized, and murdered. Equally dark is the history of retribution against those deemed to have collaborated at the war's end—a form of people's justice that depended on no court sentences, allowed no appeals, and showed no clemency. This is their story.

Barrio collaborators

According to Elmer Lear, writing in the immediate postwar years, "a significant proportion of the population *did* collaborate with Japanese rule."[32] This statement may be true depending on how "collaboration" is defined. The term is often invoked to differentiate between the few it is judged necessary to hold accountable for a collective past and the many whose actions are deemed expedient to ignore. The HDP are not concerned with high-ranking officers and functionaries of the civil administration set up by the Japanese Military Administration (JMA), men who, for the most part, were recruited from among the traditional elites and were rarely,

still under revision), fifty provinces and the City of Manila, of which thirty-two entries are from Luzon, eleven from the Visayas, and eight from Mindanao.

31. John H. Romani, "The Philippine Barrio," *The Far Eastern Quarterly* 15, no. 2 (1956): 229–37; F. Landa Jocano, *Growing Up in a Philippine Barrio* (Holt, Reinhart, and Winston, 1969); Brain Fegan, "The Social History of a Central Luzon Barrio," in *Philippine Social History: Global Trade and Local Transformations*, ed. Alfred McCoy and Ed. C. de Jesus (University of Hawai'i Press, 1982), 91–130; Greg Bankoff, "The Dangers of Going It Alone: Social Capital and the Origins of Community Resilience in the Philippines," *Continuity and Change* 22, no. 2 (2007): 327–55.

32. Elmer N. Lear, "Collaboration in Leyte: The Philippines under Japanese Occupation," *Far Eastern Quarterly* 11, no. 2 (1952): 183.



A map of the Philippines in 1950 depicting its provinces and its three major regions, Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao [drawn by Maiden Ysabel Mirabueno]

if ever, seen in rural areas.[33] These accounts instead focus on events at the barrio level and the men and women who worked directly or indirectly for the Japanese, staffing grassroots organizations like the neighborhood associations or filling positions in the municipal government. Most barrio residents were simply trying to stay alive and steer a middle course between two antagonistic armed groups that made unreasonable demands on their limited resources and labor.[34] Many barrio authorities became adroit at playing one side against the other or seemingly cooperating with one while covertly supporting the other.[35] Collaboration, therefore, can best be seen as a progressive state of complicity ranging from simple acquiescence to more active participation.

The Hoko System of Neighborhood Associations was the primary agent of Japanese control at the barrio level. Established by Decree no. 77 of 7 August 1942, the system was modelled on the Ministry of Home Affairs's 1940 guidelines governing towns and villages in Japan. Neighborhood associations called *tonarigumi* were created in Japan, comprising one family member from every five to ten households. These members met regularly to discuss and organize support for the national war effort.[36] In the Philippines, however, these associations took on a different role, focusing primarily on village security, commandeering food supplies, and ensuring an adequate labor force for the JMA. Any initial role the associations might have had in promoting Japanese language and culture and spreading "Asian" ideas of community was soon overshadowed by the harsh realities of the wartime rural situation.[37]

Neighborhood associations were established in every barrio. In the municipality of Buguias, located in Benguet province, 5,718 residents making up 1,242 families were organized into fourteen districts and one hundred neighborhood associations. Each district encompassed no more than twelve *sitios* (localities),

33. Steinberg, *Philippine Collaboration,* 34–43; see also the more nuanced argument of Alfred W. McCoy, "'Politics by Other Means': World War II in the Western Visayas, Philippines," in *Southeast Asia under Japanese Occupation*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy (Yale University Southeast Asian Studies, 1980), 191–245.

34. For a concise summary of the arguments about collaboration, albeit at the national level, see Satoshi Nakano, "In the Language of the Occupier: Recent Work on the Japanese Period in the Philippines," *Social Science Japan Journal* 2, no. 2 (1999): 267–72.

35. Ara refers to this behavioral strategy as the "gray zone." Ara, "Filipino Collaboration and Atrocities," 387.

36. Neighborhood Association, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records, National Archives of Japan, (https://www.jacar.go.jp/english/shuhou-english/topics/topics03_03.html#:~:text=Neighborhood%20associations%20were%20regarded%20as,one%20member%20of%20each%20household). See also Robert Pekkanen with Yutaka Tsujinaka and Hidehiro Yamamoto, *Neighborhood Associations and Local Governance in Japan,* trans. Leslie Tkach-Kawasaki (Routledge, 2014).

37. Ara suggests that the neighborhood association was a "paramilitary group," but the HDP provide no evidence to that effect. Ara, "Resistance and Collaboration," 262.

while each neighborhood association comprised up to fifteen families. The town mayor appointed a president to lead each district, and a leader was designated for each neighborhood association.[38] These latter attended meetings at the district level and relayed the decrees and laws promulgated by the municipal, provincial, or national government to the households in his association and ensured their implementation.[39] The barrio president was supposed to promote the study of Nippongo and Japanese culture with the aid of visiting scholars, scientists, and artists, and insist that people attend mass calisthenics every morning at 6 AM.[40] They were also charged with keeping a census of the number of inhabitants and reporting the presence of transients or strangers to the authorities.[41] In short, the aim of neighborhood associations was to exert "effective control … in an effort to change the way of life of the people."[42]

The reality on the ground, however, was somewhat different. The primary concern of the JMA was maintaining control of rural areas, given the rising level of guerrilla activity and their active contestation for control of many barrios.[43] The Japanese military demanded security and information. Barrio men formed patrols to watch the neighborhood. These details were known as the *ronda*, with each patrol consisting of eight men under a *kapo* (a designation used to signify any local commander or foreman).[44] Armed with pointed bamboo spears called *sibat*, or bows and arrows, men patrolled the streets to ensure that no guerillas entered the barrio, and, if they did, to detain or report them to the nearest garrison.[45] Guardhouses were placed at strategic points to intercept any infiltration. In Barrio Agtangao, for instance, four guard houses were built alongside the road, and all males over ten years of age were required to perform a twenty-four–hour stint of sentry duty.[46] They had to check that passersby carried a cloth marked with a red spot that signified they were of "good character."[47] To ensure their duties were properly carried out, particularly at night, men from each guardhouse in the barrio of San Joaquin on Leyte had to carry a board marked with a Japanese inscription from one guardhouse to another.

38. Benguet, Municipality of Buguias, Barrio Amlimay, 17, HDP.

39. Bulacan, History of Bulacan, 14, HDP.

40. Bulacan, Municipality of Paombong, Historical and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Kapitangan, 32, HDP; Abra, Municipality of San Juan, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio—Gaang Norte, 1, HDP.

41. Quezon, Historical Data of Lopez, 56, HDP.

42. History of Bulacan, 14.

43. Stacey Anne B. Salinas and Klytie Xu, *Philippines' Resistance: The Last Allied Stronghold in the Pacific* (Pacific Atrocities Education, 2017).

44. Batangas, Municipality of Tanauan, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Ambulong, 28, HDP.

45. Camarines Sur, Municipality of Baao, History, Culture, and Folkways of a Barrio—Sagrada, 25, HDP.

46. Abra, Municipality of Bangued, Barrio Agtangao, 4, HDP.

47. History, Culture, and Folkways of a Barrio—Sagrada, 25.

The fourth and final group delivered it to the municipal building at midnight, where the Japanese garrison had their headquarters. Any failure to deliver the board at the right time resulted in severe punishment.[48]

The Japanese military also wanted information. The barrio seethed with rumors, and it was difficult to know whom to trust. The neighborhood associations were tasked with monitoring public speech, censoring news, and preventing the distribution of prohibited articles, books, or public performances. One report stated that the associations' primary purpose was "to spy on one's immediate neighborhood." Members were not only responsible for guarding the barrio against guerrillas but also acted "as spies toward the enemies of the Japanese."[49]

Securing food from rural areas became one of the JMA's top priorities as their army became increasingly isolated in the archipelago and Allied shipping and aircraft effectively halted resupply from the Japanese home islands. Even prior to World War II, the Philippines had not been self-sufficient in many types of food and had imported rice from its Southeast Asian neighbors as well as a variety of canned foods, meat, dairy products, wheat, and bread from the U.S. The JMA established a controlled economy to both acquire strategic materials for the war effort and to achieve self-sufficiency for the occupying forces. Plans were drawn up to increase agricultural production, control prices, and distribute food and other commodities. These attempts failed due to a combination of the worsening security situation in many of the most productive rice-producing provinces, the lack of transportation, the failure to stop profiteering, and poor harvests leading to rice shortages in 1943 and to widespread starvation in some areas by the end of 1944.[50]

Neighborhood associations were duly suborned to these ends. They were initially tasked to purchase essential commodities from outside the community and ensure their equitable distribution at low prices.[51] In Nasugbu, for example, the HDP recount how at first people "never suffered acute shortages of food, as the rice harvest … was enough for all." The rations of rice, lard, bananas, soap, and other staple commodities were adequate, and locals even made their own cigarettes and had "flooded the market" with them.[52] Conditions soon deteriorated, however,

48. Leyte, Municipality of Palo, History and Cultural Life of Barrio San Joaquin, 76, HDP.

49. Ilocos Sur, Municipality of Caoayan, Report on Historical Data of the Barrio of Puro, 3, HDP.

50. Ricardo T. Jose, "The Rice Shortage and Countermeasures during the Occupation," in Setsuho and Jose, *The Philippines under Japan*, 197–214. See also Satoshi Ara, "Food Supply Problem in Leyte, Philippines, During the Japanese Occupation (1942–44)," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 39, no. 1 (2008): 59–82; Daniel F. Doeppers, *Feeding Manila in Peace and War, 1850–1945* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2016), 307–30; and Justin Jose A. Bulado, "'We All Must Work, Fight, or Starve': The Food Supply Problem in Negros Oriental during the Japanese Occupation," *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints* 71, no. 3 (2023): 413–43.

51. Pampanga, Municipality of Minalin, Barrio Sta. Catalina 60, HDP; Bulacan, A Brief History of Baliuag and its Barrios, 33, HDP.

52. Batangas, Historical Data of the Municipality of Nasugbu, 14, HDP.

along with the strategic position of Japan. Neighborhood associations now became the favored means of securing desperately needed foodstuffs for the Japanese military. Association leaders were informed of the quota set by the military, and their members were required to go from house to house to gather the necessary items. "Some members gave[;] others refused."[53] It amounted to much the same thing: those who gave did so "because they were afraid of the Japanese," and the others simply had their goods commandeered without payment.[54]

Apart from food, the Japanese needed labor, and, once again, the neighborhood associations were employed to recruit or, more often, compel people to work on military installations like airfields or construction projects such as roads. In the municipality of Marikina (Rizal), every family in 1943 was required to send a man to work on the airfield the Japanese were building at Parang.[55] Similarly, the men of Barrio Maco were forced to work on the airfield at Sasa in Davao, as well as cut timber for Japanese-operated concerns.[56] Among the other defense activities for which barrio labor was required were road and bridge construction, trench and foxhole digging, and even net and rope making.[57] Men and women were also forced to work in the fields. In the municipality of Balayan, the Japanese forced farmers to plant cotton instead of sugar, rice, and other crops, while in Nasugbu, "hundreds of people" were employed in the cotton fields.[58] To avoid this conscription, many residents simply evacuated to "far away barrios."[59]

It is difficult to determine the extent to which members of the neighborhood associations actively collaborated with the Japanese or were merely compelled by force of circumstances to cooperate. The authors of the HDP express considerable ambiguity over the complicity of *kapos* and district supervisors in this respect. The neighborhood association in Barrio Del Monte was described as under "the able leadership" of Eduardo Dacoy but still organized with "the sole aim to help the enemies, the Japanese."[60] In other cases, association leaders are referred to as "puppet officials," suggesting a much more active degree of collusion.[61] It was an invidious position, one whose risks were even recognized by the Japanese. A ranking Japanese

53. History and Cultural Life of the Barrio—Gaang Norte, 1; Tarlac, Municipality of Camiling, Barrio Pindañgan First, 3, HDP.

54. Zambales, Municipality of Sta. Cruz, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Malabago, 3, HDP.

55. Rizal, Municipality of Marikina, 65, HDP.

56. Davao, Municipality of Tagum, History of the Barrio of Maco, 4, HDP.

57. Quezon, Municipality of Mauban, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Polo, 3, HDP; History and Cultural Life of Barrio San Joaquin, 66.

58. Batangas, Historical and Cultural Life of the Town of Balayan, 7, HDP; Historical Data of the Municipality of Nasugbu, 14.

59. History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Polo, 3.

60. Davao, Municipality of Samal, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio—Del Monte, 1, HDP.

61. Camarines Sur, Municipality of Buhi, Historical Data for Santa Justina, 4, HDP.

officer named Uno, who had appointed Fausto Bermio as the neighborhood association president in Barrio Pantay Tamurong, admitted that Bermio's obligations toward the Japanese were "very delicate and dangerous." Bermio was, in fact, secretly advising the local Hoko leaders "to serve the guerrilla movement instead."[62] This seems to have been true of many association members who might just as easily be sending reports to the guerrillas as well as to the occupation authorities.[63]

Such fine distinctions, however, were not always readily apparent, as the case of Francisco Talavis Reyes demonstrates. Head of the local neighborhood association, he represented the barrio people every time the Japanese needed anything, defending those accused of aiding the guerrillas and securing supplies of food for the community at low prices. "His diplomacy convinced the Japanese officials that all he said was true. He was a friend to every party." Yet Reyes was taken by armed men from his home one night in January 1944, and a few days later, fishermen found his body tied and floating in the river with wounds to his neck and head.[64]

Apart from the neighborhood associations, the form and practice of municipal governance continued much as before. From the outset, Japanese policy patronized the existing elite, and all the important posts in first the Philippine Executive Commission and then the so-called Republic of the Philippines, established on 14 October 1943, were filled from among its members.[65] By and large, the same was true at the municipal level, where prewar politics often determined who supported the Japanese and who the guerrillas.[66] However, these officials were in a precarious position. "To be a mayor or teniente of the barrio was a very dangerous job," one HDP author notes. "The life of the constituent depended upon the cleverness and smartness of the mayor or teniente, or else any false move proved fatal. There was the guerrilla and the Japanese government to take in hand."[67] Consequently, many local officials appeared to collaborate with the Japanese while also aiding the guerrillas—or, at the very least, played both sides.

The town of Bacacay, for example, was saved from repeated Japanese threats of being burned down, thanks in part to the "tact and diplomacy" of two officials: Eulogio Lawenko, the municipal mayor, and Isabelo Binamira, who worked for the Japanese-controlled National Abaca and Other Fibers Corporation. The latter also happened to be a guerrilla officer.[68] Similarly, the able-bodied men of Barrio Capulaan in Pangasinan who were subjected to the "water cure," a form of torture,

62. Ilocos Sur, Municipality of Caoayan, Report on Historical Data of the Barrio of Pantay Tamurong, 3, HDP.

63. Iloilo, History and Cultural Life of the Town of La Paz, 17–18, HDP.

64. Bulacan, Municipality of Hagonoy, Barrio of San Roque, 52, HDP.

65. Setsuho, "The Japanese Occupation Period in Philippine History," 3.

66. Ara, "Resistance and Collaboration," 263. The same argument is made by McCoy for the provincial level of administration. McCoy, "'Politics by Other Means.'"

67. Romblon, Municipality of Looc, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Manhac, 76, HDP.

68. Albay, History of the Municipality of Bacacay, 5, HDP.

to reveal the whereabouts of their barrio lieutenant after he had publicly spoken out against the Japanese were saved from further suffering thanks to the intercession of the former mayor, Esteban Corpus.[69] An interesting example of a man whose past life inadvertently brought him to prominence during the occupation is Teofilo Guting. As a fieldhand in the Hawaiian Islands for about eighteen years, Guting labored alongside Japanese workers on the sugar plantations and learned their language and customs. He was appointed as the *teniente de barrio* of Malacampa, where he used his understanding of Japanese language and psychology "to protect and help his barriomates."[70]

Municipal officials were under constant scrutiny by the Japanese, who persistently suspected them (correctly) of covertly aiding the guerrillas. Petronilo Mandin, the "puppet" mayor of Loboc between 1943 and early 1945, was investigated twice for collaborating with the guerrillas, but each time he was able to convince the local commander that he was working for the Japanese. As proof of his support, he repeatedly cited his securement of the local orchestra to perform at Japanese-sponsored events.[71] Important, too, was the occasional intervention of national politicians in municipal matters. Congressman Justino Nuyda, who represented the second district of Albay at the National Assembly and lived in the municipality of Camalig, apparently acted as an important local intercessor for residents at "critical moments." He stood in good graces with both the Japanese and the guerrillas, and was known for his skill in resolving cases diplomatically.[72]

Living under military occupation inevitably demanded a certain degree of compromise between personal beliefs and survival in a hostile environment. Collaboration, therefore, was always a difficult term to define. For most people, however, dissimulation was the most sensible course of action: pretending to collaborate with the enemy while supplying the guerrillas with food, medicine, money, and information.[73] People were cautious, and nobody wanted to be "branded" as too pro-Japanese. In Albay, for instance, most local government employees refused to go back to their jobs, and "no amount of cajoling by the Japanese" could convince them to do so.[74] Many of those who fled to the mountains in advance of the Japanese forces returned to their homes and normal way of living, "not out of affection for the new regime," but for reasons of security as banditry and outlawry were rampant in the uplands and those who remained there too long were suspected of joining the

69. Pangasinan, District of Villasis, History and Cultural Life of Barrio Capulaan, 3, HDP.

70. Tarlac, Municipality of Camiling, Barrio Malacampa, 3, HDP.

71. Bohol, History and Cultural Life of the Town—Loboc, 32, HDP. The account is silent as to which way the mayor's sympathies lay.

72. Albay, Municipality of Camalig, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Tagaytay, 1, HDP.

73. Bulacan, Municipality of Paombong, Historical and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Kapitangan, 33, HDP.

74. [title page missing] Province of Albay, 24, HDP.

guerrillas.[75] Anyone forced to engage in pro-Japanese activities did so with great reluctance, complying where they must but all the while sensing the "danger in joining the affair because the guerillas were also watchful of those, who in one way or another cooperated with the Japanese administration."[76]

Spies and informers

People in the barrio had good cause to fear falling under suspicion. The barrio swarmed with spies and informers of all hues, some working for the Japanese and others for the guerrillas. The Japanese depended heavily on informants to exert control over rural areas, while the guerrillas were mainly local men (and women) with strong kinship and neighborhood ties to the community.[77] While over six hundred thousand Japanese troops were sent to the Philippines during World War II, there were insufficient forces to occupy more than the urban areas and larger rural centers.[78] Most of these soldiers were stationed in Luzon; the other islands had smaller numbers of troops except where guerrilla activity provoked retaliatory deployments.[79] Many barrios, therefore, had no permanent garrisons and were only periodically patrolled by Japanese soldiers looking for food and contraband or pursuing guerrillas. "Our place," records one author, was simply "too insignificant for the Japanese to recognize."[80] Instead, the Japanese relied on an extensive network of spies and informers. The guerrillas, too, employed countless informants to report on enemy activities, with some municipalities organizing their own secret services.

The Japanese wanted information on the composition, location, and movement of guerrilla units and those who supported them. Informants were local men and women, their heads often covered by a straw bag with holes for their eyes, who

75. Albay, History and Cultural Life of Legaspi City, 4, HDP.

76. Batangas, City of Lipa, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Antipolo, 4, HDP.

77. On female guerrillas, see Stacey Anne B. Salinas, *Pinay Guerrilleras: The Unsung Heroics of Filipina Resistance Fighters During the Pacific War* (Pacific Atrocities Education, 2019) and Vina A. Lanzona, *Amazons of the Huk Rebellion: Gender, Sex, and Revolution in the Philippines* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).

78. Ikehata Setsuho, "The Japanese Occupation Period in Philippine History," in Setsuho and Jose, *The Philippines under Japan*, 1. Fully 80 percent or 498,600 Japanese personnel never returned to their homeland. A detailed account of the Japanese occupation is given in Teodoro Agoncillo's two-volume history, the author having lived through the period. Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *The Fateful Years: Japan's Adventure in the Philippines, 1941–45,* 2 vols. (R. P. Garcia, 1965). On the military campaign, see Louis Morton, *The Fall of the Philippines* (Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1953). Most histories focus on the battle for Bataan, the fall of Corregidor, and the subsequent "death march." Stanley L. Falk, *Bataan: The March of Death* (W. W. Norton, 1962); Bill Sloan, *Undefeated: America's Heroic Fight for Bataan and Corregidor* (Simon & Schuster, 2012); Christopher Kolakowski, *Last Stand on Bataan: The Defense of the Philippines, December 1941–May 1942* (McFarland, 2016).

79. McCoy, "'Politics by Other Means,'" 203–5.

80. Bohol, Municipality of Tubigon, Barangay of Pinayagan, 10, HDP.

reported on the activities of their fellow villagers and identified known guerrillas—men like Isabelo Ruivivar, "the point of [whose] forefingers brought about the execution of many of his countrymen."[81] Most worked for the *Kempeitai*, the Japanese military police responsible for counterintelligence, who sent informers, often disguised as itinerant vendors or merchants, into barrios where guerrillas were known to operate.[82] Such reports, however, often came too late. Japanese soldiers found the ground around a house reported to be the headquarters and training camp for a guerrilla unit of one hundred men in Rizal freshly ploughed to remove all traces of their presence.[83] Sometimes, though, the Japanese had better luck; guided by spies, soldiers apprehended about fifty men in Barrio Ilaya one night in November 1944, most of whom were taken to Manila and "liquidated."[84]

Entire barrios were harried if the Japanese believed them sympathetic to the guerrillas. The inhabitants of Barrio Tubigan in Quezon, for example, were repeatedly subjected to surprise raids. Men and women were lined up in front of machine guns and threatened with death unless they revealed what they knew. Afterwards, many residents chose to abandon their homes and fields, leaving the village "almost a haunted place."[85] At other times, more than threats were used, and barrio residents were systematically tortured until someone disclosed who belonged to the guerrillas. In December 1942, a teniente de barrio in Bohol, identified by spies as having knowledge of a U.S. Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) officer's whereabouts, was brutally beaten until he confessed.[86] In the "blackmarked" barrio of Tanawan, men were hung up and beaten until they revealed what they knew, leaving many permanently maimed.[87]

Less is known about the spies working for the guerrillas, apart from the fact that they were "numerous."[88] These men and women relayed information on troop movements and dispositions to the guerrillas and to radio operators in contact with General Douglas MacArthur in Australia. They also warned villagers and

81. Albay, Municipality of Guinobatan, Historical Facts about Malacbalac, 5, HDP. They were commonly known as *taong bayong*. Tan, *The Makapili*, 21.

82. Albay, Municipality of Libog, Report on the Historical Data about the Barrio San Andres, 3, HDP; Tan, *The Makapili*, 47–69. See also Ma. Felisa A. Syjuco, *The Kempei Tai in the Philippines, 1941–1945* (New Day, 1988); Raymond Lamont-Brown, *Kempeitai: Japan's Dreaded Military Police* (Sutton, 1998).

83. Rizal, Municipality of Caloocan, Barrio Deparo, 50, HDP.

84. Rizal, Municipality of Las Piñas, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Ilaya, 3, HDP.

85. Quezon, Municipality of Macalelon, History of Ilayang Tubigan, 60, HDP.

86. Bohol, Municipality of Tubigon, Barrio of Ilijan Sur, 4, HDP. The U.S. Army stationed in the Philippines and the Commonwealth's Philippine Army were reorganized under a single command, the U.S. Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) on 26 July 1941 by President Roosevelt. Ricardo Trota Jose, *The Philippine Army, 1935–1942* (Ateneo de Manila Press, 1992), 192–93.

87. Bohol, Municipality of Tubigon, Barrio of Tanawan, 11, HDP.

88. Tarlac, Municipality of Gerona, History and Cultural Life of Barrio Santiago, 105, HDP.

resistance fighters of impending raids. For example, a spy named Narciso Gerojales sent advance warning of an imminent Japanese raid, allowing the barrio residents to evacuate the night before.[89] It is often difficult, however, to separate such "spies" from the general organization of resistance to the Japanese in rural areas. Many barrios had their own "secret services" comprising all those opposed to the JMA and the pro-Japanese civilian administration. In Barrio Sappaac (Abra), for instance, Mariano Buena controlled the "bolo men," a civilian militia providing logistical support to the guerrillas; the Women's Auxiliary Service, which attended to the needs of local resistance forces; and the local message center that relayed enemy movements to the district headquarters.[90] In central Luzon, the *Hukbalahap*, a communist-inspired guerrilla army, organized an extensive espionage network among local farmers to report on enemy movements.[91] Even those employed by the Japanese were often covertly working for the resistance. In Barrio Sulipa, two civilian guards charged by the Japanese to report suspicious movements were instead relaying information to the resistance.[92]

Informants came from all walks of life and spied for many and varied reasons. Some were sleepers, "professional" agents working undercover. Others were sympathizers who collaborated for reasons of ideology or nationalism. Still others were motivated by fear or greed or were just opportunists making the best of a bad situation. Even love had a part to play. Wartime rural life was no picnic, and survival necessitated a variety of strategies—from reluctant cooperation and economic sabotage to fleeing to the hills and outright resistance. Both men and women participated, often resulting in brutal acts of violence and revenge as individuals exploited the unsettled conditions to advance their own interests or to resolve family feuds.[93]

Japanese migrants had settled in the Philippines since the beginning of the twentieth century, particularly around Davao in Mindanao.[94] The Japanese military exploited this migrant community to infiltrate their own agents into

89. Leyte, Municipality of Hinundayan, History and Cultural Life of the Barrios, Biasong, 6, HDP.

90. Abra, Municipality of Bangued, History and Cultural Life of Barrio Sappaac, 5, HDP. Bolo men were so called because they were armed only with a machete-like long knife known in the Philippines by that name and used extensively in agricultural work.

91. Pampanga, Municipality of San Fernando, Historical Data of Barrio Dolores, 23, HDP. The *Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon* (People's Army Against Japan), known as the *Hukbalahap* was mainly active in central Luzon. Benedict Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines* (University of California Press, 1977), 61–109. After World War II, the Huks mounted a challenge to the newly independent Republic of the Philippines from 1946–1954. Eduardo Lachica, *The Huks: Philippine Agrarian Society in Revolt* (Praeger, 1971).

92. Tarlac, Municipality of Gerona, History and Cultural Life of Barrio Sulipa, 110, HDP.

93. McCoy, "'Politics by Other Means,'" 208–12.

94. Patricia Irene Dacudao, *Abaca Frontier: The Socioeconomic and Cultural Transformation of Davao, 1898–1941* (Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2023).

the Philippines prior to World War II. Japanese migrants were placed in a very invidious position as to their loyalties. Many migrants acting as spies were deeply integrated into their communities. Three families, for instance, long settled in the town of Ligao in Albay, who had established prosperous businesses, married, and had children, served as guides to Japanese soldiers, directing them where best to patrol.[95] Another Japanese "spy" was married to a Filipina with whom he had children, and worked at the Rosal Soap Factory in Caloocan outside Manila.[96] One HDP document records the case of Captain Oka, the officer in charge of the Japanese landing on the island of Cagbalete off the east coast of Luzon on 24 December 1941. He was one of ten Japanese fishermen who had been living in Sitio Lumingoy for "many years."[97] On other occasions, Japanese migrants may have found it expedient to capitalize on the circumstances. For instance, a market gardener named Sisedo, who had settled in Barrio San Jose in Rizal a year before to grow watermelons and vegetables, returned from American internment as a captain in the Japanese army. He also underwent a character change from someone friendly and hospitable to "no longer a kind man to the natives but a stern and cruel Japanese Army man." Such was reportedly the case with many Japanese gardeners around Manila.[98]

Other people might spy for ideological reasons, sharing pro-Axis sympathies or aspiring for an independent Philippines and an Asia free from European and North American colonialism. Ramon Crespo, for example, a Spanish mestizo married to Belen Soriano, the daughter of a roadside café owner in Rizal, was said to spy for the Japanese.[99] Entire barrios were known for their pro-Japanese standpoint; the people of Ligao, for instance, were suspected of such sentiments. The town earned local notoriety as a place of torture.[100] Others simply "sold their souls to the Nipponese Government" and spied on fellow residents.[101] Women with sexual or romantic ties to Japanese soldiers were in a particularly difficult position and might easily unintentionally betray people to the enemy. Guerilla leader Major Ernesto Felix, his family, and men had planned to spend the night in Barrio Dalig when they were betrayed by a woman and captured by Japanese troops.[102]

Some people used the wartime atmosphere of fear and suspicion to enrich themselves; the Japanese allowed those who spied for them to keep the personal

95. Albay, History and Cultural Life of the Town of Ligao, 19–20, HDP.

96. Rizal, Municipality of Caloocan, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio, San Agustin, 3, HDP.

97. Quezon, Municipality of Mauban, History and Cultural Life of Cagbalete II, 4, HDP.

98. Rizal, Municipality of Montalban, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio, San Jose, 32, HDP.

99. History and Cultural Life of the Barrio, San Agustin, 3.

100. Albay, History and Cultural Life of the Town of Ligao, 24, HDP.

101. Camarines Sur, Municipality of Baao, History, Culture and Folkways of a Barrio—Sagrada, 23, HDP.

102. Rizal, Municipality of Cardona, Historical Data of Dalig, 3, HDP.

belongings of individuals detained as guerrillas or sympathizers. In the municipality of Calape on Bohol, for instance, Merin Salomon, a well-known Japanese spy, profited from pilfering money and jewelry from the houses of those who had fled to the mountains.[103] In the neighboring barrio of Madangog, unnamed "undercovers" were permitted to loot household items such as sewing machines, radio sets, carpenters' tools, typewriters, clothes, and chinaware, even digging up buried valuables from houses commandeered by the military.[104] In the same province, another spy, Alejandro Valencia, guided Japanese patrols to the homes of the well-to-do where he and the soldiers took what they wanted.[105]

There were always individuals, too, who for money, privilege, or favor "betrayed their friends and even their relatives." They might begin by betraying guerrillas and their agents but then would implicate anybody, "especially when they needed cash." In this way, many innocent people were unfortunately "liquidated" thanks to men like Vincente Morata, the most notorious informer in La Paz, a town in Iloilo. A former guerrilla, he is said to have caused the death of more than a hundred people.[106] Lasting family animosities started this way. A certain Ismenio Sumabal, a former USAFFE soldier and relative of a long sought-after resistance leader, was denounced by another detainee and promptly executed, causing lasting "enmity between the families of the informer and Sumabal."[107]

Those who spied for the guerrillas were, in a sense, more easily classifiable as men and women who resisted the occupation either due to patriotism or revenge for Japanese brutalities. Fear, too, played its part, as anyone deemed to be collaborating faced reprisals from the guerrillas. Many HDP accounts are at pains to record that all the able-bodied men in their barrio had become guerrillas and had played their part in hit-and-run battles, sabotage, and espionage.[108] Everybody wanted to be on the winning side in the end.[109] Schoolteachers were in particularly advantageous positions for more covert activities, and the schoolhouse often became a center of resistance activities.[110] Thus, Blas Lagos, the teacher in Dumelneg, Ilocos Norte, was appointed by the local secret service to spy on enemy positions and movements and to act as "liaison officer" between the guerrillas and the civilian population.[111]

103. Bohol, Municipality of Calape, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio, Cabayugan, 60, HDP.

104. Bohol, Municipality of Calape, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio, Madangog, 203–4, HDP.

105. Bohol, Municipality of Tubigon, Barrio of Iligan Norte, 3, HDP.

106. Iloilo, History and Cultural Life of the Town of La Paz, 19–20, HDP.

107. Bohol, Municipality of Inabanga, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of U-og, 87, HDP.

108. Bulacan, History and Cultural Life of Bustos, 11, HDP.

109. Tony Judt, "The Past Is Another Country: Myth and Memory in Postwar Europe," *Daedalus* 121, no. 4 (1992): 89–90.

110. Tarlac, Municipality of Gerona, History and Cultural Life of Barrio Tangcaran, 118, HDP.

111. Ilocos Norte, Municipality of Dingras, Cultural Life of Dumalneg, 4, HDP.

Cristino Refuerzo, a teacher in the municipality of Natividad in Pangasinan, was arrested in March 1942 and taken to Kempeitai headquarters under suspicion of being an American spy. He was "beaten all blue" but later released.[112] The many brutalities and atrocities that had become such "a common sight" were often reason enough to motivate others to spy on the Japanese.[113]

Spies made barrios dangerous places to live in when even reading an American propaganda leaflet was cause enough for distrust.[114] Suspicion could fall on a person for simply being in the wrong place at the wrong time. After a skirmish in Camarines Sur in which several Japanese soldiers were killed, a Japanese patrol came upon the brothers Vicente and Conrado Catina. Although innocent of any role in the attack, they were detained as spies and interrogated about the guerrillas' whereabouts. Tortured with cigarette stubs and live charcoal, they were tied to banana trees and bayoneted to death.[115] Fishing, too, might be a "dangerous" occupation, seen as a pretext for being in an out-of-the-way spot at an unusual time. Three men "quietly" fishing by a river in Barrio Malabanban in Quezon and five men nighttime fishing in Barrio Dela Paz on Bohol were bayoneted to death by Japanese soldiers on suspicion of being spies.[116] To avoid contact with the Japanese and escape such fates, many barrio residents chose to flee to the uplands; those that remained in the hills were branded as guerrilla sympathizers.[117]

Between 1942 and 1945, rural people endured the brutality of periodic military patrols that looted, burned, raped, tortured, and sometimes murdered anyone unfortunate enough to fall into their hands—especially after the tide of war turned against the Japanese in mid-1944. Nor were the practices of guerrilla forces much better.[118] Both groups "employed eagle-eyed spies to watch for anybody who would

112. Pangasinan, History of Natividad and its Barrios, 3, HDP.

113. Batangas, History and Culture the Town of Lemery, 7, HDP.

114. Batangas, Municipality of Ibaan, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Lapu-Lapu, 1, HDP.

115. Camarines Sur, Municipality of Buhi, Historical Data of Divino Rostro, 42–43, HDP.

116. Quezon, Municipality of Candelaria, History of Barrio Malabanban, 5, HDP; Bohol, Municipality of Cortes, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio, Dela Paz, 2, HDP.

117. Albay, History and Cultural Life of the City of Legaspi, 4, HDP.

118. There is an extensive literature on guerrilla activities in the Philippines, especially on the role of U.S. military personnel. See Ira Wolfert, *American Guerrilla in the Philippines* (Simon and Schuster, 1945); John Keats, *They Fought Alone* (Lippincott, 1963); Robert Lapham and Bernard Norling, *Lapham's Raiders: Guerrillas in the Philippines, 1942–1945* (University Press of Kentucky, 1996); Kent Holmes, *Wendell Fertig and His Guerrilla Forces in the Philippines: Fighting the Japanese Occupation, 1942–1945* (McFarland, 2015); James Kelly Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942–1944* (Naval Institute Press, 2021); James A. Villanueva, *Awaiting MacArthur's Return: World War II Guerrilla Resistance against the Japanese in the Philippines* (University Press of Kansas, 2022). See also the Philippine Archives Collection of the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office that includes records on guerrilla warfare in the Philippines during World War II (https://collections.pvao.mil.ph/).

serve and render any form of service to their respective enemies."[119] Local people, proverbially stuck between Scylla and Charybdis, tried to steer a middle course, intent on preserving their lives and those of their immediate families, and not fall afoul of either group. As a survival tactic, most people at one time or another appeared to support "both guerrillas and the Japanese."[120] Everyone in the barrio lived in constant fear of being labeled a spy. Despite the notorious brutality of the Kempeitai and the paramilitary units that supported them, the guerillas seemingly inspired as great a fear among barrio residents. Whereas Japanese soldiers were only stationed in larger settlements and their paramilitary allies were relatively few, the guerrillas were everywhere. Mariano Buena, for example, the teacher in Barrio Sappaac, chose to close his school rather than run the risk of being suspected as a collaborator by the guerrillas.[121]

Paramilitaries and nonpartisan organizations

The Japanese were not without their own "guerrilla" forces or rural allies, paramilitaries like the *Makapili* and nonpartisan organizations such as the *Kalibapi*. Many of the men and women who enlisted or enrolled in these groups were unashamedly pro-Japanese, either by conviction or because they thought their political aims were best served by the occupation. Both groups tried to control the barrio, one by brute force and the exercise of terror, the other through the dissemination of Asian values and Japanese culture. A distinction, however, must be drawn between military collaborators on the one hand and political collaboration on the other. While collaborators of all persuasion were initially prosecuted by the People's Court, members of paramilitary units were specifically excluded from President Roxas's pardon in 1948, while those who joined the Kalibapi were not.

There were Filipinos, albeit relatively few in proportion to the population at large, who enlisted in various paramilitary organizations either run or approved by the Japanese military. Members of these units received some level of military training and acted as local security guards or were formed into labor battalions to carry out sensitive duties in strategically important locations such as ports and airfields. They wore a hodgepodge of uniforms, some variants of the Imperial Japanese Army and others more informal. A few were also armed with surplus U.S. weapons captured after the surrender of American forces in 1942 and formed into military units to fight alongside Japanese soldiers, retreating with them into the mountains of central Luzon in 1945. There were many such groups, the most notorious of which was the Makapili, whose units operated mainly in central Luzon, though other groups were active in all major regions of the archipelago.[122]

119. Abra, Municipality of Pidigan, History and Cultural Life of Barrio Arab, 5, HDP.

120. Nueva Ecija, History of Cabanatuan City, 17, HDP; History and Cultural Life of Barrio Sappaac, 5.

121. History and Cultural Life of Barrio Sappaac, 5.

122. Motoe Terami-Wada, "The Filipino Volunteer Armies," in Setsuho and Jose, *The Philippines under Japan*, 65–73. On paramilitary units outside of Luzon, see Tan, *The Makapili,* 36–

Yet even here the question of collaboration is not so clear cut, especially if armed struggle is framed as an anti-American conflict and portrayed as a nationalist effort to preserve the independence of the Japanese-sponsored Republic of the Philippines. Some Filipinos believed that the long-awaited independence promised by the revolution against Spain in 1896, which had been denied by the Philippine-American War, had finally been achieved.[123] There were paramilitaries with overt social reform platforms, and some even had links to prerevolutionary millenarian movements.[124] The extent to which President Jose Laurel's government exercised sovereign powers was less important than its symbolic and spiritual significance. Even some of the leading figures from the revolutionary period, most notably General Artemio Ricarte, were still active political players, promoting a nationalist agenda, and respected figureheads to many more. General Ricarte, who had fought against both the Spanish and Americans, uncompromisingly refused to take an oath of allegiance to the U.S. colonial government and chose exile, instead, in Japan. He continues to be regarded as one of the most romantic figures of the revolutionary period despite his later collusion with the Japanese during World War II.[125]

The wellspring of these movements was the *Sakdal* party, a grassroots movement led by Benigno Ramos, a former civil servant, demanding social equity for the poor, the end of unequal trade arrangements, and immediate independence. The party had contested the 1934 election with some success but had staged an abortive uprising in May 1935 and had been sanctioned. A central tenet among the party faithful was the belief that Japan stood ready to assist Filipinos in attaining their independence, much as that country had supplied weapons to the revolutionaries of 1896. Freed from captivity in 1942, Ramos ordered the newly reconstituted *Lapiang Ganap*, the Sakdal's successor, to cooperate with the Japanese, providing food, labor, guides, guards, and truck drivers to the military.[126]

46; Ara, "Resistance and Collaboration," 262–68; and Ara, "Filipino Collaboration and Atrocities," 388–89. The most prominent of these groups were the Coastal Defense Corps in Iloilo, the Standing Army and the Loyal Blood Party in Negros Occidental; the Jutai and the Naval Police in Leyte; the Home Guard in Leyte and Negros; and the Kaigun Jutai and the Tetuan Volunteer Guard in Zamboanga City. However, little information is known about their wartime activities.

123. On the Philippine Revolution of 1896, see Teodoro Agoncillo, *The Revolt of the Masses: The Story of Bonifacio and the Katipunan* (University of the Philippines, 1956); Teodoro M. Kalaw, *The Philippine Revolution* (Jorge B. Vargas Filipiniana Foundation, 1969). On the Philippine-American War, see Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899–1902* (University Press of Kansas, 2000).

124. Ara, "Resistance and Collaboration," 258–61, 268.

125. See Grant K. Goodman, "General Artemio Ricarte and Japan," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 7, no. 2 (1966): 48–60; Maria Pilar S. Luna, "General Artemio Ricarte y Garcia: A Filipino Nationalist," *Asian Studies Journal* 9, no. 2 (1971): 229–41; Ricardo T. Jose, "Exile as Protest: Artemio Ricarte," *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 8, nos. 1–2 (1999): 131–56.

126. After the 1935 uprising failed, the Sakdal party never recovered its former popularity, and Ramos went into effective exile in Japan. He was imprisoned by President Quezon in May

Some *Ganapistas* also acted as informers, being described by one HDP writer as "lie-detecting machines of the Japs."[127]

The Makapili, or *Kalipunang Makabayan ng mga Pilipino* (League of Patriotic Filipinos), were mainly recruited from this pool. Partly to prepare for the imminent landing of U.S. forces and partly due to the abject failure of the Bureau of Constabulary (BC) to control the guerrilla insurgency, the new Japanese commander, General Yamashita Tomoyuki, authorized the formation of a Filipino volunteer army organized in the same manner as those in Malaya, Burma, and the Netherlands Indies.[128] The Makapili was inaugurated on 8 December 1944, the third anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. With its headquarters in Manila, chapters were also established around central Luzon, especially where Ganap influence was strongest. Recruits received two to three hours of military training each day and were assigned duties such as collecting information and securing food. While nominally independent, with its own officers up to the rank of general, unit movements were effectively determined by local Japanese officers, though patrols were mainly led by local commanders. The Makapili never totaled more than four to five thousand men (and a handful of women), 90 percent of whom had once been rank-and-file members of the Ganap Party or groups associated with it.[129]

The HDP reserve their highest condemnation for members of the Makapili, a reputation, by all accounts, they richly deserve. They are described as "the enemy,"

1939, shortly after his return to the Philippines. On the Sakdal movement, see the excellent study by Motoe Terami-Wada, *Sakdalistas' Struggle for Philippine Independence 1930–1945* (Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2014). Those party members who provided labor were known as *yoin* or United Nippon soldiers and received some military training. Some were evidently also attached to regular Japanese units and engaged in limited combat operations. Terami-Wada, "The Filipino Volunteer Armies," 65–73.

127. Nueva Ecija, Municipality of Santo Domingo, 10, HDP.

128. Joyce C. Lebra, *Japanese-Trained Armies in Southeast Asia* (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010). The Japanese-sponsored Bureau of Constabulary (BC) was created in January 1942 and modelled on its U.S. colonial counterpart, the Philippine Constabulary. Composed of many former USAFFE POWs captured after the surrender of Bataan, it was tasked with suppressing "riots, brigandage, unlawful assemblies and breaches of the peace." It was also responsible for combating guerrilla insurgency. In both roles, the force proved unsuccessful, being largely outgunned and plagued by low morale. Officially, it was under the control of the Filipino Commissioner of the Interior of the Executive Commission, but its activities were closely monitored by the JMA, with local garrison commanders strictly controlling the issuance of weapons and rationing ammunition to six or seven rounds per man. Ricardo T. Jose, *Captive Arms: The Constabulary under the Japanese, 1942–1945* (CSSP Publications, University of the Philippines-Diliman, 1997). Jose argues that it was the BC's "ineffectiveness" that caused the Japanese to create "more dependable forces." Jose, *Captive Arms*, 18.

129. Terami-Wada, "The Filipino Volunteer Armies," 79–86. Evidence drawn from the trials of the People's Court show that individual patrols were largely led by local commanders, many of whom were later prosecuted. Tan, *The Makapili*, 21–34. Tan cites a report that there were as many as ten women in a single unit based in Nueva Ecija. Tan, *The Makapili*, 25.

"fanatics," "the terror of those times," "bestial," "traitors to the motherland," and people "against the spread of democracy."[130] Their notoriety was based on the brutality with which they conducted raids, often acting in concert with Japanese soldiers. They descended without warning on barrios suspected of being sympathetic to the underground or of aiding the guerrillas. The scene that took place in Laur on 19 January 1945 was repeated in many rural areas of central Luzon. A detachment of Makapili accompanied by Japanese soldiers arrived in the town and, on the pretext of holding a public meeting, gathered everyone in the schoolhouse. Once there, the men were tied together with a long rope to form a line and forced to walk to the neighboring municipality of Bongayon. Upon arrival, they were all killed except for a fortunate few who managed to escape.[131] Massacres on this scale were not infrequent, especially during the final months of the war. Makapili and one or two Japanese soldiers overran the barrio of San Jose in Quezon province in the early months of 1945 and "massacred families after families burning at the same time houses they encountered in their way."[132] Deliberately setting private and public buildings on fire was a favored tactic used to terrorize communities.[133] One report, probably an exaggeration, describes the Makapili massacring three thousand men, women, and children in Lipa City.[134]

Most of the time, however, the Makapili were content to detain suspects, leaving the torture and killing to the Japanese, while they commandeered whatever they needed by looting the surrounding houses. Makapili under the command of Apolinario Altovar lorded it over the local inhabitants of Quezon, making daily arrests, confiscating livestock and property, and torturing any who "would raise a voice against them."[135] Others acted as "guides," advising Japanese soldiers on which properties to search and whom to arrest as guerrillas.[136] They were frequently

130. Bulacan, Municipality of Angat, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Marungko, 32, HDP; Laguna, Report on the History and Culture of the Town—Luisiana, 13, HDP; Rizal, Municipality of Antipolo, Barrio Janosa, 6, HDP. William Pomeroy, the U.S. citizen imprisoned for his participation in the postwar Huk rebellion, mentions in his memoirs the abuse that was hurled at former Makapili prisoners when they were released after receiving presidential clemency in the leadup to the 1953 election. William J. Pomeroy, *Bilanggo: Life as a Political Prisoner in the Philippines, 1952–1962* (University of the Philippines Press, 2009), 80–81.

131. Nueva Ecija, History and Cultural Life of the Town—Laur, 10–11, HDP.

132. Quezon, Municipality of Mauban, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of San Jose, 2, HDP.

133. Rizal, Municipality of Marikina, Historical and Cultural Life of the Barrio of San Roque, 11, HDP.

134. Batangas, Lipa City, A Shory History of Sapac, 2, HDP. While this figure might be an exaggeration, there are several reports of mass killings of more than one thousand people based on the transcripts of the People's Court trials. Tan, *Makapili*, 27–33.

135. Quezon, Municipality of Atimonan, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio Lubi, 3, HDP.

136. Quezon, Municipality of Atimonan, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Habingan, 4, HDP.

involved in operations known as "zoning," when an area was cordoned off by troops and the inhabitants gathered at a central location like a church or schoolhouse. Once there, each person underwent systematic questioning and/or torture to extract information. People were left without food and water for hours or even days. Those not arrested or executed were often then sent as forced labor to work on roads or bridges.[137] Thus many residents "were not able to come back" to Barrio Pasola after just such a Makapili-directed zoning on 10 December 1944.[138] Not all Makapili, however, were without compassion. During an extensive zona in January 1945, when people were detained in the church at San Jose Del Monte for "punishments and slaughter," the town was subjected to bombing by the U.S. Air Force (USAF). The death toll might have been considerably higher than it was had not "one good Makapili opened the church door and told those inside to save their lives."[139]

Makapili were not generally so considerate, and many who joined profited from positions of relative power to enrich themselves and indiscriminately loot and pillage homes, businesses, and entire barrios. Unit commanders were particularly well situated to exploit the local situation as leadership was often the reward of collaboration.[140] It was "well known," for instance, that the local commander in Pasig confiscated goods owned by businesses and took them to the local market to sell.[141] Procuring enough food was a constant concern, and Makapili would demand hens, pigs, and vegetables from local farmers who were too afraid to refuse them.[142] At harvest time, paramilitaries went directly to the fields and seized much of the rice crop, "leaving the owners enough for their food only until the next harvest time comes."[143]

Those who defied such demands paid dearly. One incident occurred in Libis where a group of unarmed Makapili had gone in search of food. A man among them seized some chickens belonging to Roberto Luis. Awakened by the cackling of his fowls, Luis grabbed a bolo and, along with his neighbor, chased after the thief. He escaped but quickly reported the incident. The next morning, a truckload of Japanese soldiers arrived, brutally beat the two neighbors, and dumped their severely battered bodies on the roadside before dousing them with gasoline and burning them in front of numerous onlookers. "After that incident," the HDP records, "nobody dared

137. Bulacan, History and Cultural Life of the Town of Santa Maria, 46, HDP.

138. Bulacan, Municipality of Polo, Short History of the Barrio of Pasolo, 1–2, HDP.

139. Bulacan, History and Cultural Life of San Jose Del Monte, 6, HDP.

140. Lamberto San Juan was appointed to the command of the Bondoc Peninsula Makapili garrison headquartered in Lopez for the "effective help" he had rendered the Japanese. Quezon, Historical Data of Lopez, 56, HDP.

141. Rizal, Municipality of Pasig, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Palatiw, 38, HDP.

142. Quezon, Municipality of Sariaya, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Antipolo, 8, HDP.

143. Quezon, Municipality of Sariaya, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Pili, 44, HDP.

to stop the abuses committed right and left by the Makapili and Japanese soldiers." Many residents fled and did not return to the town until it was liberated in March 1945. Some were fortunate and found their homes standing though stripped of all belongings; others "were unlucky to see only the ruins of their homes."[144]

Makapili were mainly active in the provinces of central Luzon where the Sakdalista influence had been strongest, but they were stationed in only a few places. Barrio Palitiw, for instance, served as the base for Agaton Martin, alias Borong-Borong, a notorious Makapili leader in Rizal, and was known as "Little Tokyo" by neighboring communities.[145] The sitio of Sambat in San Isidro was another stronghold under the command of the "Supremo" Hugo Saavedra, founder of the Makapili in Atimonan. Local people were compelled to supply food and other services to support this unit, facing severe reprisals if they refused.[146] If the locals were lucky, the base was temporary, such as in Barrio Buenavista in Quezon that was garrisoned by the Makapili for a short time during the Japanese retreat in early 1945.[147] Schoolhouses were frequently commandeered as temporary barracks, resulting in significant setbacks for local education. Books and desks were used as fuel for cooking, or the buildings were simply set ablaze when the paramilitaries left.[148]

To describe these men as pro-Japanese, as the HDP often do, is to oversimplify very complex motives and beliefs.[149] Motoe Terami-Wada argues, somewhat ingenuously given the weight of evidence, that the Makapili's image has been tarnished by the actions of a small number of criminals who joined their ranks and that they should be regarded as "war heroes" rather than "war criminals."[150] Satoshi Ara claims that many were just poor, uneducated farmers motivated more by the food and cash handed out by the Japanese or rich landowners than by any deeper motivation.[151] The most thoughtful assessment of their membership—albeit written in Atimonan, a known center of Sakdal and Ganap support—describes them as men imbued with the belief that "the party will serve their personal interests as well as their country's aspirations for independence." The document goes on to explain how some political leaders took advantage of "the timidity and ignorance of people such that they were able to induce and convince many young

144. Rizal, History and Cultural Life of the Town or City—Teresa, 6–7, HDP.

145. History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Palatiw, 38. This was a particularly notorious unit, responsible for at least one mass killing in Rizal of over one thousand people. Tan, *The Makapili*, 30–33.

146. Quezon, Municipality of Atimonan, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of San Isidro, 5–6, HDP.

147. Quezon, Municipality of Candelaria, History of Buenavista, 2, HDP.

148. Quezon, Municipality of Dolores, History and Cultural Life of the Town, 48, HDP.

149. Manila, History and Cultural Life of Manila, 27, HDP.

150. Motoe Terami-Wada, "Lt. Shigenobu Mochizuki and the New Philippine Cultural Institute," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 27, no. 1 (1996): 104.

151. Ara, "Resistance and Collaboration," 262–68; Ara, "Filipino Collaboration and Atrocities," 388–89.

men to serve" in the Makapili. Subsequently, the barrio of Rizal became a chosen haven for "ambitious men" from towns across Quezon. So many pro-Japanese Filipinos sought sanctuary in this place that it was known as "Little Japan" and became a target of guerrilla operations.[152]

The war between the Makapili and the guerrillas often took on an almost personal nature. The paramilitaries hunted down suspected guerrillas, burned their homes, and killed their animals, and the guerrillas retaliated in a like manner, carrying out a ruthless campaign of executions. So great at times did the enmity between Makapili and guerrillas become that the violence threatened to engulf and destroy entire communities. A notable example is the municipality of Luisiana, which endured a reign of terror during the first three months of 1945 after a Makapili sergeant's son was kidnapped. In reprisal, many innocent civilians were "wantonly" executed and "the once happy and prosperous" barrio was reduced to "a few families, simply because they don't use their heads."[153] Other Makapili took advantage of the chaos to settle old scores, resulting in the deaths of many men over past grudges or misunderstandings. The guerrillas retaliated by burning down the houses of the Makapili, who in turn responded by setting fire to the town. Fortunately, few other lives were lost as most of the remaining inhabitants had already evacuated to safer places, leaving the barrio "a ghost town."[154]

In addition to the Makapili, several other volunteer units operated in Luzon. Most notable among these was the *Bisig Bakal ng Tagala* (Iron Arm of the Tagala), an armed division of the New Leaders Association. This group was formed by graduates of the New Philippine Cultural Institute, which was established by Lieutenant Mochizuki Shigenobu in May 1943 to train selected Filipino cadres in Asian (Japanese) values and prepare them as leaders of the Japanese-sponsored Republic of the Philippines.[155] The purpose of the *Bisig* was to ensure peace and order in Manila, allowing the Japanese military to focus on combating American forces. Recruits underwent combat training from Japanese instructors and were provided with weapons, ammunition, explosives, and uniforms. General Ricarte, the revolutionary war hero, also formed a volunteer army in November 1944, known as the *Hukbo ng Kusangloob sa Kapayapaan at Kaayusan ng Pilpinas* (Volunteer Army for Peace and Order of the Philippines). At its height, it may have constituted a force of between four and five thousand men. It was based at Sampaloc, a suburb of Manila, but merged with the *Bisig* after Ricarte retired to Baguio in January 1945.[156]

152. Quezon, Municipality of Atimonan, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Rizal, 5, HDP.

153. Laguna, Municipality of Luisiana, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Santo Domingo, 3, HDP.

154. Laguna, Report on the History and Cultural Life of the Town—Luisiana, 18, HDP.

155. Terami-Wada, "Lt. Shigenobu Mochizuki," 108–10.

156. Terami-Wada, "The Filipino Volunteer Armies," 86–91. There is no mention in the HDP of these other units, perhaps because their activities were mainly confined to Manila and were often confused in people's minds with those of the more infamous Makapili.

Although the Kalibapi or *Kapisanan sa Paglilinkod sa Bagong Pilipinas* (Association for Service to the New Philippines) was not a paramilitary organization, its members, like the Makapili, were closely associated with the Japanese. Unlike other political movements such as the Sakdal or Ganap parties that predate the Japanese occupation, the Kalibapi was specifically created by the JMA in December 1942. As a nonpartisan national service association, its founding goal was to foster "closer harmony and unanimity among all Filipinos dedicated to the country's reconstruction." It replaced existing political parties that had voluntarily "dissolved and liquidated their respective organizations."[157] Modelled on its Japanese equivalent, the *Taisei Yokusankai* (Imperial Rule Assistance Association), membership was open to any adult Filipino of either sex who was committed to its ideals, aims, and purposes, and who extolled cardinal indigenous virtues such as *bayanihan*.[158] The Kalibapi had chapters across the archipelago and, at its height, may have had over six hundred thousand members. The Japanese had high hopes that the Kalibapi would prove an instrument to mobilize Filipinos in support of their policies. Ricardo Jose argues, however, that despite these large numbers, the Kalibapi received little popular support and was more often the butt of ridicule.[159]

Whatever the original aim for establishing local chapters in rural areas may have been, in practice, the Kalibapi became the principal means of winning "support and full collaboration" and for organizing the local population to serve Japanese ends.[160] The organization attempted to instill a more disciplined approach to life based on Japanese values. Morning street exercises were organized, directed by broadcasts through Radio Taisho and concluding with a ceremonial bow to the rising sun "in deference to their Emperor sun-god."[161] The Kalibapi also organized social events, like the benefit ball held late one afternoon in October 1944 at the municipal hall in Tayum, Abra. The highest bidder, a lady who paid 200

157. Executive Order no. 109, 4 December 1942, as quoted in Agoncillo, *The Fateful Years,* 1:355. Terami-Wada argues that it also had the hidden agenda of undermining the influence of the Ganap Party. Terami-Wada, *Sakdalistas' Struggle*, 176.

158. *Bayanihan* traditionally takes two forms: the more reciprocal tit-for-tat arrangements that organize daily interactions in rural areas, and the more altruistic actions performed in times of neighborhood emergency that may embrace a wider setting. See Gertrudes R. Ang, "The Bayanihan Spirit: Dead or Alive?" *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 7, nos. 1–2 (1979): 91–93; Bankoff, "The Dangers of Going It Alone"; *Continuity and Change* 22, no. 2 (2007): 327–55; Greg Bankoff, "Old Ways and New Fears: Bayanihan and COVID-19," *Philippine Studies* 68, nos. 3–4 (2020): 465–73.

159. Ricardo T. Jose, "The Association for Service to the New Philippines (KALIBAPI) during the Japanese Occupation: Attempting to Transplant a Japanese Wartime Concept to the Philippines," *Journal of Sophia Asian Studies* 19 (2001): 149–85.

160. Batangas, Municipality of Tanauan, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Malaking Pulo, 110, HDP.

161. History and Cultural Life of Barrio San Joaquin, 78. *Rajio taiso* or radio calisthenics is a short exercise routine still broadcast daily on Japan's national radio. In the Philippines, see Ruben Jeffrey A. Asuncion, "Policies and Spaces in the Philippine Educational System during the Second World War: The Case of Laguna," *UP Los Baños Journal* 20, no. 1 (2022): 81.

pesos in Japanese paper money, was crowned "Queen of the Kalibapi."[162] Some events, however, were not voluntary, as when the inhabitants of Arevalo (now part of Iloilo City) were ordered to march in a parade celebrating the granting of independence to the Japanese-sponsored Republic of the Philippines.[163] The Kalibapi also sponsored Japanese language classes in the barrios, but these efforts yielded disappointing results due to the "meager enrollment."[164]

The other side of the Kalibapi's activities, however, were not so benign. It was often the moving force behind the creation of neighborhood associations in local barrios and, through these, kept a tight rein on the population, taking family censuses and regulating the weekly rations of rice and soap (while such items were still available).[165] Local headquarters may also have acted as distribution centers, selling scarce commodities directly to people and, thus, controlling who had access to such goods.[166] The Kalibapi played a crucial role in maintaining security in rural areas by working through the neighborhood associations. They divided settlements into zones and ensured that the streets were regularly patrolled at night.[167] Even more troubling, despite its purported aim of promoting self-improvement among barrio residents, the Kalibapi often served to "commandeer the people's pigs, poultry, and animals for Japanese consumption."[168]

There is surprisingly little information in the HDP about local membership. People often joined the Kalibapi for practical reasons—everyone who wanted to work for the government or be paid a government wage had to belong to the organization, and anyone enrolled in civic associations or the press was simply drafted into its ranks.[169] Membership in rural areas was lower. In one of the rare instances when a local official is named, a certain Gregorio Villas was appointed president of the local Kalibapi in Barrio San Joaquin by the Japanese, and the other local officials and workers under him were "all recruited by force."[170] Membership, therefore, was not necessarily an indication of where a person's sympathies lay. In the barrio of San Alejandro in Nueva Ecija, for instance, though the Kalibapi had sponsored the neighborhood association, it played "an important role in the underground resistance movement."[171] In this barrio, as in many others, members of the Kalibapi tried to spare their communities from the worst ravages of war. Such was also the case in Barrio Bangongon, where the Kalibapi had worked

162. Abra, History and Cultural Life of Tayum, 15, HDP.

163. Iloilo, History and Cultural Life of the District of Arevalo, 15, HDP.

164. Nueva Ecija, Municipality of Quezon, A Brief History of San Alejandro, 138, HDP.

165. History and Cultural Life of the District of Arevalo, 15.

166. Iloilo, History and Cultural Life of the Town of Mandurriao, 6, HDP.

167. History and Cultural Life of the Town of Mandurriao, 6; Bulacan, Municipality of San Ildefonso, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Maasim, 4, HDP.

168. History and Cultural Life of Barrio San Joaquin, 78.

169. Jose, "The Association for Service to the New Philippines," 160.

170. History and Cultural Life of Barrio San Joaquin, 66–67.

171. A Brief History of San Alejandro, 138.

tirelessly to maintain "a small haven" of tranquility and industriousness until the clashes between the Japanese-sponsored BC, the Hukbalahap, and the USAFFE guerillas irrevocably shattered the peace.[172]

People's justice

The history of the varying shades of collaboration in the barrio are dark in the sense that they are largely unrecorded and generally forgotten. But an even darker aspect of barrio history is the record of retribution against those found to be collaborating with, spying for, fighting alongside, or otherwise aiding the Japanese. In rural areas, there were no courts, no need for witnesses, and no delays in carrying out sentences. In most cases, there was only one verdict—death: a daytime gunning down for the fortunate, a nighttime abduction, torture, and execution for the less so. These might be public affairs, warnings to others, or secret executions, the bodies unceremoniously buried in unmarked graves. Families suffered, too, complicit by association.[173] Frequently, the homes of those condemned were set alight, sometimes with the owner still in it. A lucky few escaped with only facial mutilation, branded forever in the eyes of their communities. The prosecutor, judge, and executioner in most cases was the local guerrilla commander, his sentence carried out by a denominated *verdugo* or executioner.[174] There was nothing half-hearted about this kind of people's justice, despite what has been written about the subsequent treatment of the national elite. In the barrios, it was "tooth for tooth" because "vengeance is sweet." However, the author of this sentiment, a former guerrilla, later admitted that such reckoning was "not so sweet at times when vengeance is against fellow countrymen."[175]

Mere suspicion of being a Japanese spy was enough to warrant a death sentence. The HDP are full of the names of spies and reports of their execution. Many holding local leadership positions or otherwise regarded as "prominent people" in the barrio during the occupation also met with this fate.[176] Maximino Collantes, who held the "top position" in Barrio Labnig, was executed by local guerrillas in Albay on suspicion of being a Japanese spy.[177] Melchor Sumagang, the teniente of Barrio Montesuerte on Bohol, and his son, Hilario, were shot at their headquarters, and their house was burnt down.[178] When it was safe to do so,

172. Bulacan, Municipality of Hagonoy, History and Cultural Life of Bangongon, 38, HDP.

173. The People's Court transcripts detail many incidences where political affiliation was a family affair. Tan, *The Makapili*, 28.

174. Albay, Municipality of Polangui, Historical Event of the Barrio of Magpanambo, 8, HDP.

175. Municipality of Santo Domingo, 11.

176. Agusan, Historical Background of Buenavista, 9, HDP.

177. Albay, Municipality of Malinao, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Labnig, 4, HDP.

178. Bohol, Municipality of Carmen, Historical and Cultural Life of the Barrio Montesuerte, 131–32, HDP.

such men were executed publicly, as happened to Maximiniano Parangipang, the headman of Barrio Barbarangay in Ilocos Norte.[179] The same fate was reserved for informers, those who had identified guerrillas or their sympathizers to the Japanese. No mercy was shown to such a "Judas of the barrio."[180] Some were shot on the spot, their dead bodies thrown into a pit and left to decompose or, as in the case of a spy named Abella, left on a garbage pile in Barrio Canlubang.[181] Others were forced to dig their own graves and then beheaded.[182]

People were reportedly shot "without investigation."[183] An old man, found in possession of a suspicious letter in the Municipality of Santa Maria, was accused of spying and executed, his body interred in the schoolyard.[184] Not being known locally was often sufficient reason to warrant mistrust. Another man, known only as Pongkol (One-leg?), was suspected of being a Japanese spy. He was taken to the local cemetery, forced to dig his own grave, and then shot. Later, he was found to be completely innocent; his "only fault … was his being a foreigner of the place."[185] Likewise, Pedro Veyra and his wife Leopolda Valenzona, prominent residents of the municipality of Baybay, were put to death by the guerrillas without any investigation. Many innocent people, victims of "loose talk," met their end in this way; consequently, people in the barrio "were more cautious with their speech and actions for some personal grievances were settled at the end of the sword or with the gun."[186]

Barrio residents had good reason to fear such talk as some people, who were "neither spies nor friends of the Japanese," were denounced and executed on the "misinformation of camp followers who courted favor from it."[187] At times, these deaths might not even be ordered by unit commanders but were the result of "illiterate followers" misusing "the power vested upon them by their superiors."[188] Instances of summary justice reached a crescendo in the "days of terror" at the end of 1944 and during the first half of 1945. In towns and barrios across the archipelago, after the American forces had landed in Leyte in October 1944, "many useful citizens … were innocently executed as chimerical spies by … rough-and-

179. Ilocos Norte, Municipality of Banna, History and Cultural Life of Barrio Barbarangay, 48, HDP.

180. Bohol, Municipality of Sagbayan (Borja), History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Santa Cruz, 4, HDP.

181. Laguna, Municipality of Lilio, Bukal (Kanluran), 5, HDP; Laguna, City of Calamba, History and Cultural Life of Canlubang, 96, HDP.

182. Historical Event of the Barrio of Magpanambo, 8.

183. Bohol, Municipality of Sierra Bullones, Barrio of Catagda-an, 63, HDP.

184. Bulacan, Municipality of Santa Maria, Barrio Cay Pombo, 55, HDP.

185. Cebu, Vol. 37, Historical and Cultural Life of the Town of Oslob, 146, HDP.

186. Leyte, Municipality of Baybay, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio, Carida, 6, HDP.

187. Iloilo, History and Cultural Life of the Town of La Paz, 20, HDP.

188. Albay, Historical Data of the Town of Ligao, 25, HDP.

ready guerrillas."[189] Entire barrios suffered greatly. The residents of Barrio Bolbollo in Abra, compelled to supply provisions and labor to a nearby BC unit, were "misjudged" by the guerrillas as "spies." At least twenty local men were killed as a result.[190] Thirteen suspected "spies" were killed and buried in the school site at Barrio Lumaba.[191] In the municipality of Palo on Leyte, dead bodies, many naked, others covered with wounds, and some without heads could be seen floating down the Banga and San Joaquin rivers "almost every day"—all reputedly killed at the hands of the local guerrillas.[192]

Nor did a person have to be a spy to merit a death sentence. Anyone perceived as being pro-Japanese might suffer the same fate. Men holding prominent positions—mayors, councilmen, even lawyers—paid a heavy price for their perceived collaboration. Some were kidnapped and then shot. Ciriaco Lumn, a prominent citizen of Clarin in Bohol, was killed by the guerillas because he had encouraged people to return to their homes at the start of the occupation.[193] The chief of police in the municipality of Ligao, Zosimo Pulvinar, was held responsible for the death of many prisoners, and his death "became a must among guerilla officers." He was killed in Bolinao.[194] Similarly, the mayor of Bilar, S. Cemini, suspected of working against the guerrillas, was gunned down in front of the municipal hall.[195] Party members, too, were favorite targets.

Sakdalistas or Ganapistas were, by definition, seen as collaborators and often executed if captured by the guerrillas.[196] Guerrillas dogged the footsteps of Serapio Arenas, Maximo Aguilar, and Simon Ocampo, all local Ganap party leaders in Meycauayan, until an opportune moment was found to kill them.[197] By the last quarter of 1944, the bodies of such unfortunates might be "seen drifting by the streams and lonely brooks."[198] Reports of women being executed are less common but did take place. A woman, a native of Camaligan in Camarines Sur, was killed and her body thrown into the river "so that everyone will know what was done to the collaborators." Local townspeople might also seek vengeance.[199] Alfredo Pedrosa, a lawyer and local politician known to have collaborated with the Japanese, "met his untimely death" at the hands of neighbors.[200]

189. Ilocos Sur, Historical Data of Santo Domingo, 5, HDP.

190. Abra, Municipality of Pilar, History and Cultural Life of Bolbollo, 2, HDP.

191. Abra, Municipality of Villaviciosa, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio—Lumaba, 2, HDP.

192. History and Cultural Life of Barrio San Joaquin, 76.

193. Bohol, History and Cultural Life of the Town of Clarin, 51, HDP.

194. Albay, Historical Data of the Town of Ligao, 20, HDP.

195. Bohol, A Brief History of the Town of Bilar, 4, HDP.

196. Camarines Sur, Municipality of Ragay, History of Buenasuerte, 4, HDP.

197. Bulacan, Municipality of Meycauayan, History and Cultural Life of Bancal, 62, HDP.

198. Municipality of Santo Domingo, 11.

199. Camarines Sur, History and Cultural Life of Camaligan, 16, HDP.

200. Antique, History and Cultural Life of the Municipality of Barbaza, 13, HDP.

An even rougher justice awaited those who had worked alongside the Japanese military and had taken up arms to fight against their countrymen. Makapili members, along with other paramilitary units and constables in the BC, faced brutal consequences if captured by guerrillas. Surrender offered no assurance of safety. On 28 October 1944, Lt. Victorio Sumodobila, the commanding officer of a BC unit stationed in Corella, Bohol, was shot dead immediately after raising his hands in surrender. He was fortunate. Four of his constables met a similar fate only after being tortured. In all, nine local constabulary members in the town met a "violent and painful death."[201] The same fate awaited members of the various volunteer armies if captured, their deaths seen as retaliation for the depredations and killings they had inflicted upon guerrillas, their families, homes, and livestock when they were in the ascendancy.[202]

For those collaborators not deemed to warrant a death sentence, a lesser form of punishment was facial mutilation. There are accounts of people who had already been detained as spies having one of their ears cut off, though they could still face execution if later "found" guilty. One particularly disturbing account involves a newly enlisted U.S. Army soldier leading a squad to cut off the ears of an informer, his wife, and his brothers. As a result, the soldier and his family no longer dared to live there, fearing retaliation from the informer's family, who could be seen walking, earless, about the barrio.[203] Reports of mutilation are scattered, however, suggesting it was a relatively uncommon form of punishment. Other forms of torture and mistreatment were far more prevalent. Collaborators were often tied to trees and left to face death by dehydration, wild animals, or passers-by.

Families were made to suffer, too. A favored reprisal used by guerrillas was to set the house of a collaborator on fire. The HDP have many such reports. Luis Tortbio, a veteran of the Philippine-American War, was suspected of spying and had his house set alight. His past service possibly saved his life, as his neighbor, Felix Pajo, accused of the same offence, was shot as well as having his house burnt down.[204] Jose Reyes, a Spanish mestizo, suffered the same fate. Suspected of being an informer and maintaining too "friendly relations" with the Japanese, he saw his "truly grand and magnificent" house and other properties set ablaze one day in September 1943. Later he, too, was shot.[205] Entire barrios faced reprisals if they were deemed to have been overly cooperative with the Japanese. The guerrillas not only razed to the ground the homes of suspected informers in Dalaguete but also set alight the town's school buildings that had been used as a temporary barracks

201. Bohol, Municipality of Corella, History and Cultural Life of the Town, 6, HDP. Most men belonging to the BC were acquitted after the war, and membership per se was not deemed to be treasonous. Jose, *Captive Arms*, 19.

202. History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Santo Domingo, 3.

203. Bohol, Municipality of Inabanga, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of U-og, 88, HDP.

204. Bohol, History and Cultural Life of Carmen, 5, HDP.

205. Bohol, Municipality of Tubigon, Barrio of Pinayagan, 10, HDP.

by Japanese soldiers.[206] Even if left standing, the home of a collaborator was often stripped of its worldly goods—sewing machines, wardrobes, tables and chairs, et cetera. Sometimes, the only thing left standing was the frame, the wooden walls, and floors repurposed for use in tents and foxholes.[207]

Life in the barrios was hard and dangerous; as one writer concludes, "those were the times that lives of persons was very cheap."[208] Many people in the barrio found themselves caught in the middle between Japanese soldiers and their informers, on one side, increasingly willing to use whatever force necessary to extract intelligence, and the guerrillas, on the other side, meting out summary justice to anyone deemed to be collaborating with the enemy. "The guerillas came to punish the people suspected as spies," records one HDP, and "when the Japanese soldiers came, they did the same."[209] Both sides also showed no compunction about seizing whatever supplies they needed regardless of its consequences for the families of those concerned. "Civilians who refused to give the guerrillas that little livelihood were maltreated and condemned as spies. Civilians who were suspected of guerrilla activities by the Japanese were tortured to death."[210] It was an impossible situation. Those who, due to circumstance or lack of skill, were unable to steer a middle course, died. Often, a middle path was not possible:

> Those who aided one, although they acted under the compulsion of an irresistible force and under the impulse of an uncontrollable fear, were suspected by the other as spies or as pros for the other. In other words, the aid to be given to one was treason to the other. There was no trial then. Mere suspicion was sufficient to convict one, and that conviction always meant death.[211]

Many people lost their lives this way, particularly as control over rural areas was hotly contested. In the municipality of San Jose del Monte in Bulacan, for example, the struggle for supremacy between a "Sakdal" unit and the guerrillas seesawed between 1943 and 1944, with one side controlling the barrio then the other, depending on whether the former were supported by Japanese troops.[212] In a single barrio, Tanong in Rizal province, more than fifty people were reportedly killed either by the Japanese, by the Makapili, or by the guerrillas. Many others, especially those who had collaborated, fled "to other towns where their pro-Japanese activities

206. Cebu, Volume 35, History and Cultural Life of the Town—Dalaguete, 5, HDP.

207. Historical and Cultural Life of San Jose Del Monte, 7.

208. History and Cultural Life of Camaligan, 16.

209. Abra, Historical and Cultural Report of the Municipality of Baay, 7, HDP.

210. Romblon, Municipality of San Fernando, History and Cultural Life of the Barrio of España, 22, HDP.

211. Abra, Municipality of San Isidro, History and Cultural Life of the Town of San Isidro, 4, HDP.

212. History and Cultural Life of San Jose Del Monte, 5.

were not known" and never returned to the barrio.[213] There was no appeal and no possibility of pardon from the justice of the barrio.[214]

Dark histories of the barrio

With the hindsight of eighty years, passions cool and memories soften. Actions that, at the time, might have had only one explanation now seem less self-evident. The HDP were compiled a few years after the occupation, when the events of the recent past merited only one possible interpretation given the outcome of the war: anyone who had not supported the guerrillas and the commonwealth government in exile had collaborated with the enemy, whether they were pro-Japanese, held an alternative vision of an independent Philippines, or were simply trying to survive at a time of great uncertainty and personal insecurity. History might be written by the victors, but what is more surprising is the frequently ambivalent attitude of barrio people toward their supposed protectors and liberators who are often tarred with the same brush as traitors and Japanese. All too often, a reign of terror accompanied the withdrawal of Japanese troops, with accusations of guerrilla forces committing widespread murder and the rape of "peaceful citizens" on the pretext of collaborating with the enemy.[215] Meanwhile, the USAF rained a different kind of terror from the skies, leaving entire towns in ruins. In Bangued, for instance, only three houses escaped "the fury of the incendiary bombs" dropped on 10 March 1945, when three hundred people lost their lives.[216] The violence unleashed in the barrio shows few signs of class-inspired retribution.[217] As one commentator in Nueva Ecija simply observed, it was a time when "lives were as cheap as chickens."[218]

The black-white dichotomy that divides collaborator from guerrilla in the Philippines is now under scrutiny by several, albeit non-American, scholars.[219] "Collaboration" is an elastic term encompassing various activities that took place in the barrio and one that is open to constant reinterpretation. It includes a range of actions from working for the "enemy" or supporting them economically, to

213. Rizal, Municipality of Marikina, Historical and Cultural Life of the Barrio of Tanong, 23–24, HDP.

214. Similar reprisals took place in Europe during the last months of the war. Judt, "The Past Is Another Country," 92–93.

215. Abra, History and Cultural Life of Lagangilang, 5, HDP.

216. Abra, History and Cultural Life of Bangued, 8, HDP.

217. Ara makes a convincing case for such forms of class-based violence in his studies of collaboration in Leyte and Negros Occidental. The absence of such evidence may be either a reflection of the authorship of the HDP as a source or the specifically regional nature of such violence. Ara, "Resistance and Collaboration," 268–71; Ara, "Filipino Collaboration and Atrocities."

218. Nueva Ecija, History of Cabanatuan City, 17, HDP.

219. Setsuho, "The Japanese Occupation Period in Philippine History," 7–9; Ara, "Resistance and Collaboration"; Ara, "Filipino Collaboration and Atrocities." See also Bulado, "Political Collaboration."

membership in nonpartisan political organizations and participation in sponsored events, to supplying information and spying on fellow citizens, to enlisting in paramilitaries and fighting alongside Japanese troops, often against one's own compatriots. A further distinction must also be made between "services" rendered voluntarily, those engaged in tacitly, and outright coercion. Nothing is simple about the term, especially given the Sakdalista origins of the majority of those who joined the Ganap and were later recruited into the Makapili and the other paramilitaries.[220] Nor should it be forgotten that both the Makapili and the Hukbalahap attempted to establish an anti-American accord to confront the returning U.S. "liberating" forces.[221]

These fine distinctions were acknowledged at the national level even before the HDP survey, as evidenced by President Roxas's 1948 decree granting presidential pardon to all those accused of political, economic, and cultural collaboration. It was simply in too many people's postwar best interests, both in the Philippines and the United States, to be done with the matter once and for all. "Proximity to power," writes Christopher Capozzola, "not to principle, decided the outcome of the Philippines' collaboration dilemma."[222]

The HDP offer a unique, bottom-up, grassroots account of the Japanese occupation told from the viewpoint of the barrio by the people who lived through this turbulent period of Philippine history. These pages describe the trials and tribulations of rural life and the types of decisions people had to make every day just to survive. They bring color and life to faceless statistics, honoring the memory of the half a million or more Filipinos who lost their lives during the war, and rescuing local people from historical obscurity.[223] The HDP show that, contrary to the impression left by the decisions of the People's Court, collaborators were not treated with undue leniency by a judicial system "tainted with class-based partiality."[224] The clemency of the court at the national level must be balanced with the rough justice of the barrios.[225] The latter details the merciless reprisals against anyone suspected of aiding and abetting the enemy during the occupation, as well as the brutal retribution faced by those suspected of collaboration after liberation.

220. Terami-Wada, *Sakdalistas' Struggle*, 194.

221. Terami-Wada, "The Filipino Volunteer Armies," 83.

222. Christopher Capozzola, *Bound by War: How the United States and the Philippines Built America's First Pacific Century* (Basic Books, 2020), 205.

223. The estimated number of Filipinos who died during World War II, military and civilian, ranges from five hundred thousand to one million. Werner Gruhl gives the number of dead as 527,000. Werner Gruhl, *Imperial Japan's World War Two, 1931–1945* (Transaction, 2007), 143–44.

224. Ara, "Filipino Collaboration and Atrocities," 385.

225. In fairness, several authors argue that it was only the elite who were absolved from collaboration by the courts and that the "poor" were condemned and punished. Satoshi Ara makes this case forcefully. Ara, "Filipino Collaboration and Atrocities," 384. However, even they were pardoned in 1953.

There were no trials in the barrio and no dependence on reluctant witnesses.[226] The only evidence required was that furnished by people's own eyes—and the streams ran red with the blood of those deemed guilty.

The histories that the HDP reveal may be dark, depicting a world of mistrust and violence, when a loose word or a mistaken confidence might result in arrest, torture, or death, a world where it was dangerous to take a side, but also one where doing nothing was no guarantee of safety. Many rural people attempted to steer a middle course. Some communities succeeded, at least temporarily, particularly if they were in locations without strategic value or far from the main theaters of conflict. Others fled to the hills, abandoning homes for safer sites or struggling to survive in the forests or mountains—but that is another story.[227] For most, however, there was no alternative but to survive in any way possible, even if that involved sometimes collaborating with the Japanese and at other times aiding and abetting the guerrillas. Many fell afoul of one side or the other, or simply found themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The HDP tells all these stories like no other source. It presents a people's history, a view from the barrio to counteract the more national and elite-focused accounts that too often dominate Philippine historiography. In this sense the history of the Japanese occupation shows many continuities that can be traced to the socio-political movements of the late nineteenth century and the revolutionary period, the "unfinished revolution."[228] The themes that run through 1896 (and incidentally 1986) are also present between 1942 and 1945, among the Sakdalistas, Ganapistas, Kalibapi, Makapili, and other paramilitaries, no matter how distasteful the association may be to some.[229] The people in the barrio were faced with difficult choices and hard decisions, and too many died. In the HDP, they have left their histories.

226. Many cases prosecuted before the People's Court had to be dismissed due to the failure of witnesses to appear. Tan, *The Makapili*, 88–123.

227. Much the same dilemma faced people in the barrios during the Seven Years War and the British Occupation of Manila from 1762–1764. Kristie Patricia Flannery, *Piracy and the Making of the Spanish Pacific World* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2024), 131.

228. Reynaldo C. Ileto, "The 'Unfinished Revolution' in Philippine Political Discourse," *Southeast Asian Studies* 31, no. 1 (1993): 62–82. See also Teodoro Agoncillo and Oscar Alfonso, *A Short History of the Filipino People* (University of the Philippines, 1960). Ara makes this comparison, too. Ara, "Resistance and Collaboration," 273.

229. David G. Timberman, "Unfinished Revolution: The Philippines in 1986," *Southeast Asian Affairs* (1987): 239–63. Ara makes this case in relation to the paramilitary unit known as the Western Leyte Guerilla Warfare Forces. Ara, "Resistance and Collaboration," 259–60.

The Invention of the *Kamikaze*: Dissent and Resistance in the Japanese Military

☆

Nick Kapur

Abstract

Previous scholarship has focused on why kamikaze pilots accepted their one-way missions, typically drawing on notions of an essentialized Japanese culture or modern state-nationalism. This article brings the invention of kamikaze tactics into the 1940s by excavating examples of dissent and resistance in the Japanese military. It argues that since many people articulated opposition by citing their own understandings of Japanese culture, kamikaze tactics cannot be explained as predetermined by traditional culture or modern ideological indoctrination. This article emphasizes the viewpoints of working-class soldiers who comprised the majority of kamikaze squadrons, as well mid-ranking career officers representing an earlier Japanese military tradition.

Introduction

At 7:25 a.m. on 25 October 1944, as part of the larger Battle of Leyte Gulf in the brutal final stages of the Pacific War, nine Mitsubishi A6M "Zero" fighter planes took off from Clark Airfield on the island of Luzon in the Philippines, and headed out to sea. Four of the Zeros carried normal armaments, serving as a covering force. The other five Zeros were strapped to massive 250-kilogram (550-pound) bombs and were part of a newly formed unit, led by Lieutenant Seki Yukio, called the "Divine Wind Special Attack Force" (*Shinpū Tokubetsu Kōgekitai*). The pilots of these five planes had committed to a course of certain death.

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Slightly more than three-and-a-half hours later, at 10:51 a.m., a Zero carrying a large bomb deliberately crash-dived into the American escort carrier U.S.S. *St. Lo* (CVE-63) off the east coast of Samar Island. The plane plunged through the wooden flight deck and into the hanger deck where aircraft were being rearmed and refueled. The resulting explosions tore the ship apart. The order was given to abandon ship, and the *St. Lo* sank within minutes, taking 113 men to a watery grave.

According to standard accounts, both popular and scholarly, this was the first instance of a *kamikaze* attack (known in Japanese by the euphemisms "special attack" [*tokubetsu kōgeki*, often abbreviated *tokkō*] and "body-ramming" [*taiatari*]).[1] Although there had been numerous previous instances of Japanese pilots deliberately crashing aircraft into targets (and even several instances of American pilots doing so), scholars generally agree these earlier instances were spontaneous, spur-of-the-moment decisions by individual pilots, often in aircraft that were heavily damaged and no longer flyable, rather than planned, premeditated one-way missions such as that led by Lt. Seki on 25 October.

Traditional accounts, as immortalized in memoirs, manga, and films, portray these kamikaze attacks as the brainchild of Vice Admiral Ōnishi Takijirō. According to these accounts, Ōnishi was maverick naval aviator disliked by his senior officers but beloved by his men. He had helped plan the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 and had a reputation for thinking outside the box. As the commander of the naval air squadrons in the Philippines during the Battle of Leyte Gulf, Ōnishi had firsthand knowledge of the desperate situation Japan was facing. By the summer of 1944, the tide of the war had turned. The Japanese military had not won a major battle since capturing the Philippines in early 1942. The once mighty Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) had been beaten back repeatedly, and the Allied "island hopping" campaign had recaptured much of the territory Japan had acquired in 1941 and 1942.

The Allied advantage in production and manpower was becoming overwhelming. Japanese production of new ships and planes had fallen every year since 1941. By the summer of 1944, the United States had individual task forces that were larger than the entire remainder of the Japanese surface fleet. From January to October of 1944, the IJN lost over 4,000 planes and almost as many trained pilots. Moreover, most of the planes that remained were obsolescent. As late as 1943, the Zero fighter was arguably still the best single-engine fighter

1. The English term *kamikaze* derives from the native Japanese (*kun-yomi*) reading of the Chinese characters *shinpū* (神風), meaning "divine wind," and was a reference to the unseasonal typhoons that, according to legend, had saved Japan from the Mongol invasions in the late thirteenth century and were taken to be a sign that Japan was a sacred land protected by the gods. By evoking these legends, the architects of these tactics hoped to imply that they would similarly protect Japan from foreign invasion, this time by the U.S. military. In this article, in the service of clear and concise English prose, I frequently translate *tokkō* and *taiatari* as "kamikaze" and otherwise treat these terms as interchangeable.



A kamikaze A6M Zero near the end of its run at the escort carrier USS White Plains *on 25 October 1944. The aircraft exploded in mid-air moments after the picture was taken, scattering debris across the deck.* [U.S. Naval History and Heritage Command]

in the war. However, with the arrival of powerful American fighters like the Grumman F6F Hellcat and the Vought F4U Corsair in significant numbers over the course of 1943, as well as the development of new aerial tactics that limited the advantages of the Zero, the once-feared Japanese fighter had become outclassed.

Furthermore, with the amphibious invasion of Saipan, launched on 15 June 1944, the U.S. had, for the first time, invaded territory considered by the Japanese to be part of the "home islands" (*naichi*). That same day, approximately 50 American B-29 Superfortress ultra-long-range bombers bombed the Yawata Steel Works in Fukuoka prefecture, in what was the first bombing of the Japanese main islands since the symbolic and ineffectual Doolittle Raid against Tokyo in April 1942.[2]

According to this standard narrative, Vice Admiral Ōnishi, responding to this desperate war situation, reluctantly yet decisively took the decision to implement deliberate and premeditated crash-diving attacks against American ships, drawing upon a corps of willing volunteers. Thereafter, inspired by the early successes of Ōnishi's "kamikaze" squadron, the rest of the navy and the Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) rapidly adopted kamikaze tactics: airplane crash-diving; human-piloted bombs dropped by bombers; piloted torpedoes launched by submarines; explosive-filled motorboats designed to ram amphibious landing craft; and frogmen attaching mines to ships at anchor and manually detonating them. Eventually, the Japanese military began preparing Japan's civilian population to potentially die in a similar fashion, if necessary to repel an Allied invasion, in what Japanese leaders euphemistically termed "every person a kamikaze" (*zen'in tokkō*)

2. Wesley Frank Craven and James Lea Cate, ed., *The Army Air Forces in World War II: Volume Five: The Pacific: Matterhorn to Nagasaki June 1944 to August 1945* (Office of Air Force History, 1983), 3, 99–101.

and "100 million shattered jewels" (*ichioku gyokusai*), and which scholar David Earhart has called "the kamikazefication of the home front."[3]

Such "suicide" tactics were extremely rare or even unprecedented in the recorded history of warfare.[4] While there had always been instances of individual self-sacrifice undertaken in the heat of combat, never had such self-sacrifice taken place on such a wide scale and in such a premeditated, institutionalized manner. Although there had been many instances of men being sent into combat situations in which the chances of returning were slim, rarely if ever had those chances been willfully reduced to zero well before the combat even occurred.

Serious academic scholarship on kamikaze tactics and the men who carried them out is very slim in English, and even in Japanese.[5] What scholarship exists tends to focus narrowly on few areas of inquiry; in particular, scholars and popular writers have sought to explain why kamikaze pilots and other "special attack" soldiers accepted their one-way missions, with many writers resorting to explanations drawing upon notions of an ancient and essentialized Japanese culture of aestheticizing death and valorizing self-sacrifice dating back to samurai times, or else emphasizing the powerful wartime ideological system that had developed over time dating back to at least the Meiji period (1868–1912).[6] Others have

3. See David C. Earhart, *Certain Victory: Images of World War II in the Japanese Media* (M.E. Sharpe, 2008), 409–59.

4. Using the English word "suicide" in relation to kamikaze attacks is problematic for a number of reasons, and therefore I have generally avoided doing so. In general, Japanese pilots and officers did not discuss these attacks as "suicides" (*jisatsu*), or even with the related, more positive Japanese term *jiketsu* (literally, "self-determination"). In general, official documents and the mass media acted as if these tactics were within the bounds of normal military operations, even as many officers rejected this notion in private. In addition to euphemisms like "special attack," the word most commonly used in relation to these tactics in place of "suicide" was "certain death" (*hisshi*).

5. Although the secondary literature on kamikaze attacks in Japanese is voluminous, the overwhelming majority of these works are written by journalists, fiction writers, and former military men. Many lack scholarly apparatus. Particularly notable examples include *"Tokkō" to Nihonjin* (Kōdansha, 2005) by journalist and pop historian Hosaka Masayasu; *Fujimi no tokkō hei: gunshin wa naze jōkan ni hankō shita ka* (Kōdansha, 2017) by playwright and novelist Kōkami Shōji; *Tokkō: sensō to Nihonjin* (Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2015) by journalist Kurihara Toshio; *Tokkō to wa nani ka* (Bungei Shunju, 2006) by journalist Mori Shirō; *Tokkō: gedō no tōsotsu to Ningen no jōken* (Bungei Shunjū, 1992) by businessman and former naval aviator Morimoto Tadao; and *Rikugun tokubetsu kōgekitai* (3 vols., Bungei Shunjū, 2018) by screenwriter Takagi Toshirō. For two histories by academics aimed at a popular audience and lacking extensive scholarly apparatus, see Ichinose Toshiya, *Tokotai-in no riaru* (Kōdansha, 2020), and M.G. Sheftall, *Blossoms in the Wind: Human Legacies of the Kamikaze* (NAL Caliber, 2005). For an excellent brief scholarly overview of various aspects of the kamikaze attacks, see Chapter 2, "Kamikaze Attacks, Planning before and after the Fall of Saipan," in Peter Wetzler, *Imperial Japan and Defeat in the Second World War: The Collapse of an Empire* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 59–88.

6. For interpretations drawing heavily upon essentialized notions of Japanese culture, see Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms and Nationalisms: The Militarization of Aesthetics in Japanese History* (The University of Chicago Press, 2002), a study by a cultural anthropologist

focused on whether and to what extent kamikaze pilots may have been forced or coerced into "volunteering."[7]

Most previous studies, moreover, have emphasized the writings of elite university students whose higher education draft deferments were rescinded late in the war and who were then drafted into service as kamikaze pilots.[8] While the poems, letters, and testaments produced by these highly educated young men are eloquently written and poignant, they are problematic as sources because they were subject to the military's surveillance and censorship. Perhaps more importantly, elite former university students comprised less than one-quarter of all "special attack" forces, and thus focusing on their voices elides the majority of working-class soldiers who perished in these attacks.[9] But even expanding our purview to include non-elite "special attackers" ignores the viewpoints of mid-ranking career aviators and other officers in the army and navy who survived into the final stages of the war, most of whom came from humble backgrounds, and many of whom were deeply opposed to the new tactics.

Accordingly, this article excavates examples of dissent against, and even resistance to, kamikaze tactics among mid-ranking career officers in the Japanese military during the final years of the war, with the aim of destabilizing pat narratives of universal acquiescence or overwhelming coercion, either based on notions of a timeless and essentialized Japanese culture or, perhaps more plausibly, as the grim endpoint of a long and gradual process of kamikazification of the Japanese military that was a historically overdetermined result of Japan's modern military, political, and social history. While in no way seeking to deny that many or even most kamikaze went to their deaths under a significant degree of coercion, this article suggests that if so many career military officers were able to articulate opposition to kamikaze tactics, in many cases by citing their own, sometimes diametrically opposed, understandings of Japanese culture and military tradition, historians and popular writers might have heretofore been seeking the origins of the kamikaze much farther in the past than is justified by the historical record.

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that remains the most widely cited work on this topic in English; and the account found in the Japanese Defense Agency's official history, Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 36: Rikugun kōkū sakusen: Okinawa, Taiwan, Iōtō hōmen* (Asagumo Shinbunsha, 1970), 305. For a study in Japanese asserting the overdetermined nature of kamikaze attacks dating back to the Meiji period, see Nishikawa Yoshimitsu, *Tokkō to Nihonjin no sensō: yurusarezaru sakusen no jissō to ikun* (Fuyō Shobō, 2009), especially 225–324. For a recent study by a Western scholar embracing both explanations simultaneously, see Michael Lucken, *The Japanese and the War: From Expectation to Memory*, trans. Karen Grimwade (Columbia University Press, 2017), especially 113–14.

7. See, for example, Hatanaka Chōkei, *Sensō no tsumi to batsu: tokkō no shinsō* (Fuyō Shobō, 2015), 11–59.

8. In particular, see Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze Diaries: Reflections of Japanese Student Soldiers* (University of Chicago Press, 2007).

9. Benjamin Uchiyama, *Japan's Carnival War: Mass Culture on the Home Front, 1937–1945* (Cambridge University Press, 2019), 205.

Decentering Ōnishi

In recognition of what is perceived to be his central role in initiating kamikaze attacks, Vice Admiral Ōnishi has come to be remembered as the "father of the kamikaze" (*tokkō no chichi*).[10] However, the simplistic story of Ōnishi spontaneously inventing kamikaze attacks in reaction to the desperate situation in the Philippines in October 1944 is far from accordance with available evidence. In fact, Ōnishi's implementation of kamikaze tactics seems to have come after months or even years of planning; he almost certainly was ordered to implement the new tactics by his superiors; and his feelings toward the new tactics seem to have been at least somewhat ambivalent.

Long before Ōnishi's actions in the Philippines in October 1944, some of the highest-ranking leaders of the Japanese military were making plans for a wide variety of "certain death, certain hit" (*hisshi hitchū*) tactics. As early as 6 August 1943, during preliminary discussions for the upcoming meeting of the Naval General Staff's War Preparations Planning Committee (*gunbi kōsabu*), Kuroshima Kameto, the newly appointed deputy chief of naval operations, argued for the necessity of preparing to take the "unprecedented measure" of conducting "certain death, certain kill" attacks, citing the example of a fighter plane deliberately crash-diving into an enemy vessel.[11] Then, at the full meeting of the committee on 11 August to discuss "War Preparedness Policy for the Third Stage of the War," in the presence of fellow committee members including Chief of the Naval General Staff Osami Nagano, Vice Chief of the General Staff Itō Seiichi, Navy Minister Shimada Shigetarō, and Vice Minister Sawamoto Yoshio, Kuroshima argued that "our main policy should be to establish an invincible defense, in combination with 'certain death, certain kill' attacks."[12] Kuroshima had only recently been elevated to the post of deputy chief of naval operations on 19 July, and may well have been elevated to this post based on his commitment to kamikaze tactics. In his previous post as chief of staff of the Combined Fleet, Kuroshima had broached the topic of employing ramming attacks by motorboats filled with explosives to his superiors on the General Staff. In any case, according to the Defense Agency's official history, "[Kuroshima's] appointment as the person in charge of war preparations at the Naval General Staff was of decisive importance in ensuring the General Staff's rapid adoption of kamikaze tactics."[13]

10. For examples of Ōnishi-centric narratives of the origins of kamikaze attacks, see Kōdachi Naoki, *Tokkō no shin'i: Ōnishi Takijirō wa naze 'tokkō' o meijita no ka?* (Bungei Shunjū, 2014), Kusayanagi Daizō, *Tokkō no shisō: Ōnishi Takijirō den* (Gurafusha, 2006), Nishimura Makoto, *Ōnishi Takijirō: kamikaze tokkō o meijita otoko* (Futabasha, 2015), and Inoguchi Rikihei and Nakajima Tadashi, *Shinpū Tokubetsu Kōgekitai no kiroku* (Sekkasha, 1963).

11. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshi Shitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 45: Daihon'ei Kaigun-bu rengō kantai 6: Daisan dan sakusen kōki* (Asagumo Shinbunsha, 1971), 322.

12. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 45,* 322.

13. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 45,* 322.

A similar trend was emerging within the Imperial Japanese Army. In February 1944, General Tōjō Hideki, who was already serving simultaneously as both prime minister and army minister, appointed himself chief of the Army General Staff. Having consolidated command and operational authority over the army in his own hands, Tōjō made it clear that he expected the army to begin adopting "special attack" tactics in the near future.[14] At this same time, Tōjō bulldozed the navy into allowing his loyal lackey, Shimada Shigetarō, to unprecedentedly serve simultaneously as both navy minister and chief of the Naval General Staff, similarly combining both command and operational authority so he could push through special attacks without opposition.[15]

Tōjō was a strong believer in the qualitative power of Japan's spiritual superiority (*seishinryoku*) to overcome quantitative disadvantages in training and materiel. On 11 March, he made an inspection of the Akeno Flight School in Mie Prefecture, during which he asked a group of pilot trainees: "With what do you shoot down enemy aircraft?" The trainees proposed a number of answers: "With your machine guns? With 20-millimeter cannons? With anti-aircraft guns?" Tōjō remained silent until one student finally ventured: "I would use my indomitable spirit [*kikon*], even ramming the enemy aircraft if necessary to bring it down," which seemed to satisfy Tōjō. On other occasions Tōjō had been heard to express similar sentiments, such as, "We must rely entirely on our spirit [*tamashii*] to attack the enemy. Without our spirit, we will not be able to bring down enemy planes."[16]

Similarly, on 4 May 1944, Tōjō made a surprise inspection of the Army Aviation Officer Training School in Saitama, touring the campus and asking students and instructors a number of questions about the content of their training. Once again, Tōjo asked how to shoot down enemy aircraft, and when a cadet suggested machine guns, Tōjō answered, "Wrong! Enemy planes are brought down through the power of Japan's spiritual superiority [*seishinryoku*]. Therefore, if your machine guns don't bring them down, you will bring them down by any means necessary, even a suicidal ramming attack."[17] Tōjō then had all the staff and students gather in a hanger where he gave them a speech excoriating them for the inadequacy of the school's training methods. Tōjō declared, "Your education in all areas should be based on spiritualism [*seishinshugi*], inspiring in you an indomitable spirit of always fighting to the death."[18]

14. Hosaka, *"Tokkō" to Nihonjin*, 187.

15. Senō Sadao, "Shinpū tokkō no 'shinwa' e no giwaku," *Maru* 35, no. 9 (September 1982), 123.

16. Itō Takashi, Hirohashi Tadamitsu, and Katashima Norio, ed., *Tōjō naikaku sōri daijin kimitsu kiroku; Tōjō Hideki taishō genkōroku* (Tokyo University Press, 1990), 535.

17. Yoshida Atsushi, *Ōzora ni ikiru*, (self-published, 1990), 172.

18. Rikugun Kōkū Shikan Gakkō Shi Kankōkai, ed., *Rikugun Kōkū Shikan Gakkō* (Rikugun Kōkū Shikan Gakkō Shi Kankōkai, 1996), 229.

Finally in March 1944, the Army General Staff, at Tōjō's urging, took the decision to begin preparing the Army Air Corps for kamikaze attacks.[19] The majority of the officers in the Army Aviation Headquarters resisted this policy, however, arguing it was intolerable to try to make up for shortcomings in technology and production, which were the responsibility of central planners, by sacrificing the lives of front-line pilots and soldiers.[20] The army aviation officers also harbored an abiding sense of grievance toward senior generals in the Army Ministry and on the Army General Staff, who had notoriously resisted expanding army aviation due to their devotion to land-based infantry units.[21] Chief of Army Aviation General Yasuda Takeo was especially opposed to the use of army aircraft in kamikaze attacks and sought to prevent implementation through delay and inaction, until an impatient Tōjō removed him from his post in on 28 March, replacing him with a loyal protégé, General Ushiroku Jun.[22] Even so, a majority of the officers in Army Aviation Headquarters continued to oppose the implementation of kamikaze tactics, prompting Ushiroku to appoint Sugawara Michiō, an army general highly respected in aviation circles, as his deputy chief of army aviation to bolster his push to implement the new tactics.[23]

Meanwhile, the navy was making plans of its own. In February 1944, shocked by the fall of the Marshall Islands to the United States and the massive raid on its Truk Lagoon base by the U.S. Navy, the IJN authorized research on its *kaiten* ("turn of Heaven") manned torpedo; development of its *ōka* ("cherry blossom") human-piloted, rocket-propelled bomb began a few months later. In April 1944, the Naval General Staff submitted a request to the Navy Ministry for "urgent testing" of nine types of experimental weapons, including several suitable for kamikaze attacks, stating in unusually blunt terms: "If you allow us to produce these, we can definitely turn the tide of the war, but if these [weapons] are not realized, the war will be lost."[24] The Navy Ministry immediately authorized this request.[25] By 1 August, the navy had ordered an initial production run of 100 *kaiten* manned torpedoes, and the initial design of the *ōka* bomb was approved by the Navy General Staff on 5 August. Crude wooden motorboats built around two large bombs and surplus automobile engines had already gone into mass

19. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 94: Rikugun kōkū no gunbi to unyō 3: Dai Tōā Sensō shūsen made* (Asagumo Shinbunsha, 1976), 264–65.

20. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 94*, 265.

21. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 94*, 265.

22. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 94*, 265; Ōnuki Ken'ichirō and Watanabe Kō, *Tokkōtai shinbu ryō: shōgen—kikanhei wa jigoku o mita* (Kōdansha, 2009), 49; Hosaka, *"Tokkō" to Nihonjin*, 188.

23. Hatanaka, *Sensō no tsumi to batsu*, 200–1; Hosaka, *"Tokkō" to Nihonjin*, 188–89; Fukahori Michiyoshi, *Tokko no shinjitsu: meirei to kenshin to izoku no kokoro* (Hara Shobō, 2001), 149.

24. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 45*, 326–27.

25. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 88: Kaigun gunsenbi 2: kaisen ikō* (Asagumo Shinbunsha, 1975), 125.

production on 15 June. Between the navy and the army, nearly ten thousand of these boats would be produced by the time the war ended in August 1945.

Although most documents directly referencing the special attacks were destroyed by high-ranking members of the Japanese military just prior to Japan's surrender in August 1945, a few that survive provide clear evidence of advance centralized planning for the inauguration of kamikaze attacks in fall 1944. For example, although the original documents were destroyed, surviving summaries of the "Combined Fleet Operational Guidelines," issued 1 August 1944, and the "Combined Fleet Operation Shō-Gō Guidelines," issued 4 August (Confidential Combined Fleet Orders No. 83 and 85, respectively), explicitly order the "immediate establishment" of "special attack bases" in the Philippines, and stipulate that "the deployment of surface and underwater special attack units shall be controlled by the Imperial General Headquarters and these units shall participate in the operation according to a special order."[26]

Similarly, on 25 August, a full two months before Vice Admiral Ōnishi supposedly "spontaneously" devised the kamikaze tactic in response to the situation on the ground in the Philippines, Imperial Order No. 528, signed by Emperor Hirohito, Prime Minister Koiso Kuniaki, and Navy Minister Yonai Mitsumasa approved revisions to the Navy Special Training Regulation that added "Special Attack Techniques" and "Designated Special Attack Soldiers" to the training regimen for navy recruits.[27] Finally, on 13 September, a "Navy Special Attack Department" headed by Vice Admiral Ōmori Sentarō was established within the Navy Ministry, six weeks prior to Ōnishi's actions in the Philippines.[28]

When Ōnishi was officially made commander of the navy's 1st Air Fleet on 5 October 1944, he came to understand that he would be expected to implement kamikaze attacks in defense of the Philippines. According to the posthumously published memoirs of Chief of Naval Operations Nakazawa Tasuku, prior to his departure Ōnishi met with Chief of the Navy General Staff Oikawa Koshirō, Vice Chief of Staff Itō Seiichi, and Nakazawa and urged the use of "certain-death body-ramming tactics" (*hisshi taiatari senpō*) in defense of the Philippines. Oikawa enjoined Ōnishi: "No matter what, avoid issuing direct orders."[29] Oikawa also told Ōnishi that while the Naval General Staff was not directly ordering kamikaze attacks, "if implementation occurs spontaneously on the battlefield, we are not opposed."[30]

26. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 81: Daihon'ei rikugun bu 9: Shōwa nijū-nen ichigatsu made* (Asagumo Shinbunsha, 1975), 155–56.

27. "Imperial Ordinance No. 528: Revision of the Navy Special Training Regulation," *National Archives of Japan Digital Archive* (https://www.digital.archives.go.jp/file/136051.html).

28. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 88,*168.

29. Nakazawa Tasuku Kankōkai, ed., *Kaigun chūjō Nakazawa Tasuku: sakusenbuchō, jinjikyokuchō no kaisōroku* (Hara Shobō, 1979), 157–58; Nakazawa Tasuku, "Kakute Shinpū Tokkōtai wa hensei sareta," in *Tokkō no kiroku: "jisshi reishō" hijō no sakusen*, ed. Maru Henshūbu (Kojinsha, 2011), 13–16. See also Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 45*, 503.

30. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 17: Okinawa hōmen Kaigun sakusen* (Asagumo Shinbunsha, 1968), 705.

Although he was careful to avoid any explicit statement, Nakazawa's self-serving account was clearly intended to create the impression that Ōnishi had suddenly and unexpectedly proposed kamikaze attacks, despite all evidence to the contrary.

Ōnishi also conferred with Genda Minoru, another well-known naval aviator and the lead architect of the Pearl Harbor attack, who at that time was a staff officer in the Operations Section of the General Staff. After Ōnishi made it clear he would be implementing body-ramming attacks, Genda requisitioned 150 obsolete Zero fighter planes for Ōnishi to use for this purpose.[31] Genda also drafted a telegram, which survived the war, informing Ōnishi of the navy's plans to announce each kamikaze attack as it took place with great fanfare, for the purpose of "raising the fighting spirt of the entire military and revitalizing morale on the home front."[32] Genda's telegram is dated 13 October, after Ōnishi had departed for the Philippines, and was noted as not having been received by Ōnishi until 26 October, after he had launched the first kamikaze attacks.

Crucially, this telegram reveals that the poetic name *kamikaze* (after the thirteenth-century typhoon) and the specific names of the individual attack squadrons (after an eighteenth-century poem by nativist scholar Motoori Norinaga[33]) had been selected in advance, belying a claim later made by Ōnishi's chief of staff, Inoguchi Rikihei, that he and Ōnishi had come up with the names on the spot in the Philippines.[34] In creating a "special attack" squadron, therefore, Ōnishi was clearly acting with the support of his superiors and almost certainly carrying out what he believed to be their orders, even though everyone involved was careful to avoid leaving a paper trail.

In all likelihood, Ōnishi was specifically chosen for the dubious honor of taking on this task. Disliked by a number of high-ranking officers in the navy for his unorthodox methods and outspoken ways, he was set up to be the fall guy if the kamikaze attacks proved ineffective. At the same time, he was understood to be an effective leader of men who had the respect of those who served under him. According to the Defense Agency's official history of the war, "It is likely that one of the reasons for [Ōnishi's] selection was a belief that given the war situation, the use of kamikaze attacks would become unavoidable, and that the only person capable of getting them started was Vice Admiral Ōnishi, since he was so highly respected among aviation personnel."[35]

31. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 56: Kaigun shōgō sakusen 2: Firipin oki kaisen* (Asagumo Shinbunsha, 1968), 108–9.

32. Imperial navy telegram No. 261917, quoted in Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 56*, 108.

33. The first four kamikaze squadrons were named Shikishima, Yamato, Asahi, and Yamazakura, after Norinaga's tanka poem "Shikishima no yamato-gokoro o hito towaba asahi ni niou yamazakura-bana" [If someone inquires / about the Japanese soul / of these Blessed Isles / say mountain cherry blossoms / fragrant in the morning sun] (this author's translation).

34. See Inoguchi and Nakajima, *Shinpū Tokubetsu Kōgekitai*, 45–46; and Moji Chikanori, *Kaisō no Ōnishi Takijirō: Daiichi Kōkū Kantai fukkan no jukkai* (Kōjinsha, 1989), 80.

35. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 56*, 108.

When Ōnishi arrived in the Philippines on 17 October, the first thing he did was implement kamikaze tactics, underscoring that he had arrived with a predetermined agenda. Upon arriving in Manila, he conferred with his predecessor, Vice Admiral Teraoka Kinpei. According to Teraoka's diary, Ōnishi told him:

> Ordinary military tactics are no longer enough. In order to win the war, we have no choice but to blacken our hearts [*kokoro o oni ni sezaru o enai*]. Those who volunteer for certain-death missions should have their names reported in advance to Imperial General Headquarters, so that they can solemnly prepare themselves and maintain a composed state of mind. I wonder, should we try to recruit these young eagles ourselves directly? No, it's probably a better precedent for the future if we approach them in private via their direct superiors. If we first form a unit from the bravest of our fighter pilots, pilots from the other units will naturally follow. If naval aviation takes this decisive course of action, the navy's surface forces will also adopt the same spirit. And if the entire navy is seized by the spirit of volunteering, the army will surely follow suit.[36]

Teraoka later recalled that Ōnishi tried to offer him some comforting words: "The truth is, I was sent here for this specific purpose. You did the best you could, but we can't win the war this way. I consulted with [Chief of the Naval General Staff] Oikawa, and in any case they're ordering me to do it [*tonikaku mei o moratte*], so we have to start using human bullets [*nikudan*]. I know you did your best."[37]

Ōnishi surprised his new subordinates by appearing at Clark Airfield on 19 October, just two days after arriving in Manila. He immediately asked his senior officers (Commander Tamai Asaichi, executive officer of the 201st Air Group, and 1st Air Fleet Chief of Staff Lieutenant Inoguchi Rikihei) to recruit "volunteers" for a "special attack" unit, which they proceeded to do. Their manner of recruiting, however, was to decide who to select in advance and then ask if they would like to volunteer. None of the pilots asked in this way refused a direct query from a senior officer.

Lieutenant Seki Yukio was chosen to lead the first mission not only because he was an officer and a graduate of the naval academy, but also likely because he was an outsider in more ways than one. Seki was not a fighter pilot like the others, but rather, had trained as a dive bomber pilot and transferred from a unit stationed in Taiwan; therefore, he was a stranger without close ties to the rest of the unit. When Seki was asked to consider leading the first attack, it was reported that after a long pause, he replied simply: "By all means, please let me do it" (*zehi, watakushi ni yarasete kudasai*).[38]

36. Inoguchi and Nakajima, *Shinpū Tokubetsu Kōgekitai*, 36; Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 45*, 503–4.

37. Ōno Kaoru, *Tsuiseki dokyumento kesareta senshi: Shinpū Tokubetsu Kōgekitai "zero-gō" no otoko: "Saisho no tokkō" ga "seishi" kara massatsu sareta nazo o ou* (Sankei Shuppan, 1980), 170.

38. My account here draws primarily upon Inoguchi and Nakajima, *Shinpū Tokubetsu Kōgekitai*, 37–44.

Dissent in the Middle Ranks

Although the initial recruitment of volunteers seemed to have gone smoothly, Vice Admiral Ōnishi had to tread carefully because in fact large numbers, perhaps even majorities, of mid-ranking officers in both the navy and the army were deeply opposed to the new "special attack" tactics. As mentioned above, most of the officers in Army Aviation Headquarters resisted General Ushiroku's attempts to implement kamikaze tactics by army flyers. One of the officers assigned to the headquarters, Naitō Susumu, recorded the contents of a meeting chaired by Ushiroku in late spring, 1944:

> The commanding officer [Ushiroku] spoke first: "In order to make a breakthrough in the present war situation, a 'certain-kill body-ramming' unit is to be formed." This was expressed as a kind of question about the advisability of forming such a unit. But none of the higher-ranking officers present said a word. Thinking this would be disastrous I, probably shaking with emotion, raised my hand and in a rather vehement tone, strongly voiced my opposition: "The commander of the Air Corps seems to be under the impression that our inability to achieve results is due to the 'slipshod' [*darashinai*] performance of the Air Corps, but I would like to emphasize that there are problems with our equipment and the way it is being used." Then, because Major Ishikawa [Yasutomo] rose and said, "I agree completely with Major Naitō's opinion," in accordance with an order from the commanding officer it was declared that this conference was over and had never taken place.[39]

In order to hold secret meetings away from prying eyes and off the official record, Army Aviation Headquarters rented a private residence in Kawada-cho, Ichigaya, Tokyo, nicknamed the "Aviation Dormitory." On 7 July 1944, the day Japan's defeat in the Battle of Saipan was announced, the so-called "Ichigaya Conference" was convened at the Aviation Dormitory to secure unanimity within army aviation in favor of launching kamikaze attacks. Those present included Army Aviation Headquarters chief General Ushiroku Jun; chief of the Technical Department of Army Aviation Headquarters Lieutenant General Komamura Toshizō; head of the Army Aviation Inspection Bureau Major General Nakanishi Ryōsuke; director of the Third Aviation Technical Research Institute Major General Masaki Hiroshi (who had been tasked with the development of army special attack weapons); and Lieutenant Colonel Ura Shigeru of the air staff of the Army Department at Imperial General Headquarters, as well as a number of experienced mid-ranking pilots.[40]

Perhaps to the staff officers' surprise, the pilots with experience in the field spoke against inaugurating kamikaze attacks. Major Sakamoto Hideo, one of

39. Tanaka Kōji, Kōchi Yamayuzuru, and Ikuta Makoto, eds., *Nihon Rikugun kōkū hiwa* (Hara Shobō, 1981), 249; my translation here is indebted to Peter Wetzler's translation in Wetzler, *Imperial Japan and Defeat*, 79.

40. Masumoto Kiyoshi, *Moyuru seisōken: Rikugun kōkū no monogatari* (Shuppan Kyōdōsha, 1961), 135; Sakamoto Hideo, "Watashi wa tokkō meirei ni zettai hantai da!" *Maru* 16, no. 7 (July 1963), 206; Senō, "Shinpū tokkō no 'shinwa' e no giwaku," 124.

the army's top test pilots, voiced ardent opposition to the new tactics, presenting counterpoint after counterpoint to the arguments of the staff officers. He was consistently supported by one of his fellow test pilots, Major Takeshita Fukuju, as well as other pilots attached to the Inspection Bureau. The main thrust of Sakamoto's argument was that if a primary reason for initiating kamikaze attacks was a lack of trained pilots, then army aviation should stick to conventional tactics because diving at the extremely steep angle required for successful kamikaze attacks was actually more difficult than conventional attacks. Wasting so many pilots in this way, moreover, would mean an insufficient supply of trained and experienced pilots for the final defense of the Japanese mainland.

Sakamoto kept arguing and refused to back down until well after midnight, at which point Lieutenant General Komamura, the second-highest-ranking person in the room, became enraged, shouting, "Major Sakamoto, you're nothing but a country bumpkin who is completely out of touch with how the world works!" Stunned by this rebuke from such a senior officer, Sakamoto had no choice but to give in, and it was agreed to proceed with kamikaze attacks.[41]

In August 1944, Major Ishikawa, who had continued resisting the implementation of kamikaze attacks at Army Aviation Headquarters, was transferred and replaced by Major Maruta Fumio. Maruta was also strongly opposed to kamikaze attacks, but it was too late to reverse the tide toward their implementation. At a 25 September staff meeting, a member of the Army General Staff summarized the grim war situation, concluding, "There is no longer any way to achieve a breakthrough in the war other than by converting the Air Corps to special attackers, so we ask Army Aviation to take the lead in organizing kamikaze squadrons and promoting kamikaze attacks." While everyone else remained silent, Maruta voiced his opposition to the use of kamikaze attacks, becoming enraged when a member of the General Staff retorted that the main reason the war was being lost was the "careless" [*boyaboya*] operations of the Air Corps. According to Maruta, the meeting ended in shouting and recriminations, but despite his objections, instructions were handed down three days later to begin the formation of kamikaze squadrons.[42]

Accordingly, the army began making preparations to organize its first special attack unit by recruiting elite pilots attached to its Hokota Army Aviation School in Ibaraki prefecture to crash-dive Kawasaki Ki-48 light bombers into American ships during the Battle of the Philippines, in what would become known as the Banda ("myriad cherry blossoms") Squadron. However, almost all of the mid-ranking officers attached to Hokota were strongly against the implementation of kamikaze attacks, including Captain Fukushima Naomichi, Major Takeshita Fukuju, and Captain Iwamoto Masuomi, all of whom were experienced army aviators. Takeshita had opposed the implementation of kamikaze attacks at the Ichigaya Conference in July, and Fukushima wrote a detailed research report

41. Masumoto, *Moyuru seisōken*, 137–40; Sakamoto, "Watashi wa tokkō meirei ni zettai hantai da!", 206–7.

42. Tanaka, Kōchi, and Ikuta, ed., *Nihon Rikugun kōkū hiwa*, 221.

arguing that crash-diving attacks would be inferior to traditional dive bombing because the top speed of a diving aircraft would be around half the terminal velocity of a dropped bomb, and thus a diving aircraft would have greater difficulty penetrating the armor-plated deck of an enemy vessel.[43]

But it was Iwamoto who was remembered as the fiercest opponent of crash-diving tactics. Iwamoto had carried out extensive research into "skip bombing," a novel method for attacking enemy ships that involved approaching at an extremely low angle and dropping a bomb such that it would skip off the water and into the ship at the waterline, like a stone skipping off a lake.[44] Iwamoto made the rounds in army aviation circles in the summer of 1944, preaching the efficacy of skip bombing as a silver bullet to turn the tide of the war without having to resort to crash-diving tactics.[45] Iwamoto also became extremely proficient in the method, achieving hit rates of nearly 100 percent in practice runs against dummy targets.[46] By this point, however, the army had committed to crash-diving attacks, and Iwamoto was ordered to lead the Banda Squadron in conducting the army's first kamikaze attack in the Philippines. This stunned his comrades, since it meant deliberately expending the life of one of the army's most skilled pilots, but the army brass was desperate to have a successful first kamikaze attack so as not to be outshined by the navy. Iwamoto's selection had the added virtue of permanently silencing one of the most outspoken critics of kamikaze attacks. According to Takagi Toshirō, Iwamoto's name was on a list of officers to be ordered on kamikaze missions forwarded in the name Inspector General of Army Aviation Sugawara Michiō, suggesting that Sugawara might have had a hand in attempting to eliminate the nettlesome Iwamoto.[47]

The Ki-48 planes assigned to the Banda unit had been specially modified for crash-diving attacks, with hard-wired detonators on shafts protruding from the nose and no means for the pilots to disable their bombs or drop them manually. Prior to departing for the Philippines, however, Iwamoto, with technical assistance from Takeshita, secretly modified the aircraft such that the bombs could be manually dropped by the pilots.[48] A surviving member of the unit also recalled Iwamoto telling his men, "Crash-diving with airplanes not only pointlessly wastes the life of the pilot, but also has a reduced probability of sinking [the enemy ship]…. If you are ordered to sortie, accurately drop your bombs on the target and return to base. That way you can live to sortie again and again."[49]

43. Takagi Toshirō, *Rikugun tokubetsu kōgekitai 1* (Bungei Shunjū, 2018), 30–34.

44. Takagi, *Rikugun tokubetsu kōgekitai 1*, 23–26.

45. Takagi, *Rikugun tokubetsu kōgekitai 1*, 38–40; Kōkami, *Fujimi no tokkō hei*, 35–36.

46. Takagi, *Rikugun tokubetsu kōgekitai 1*, 26.

47. Kōkami, *Fujimi no tokkō hei*, 37; Takagi, *Rikugun tokubetsu kōgekitai 1*, 162.

48. Takagi, *Rikugun tokubetsu kōgekitai 1*, 168–72, 361–62; Kōkami, *Fujimi no tokkō hei*, 46–47, 69.

49. "Inochi no taisetsusa uttaeta tokkōtai chō: Buzen shi shusshin no kyūrikugun Iwamoto Mitsuomi taii," *Nishi Nihon Shimbun*, 24 August 2019 (https://www.nishinippon.co.jp/item/n/537448/); Takagi, *Rikugun tokubetsu kōgekitai 1*, 362–65; Kōkami, *Fujimi no tokkō hei*, 70–72; Katō Taku, *"Tokkō" no mekanizumu* (Chūnichi Shimbunsha, 2023), 31.

At least one pilot under Iwamoto's command seems to have taken his words to heart. Corporal Sasaki Tomoji was ordered out on kamikaze missions nine times but dropped his bombs at enemy targets and returned to base all nine times, surviving the war and living to the age of 92. In interviews, Sasaki credited Iwamoto's command to drop his bombs and not die in a ramming attack with giving him the strength to return to base nine times in the face of harsh criticism and abuse from his superiors.[50] Iwamoto himself did not survive, however; he was shot down in transit to a base in the Philippines before he could launch his own kamikaze attack.

Even the legendary "first kamikaze" Seki Yukio, who had supposedly declared, "By all means, please let me do it" and was valorized as a war hero in official propaganda, expressed his profound distaste for the new tactics on the eve of his final mission. According to Onoda Masashi, a Dōmei News Wire reporter stationed at Clark Airfield, on the evening of 20 October 1944, Seki went outside with Onoda, and the two men sat down on rocks beside the river. As mentioned, Seki had no friends in the unit and was apparently lonely and wanted someone to unburden himself to.

Seki confided in Onoda: "Japan is finished if it is going to start killing off highly-trained pilots like me. I have no doubt I could drop a 500-kilogram bomb on an enemy carrier's flight deck without having to resort to crash-diving." Onoda asked, "But didn't you volunteer for this mission?" Seki replied, "No, they had already picked me out beforehand [*shiraha no ya ga tattanda*]."[51] Seki explained, "I don't want to die. But if I have to die, I'm not dying for the emperor or the Japanese Empire. I'm doing it for my beloved wife. In any case, they're ordering me to do it, so I don't have a choice. If Japan is defeated, the Americans might rape my wife, I suppose. So I'm dying to protect her, right? Dying for my beloved. Huh. Maybe that's kind of nice."[52] In other words, despite the official narrative that Seki "volunteered" for his kamikaze mission, and Inoguchi's insistence that he had asked rather than ordered Seki, Seki believed that he had received a direct order and had no choice.

Onoda was so moved by Seki's frank words that he included them in a draft newspaper article titled "Lieutenant Seki the Human Being." Under the wartime censorship regime, the draft was checked by Executive Officer Tamai, Chief of Staff Inoguchi, Squadron Commander Ibusuki Masanobu, and Lieutenant Kanno Naoshi, one of the most senior and experienced pilots in the 201st Air Group. Kanno, in particular, criticized Onoda's draft: "Why the hell are you eating your meals with the 201st? Lieutenant Seki was not the kind of man who would have lingering regrets about his wife. Kamikaze pilots are war gods. It's blasphemous

50. Katō, *"Tokkō" no mekanizumu*, 31; Kōkami, *Fujimi no tokkō hei*, 191.

51. Onoda Masashi, "Shinpū tokkō dai ichi-gō Shikishima taichō: gyorai kakae shichi ni tobu Seki shōsa no hitsū na yūshi o moto hōdō han'in ga setsusetsu to uttaeru," *Jinbutsu Ōrai* 5:4 (April 1956), 27.

52. Onoda, "Shinpū tokkō dai ichi-gō Shikishima taichō," 28; Onoda Masashi, "Shinpū Tokkōtai shutsugeki no hi" in *Taiheiyō Sensō dokyumentarii 23* (Kyō no wadaisha, 1971), 28–29.

to slander these gods by treating them as ordinary human beings. If you can't understand this, you're a traitor to your country and I'll gun you down myself!" The mild-mannered Ibusuki was gentler: "Onoda, I think you should probably rewrite it. Seki is a war god now after all … ." Inoguchi then issued a direct order to rewrite the article from scratch, which Onoda, as a commissioned officer in the military press corps, could not refuse; Onoda recalled, "I ended up writing a sham article that was a complete whitewashing of Seki Yukio, portraying him as a man of high ideals who only spoke in elevated, flowery language."[53]

On 26 October, the day after the first official kamikaze attacks, Vice Admiral Ōnishi summoned approximately forty squadron commanders from the 1st and 2nd Air Fleets to his headquarters to inform them of his intention to expand the use of the tactic. Ōnishi asserted that because Japanese planes were badly outnumbered and overmatched, implementing kamikaze tactics would be an act of mercy (*jihi*) toward their pilots because, rather than dying meaningless deaths in conventional attacks, they would have a chance to render their deaths meaningful via "special attacks."[54] Ōnishi's pronouncement was met with stunned silence, and noting the dismay on his officers' faces, he ended on a forceful note: "We have carried out kamikaze attacks and they have achieved great results. I believe that there is no other path to winning the war, so from today forward the special attacks will continue. I will not tolerate any criticism. If anyone opposes me, I will cut them down [*tatakikiru*]."[55]

Even after Ōnishi said these harsh words, his aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Commander Moji Chikanori, remained nervous because he could see on the faces of the commanders that they remained opposed to the special attacks. Moji particularly noted an expression of opposition on the face of Lieutenant Commander Okajima Kiyokuma, the commander of the 203rd Naval Air Group and one of the most experienced pilots in the room.[56] Indeed, according to Tsunoda Kazuo, one of the pilots in the 201st Air Group, Okajima later exchanged heated words with Lieutenant Commander Nakajima Tadashi, commander of the 201st Air Group, in the officer's wardroom, arguing, "These 'special attacks' are a path to damnation [*jadō*]. Instead, we should fall back to the home islands, reform our ranks, and fight bravely in a decisive battle. I will not allow even a single aircraft from the 203rd to be sent on a kamikaze mission." The argument was brought to an end only through the mediation of Commander Tamai, who suggested that Okajima's men would be exempted from kamikaze duty and sent back to the mainland on the next transport.[57] Okajima must have received pressure from his superiors, however, because according

53. Onoda, "Shinpū Tokkōtai shutsugeki no hi," 34.

54. Mori, *Tokkō to wa nani ka*, 151.

55. Moji Chikanori, *Sora to umi no hate de: Daiichi Kōkū Kantai fukkan no kaisō* (Mainichi Shimbunsha 1978), 297; Moji, *Kaisō no Ōnishi Takijirō*, 108–9; Mori, *Tokkō to wa nani ka*, 150–52.

56. Moji, *Sora to umi no hate de*, 298; Moji, *Kaisō no Ōnishi Takijirō*, 109–10.

57. Ikari Yoshio, *Shiden Kai no rokki* (Kōjinsha, 2004), 197.

to one of the pilots under his command, Abe Masaharu, on 29 October, Okajima halfheartedly solicited volunteers for a kamikaze mission.[58]

During the Battle of Okinawa, however, Okajima again refused to allow his squadron to be sent on kamikaze missions. Hijikata Toshio, a pilot who had just been assigned to the 203rd Squadron, recalled Okajima reiterating his opposition: "When you fly in a fighter plane, your mission is to fight against the enemy from beginning to end, shoot him down, and return safely. A fighter pilot's sole ambition is to fight against enemy pilots, so tactics like strapping on a bomb and crashing into an enemy is a path to damnation [*jadō*]." Hijikata recalled that senior officers even spoke of Okajima as a traitor to the nation (*kokuzoku*) around this time. Hijikata believed that the only reason he did not perish in a kamikaze attack was because he had been assigned to Okajima's unit.[59]

Okajima was punished for his intransigence by being repeatedly passed over for promotion to wing commander, where his opposition to kamikaze attacks would have carried more weight. Several of his more junior colleagues were promoted above him until he had become one of the oldest and longest-serving squadron leaders in the navy. He continued to speak out against the kamikaze attacks, however, and on 15 July, he was removed from the front lines and "promoted" to a staff position, which his fellow officers viewed as a means of silencing him.[60]

In one of his final interviews before his death in 1995, Okajima recalled listening to a staff officer talk about the logistics of kamikaze missions in the spring of 1945: "I found myself gripping the handle of my handgun. 'I ought to pistol whip this motherfucker to death,' I thought to myself. I didn't mind dying in battle, but I couldn't stand hearing him talk about my men as if they were mere insects. That bastard knew he'd never have to fly a kamikaze mission himself."[61]

Other squadron commanders successfully resisted having their squadrons converted to kamikaze operations as well. A notable example is Lieutenant Commander Minobe Tadashi, the experienced commander of the 901st fighter squadron, 153rd Air Group, 1st Air Fleet. At the Combined Fleet Naval Operations Conference held in late February 1945 at the 3rd Air Fleet's headquarters at Kisarazu Naval Air Base in Chiba, the Combined Fleet's chief of staff explained that to overcome the disadvantageous military situation, the upcoming Operation Kikusui in defense of Okinawa would employ a strategy of "every man a kamikaze" (*zen'in tokkō*). Most of the over 80 officers present, especially those senior in rank, seemed prepared to accept this.

Minobe, however, as one of the lowest-ranking officers in the room, raised his hand to speak: "Even if we launched an all-out kamikaze attack, including even

58. Abe Masaharu, "Wasurezaru nekketsu reisentai," in *Watashi wa Rabauru no gekitsuiō datta: shōgen, Shōwa no sensō*, ed. Honda Minoru et al. (Kōjinsha, 1990), 156–58.

59. "Tokkō Saigo no Shōgen" Seisaku Iinkai, *Tokkō: saigo no shōgen* (Bungei Shunjū, 2013), 375.

60. Watanabe Yōji, *Hijō no sōjūseki: seishi no hazama ni ichi shite* (Kōjinsha, 2015), 112.

61. Watanabe, *Hijō no sōjūseki*, 113.

the slowest training planes, it would be impossible to break through a defensive net of just 10 or 20 Grumman fighters. The Battle of the Philippines has already proven that we can't win the war simply by calling everyone a 'kamikaze' [*tokkō no kakegoe bakari de wa katenai*]." The chief of staff angrily replied, "When 4,000 of our aircraft manned by desperately loyal samurai charge across the sky, who can possibly defeat them? It's hard to believe such cowardly words were just uttered by a frontline squadron commander." To which Minobe responded,

> You accuse me of cowardice, but I do not fear death. Among the young navy men, there is not a single one who fears death. But in dying for the nation, they want to know that their deaths will have some purpose and meaning. It's not enough to give them some empty words about the power of Japan's spiritual superiority. If they have to die, please make sure their deaths will serve some useful purpose.[62]

Minobe recorded thinking angrily to himself at the time, "For more than three years since the start of the war, I have battled through a hail of bullets and have dared to fly on the very front lines, face-to-face with the enemy. What does a tone-deaf staff officer stationed far to the rear know of air combat? Even though military orders are supposedly the emperor's orders, surely His Majesty would never approve of such a foolish and ill-considered strategy."[63]

For Minobe, wasting planes and pilots on one-way kamikaze missions flew in the face of all his military training, which had taught him to use every resource to the utmost to protect the emperor and the nation. Despite the fact that the operation was named "Kikusui," evoking the "floating chrysanthemum" crest of the fourteenth-century warrior Kusunoki Masashige who, according to legend, had willingly sacrificed his life in defense of the emperor, Minobe believed that kamikaze attacks were the exact opposite of what the crafty and resourceful Masashige would have done. Although Masashige was used to justify the kamikaze attacks because in the end he died for the emperor, Japanese military men had long been taught to view Masashige as an exemplar of living to fight another day and maximizing the use of meager resources. For example, they studied Masashige's defenses of mountaintop fortresses at Chihaya and Akasaka where, rather than sacrificing his life in a defiant gesture as others suggested, Masashige deliberately accepted the humiliation of running away from the enemy in order to survive to fight again and again for the emperor. "Sending out poorly trained boy soldiers and promising young college students to their deaths, rendering their sacrifice completely meaningless—what kind of 'Operation Kikusui' is this?" Minobe wrote. "Where in the world is the navy's vaunted tradition of the Kusunoki Masashige spirit?"[64]

One of the young pilots under Minobe's command, Tsuboi Harutaka, recalled that Minobe was still seething with anger when he returned to his unit at the

62. Minobe Tadashi, *Taishōkko no Taiheiyō senki* (Hōjōsha, 2017), 327–29.
63. Minobe, *Taishōkko no Taiheiyō senki*, 329.
64. Minobe, *Taishōkko no Taiheiyō senki*, 328.

Fujieda Naval Air Station in Shizuoka following the meeting at Kisarazu: "I still clearly remember how he called us aviators together and said, 'No matter what, I will never allow any of you to die in a kamikaze attack'!"[65]

During the Battle of Okinawa in April 1945, Minobe's unit refused orders to carry out kamikaze strikes, instead engaging in daring night assaults using more conventional tactics. These attacks proved more successful than daylight attacks, given the divergence in Japanese and Allied plane quality, and while highly dangerous, at least did not entirely foreclose the possibility of survival. Minobe thus won the support of Vice Admiral Ōnishi, and his squadron was thereafter exempted from kamikaze duty.[66]

Other middle-rank officers resisted less ostentatiously. Major Yoshida Atsushi, for example, was the commander of the 615th Army Air Group during the Battle of Okinawa. Despite the fact that Operation Ten-Gō was predicated on the notion of "every man a kamikaze," on the eve of the operation, Yoshida issued the following injunction to his men: "Unless completely unavoidable, we will not carry out body-ramming attacks against enemy vessels. Do whatever it takes to overcome all obstacles and survive to sortie again."[67] Then, as the men were preparing to take off the following day, Yoshida again enjoined them, "My squadron is not a kamikaze squadron, so do not allow yourselves to die easily. Overcome all difficulties along the way and return to base, so that you can attack repeatedly. I forbid you to throw away your lives frivolously."[68] Regrettably, from Yoshida's perspective, in the course of the actual battle, some of his pilots engaged in kamikaze attacks anyway, apparently on their own recognizance and in contravention of his explicit injunctions.[69]

On some occasions, mid-ranking officers who objected to kamikaze tactics got their objections into print. For example, an issue of the monthly magazine *Taiyō* ("Ocean") from March 1945—when the Battle of Iwo Jima still raged and the Battle of Okinawa was about to begin—featured a 17-page roundtable discussion (*zadankai*) of land-based naval aviation operations by a group of seasoned navy pilots. In the middle of the conversation one of these pilots, a squadron commander identified as "Lieutenant Commander Iwaya"[70] offered, seemingly unprompted, a scathing critique of the special attacks. Iwaya declared:

> In the previous wars fought by the navy, with the Russo-Japanese War being a prime example, there have always been missions

65. Sakai Katsuhiko, "'Tokkō kyohi' tsuranuita Fuyō butai," *Jiji Dotto Komu*, 26 August 2015 (https://www.jiji.com/jc/worldcup2018?s=v4&id=fuyou201508a0005).

66. Mori, *Tokkō to wa nani ka*, 261–75; Minobe, *Taishōkko no Taiheiyō senki*, 330.

67. Yoshida, *Ōzora ni ikiru*, 221.

68. Yoshida, *Ōzora ni ikiru*, 225.

69. Yoshida, *Ōzora ni ikiru*, 221.

70. This was most likely Iwaya Fumio (巌谷二三男, 1909–1987), an experienced naval aviator who at that time was a squadron commander with the rank of lieutenant commander, assigned to one of the navy's land-based attack squadrons.

> involving nearly certain death [*kesshitai*]. Whether in an airplane or anywhere else, military men always understood that they were risking death. But this is the first time that a method of attack involving certain, unavoidable death decided in advance [*hisshitai*] has been introduced. Previously, no permission would have been granted for such a method. The fact that the navy is resorting to such tactics now shows how dire the war situation has become. But this is completely outside the rules. If we consider the sacred principles of aerial combat—I can't say for sure how aerial warfare might evolve in the future, but it would be a mistake to regard special attack operations as a proper method. The right way is to attack the enemy as skillfully as possible and return to base with good results. A single plane should be utilized over and over again. That's the proper way to fight a war. I realize this sounds like a strange concept according to the current way of thinking, but otherwise it will be impossible to develop our air power. There will be no progress if more and more pilots are sent off to die. Even if you just think about it from a human perspective, it doesn't make any sense.[71]

None of the other pilots made any reply to Iwaya's harsh criticism, and the moderators immediately steered the conversation to other topics; yet, astonishingly, the critique made it into the magazine's print edition, despite the wartime censorship regime designed to preclude open criticism of the military.

Iwaya's remarks drew a stark distinction between *kesshitai* (決死隊) situations that had occurred in previous wars and were acceptable, and the *hisshitai* (必死隊) tactics used in kamikaze attacks that he found completely unforgivable. This raises an interesting translation question because in most Japanese-English dictionaries, both *kesshitai* and *hisshitai* are generically rendered as "suicide squad." As is evident from the Japanese characters used in each word, however, *kesshitai* involves a voluntary decision by the soldier to risk death (in other words, 死を決める *shi o kimeru*), whereas *hisshitai* implies a certain, unavoidable death ordered from above (必ず死ぬ *kanarazu shinu*). With this distinction, Iwaya was highlighting the fact that in previous wars, even in situations where death was almost certain, the possibility of survival was never entirely foreclosed in advance; even in cases where soldiers decided to sacrifice themselves for the good of the unit, they did so on the spur of the moment, and crucially, of their own volition, without being ordered or coerced into doing so in advance.

The vehement objections to *hisshitai* tactics from Iwaya and other officers of similar rank likely arose from the fact that these mid-ranking officers had been trained prior to the advent of the Pacific War and had imbibed a prewar Japanese military culture that valorized *kesshitai* tactics but frowned upon certain-death

71. "Rikujō kōgeki kitai jissen zadankai: Kaigun kōkū kichi nite," *Taiyō* 7, no. 3 (March 1945): 10–11.

hisshitai. Another widely used shorthand for what traditional Japanese military men viewed as a crucial distinction was the phrase "10 deaths, zero lives" (*jūshi reishō*十死零生), a synonym for *hisshitai* that was contrasted unfavorably with the phrase "nine deaths, one life" (*kyūshi isshō* 九死一生), a synonym for *kesshitai*, implying a 10 percent chance of returning alive (or sometimes alternatively, "ten deaths, one life," implying a 9 percent chance of survival).

As Rear Admiral Nakazawa Tasuku wrote in his memoirs, it had always been the unwritten policy of the Japanese navy that commanders would not order their subordinates into "certain death" (*hisshi*) situations. Even in desperate situations, they would only be able to order their men to undertake *kesshi* or "almost certain death" tactics, and *hisshi* tactics could only be carried out by individuals on their own initiative and of their own free will.[72] For example, when Commander Arima Ryōkitsu proposed the blockade of Port Arthur as a "certain death" (*hisshi*) operation during the Russo-Japanese War, Fleet Admiral Tōgō Heihachirō refused to allow it, and insisted that a means be provided for at least some of the men to return; and indeed some of the men involved did survive. Likewise, when the suggestion arose that the midget submarines sent to Hawai'i as part of the Pearl Harbor attack might be a *hisshi* operation, Admiral Yamamoto Isoroku would not authorize the operation until plans were modified to include making a full-size submarine available to pick up any surviving midget submarine operators, thereby converting it into a morally acceptable *kesshi* operation.[73]

This earlier version of Japanese military culture lasted well into the Pacific War. Renowned navy fighter pilot ace Sakai Saburō recalled his commanding officer telling him and his fellow pilots at the outset of the war:

> Our pilots and aircraft are the treasures of our nation …. If your plane is hit and you decide return is impossible, absolutely do not do anything foolish like crash-diving into the enemy. The waters of the South Pacific are warm. If you make an emergency landing at sea, you can survive. Your life jacket will keep you afloat for at least seven hours. After sunset, swim to shore and hide in the jungle. Our ground forces will definitely come to rescue you. Don't even think about crash-diving! No matter how many times you are shot down, live on so you can continue fighting for your country.[74]

Accordingly, Sakai and his fellow pilots repeatedly reminded each other throughout the war, "Do not die in vain. Value your life. Value your plane. Even if you crash-land in enemy territory, cling to life and return home, so you can fight again and again."[75] Later, when Sakai became a wing commander himself, he similarly enjoined new pilots assigned to his command:

72. Nakazawa Tasuku Kankōkai, ed., *Kaigun chūjō Nakazawa Tasuku*, 156–57.

73. Todaka Kazushige, ed., *Tokkō shirarezaru naimaku: "Kaigun Hanseikai" tōjishatachi no shōgen* (PHP Kenkyūsho, 2018), 283.

74. Sakai Saburō, *Zero-sen no shinjitsu* (Kōdansha, 1992), 338–39.

75. Sakai, *Zero-sen no shinjitsu*, 341.

> Even if you are hit over enemy airspace and decide that return is impossible, do not crash-dive into the enemy. Even if your engine fails, do not crash-dive. Make an emergency landing in enemy territory. … I don't care if you become a prisoner of war. If you are captured, you will eat the enemy's food and require guards to watch over you—this alone will drain their resources. As long as there is even the slightest chance of survival, do not die. We did not come to the battlefield merely to die. We came to fight and defeat the enemy for as long as we still draw breath![76]

It is clear, then, that large numbers of mid-ranking officers opposed the implementation of kamikaze tactics. These mid-ranking officers had joined the military prior to the start of the Pacific War and had been trained under an older set of military doctrines and values, a worldview they retained in the war's final stages. Moreover, these mid-ranking officers remained on the front lines and witnessed the anguish of the men they were sending off on one-way missions, whereas more senior officers were more insulated from the horrible consequences of the drastic shift in tactics they had forced on the men entrusted to their command.

Senior Officer Misgivings

Even many senior officers, in their own ways, signaled their opposition to the implementation of kamikaze tactics. As mentioned above, Chief of Army Aviation General Yasuda Takeo opposed the tactics and had to be removed from his post and replaced with General Ushiroku Jun before the army could make progress on implementation. When the commander of the Hokota Army Aviation School, Major General Imanishi Rokurō, received an informal order [*nairenraku*] to form an army special attack unit in October 1944, he replied with a strongly worded statement of opposition: "Officially organizing special attack units into a formal structure would make it difficult to maintain morale and respect for the chain of command, and would actually reduce their combat effectiveness." Imanishi argued that this kind of attack was only appropriate when carried out as a "near certain death" [*kesshitai*] action on the front lines by low-ranking pilots as a "spontaneous crystallization of their willingness to sacrifice themselves in defense of the nation." He concluded with a barbed allusion to the widely criticized failure of the army to devote sufficient resources to its aviation branch: "If the concern is about a need to respond to sudden emergencies, then wouldn't it be best to keep adequate equipment on the front lines at all times?"[77]

Similar signs of resistance can be found among high-ranking officers in the navy. Ōnishi's predecessor as chief of the 1st Air Fleet in the Philippines, Teraoka Kinpei, had in fact repeatedly refused suggestions that he implement crash-diving tactics prior to Ōnishi's arrival. Teraoka recalled, "Since it was clearly a *hisshi* tactic,

76. Sakai, *Zero-sen no shinjitsu*, 341.

77. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 48: Hitō Shō-Gō Rikugun kōkū sakusen* (Asagumo Shinbunsha, 1971), 345.

I was of the opinion that we had to avoid it to the extent possible, so I did not authorize it."[78] This refusal was a major factor leading to Teraoka's removal and replacement by Ōnishi after just two months on the job.[79]

Similarly, on 22 October 1945, Ōnishi urged Admiral Fukudome Shigeru, commander of the 2nd Air Fleet, to inaugurate kamikaze attacks, but Fukudome refused, saying, "I'm going to keep attacking in the traditional way." In particular, Fukudome cited his concerns that special attacks would negatively affect the morale of his air crews. Only after the alleged "success" of the 25 October mission led by Lieutenant Seki did Fukudome agree to have the 2nd Air Fleet begin launching kamikaze attacks.[80]

Fukudome's concerns about morale proved justified. According to Captain Yokoi Toshiyuki, who was chief of staff for the 5th Air Fleet based in southern Kyushu during the Battle of Okinawa, and thus intimately involved in that unit's kamikaze operations,

> As might have been expected, these attacks created many command problems … . When it came time for their takeoff, the pilots' attitudes ranged from the despair of sheep headed for slaughter to open expressions of contempt for their superior officers. There were frequent and obvious cases of pilots returning from sorties claiming that they could not locate any enemy ships, and one pilot even strafed his commanding officer's quarters as he took off.[81]

Yokoi recalled voicing his opposition to kamikaze tactics. In February 1945, he had been summoned to Atsugi Naval Air Base, where he met with Vice Chief of the Naval General Staff Itō Seiichi and was informed that he was to be appointed chief of staff to Vice Admiral Ugaki Matome of the 5th Air Fleet, with the mission of "break[ing] up enemy carrier strike forces by concentrating all power in [kamikaze] air attacks." Yokoi, who "had never believed in the soundness of such tactics," expressed his opposition to Itō and attempted to decline the assignment, whereupon he was informed that was not an option. The best he could do was extract from Itō a promise that he and Ugaki would have the freedom to decide which pilots were sent on kamikaze missions.[82]

In April 1945, as part of its efforts to defend against the U.S. invasion of Okinawa, the navy launched Operation Kikusui, which involved converting

78. Onoda, "Shinpū tokkō dai ichi-gō Shikishima taichō," 26.

79. Onoda, "Shinpū tokkō dai ichi-gō Shikishima taichō," 26; Dennis Warner and Peggy Warner, with Senō Sadao, *Dokyumento kamkaze: tokkō sakusen no zenbō*, trans. Senō Sadao (Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1982), 1:156.

80. Bōeichō Bōei Kenshūjo Senshishitsu, ed., *Senshi sōsho 45*, 504; Moji, *Kaisō no Ōnishi Takijirō*, 105–6; Mori, *Tokkō to wa nani ka*, 149–50.

81. Toshiyuki Yokoi, "Kamikazes in the Okinawa Campaign," in *The Japanese Navy in World War II: In the Words of Former Japanese Naval Officers*, ed. David C. Evans (Naval Institute Press, 1969), 468.

82. Yokoi, "Kamikazes in the Okinawa Campaign," 459.

almost all remaining naval aircraft into kamikaze attack planes and sending a task force commanded by Itō and led by the navy's flagship, the battleship *Yamato*, on a suicide mission to beach on Okinawa and battle U.S. amphibious landing forces to the end. According to journalist Itō Masanori, who interviewed dozens of naval officers shortly after the war for his 1956 book, *The Last Days of the Combined Fleet*, Operation Kikusui, and in particular the hasty decision to send the flagship on a kamikaze mission, provoked something akin to a rebellion among the more junior officers on the Naval General Staff, who "repeatedly urged their superiors to undertake serious self-reflection [*hansei*]" with regard to the plan, which they argued was "contrary to principles of humanity [*jindō*]."[83]

Surviving officers recalled extreme dissatisfaction among the senior officers of the *Yamato* task force as well. In a heated discussion on the bridge of the *Yamato* the day the orders were received, almost everyone spoke out in vehement opposition to the plan. Lieutenant Commander Sugihara Yoshirō, the famously cool-headed commander of the destroyer *Asashimo*, shouted, "I refuse to accept a plan that will inevitably result in our ships being sunk before we even get to Okinawa. I am absolutely opposed to pointlessly discarding our nation's last asset!" The normally mild-mannered Captain Shintani Kiichi, commander of the destroyer *Isokaze*, angrily exclaimed, "This operation denies us a meaningful death. The proper time for us to die is fighting tooth-and-claw with the enemy as they invade the mainland. Idiots!" Likewise, Captain Kotaki Hisao, commander of the 21st Destroyer Division, bitterly spat, "The brass who cooked up this scheme at Combined Fleet Headquarters are living comfortably in their underground bunkers at Hiyoshidai. They have their heads up their asses while the rest of us are fighting a decisive battle for the fate of the nation. Remember Tōgō? Remember Nelson? They need to crawl out of their hidey-holes and take direct command of this operation."[84]

The mission seemed to fly in the face of the philosophy of the Combined Fleet, which was "fight bravely, but do not die in vain" (*yūsen suredomo toshi suru na*).[85] In a private interview with navy General Staff officer Mikami Sakuo first made public in 2024, Mikami also recalled that the crew of the *Yamato* had voiced "extreme dissatisfaction" when informed of their one-way mission, requiring the navy to take "extreme measures" to "forcibly compel" them into going out on the mission. Later, when he met surviving senior officers of the mission upon their return to Sasebo naval base, they "rained curses and insults of the harshest variety" down upon him.[86]

Around this same time, according to Itō Masanori, retired Admiral Suzuki Kantarō, the prime minister of Japan at the time, summoned some staff officers

83. Itō Masanori, *Rengō kantai no saigo* (Bungei Shunjū, 1968), 207.

84. Itō, *Rengō kantai no saigo*, 208.

85. Itō, *Rengō kantai no saigo*, 208.

86. Ōta Hiroyuki, "*Yamato* tokkō, higeki e kyūten tennō ni sontaku, wazuka 1-nichi de sanbō no shōgen hakkutsu," *Asahi Shimbun*, 8 July 2024, evening edition, 1.

from the Naval General Staff to his official residence and conveyed his dismay at the use of kamikaze tactics: "Sending soldiers into situations where there is no chance of survival whatsoever can hardly be called a 'strategy' in any true sense of the word. The Japanese navy's unwritten rule has always been to limit deployment of soldiers to situations where there was at least a small chance of survival [*kyūshi ni isshō*]. This point must be carefully considered."[87] Suzuki expressed similar sentiments in his autobiography, published after the war: "Although one could not help being moved to tears by the samurai spirit of the brave soldiers who participated in those countless kamikaze attacks, from a tactical point of view, shattered-jewelism [*gyokusaishugi*] was clearly nothing more than defeatism [*haisenshugi*]. A worthy commander would never have tried to borrow strength from kamikaze squadrons."[88]

Even Ōnishi himself expressed some misgivings. On 25 October, when he heard wishful-thinking reports that the first official kamikaze attack led by Seki had sunk two fleet carriers and a cruiser (in truth they had only sunk one escort carrier), Ōnishi exclaimed, "Oh, so it wasn't all in vain."[89] Two days later, Ōnishi privately voiced his dissatisfaction to his chief of staff, Inoguchi: "The fact that we've had to resort to such a thing shows how terrible Japan's operational leadership has been. In fact, this is a heresy against the very idea of leadership [*tōsotsu no gedō*]."[90]

The Convenience of Ōnishi

On 16 August 1945, one day after Emperor Hirohito announced Japan's surrender, Ōnishi committed ritual *seppuku* suicide by slicing open his belly and bleeding to death. Ōnishi left a brief note in which he took personal responsibility for the creation of the kamikaze, apologized to the pilots he sent to their deaths, and implied that the strategy as a whole had been "reckless," while expressing his wish that the "special attack spirit" (*tokkō seishin*) would continue on and somehow contribute to world peace:

> I wish to express my deep gratitude to the souls of the brave special attackers. With faith in our ultimate victory, you fought valiantly and became human bullets, falling from the sky like blossoms.
>
> Despite your sacrifice, we ultimately failed to achieve our aim. By atoning for that failure with my death, I sincerely apologize to those brave souls formerly under my command and their bereaved families.
>
> I ask the young people of Japan to find a moral in my death. Taking reckless action only aids the enemy. You must humbly abide by the

87. Itō, *Rengō kantai no saigo*, 216–17.
88. Suzuki Kantarō, *Suzuki Kantarō jiden* (Jiji Tsūshinsha, 1968), 290.
89. Kurihara, *Tokkō: Sensō to Nihonjin*, 59.
90. Inoguchi and Nakajima, *Shinpū Tokubetsu Kōgekitai*, 94.

> spirit of the emperor's decision [to surrender] with self-restraint and perseverance.
>
> But even as you persevere, you must never forget your pride in being Japanese. You are the treasure of our nation.
>
> Steadfastly maintaining the spirit of the special attackers even in peacetime, devote yourselves to the welfare of the Japanese race and to peace for all peoples of the world.
>
> Navy Vice Admiral Ōnishi Takijirō, 16 August 1945

Ōnishi's suicide and the content of his note proved convenient for his superiors, allowing them to evade responsibility for coercing both Ōnishi himself and the actual kamikazes into carrying out "certain death" attacks. By taking personal responsibility for the kamikaze tactics in vague and expansive terms, and then immediately committing suicide such that he was no longer around to explain or speak for himself, Ōnishi facilitated, intentionally or not, the creation of his enduring image as the "father of the kamikaze" who "spontaneously" invented kamikaze tactics in response to the dire exigencies of the Battle of Leyte Gulf in October 1944.

Senior officers in both the navy and the army were at great pains to avoid leaving a paper trail regarding their involvement in the creation of the kamikaze. But despite the existence of fragmentary yet compelling documentary evidence that the switch to "special attack" tactics was organized at the highest levels of the military over the course of 1944 (not to mention the careful planning, permissions, and budgetary approval required to mass produce the *ōka* piloted bombs, *kaiten* manned torpedoes, and explosive wooden motorboats), senior officers consistently denied their involvement in implementing the new tactics.

For example, despite having described the meeting with Navy Chief of Staff Oikawa and Ōnishi in his unpublished memoirs, retired Rear Admiral Nakazawa Tasuku denied having any involvement in public statements. In a 11 July 1977 lecture titled "Recollections of My Time in the Navy," Nakazawa claimed that the kamikaze attacks were first conceived by Ōnishi in the Philippines, and that "up until that point, there had been absolutely no movement for something like this within the central command of the navy."[91] During the Q&A that followed, naval historian and former navy man Senō Sadao pointed out that the "Jinrai" *ōka* piloted bomb unit had been organized and started training at Hyakurihara Air Base in Ibaraki by 1 October 1944, three weeks before Ōnishi established the kamikaze attack force in the Philippines, and that as chief of naval operations, Nakazawa must have known about this unit. Nakazawa replied that he had no knowledge as to how the *ōka* piloted bomb unit was created and trained, and told Senō to ask Doi Kazuo, the member of the General Staff who had been in charge of unit formation at the time. But Doi, who was also present at the 1977 event,

91. Senō, "Shinpū tokkō no 'shinwa' e no giwaku," 120.

immediately responded that no unit could have been formed without Nakazawa's knowledge, and that he had consulted with Nakazawa and received his approval.[92] Senō then asked Nakazawa if the formation of the *ōka* squadron meant kamikaze attacks by aircraft had been adopted as an official policy by the naval General Staff prior to Ōnishi's departure for the Philippines. Nakazawa did not respond, sitting in agonizing silence, as if thinking, for a full ten minutes, until finally another former senior officer present said, "Let's defer this question for now, and I'll convey Mr. Nakazawa's answer to you at a later date." However, no answer was provided prior to Nakazawa's death in December of that same year.[93]

Similarly, at a meeting he chaired around the same time to plan for the upcoming publication of *The History of Japanese Naval Torpedoes*,[94] Nakazawa stated, "The special attacks were carried out on the private initiative of each unit, and the Naval General Staff had no involvement of any kind." This immediately drew a rebuke from Torisu Kennosuke, the former commander of submarine I-165, who retorted, "But didn't the Navy Ministry and Naval General Staff directly plan the *kaiten* and *kamikaze* special attacks?"[95]

Likewise, despite the existence of the 13 October 1944 telegram in which Genda Minoru explicitly noted that Ōnishi was expected to begin using special attacks upon arrival in the Philippines, in a 1987 interview with a reporter from the *Chūgoku Shimbun* newspaper, Genda claimed he had "no particular recollection" of drafting such a telegram, and therefore, no advanced knowledge of Ōnishi's plans to begin launching kamikaze attacks in the Philippines.[96]

Similar denials came from Lieutenant General Sugawara Michiō, who as mentioned, was brought into Army Aviation Headquarters as deputy chief in spring 1944 to help implement crash-diving tactics. Sugawara later served from 26 December 1944 through the end of the war as commander of the 6th Army Air Force, a new unit primarily created to carry out kamikaze attacks. In a 1961 letter intended for public consumption, Sugawara insisted that "the kamikaze pilots … were volunteers from beginning to end. Although I cannot guarantee that there were never any lapses into coercive measures on the ground … in examining their formation and their reports to the emperor, it is clear that, to the furthest extent possible, these units were formed on a firm basis of volunteerism."[97] However, in his private memoirs held in the National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS), Sugawara described in detail the lack of sufficient volunteers and the army's need for increasingly coercive measures.[98] Like many other senior officers who sent

92. Senō, "Shinpū tokkō no 'shinwa' e no giwaku," 120–21.

93. Senō, "Shinpū tokkō no 'shinwa' e no giwaku," 121.

94. Kaigun Suirai Shi Kankōkai, ed., *Kaigun Suirai Shi* (Kaigun Suirai Shi Kankōkai, 1979).

95. Todaka, ed., *Tokkō shirazareru naimaku*, 317.

96. Hosaka, "Tokkō" to Nihonjin, 185.

97. Takagi Toshirō "Rikugun tokubetsu kōgekitai 3" (Bungei Shunjū, 2018), 468–69.

98. Wetzler, *Imperial Japan and Defeat*, 68–69.

special attack forces on their one-way missions, Sugawara repeatedly promised departing kamikaze pilots that in the end he, too, would strap himself into a plane and embark on a one-way mission. However, like most of his fellow senior officers, Sugawara did not keep his promise. After the war, he became a chicken farmer and lived to the ripe old age of 95.[99]

Conclusion

Examining the process by which kamikaze tactics were implemented as well as the widespread resistance and criticism leveled at the tactics by mid-ranking officers in the Japanese army and navy helps us move beyond the scholarly and popular emphasis on the erudite and philosophical writings of the small portion of special attackers who had studied at elite universities. It also helps us understand that, rather than being broadly overdetermined or deeply rooted in timeless and ancient Japanese culture dating back to the time of the *Tale of Genji*, as suggested by scholars such as Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney,[100] the emergence of kamikaze tactics was a more recent phenomenon whose invention must be radically pushed forward, not merely to the modern era, but perhaps all the way until the mid-1940s.

Existing scholarship that rejects explanations based in premodern Japanese culture but asks why kamikaze squadrons accepted or at least acquiesced to their one-way missions nevertheless rests on the presumption that these missions were accepted or at least could not be resisted. These explanations tend to look back to state propaganda, cultural production, and the educational system that date back at least to the late Meiji Period, and when signs of resistance are found, they are generally credited to the "liberal" education rooted in Western philosophy that was received by pilots at elite universities.

Evidence of widespread resistance by mid-ranking officers who were not trained at elite universities, and even by some senior officers, however, suggests that by no means were kamikaze tactics a natural or inevitable culmination of Japan's wartime culture and decades of emperor-centered state propaganda. Rather, these tactics were contingent on the decisions of a few specific leaders, who opted to save themselves (at least momentarily) the embarrassment of having to admit to the emperor and the Japanese people that the war was lost. This choice came at the cost of the lives of thousands of young men—mostly in their late teens and early twenties—that the nation had collectively entrusted to their command, and who truly did die in vain.

The invention of the kamikaze as they are widely understood in Japan today, as tragic but heroic volunteers—young men who chose to die because they believed they were defending their nation—may actually be a product of a concerted postwar effort to valorize these deaths, to give them meaning, to

99. Handō Kazutoshi and Hosaka Masayasu, *Shōwa no meishō to gujō* (Bungei Shunjū, 2008), 248–50.

100. See Ohnuki-Tierney, *Kamikaze, Cherry Blossoms and Nationalisms*, 38–44.

soothe the raw emotions of bereaved families, and to exonerate senior officers. This myth began with Vice Admiral Ōnishi's suicide on the very first day of the postwar period, and is still widespread in Japan and around the world today. If anything, it is this myth that was overdetermined, as so many different types of people stood to benefit.

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Opening A New Cold War Front: Korean War POW/MIA Campaigns of the 1950s

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Liu Zhaokun

Abstract

POW/MIA campaigns have motivated the U.S. military to repatriate servicemembers' remains from overseas battlefields for decades. Although scholars tend to regard them as a product of the Vietnam War, this study argues their birth should be traced to the Korean War. The limitation of its military power during the Cold War prompted the United States to open a new front against the communist bloc. During and after the Korean War, China and North Korea accused the U.S. of preventing their prisoners from returning home under the pretext of voluntary repatriation; the U.S. countered that those states detained missing U.S. personnel in secret camps. U.S. officials used this to further an anti-communist agenda and mobilize a population upset by military setbacks and allegations of domestic subversion. The politicization of the missing prisoners after the Korean War was a harbinger of the post-Vietnam campaigns.

Almost all U.S. government agencies and veterans' organizations display a Prisoners of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) flag. This black flag symbolizes the remote possibility that service members missing for decades are still alive in secret prisons, and campaigns to return them (or their remains) have shaped the post-Vietnam War politics and culture in America. The origin of POW/MIA campaigns, defined as all types of efforts to account for military personnel declared missing in previous wars, warrants careful investigation.[1]

1. The term POW/MIA, coined in the early 1980s, currently refers to military personnel

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Scholars generally portray POW/MIA campaigns as byproducts of the Vietnam War. During that war, the Nixon administration particularly exaggerated the tally of American POWs and accused the North Vietnamese government of abusing prisoners to divert domestic attention from U.S. forces' atrocities and to lay insurmountable roadblocks to peace talks by demanding that Hanoi release every alleged prisoner. When only a portion of the (over-reported) POWs returned home after 1973, a loose coalition of opportunistic right-wing politicians, self-serving rumormongers, and people who could not accept U.S. defeat created a national myth that their fellow citizens were held secretly by Vietnam, abandoned by their government. The instigators of these campaigns accused anti-war demonstrators, civil rights advocates, and statespersons who favored reconciliation with Vietnam of having cost the United States its triumph.[2] These researchers inadequately addressed, however, the simple fact that the United States did not win the Korean War either. Was there similar campaign after the Korean War; or are POW/MIA campaigns unique to the post-Vietnam War United States?

According to Michael Allen, the U.S. federal government exploited the issue of missing soldiers (or their remains) to defend its authority in all wars, and such efforts only failed in the Vietnam War.[3] Claims of U.S. prisoners being secretly detained by their enemies emerged only with the Cold War, however, when the United States had to maintain a power balance with its nemesis. Calls for more effective efforts to locate missing combatants were common in American society after each war, but the Korean War was the first major conflict that ended with the loss of territory in which U.S. servicemembers had fought to adversaries that had the capacity to detain U.S. prisoners with impunity.

Early wars, notably those against Native Americans, sometimes ended in a similar fashion, but they occurred when the country had yet to assume a duty of care for its martyrs' bodies. The post-bellum South arguably shared the modern mentality of post-Vietnam War America on this matter; state lines were more porous than the Iron Curtain, however, and the authorities that had launched the war disappeared when it ended. There were rumors after the Second World War that U.S. prisoners liberated from the Germans by Soviet forces were being held in Siberia.[4] The wartime alliance between the U.S. and the USSR effectively ended

whose remains have not been recovered, even if they have been confirmed as dead. This study also uses this term to discuss Korean War casualties for convenience, even though not all Korean War-era U.S. fatalities whose bodies had not been recovered were given POW or MIA status.

2. Douglas L. Clarke, *The Missing Man: Politics and the MIA* (National Defense University Press, 1979); H. Bruce Franklin, *M.I.A. or Mythmaking in America: How and Why Belief in Living POWs Has Possessed a Nation*, expanded and updated version (Rutgers University Press, 1993); Michael J. Allen, *Until the Last Man Comes Home: POWs, MIAs, and the Unending Vietnam War* (University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Patrick Gallagher, *Traumatic Defeat: POWs, MIAs, and National Mythmaking* (University Press of Kansas, 2018).

3. Allen, *Last Man*, 103.

4. Allen, *Last Man*, 127.

before Germany's capitulation, though, and the USSR generally had denied U.S. personnel access to its territory during and after the war, so these rumors suggest that the POW/MIA issue is a Cold War product. While the USSR retained Axis prisoners after the Second World War, the majority were repatriated, although it often took years. Historians accordingly focused on these survivors' reintegration into their societies against the Cold War background, rather than on the unreturned prisoners. Most of the allegations that U.S. service personnel were detained by the Soviet Union after either world war were fomented by post-Vietnam War POW/MIA activists.[5]

POWs' experiences are prominent in Korean War historiography. David Chang analyzed how President Truman's wishful thinking in a war of ideology left more than 14,000 Chinese prisoners no choice but to embrace Taiwan and prolonged the war for eighteen months.[6] Monica Kim fathomed the notions of imperialism, decolonization, revolution, and humanity evinced during the interrogation of POWs from both sides.[7] A large number of studies have narrated U.S. prisoners' physical and psychological ordeals[8] amid considerable scholarly interest in how and why many prisoners were perceived as having been brainwashed in captivity and stigmatized after their return.[9] As historian Charles S. Young observed, the country's inability to fit its returned POWs into the heroic niche reserved for ex-prisoners from earlier wars and the bitter fact that the struggle over repatriation delayed the armistice helped drive the "forgotten" status of the war and the prisoners alike.[10] Truman's efforts to portray Korea as a limited war also minimized public attention, and President Eisenhower adopted the same policy.[11]

Unlike their repatriated compatriots, though, the Korean War POW/MIAs bore no stigma of collaboration and should be discussed differently. Their alleged, secret detention implied resistance to both bodily and ideological duress inflicted

5. Recent studies in English include Susan C. I. Grunewald, *From Incarceration to Repatriation: German Prisoners of War in the Soviet Union* (Cornell University Press, 2024); Sherzod Muminov, *Eleven Winters of Discontent: The Siberian Internment and the Making of A New Japan* (Harvard University Press, 2022). Regarding the secret prisoners, even serious studies in German are rare; however, the first two chapters of *Traumatic Defeat* analyzes how Germans perceived the issue.

6. David C. Chang, *The Hijacked War: The Story of Chinese POWs in the Korean War* (Stanford University Press, 2020).

7. Monica Kim, *The Interrogation Rooms of the Korean War: The Untold History* (Princeton University Press, 2019).

8. Raymond B. Lech, *Broken Soldiers* (University of Illinois Press, 2000); William Clark Latham Jr., *Cold Days in Hell: American POWs in Korea* (Texas A&M University Press, 2012).

9. Charles S. Young, *Name, Rank, and Serial Number: Exploiting Korean War POWs at Home and Abroad* (Oxford University Press, 2014); Kim, *Interrogation Rooms*, 303–48.

10. Young, *Name, Rank, and Serial Number*, 6–7, 176–81.

11. Steven Casey, *Selling the Korean War: Propaganda, Politics, and Public Opinion in the United States, 1950–1953* (Oxford University Press, 2008), 359–64.

by the communists, an idea that complied with the Cold War discourse of the United States.[12] Studies of Korean War POW/MIA campaigners fit neatly within the established historiography of anti-communism,[13] particularly what Masuda Hajimu has defined as a grassroots movement that sought to defend domestic order and target supposed communist sympathizers after the outbreak of the Korean War.[14] Their post-1973 counterparts, on the other hand, are often remembered for militancy against their own government arising from disagreements over the interpretation and commemoration of the Vietnam War. Those later campaigners' initial targets, however, also included foreign and domestic elements they held responsible for denying the United States a victory.

Researchers of POW/MIA campaigns focus almost solely on these campaigns' domestic dynamics. Lewis Stern's *Imprisoned or Missing in Vietnam* is the only monograph that discusses the diplomatic aspects of the Vietnam War POW/MIA issue extensively.[15] U.S. diplomats raised the POW/MIA issue to gain leverage against their North Korean and Chinese counterparts, though. Among diplomatic historians, Xia Yafeng and Meredith Oyen indicate that the detainment of U.S. civilians in China and vice-versa played a critical role in extending Sino-U.S. negotiations during the Cold War.[16] Studies show that repatriating remains of missing personnel facilitated communications between belligerents in a *quid pro quo* manner.[17]

Until the 1980s, however, the Korean War POW/MIA issue was more anti-communist propaganda at the Korean War Military Armistice Commission (MAC) than a subject eliciting cooperation between the United States and China

12. Gallagher, *Traumatic Defeat*, 2–4; Young, *Name, Rank, and Serial Number*, 138–39.

13. It is impractical to discuss this huge genre in a non-historiographical essay, but two books worth mentioning are Jeff Broadwater, *Eisenhower and the Anti-Communist Crusade* (University of North Carolina Press, 1992); and Gary Donaldson, *Abundance and Anxiety: America, 1945–1960* (Praeger, 1997).

14. Masuda Hajimu, *Cold War Crucible, The Korean Conflict and the Postwar World* (Harvard University Press, 2015), 8–9, 24; Lisle A. Rose, *The Cold War Comes to Main Street: America in 1950* (University Press of Kansas, 1999) and Cynthia Hendershot, *Anti-communism and Popular Culture in Mid-century America* (McFarland, 2003) also discuss domestic grassroot anti-communism paranoids.

15. Lewis M. Stern, *Imprisoned or Missing in Vietnam: Policies of the Vietnamese Government Concerning Captured and Unaccounted for United States Soldiers, 1969–1994* (McFarland, 1995).

16. Xia Yafeng, *Negotiating with the Enemy: U.S.-China Talks during the Cold War, 1949–1972* (Indiana University Press, 2006), 103; Meredith Oyen, *The Diplomacy of Migration: Transnational Lives and the Making of U.S.-Chinese Relations in the Cold War* (Cornell University Press, 2015), 187–214.

17. Stern, *Missing in Vietnam*; Liu Zhaokun, "Icebreaking Cooperation: Resuming the Repatriation of U.S. Servicemen's Remains from North Korea, 1985–1990," *Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 28, no. 3 (2021): 247–74; Sungmin Cho and Jennie Jin, "The Politics of Bones: The Political Motives behind the Repatriation of Remains of Chinese Soldiers Killed in the Korean War," *The China Journal* 87, no. 1 (2022): 102–4.

or North Korea. During 1982, the United Nations Command gradually switched to a more practical agenda—recovering the remains of missing UNC soldiers—at the MAC.[18] The MAC was the sole means by which Washington approached Pyongyang until the 1990s, but it received limited attention from scholars of U.S.-North Korean relations.[19]

The present study investigates the birth of the POW/MIA issue during the Korean War and how its POW/MIAs were exploited in international and domestic politics. The U.S. military likely introduced the POW/MIA issue as a tactic to fend off charges it was blocking the repatriation of Chinese and North Korean personnel, and to secure the moral high ground in a war without a clear yardstick for victory and in post-armistice global affairs. China and North Korea adopted the same political rhetoric.[20]

Domestically, the U.S. government's seeming inability to rescue (allegedly) detained U.S. prisoners prompted speculation about who had "stabbed the country in the back" in its battle against communism; many of their targets reappeared as enemies of Vietnam War POW/MIA campaigners. The relative obscurity of the Korean War, coupled with its POW/MIA campaigners' reluctance to attack their own government, prevented their campaigns from receiving the attention enjoyed by their Vietnam War counterparts. It is nonetheless appropriate to define the POW/MIA issue as a byproduct of the Cold War, conceived of as an era when U.S. military power was inadequate to ensure unconditional cooperation from opponents in pursuit of its commitment to fallen combatants.

The Birth of the POW/MIA Issue

The POW/MIA issue could only come about for the U.S. military after the Korean War. Prior to Korea, the U.S. military generally emerged victorious in major foreign conflicts; its vanquished enemies could hardly resist demands that all captives be released unconditionally. Some combatants remained unaccounted for,

18. Paul M. Cole, *POW/MIA Issues*, Vol. III, Appendixes (RAND, 1994), 59–71. This study neither endorses nor denies the allegation of living POWs after the Korean War.

19. Lester H. Brune, *The Korean War: Handbook of the Literature and Research* (Greenwood Press, 1996); Allan R. Millet, "The Korean War: A 50-year Critical Historiography," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 24, no. 1 (2001): 188–224. Studies discussing the post-armistice talks include: P. Wesley Kriebel, "Korea: The Military Armistice Commission 1965–1970," *Military Affairs* 36, no. 3 (1972): 96–99; Cho Sung-hun, *Kunsabun'gyesŏn'gwa nambuk'an kaltūng* [*Military Demarcation Line and Conflict between North and South Korea*] (Kukpangbu kunsap'yŏnch'anyŏn'guso, 2014); Feng Dongxing, "Chaoxiantingzhan de zhongliguo jianchaweiyuanhui [Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission in Korean Armistice]," *Dongbeishida xuebao* 65, no. 1 (2015):153–59; and Monica Hahn, "The Frontlines of Freedom: The 1967 Incident at Guard Post Ouellette and the Military Armistice Commission," *Korea Journal* 62, no. 1 (2022): 21–52.

20. Due to difficulties in accessing Chinese and North Korean documents, it is impossible to provide an impartial assessment of their political exploitation of missing Chinese, American, and Korean prisoners.

but the termination of such searches was accepted as inevitable by both the military and the public. Since the Korean War resulted in a stalemate, however, efforts to find the missing were at the mercy of the North Korean People's Army (KPA) and the Chinese People's Volunteer Force (PVF). A flawed logic ensued: so long as there were soldiers unaccounted for, and the U.S. military could not enter North Korea, the PVF/KPA must have detained these missing soldiers. It was impossible for the PVF/KPA to explain the whereabouts of every single missing U.S. servicemember, moreover, so there was no solid evidence with which to debunk the accusation. Such accusations therefore could and would be perpetuated, and became a moral weapon wielded by diplomats and ordinary people alike. They were re-employed notably by the Nixon administration during the Vietnam War.[21]

The foundation for the POW/MIA controversy was also laid, in part, by the scale of the missing in Korea. Toward the end of 1950, the U.S. military was surprised and routed by the PVF, withdrawing from the Yalu River south of the 38th Parallel in a disorganized manner. The hastily retreating survivors could hardly affirm the fate of their fellow soldiers who never reached friendly lines. Worse, due to disease, malnutrition, or U.S. air raids, U.S. prisoners' mortality was comparable to that in the Pacific theater of World War II or the U.S. Civil War's infamous Andersonville camp. Many prisoners perished before the few English-speaking PVF/KPA officials had their identities recorded accurately. The resulting discrepancy between the number of missing U.S. personnel and the number of POWs reported by the PVF/KPA enabled the U.S. military to launch a propaganda offensive when defeating the PVF/KPA by force became infeasible.

The initial salvo in that propaganda campaign was fired during the armistice negotiations, when representatives of the United Nations Command (UNC), primarily comprising U.S. and South Korean forces, struggled with their PVF/KPA counterparts over how POWs should be swapped. On 14 November 1951, Lieutenant Colonel James M. Hanley, head of the War Crimes Section of the Eighth Army's Judge Advocate Section, announced that at least 5,790 UNC POWs had been slaughtered by their captors.[22] According to Paul Cole's study, which is the most extensive work available to non-military researchers, Hanley probably intended to influence public opinion against China,[23] when even the U.S. military believed that the PVF treated UNC prisoners better than the KPA. It was clear the UNC was reluctant to return all PVF/KPA prisoners once the war ended, which the PVF/KPA perceived as contradicting prevailing norms of warfare and categorically condemned. The PVF/KPA insisted that the United States was sabotaging the negotiations and perpetrating a hoax to conceal its guilt.[24] Chinese

21. Franklin, *Mythmaking in America*, 92–93.

22. "5790 U.N. Prisoners Massacred by Reds: Majority of Atrocity Victims Americans, U.S. Colonel Reveals," *Los Angeles Times*, 14 November 1951, 1.

23. Paul M. Cole, *POW/MIA Issues*, Vol. I, The Korean War (RAND, 1994), 24.

24. "Meifang zhizao wojun 'shahai fulu'de wuchi huangyan, shitamen ziji xianru feichanghun-

officials believed Hanley was provoking global hatred against the communist bloc to salvage faltering domestic and international support for the war.[25]

Hanley's statement had not been authorized by General Matthew Ridgway, commander-in-chief of the UNC. On 16 November 1951, though, Hanley adjusted the number of slaughtered U.S. prisoners alone to 6,270.[26] The discrepancy triggered international media outlets' suspicion. Ridgway reprimanded Hanley for his imprudent statements; however, he not only acquiesced to Hanley's numbers but increased them to 8,000.[27] Concurrently, however, he admitted that only 365 prisoners had been confirmed as executed, and 254 victims had been identified.[28] Although the claims of Hanley and Ridgway gradually were forgotten, the PVF/KPA must have regarded them as irrefutable proof of the UNC's intention to seek a surrogate for victory in Korea.

The allegations of POW massacres disappeared not only because of their dubious veracity but also due to a new U.S. propaganda tactic: claiming that the PVF/KPA would hold UNC prisoners as hostages after the armistice. On 9 December 1951, a UNC spokesperson, Brigadier General William P. Nuckols, became the first person to voice such an accusation publicly, specifying that the purpose of detaining prisoners was to force UNC acceptance of the PVF/KPA's proposed mechanism of supervising the eventual armistice.[29] An Associated Press article ascribed the UNC's assertion to the two sides' conflicting standpoints on how POWs would be swapped. The PVF/KPA demanded an all-for-all exchange, whereas the UNC insisted a one-for-one exchange on the grounds that without a reliable roster of POWs, the UNC could not ensure that all prisoners would be released after the one-time, all-for-all exchange; the remainder might be held as bargaining chips.[30] The UNC also rejected an all-for-all exchange for tactical reasons; it was holding almost ten times more enemy prisoners than the other side did, and one-time swap of all prisoners would replenish depleted KPA units. The PVF/KPA knew that if the one-for-one

luan he langbeide jingdi [The United States Fabricated the Blatant Hoax of 'Massacring Prisoners' by Our Army, Throwing It into a Situation of Utter Disarray and Embarrassment]," *Renmin ribao*, 19 November 1951, 1; Bian Zhenxia, *Chaoxianzhanzhengzhong de yingmeizhanfu jishi* [*Anecdotes of British and American Prisoners in the Korean War*] (Jiefangjunwenyi chubanshe, 1994), 16.

25. Bian, *Chaoxianzhanzhengzhong de yingmeizhanfu jishi*, 16–20.

26. "American POW Atrocity Slayings Raised to 6270: 13,400 U.N. Prisoners Killed, Hanley Reports; Ridgway Opens Probe," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 November 1951, 1.

27. Associated Press, "Atrocities Report Asked of Ridgway: Dept. of Defense Calls for Clarifying Statement," *New York Herald Tribune*, 20 November 1951, 18; Frank Robertson, "Atrocity Toll Seen Likely by Ridgway," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 20 November 1951, 1; "8,000 U.S. Prisoners Murdered—Ridgway," *The Atlanta Constitution*, 24 November 1951, 1.

28. Murray Schumach, "365 Atrocities Deaths Proved, 6,000 Possible, Says Ridgway," *New York Times*, 21 November 1951, 1 and 3.

29. Associated Press, "Allies Charge P.W.s in Korea Are Hostages: Say Reds Are Using Prisoners as 'Club'," *New York Herald Tribune*, 9 December 1951, 1.

30. Associated Press, "Fear Reds May Withhold Prisoners," *Newsday*, 12 December 1951, 1.

proposal were adopted, they would run out of prisoners first, and suspected that the UNC would then withhold theirs with impunity.[31]

These presumptions reflect an intransigent distrust between the UNC and the PVF/KPA that was exacerbated by the exchange of POW rosters. The lists provided fresh evidence of the other side's insincerity in handling the POW issue. On 18 December 1951, the PVF/KPA offered a roster of 11,559 captured UNC personnel, including 3,198 U.S. prisoners.[32] Upon comparing the roster against the PVF/KPA's propaganda, the UNC questioned its credibility. On 24 December, for instance, a UNC admiral demanded an explanation of PVF/KPA propaganda that claimed to hold 65,363 UNC POWs as of March 1951.[33] A possible reason for this discrepancy was that the KPA impressed South Korean prisoners into its ranks, thus depriving them of their POW status. PVF/KPA propaganda units also boasted about the numbers of prisoners without verification to boost morale. In a notable case, Sergeant First Class Robert Lauer's remains were repatriated on 11 January 1952. On 16 April 1953, however, his parents insisted their son was still a prisoner, citing shortwave radio reports from China of his captivity.[34]

The official number of U.S. MIAs on 18 December 1951, according to the Department of Defense, was 11,051, almost 3.5 times as many as the number of POWs on the list.[35] This was sufficient to sustain allegations that the PVF/KPA would withhold POWs by denying their existence. Although most of the more than 8,000 servicemembers unaccounted for probably perished in battle, the UNC negotiators at Panmunjom projected them as POWs still alive or murdered in captivity.[36] The PVF/KPA protested this blatant misinterpretation.[37]

The American public, particularly the families of those unaccounted for, were discomfited by the discrepancy. Shortly after the release of the list, the White House was inundated by letters. A Mrs. Carrier (first name unknown), for instance, complained that her husband was not on the list and stated that "if we accept this

31. Bian, *Chaoxianzhanzhengzhong de yingmeizhanfu jishi*, 162–65.

32. A copy of the list is in folder OF-471B POW (1950–1951), box 1499, White House Central Files, Official Files (WHCF-OF), Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum, Independence, MO (hereafter Truman Library).

33. "Allies, Reds Far Apart in POW Issue: Negotiators Still Wrangling over Disputed Lists," *Pittsburgh Gazette*, 24 December 1951, 2.

34. Mr. and Mrs. Lauer to General Clark, 16 April 1953, and reply, 15 May, box 49, entry A1-193, Record Group (RG) 554, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (hereafter NARA).

35. Department of Defense Office of Public Information, "Report of US Casualties, Summary No. 69," 18 December 1951, box 3, entry 1020, RG 330, NARA.

36. Mac R. Johnson, "Only 3,198 G.I.s on List; 8,000 Still Are Missing: Enemy Names 11,559 Allies in Return for 132,474 Reds, U.N. Is Shocked, "*New York Herald Tribune*, 19 December 1951, 1; "50,000 Died as Captives, Reds Hint: Allied Negotiators Continue to Press for Full Accounting," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 28 December 1951, 2.

37. "Red Charge U.S. Lists Its Dead as Prisoners," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 21 December 1951, 1.

fact we might never see our loved ones again," urging the president to pressure the PVF/KPA to account for these missing soldiers.[38] The U.S. military, meanwhile, did not believe all the 3,198 listed prisoners were still alive; it only regarded 1,749 of them as confirmed POWs.[39] Nevertheless, the UNC continued to charge the PVF/KPA with delinquency in providing information on all POWs in their custody.

While the UNC denied the accuracy of the POW roster offered by the PVF/KPA, some statistics suggested it was reliable. On 19 December 1951, the *New York Herald Tribune* cited an anonymous informant's statement that the POW tally on the PVF/KPA roster broadly matched the U.S. military's data.[40] Ten days later, the PVF/KPA reported that 571 U.S. POWs had perished, three had been released, and an additional 132 had fled (with minimal chance of survival); they also promised to investigate the fate of 332 U.S. soldiers not on the roster.[41] In May 1953, UNC commander in chief General Mark W. Clark estimated that 1,379 U.S. personnel had perished in captivity.[42] Since most POW deaths occurred earlier than December 1951, the discrepancy between the POW toll offered by both sides was moderate. In April 1953 and after the armistice, moreover, the PVF/KPA released 3,746 U.S. POWs, a number slightly higher than the sum of prisoners listed in December 1951 plus subsequently captured ones.[43] It was also higher than the U.S. military's official number of 2,654 confirmed POWs in late July 1953, at which point the UNC was not planning to charge the PVF/KPA with concealing the existence of some POWs with the intention to detain them after the truce.[44]

Basis of the Korean War POW/MIA Issue

Indicting the PVF/KPA for detaining U.S. prisoners necessitated some evidence. After the war, the UNC introduced a list of 944 unreturned U.S. POWs whose fate it demanded the PVF/KPA explain. This list subsequently shrank to 450, and then to 389. No evidence of the inclusion criteria for the initial 944-person list appears to have survived,[45] but a study by the U.S. Far East Command on 25 September 1953 offers some clues.

38. Referral Memorandum from William D. Hassett to Secretary of Defense Robert Lovett, 4 January 1952, folder OF-471B POW (January to May 1952), box 1499, WHCF-OF, Truman Library.

39. Secretary of Defense Robert Lovett to Senator Francis Case, 14 October 1952, folder OF-471B POW (June 1952 to 1953), box 1499, WHCF-OF, Truman Library.

40. Johnson, "Only 3198 G.I.s on List," 16.

41. "Korea Truce Talks Still Stalemated: Some Americans Named as POWs also on Dead List," *Pittsburgh Gazette*, 29 December 1951, 2; "Red Claims UN Fire Killed 571 Own Men: 132 American POWs Escaped, 3 Released," *Austin Statesman*, 26 December 1951, 1.

42. Cole, *POW/MIA Issues*, Vol. I, 26–27.

43. Cole, *POW/MIA Issues*, Vol. I, 74–77.

44. Commander in Chief, UN Command to Department of Army, No. CX63929, 23 July 1953, box 54, entry PI127-1, RG 554, NARA.

45. These lists of prisoners will be cited as the "944 List," "450 List," and "389 List" respectively.

It reported that the maximum number of POWs detained by the PVF/KPA after the armistice was 952. Only forty-seven were likely to be still alive and withheld by the time that this report was furnished, based on repatriated POWs' testimony or PVF/KPA propaganda; two of them appeared on the POW list of December 1951.[46] One of those two stopped writing home in April 1952, suggesting his death by that time. In 2003, China unofficially admitted that he perished in China in April 1953, leaving only one person's fate that China was responsible for explaining.[47] The fate of some missing prisoners should have been explained by the PVF/KPA, per the armistice agreement, but many others, as the Defense Department admitted to Senator John F. Kennedy (D-MA) in 1954, "should not have been on the list in the first place."[48]

One such case was Colonel Glenn Nye, who did not escape from his aircraft that exploded upon slamming into the ground on 7 October 1952. According to Senator Everett M. Dirksen (R-IL), Nye was placed on the list because other airmen in his squadron deemed that "he was too able a pilot to have crashed and been killed."[49]

The 450 List and the 389 List were also rife with problems. An air force pilot lost off the coast in freezing temperatures and another who fell 400 feet without a parachute over North Korea both stayed on the 450 List.[50] Private Billy Baker stayed on it even though his remains had been repatriated during the war. On such occasions, it was impossible for the PVF/KPA to offer any information, and no belligerent is expected to keep a record of every enemy it has killed. Keeping such clear-cut deaths on the list created an unfulfillable demand, though, allowing the United States to perpetuate its demonization of the PVF/KPA. China considered the list so flawed it did not bother debunking it.[51] Whether the PVF/KPA could

46. Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff (J-2), "A Study of Repatriation U.S. Military Personnel, 25 September 1953, Amended 6 October 1953," box 5, entry 1020, RG330, NARA.

47. Associated Press, "China Admits Taking, Burying U.S. POW," CBS News, 19 June 2008 (https://www.cbsnews.com/news/china-admits-taking-burying-us-pow-19-06-2008).

48. For presumably explainable cases, see *Return of American Prisoners of War Who Have Not Been Accounted for by the Communists*, *Hearing before the Subcommittee on the Far East and the Pacific of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, House of Representatives, 85th Congress, first session, 27 May 1957 (U.S. Government Publishing Office, 1957), 4. For the Defense Department's comment, see the "Prisoners of War (SPEC)," 23 June 1954, folder "Prisoners of War," box 281, Senate Files, John F. Kennedy Pre-presidential Papers, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston, MA.

49. Everett McKinley Dirksen to Thurston B. Morton, 28 August 1954, State Department Central Decimal Files (SDCDF) 611.95A241/8-2854, RG59, NARA.

50. Official Memorandum for Mr. McConaughy from Joseph P. Nagoski, "Possible Inconsistencies in Current List of 450 Unaccounted-for Personnel," 30 September 1955; and General E. B. Erskine to Walter S. Robertson, 1 October 1955, box 1, entry A1-5315, RG59, NARA.

51. "Bixu zhujiu meiguo qiangpokouliu chaozhongbeifurenyuan de Zeren [We Must Hold the U.S. Accountable for Detaining Korean and Chinese Prisoners]," *Renmin ribao*, 27 October 1957, 5.

tell the U.S. military anything about the 389 List was also questionable. Twenty-five soldiers were on it simply because someone had written their names on a blackboard in an area once occupied by the KPA.[52]

The U.S. public learned about the existence of such lists, but not their contents, through official propaganda. The 944 List has never been located by researchers.[53] The 450 List, first publicized in connection with a congressional hearing on Korean War POW/MIAs in 1957, contained merely names, ranks, and serial numbers;[54] like the later 389 List, it was given scant attention by domestic press.

As Korean War POW/MIA relatives never acquired significant political influence, the military felt no pressure to release interpretations of these lists. Families of missing soldiers were informed that their loved ones were on the lists, but did not receive copies. Congressional hearings on POW/MIAs after 1957 all focused on the Vietnam War, though they irregularly cited POW/MIA cases of the Korean War. It was not until 1992 that the U.S. Congress offered another hearing focused on the Korean War POW/MIA issue, signaling the country's new interest in this "forgotten war." By that time, each U.S. service member killed in Korea whose remains had yet to be identified had been declared a POW/MIA.[55] The new list of such individuals, comprising more than 8,000 names, rendered the 944/450/389 Lists obsolete.

The U.S. government was often reluctant to remove names from the lists because of their values in censuring the communist bloc. By mid-1954, fewer than fifty missing U.S. combatants had not been proved or presumed dead, yet the Defense Department insisted that the resulting diminution of MIA numbers would not affect the lists.[56] It later argued that men "either captured or killed in action under circumstances in which the UN forces were unable to determine their fate" or lost when "elements of the Chinese Communist and/or North Korean forces were in a position […] to determine their fate" should stay on the list. Thus the PVF/KPA was still responsible for explaining these combatants' whereabouts, even though their death had been affirmed beyond doubt.[57]

The State Department followed a similar approach. On 10 July 1957, for instance, some diplomats discussed indicting China for defaulting on revealing the fates of several U.S. soldiers for whom there was "excellent" proof of capture.

52. Cole, *POW/MIA Issues*, Vol. III, 122–55.

53. Cole, *POW/MIA Issues*, I, 231.

54. *Return of American Prisoners of War*, 27–32.

55. See Liu Zhaokun, "Icebreaking Cooperation," 250–52.

56. Colonel Percy H. Lash Jr. to Margaret C. Smith, 16 June 1954, SDCDF 611.95A241/6-1654, RG59, NARA.

57. Memorandum for Mr. Walter Robertson (Department of State) by G. B. Erskine, "Geneva Negotiations on Prisoners of War," 16 September 1955, SDCDF 611.95A241/9-1655; Walter P. McConaughy to Elsie A. Simonson, 25 April 1957, SDCDF 611.95A241/3-857, RG59, NARA.

Among the five to be prioritized, all had been seen dead by multiple fellow soldiers.[58] Their names were no longer task lists of missing personnel to be accounted for, but political weapons in the "cold" stage of the unending Korean conflict.

In the minds of many POW/MIA families, however, the 944/450/389 Lists failed to cover all possible prisoners. Because the criteria for including names on these lists remained unavailable, they wished to know why their loved ones had been excluded, particularly after they had acquired "evidence" suggesting their relatives' survival. Rita van Wees fought a decades-long battle to place her son, Corporal Ronald van Wees, who disappeared 3 November 1952, on the list of withheld POWs after she received fellow soldiers' statement indicating his captivity. Some families cited photos and testimonies of unknown provenance, likely fabricated, that asserted there were large groups of Caucasian prisoners in Chinese labor camps. First Lieutenant Jack Ledbetter's family insisted on his survival in such a secret camp even after his body had been identified. According to the State Department, their stubbornness was likely caused by a Chinese person who had been caught forging intelligence about prisoners for years.[59] During the war, the military had warned soldiers' families about this illegal industry profiting from their sorrow.[60] It thrived again after 1975, when Vietnamese refugees seeking immigration visas mass-produced rumors of detained U.S. personnel or their remains.[61]

Despite the U.S. military's unclear rationale for including people in the 944/450/389 Lists and the reluctance to remove names from them, neither the Defense Department nor the State Department ever officially announced that all listed persons were POWs and alive after the truce. Rather, they were defined as those for whom there was "evidence that they had at one time or another been in communist custody."[62] This suggested that these individuals might have been captured, but by no means confirmed they had ever entered a POW camp. In February 1954, the two departments jointly stated that "the United Nations Command had no conclusive evidence regarding the death or survival of these persons," and "it has never been believed, or intended to be implied, that all 944 men were living."[63] In subsequent years, they reiterated that there was no reliable

58. Ralph N. Clough to James J. Kelleher Jr., 10 July 1957, SDCDF 611.93251/7-1057, RG59, NARA.

59. Thurston B. Morton to Carl Albert, 18 February 1954, SDCDF 611.95A241/2-254, RG59, NARA.

60. C. C. Hall to Mr. and Mrs. George Peiritsch, 20 July 1951, service record of Staff Sergeant Frank G. Peiritsch, National Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO.

61. For a notable post-Vietnam War case, see Allen, *Until the Last Man Comes Home*, 199–200.

62. Multiple form letters in this era are found in the binder "Correspondence re American personnel rumored to be in Communist Custody," 27 October 1953, box 707, entry NM3-363E, RG407, NARA.

63. "Joint State-Defense Department Background on Efforts to Secure the Return of American Prisoners of War Who Might Still be Held in Communist Custody," and its supple-

evidence that anyone listed was still alive, but added the perplexing phrase that they could not "in good conscience completely foreclose the possibility that some of them might still be alive."[64]

In reality, China and North Korea never admitted to holding a single prisoner after the armistice. China openly charged fifteen U.S. airmen and some CIA agents, who were shot down over China during the Korean War, with espionage. Their captivity in China was well publicized.

Affirming that soldiers were still imprisoned without taking action guaranteed public outrage. POW/MIA families and some members of Congress were adamant that the 944/450/389 Lists contained the names of Americans confirmed as detained behind the Iron Curtain after the Korean War. On 18 January 1954, for example, a Texan congressmember asked the State Department to disclose its efforts to "secure the release of 944 American boys who are allegedly still prisoners of the Communists."[65] That August, Senator Dirksen mysteriously contended that there were nearly a thousand "American pilots whom the Reds declared they are holding prisoner."[66]

Three major factors contributed to the American public's widespread suspicion that the PVF/KPA continued to hold POWs. First, after World War II, there were rumors that American POWs liberated by the USSR had been relocated to Siberia and never returned.[67] Knowing that the USSR had detained German and Japanese POWs for years, U.S. POW/MIA families could not preclude the possibility that the Soviet Bloc was withholding POWs again. Second was the ambiguous phrasing of official statements regarding the 944/450/389 Lists. While they noted there was no evidence anyone was alive, they also admitted to having no proof of their demise. Families clung to the hope that the lack of evidence indicated survival in POW camps. Military officials' careless or intentional misinterpretation of the 944/450/389 Lists reinforced such beliefs. General Clark expressed in newspapers and memoirs that nearly a thousand U.S. soldiers were held hostages by the communist bloc after the armistice.[68] In the aforementioned 1957 congressional hearing, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Stephen S. Jackson stated that the United States believed the PVF/KPA "should have some knowledge" of the individuals on the

mentary section, folder "State Department," box 10, James C. Hagerty Papers, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum, Abilene, KS (hereafter Eisenhower Library).

64. Howard A. Cook to Stanley G. Jachera, 10 June 1955, and Wilton B. Persons to Edward S. Guthrie Sr., 9 October 1959, box 17, entry A1-1020, RG330, NARA; "Draft DOD Statement on Reduction of List," SDCDF 611.95A241/7-1960, RG59, NARA.

65. George Mahon to Thurston B. Morton, 18 January 1954, SDCDF 611.95A241/1-1854, RG59, NARA.

66. Everett McKinley Dirksen to Thurston B. Morton, 28 August 1954, SDCDF 611.95A241/8-2854, RG59, NARA.

67. Timothy K. Nenninger, "United States Prisoners of War and the Red Army, 1944-45: Myths and Realities," *Journal of Military History* 66, no. 3 (2002): 779.

68. Cole, *POW/MIA Issues*, I, 228; Young, *Name, Rank, and Serial Number*, 138.

944 List and that considerable evidence suggested that these persons had been alive while under the control of the PVF/KPA; however, he had misinterpreted the list. Although Jackson's statement did not indicate these combatants had ever reached POW camps, the way he couched it led to a widespread misperception that the listed soldiers were unrepatriated prisoners. Paul Cole deemed this hearing the official genesis of the "mythology of the 944 list."[69]

Historical precedents and equivocal phrases were not sufficient by themselves to spread this mythology though. Almost all missing servicemen were presumed dead officially by mid-1954. In the early 1950s, ordinary Americans tended to trust authorities more than they do today.[70] POW/MIA families likely would have been reluctant to challenge the military's declarations of their loved ones' death. However, merging their calls for rescuing their allegedly detained relatives with concurrent anti-communist rhetoric would enable these families to seek more supporters and render their challenge to military authorities less subversive. The third factor contributing to the widespread myth of living POWs, therefore, was its alignment with the anti-communist political agendas of generals, politicians, and social activists desperate to locate enemies responsible for the military stalemate in Korea and, thus, the purported enslavement of prisoners.

Debate over Detained Prisoners at Panmunjom and Geneva

The MAC at Panmunjom supervised postwar POW repatriation and was the official venue for resolving the POW/MIA issue. Given that the war had been prolonged for more than eighteen months merely because of deadlocks over POW repatriation, any agenda regarding prisoners after the war likely would be perceived as malevolent. The POW/MIA issue thus was caught in the political crossfire. Detaining POWs after the cessation of hostilities is a violation of international human rights conventions. Accusing their opponents of such action would enable both the UNC and the PVF/KPA to secure the moral high ground and put their adversaries on the defensive in the MAC negotiations, and concurrently downplay their respective wartime mishandling of prisoners.

Before the United States introduced the POW/MIA issue at Panmunjom, both sides had openly blocked some prisoners from repatriation, rendering future cooperation on this issue almost impossible. The KPA impressed South Korean prisoners into their ranks; some PVF prisoners were recruited into spy rings by Taiwanese officers, which meant that they were not eligible for postwar repatriation.[71] On 18 June 1953, President Rhee allowed anti-communist KPA

69. Cole, *POW/MIA Issues*, I, 230–31; *Return of American Prisoners of War*, 2–5.

70. Melinda L. Pash, *In the Shadow of the Greatest Generation: The Americans Who Fought the Korean War* (New York University Press, 2012), 13–14.

71. Catherine Churchman, "Victory with Minimum Effort: How Nationalist China 'Won' the Korean War," and "The Life and Death of Line-Crossers: The Secret Chinese Agents of UNPIK," in *The Korean War in Asia: A Hidden History*, ed. Tessa Morris-Suzuki (Rowan and Littlefield, 2018), 77–108, 155–72.

prisoners, who were supposed to be delivered to neutral forces before further KPA attempts to persuade them to return home, to flee from their cells. Approximately 25,000 POWs melted away into local civilian population, making it impossible to recapture them.[72] Although the U.S. military denied playing any role in this release, the PVF/KPA thought otherwise.[73] The PVF/KPA never accepted that their prisoners refused repatriation of their own volition.[74]

Some POW/MIA families, meanwhile, were aware of the U.S. military's mishandling of enemy prisoners. On 31 January 1958, the mother of Lieutenant Edward Guthrie, who was on the 389 List, requested U.S. Representative Usher L. Burdick (R-ND) to appeal to the U.S. military to order Rhee to release the KPA prisoners he had "detained," as a means of prompting the release of her son.[75]

Even before the completion of POW repatriation, each side charged the other with withholding prisoners. On 7 August 1953, based on returnees' reports that some U.S. officers might be sentenced as war criminals and therefore not returned promptly, General Clark threatened to keep Chinese officers in retaliation. Although that proposed reprisal was abandoned, the UNC indeed held some PVF/KPA officers until the last days of repatriation.[76]

In MAC meetings, it was the PVF/KPA that initiated the issue of detained prisoners. On 30 August 1953, a PVF officer demanded the UNC explain three incidents: the U.S. Secretary of the Army stating on 15 August that the U.S. military would retain 250 POWs; General Clark's hint that he would release 76,000 PVF/KPA personnel in May, but the number becoming 74,000 in August; and locating the KPA POWs "released" by Rhee.[77] When the PVF/KPA declared that all UNC prisoners had been returned on 6 September, moreover, they produced a list of several hundred POWs and asked the UNC to release them.[78]

The U.S. military countered with the 944 List, and UNC officials insisted the listed individuals either had been mentioned in PVF/KPA propaganda, officially listed as captives, seen in POW camps, or known to have send letters home, but not

72. Korea Institute of Military History, *The Korean War*, Volume 3 (University of Nebraska Press, 1999), 548–57.

73. "Ambassador Dean's Response to the Joint Statement of Ki Soek-Pu and Huang Hua on 14 December (1953)," box 2, entry A1-745, RG43, NARA; Minutes of the Twentieth Meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, 21 September 1953, box 1, entry A1-1262, RG554, NARA.

74. U. Alexis Johnson and Jef Olivarius McAllister, *The Right Hand of Power* (Prentice-Hall, 1984), 170, 231.

75. "Mrs. Edward S. Guthrie to Alice Anderson, January 31, 1958," folder 15, box 14, Usher L. Burdick Papers, Chester Fritz Library, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND. Guthrie wanted her letter to Anderson to be forwarded to Representative Burdick.

76. Cole, *POW/MIA Issues*, I, 78–80.

77. Minutes of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, 30 August 1953, box 1, entry A1-1262, RG554, NARA.

78. Minutes of the Twenty-first Meeting of the Committee for the Repatriation of Prisoners of War, 7 September 1953, box 67, entry PI-127/1, RG554, NARA.

returned or reported dead.[79] Evidence available today demonstrates that the UNC officials' claims were inaccurate, but is insufficient to substantiate an argument that they intentionally made a baseless accusation, given that in September 1953, even the U.S. military had yet to parse all intelligence from repatriated POWs. The UNC had adopted a tit-for-tat strategy against the PVF/KPA's political charges, however, with the two sides still technically at war.

The 944 List was brought to the MAC shortly after the PVF/KPA declared all POWs had been exchanged, and the UNC thus, perhaps accidently, created a dilemma for the PVF/KPA. Whatever their response, they would be incriminated. If listed soldiers were returned, it would constitute irrefutable proof that the PVF/KPA was still holding POWs; if they were not, U.S. officers could claim the PVF/KPA had murdered them.

The PVF/KPA therefore countered with a binder of 98,742 names of its personnel, including those released by Rhee or refusing repatriation. They insisted those individuals' imprisonment had been substantiated by solid evidence, such as letters sent from South Korean POW camps and reports from the International Red Cross.[80] A Chinese officer's memoir claimed that most letters used fabricated names or addresses though.[81] Both sides preferred to exaggerate the number of detained POWs for political ends than to conceive a feasible plan to account for the missing.

They nevertheless attempted to adhere to the armistice agreement in its immediate aftermath, at least in front the world's press. On 3 October, KPA officers declared that of the 944 Americans listed, ten were recorded as repatriated and 112 as dead, released, or escaped.[82] Over the next several months, the U.S. military asserted that the 3 October explanation was unsatisfactory and demanded more information; the PVF/KPA kept reminding the UNC of their 98,742 people.

The UNC remained indecisive about how to account for PVF/KPA personnel. The U.S. military finished a review of the 98,742 people by the end of 1953. They concluded that the list contained approximately 27,000 "escapees" of June 1953, some 22,000 individuals refusing repatriation, and 37,000 civilians falsely listed by North Korea.[83] On 31 January 1954, the UNC sent the Army Department a message expressing its reluctance to explain the fates of the 98,742 persons to

79. Minutes of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, 9 September 1953, box 1, entry A1-1262, RG554, NARA.

80. Minutes of the Twentieth Meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, 21 September 1953, box 1, entry A1-1262, RG554, NARA.

81. Guo Weijing, *Shijie diyideng zhanfuying: lianheguojun zhanfu zai chaoxian* [*First-Rate POW Camp in the World: UNC POWs in Korea*] (Zhongguo shehuikexue chubanshe, 2010), 146–47.

82. Minutes of the Twenty-Second Meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, 3 October 1953, box 1, entry A1-1262, RG554, NARA.

83. U.S. Embassy in Manila to the State Department, 29 December 1953," box 2, entry A1-745, RG43, NARA.

the PVF/KPA. The UNC found no accurate information on at least 6,655 of the names—many more than 944—and viewed this as a possible pretext for the KPA/PVF to refuse cooperation. The KPA/PVF might ask for more POWs (actually civilians) to put the UNC on the defensive. The UNC realized there was little chance of the PVF/KPA releasing more information about the 944 List, since they had announced the release of all captives in September 1953. If non-U.S. POW/MIAs were included, the UNC list also contained several thousand names, but far fewer than 6,655. Concealing the 98,742 names and their whereabouts seemed like the only way to extract more information about its UNC counterparts. Releasing those names, which included PVF/KPA defectors, would have grave political and humanitarian consequences; it was the UNC's last option.[84]

This set of positions guided the UNC's POW/MIA-related negotiations in subsequent MAC meetings. On 22 May 1954, when the PVF/KPA summoned the forty-third MAC meeting to discuss the POW/MIA issue, the UNC refused to disclose anything regarding the 98,742 individuals first, only to encounter the PVF/KPA's refusal to account for any U.S. POW/MIAs. The PVF/KPA reasoned that further accounting was unnecessary, because there was "no tenable data" on the 944 List.[85] In August 1954, after the PVF/KPA declined another UNC offer of all 98,742 names in exchange for information on the fate of missing UNC personnel, the U.S. Army ruled that, pending further orders, no more attempts should be made via the MAC.[86] In late 1955, the UNC delivered the 450 List to the PVF/KPA at the sixty-seventh MAC meeting and accused the latter of detaining the listed personnel.[87] The UNC received a partial account of the 450 men in February 1956, but instantly called that unsatisfactory, insisting that the PVF/KPA knew more about persons they classified as having "no data."[88] Ironically, the hard evidence that disproved the findings of the PVF/KPA was that many U.S. soldiers listed as escapees had already had their remains repatriated.

After February 1956, the UNC concluded that further progress on the POW/MIA issue was unlikely. It was politically infeasible to account for the people whom the PVF/KPA were most eager to retrieve; those released by Rhee

84. CINCUNC to DEPTAR, No. CX66632, 31 January 1954, box 18, entry A1-1267A, RG554, NARA.

85. Minutes of the Forty-third Meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, 22 May 1954, box 1, entry A1-1262, RG554, NARA.

86. Minutes of the Forty-seventh Meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, 17 August 1954, box 1, entry A1-1262, RG554; CINCUNC to DA, No.C69436, 28 August 1954, and DA to CINCUNC, No. DA967346, 8 September 1954, box 75, entry PI-127/1, RG554, NARA.

87. Minutes of the Sixty-seventh Meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, 26 November 1955, box 1, entry A1-1262, RG554, NARA.

88. Minutes of the Sixty-ninth Meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, 25 February 1956, box 1, entry A1-1262, and DA to CINCUNC, No. DA900776, 12 April 1956, box 23, entry A1-1267A, RG554, NARA.

or who had defected to Taiwan.[89] In China, the families of those known to have sacrificed for the country could be awarded the title of "martyrs' household," which came with compensation and political privileges. Offering defectors' relatives such titles would have made the regime a laughingstock.[90] Since the UNC would not confirm defectors' names, the PVF had no motivation to keep cooperating.

Until 1982, when the UNC shifted its requests from alleged prisoners to deceased soldiers' remains, it handed over rosters of unaccounted-for personnel (the 944,450, or 389 List) at the MAC on at least thirty occasions, but all were ignored. The PVF/KPA likewise received nothing regarding its 98,742 people.[91]

Citing the POW/MIA issue at the MAC thereafter was done more to denounce the other side as defying humanitarian principles than to request its cooperation. During the 175th MAC meeting, for example, the KPA evoked the issue of its missing prisoners amid its tirades against the UNC's defiance of the armistice agreement and the perpetuation of the Korean people's suffering.[92] In the 210th MAC meeting, when KPA officers insisted on the return of two fishermen washed onto the South Korean coast, the UNC not only made a counterdemand regarding South Korean fishermen apprehended in North Korea but asked a satirical question: if North Korea really cared about the two fishermen, how could they ignore the more than 2,000 UNC personnel (not just Americans) who had gone missing during the war?[93] In 1976, South Korean troops ambushed a few KPA infiltrators below the 38th Parallel and transferred their remains to the UNC. In the 377th MAC meeting, UNC officers denounced the infiltration as aggression, while the KPA representatives called that a sham charge and rejected the corpses. The UNC saw a propaganda opportunity and claimed that "twenty-six years since your side launched the war, the UNC has not forgotten those who fought your aggression," but that the KPA "in less than ten days, have not only failed to acknowledge your personnel, but have even refused to accept their remains and bury them."[94]

Ambassadorial talks in Geneva between the United States and China in Geneva emerged as another noteworthy venue for covering Korean War POW/MIA issues. When the United States first confronted China in the Geneva

89. SR MBR UNCMAC to CINCUNC, No.MAC 6-8-16, 12 August 1956, box 24, entry A1-1267A, RG554, NARA.

90. Liu Zhaokun, "Making Martyrs Posthumous Revolutionists: Chinese People's Liberation Army's Policies for Repatriating Soldiers' Remains and Accounting for the Missing after the Chinese Civil War and the Korean War," *Human Remains and Violence* 9 no. 2 (2023): 50–51.

91. Cole, *POW/MIA Issues*, III, 59–62.

92. Minutes of the 175th Meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, 26 July 1963, box 5, entry A1-1262, RG554, NARA.

93. Minutes of the 210th Meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, 10 June 1965, box 6, entry A1-1262, RG554, NARA. The U.S. military was by then using a list of 2,840 missing personnel from all UNC countries.

94. Minutes of the 377th Meeting of the Military Armistice Commission, 28 June 1976, box 17, entry A1-1262, RG554, NARA. The UNC may have intentionally chosen early July of that year to pass the 389 List to the KPA.

convention of April 1954 to discuss escalating conflicts in Vietnam, both sides regarded their detainees in the other country (including the alleged POW/MIAs) as important leverage. One of China's major goals in Geneva was to persuade the United States to treat it as a Great Power. The exit ban imposed on Chinese students in the United States prompted China to exchange hostages, but Beijing insisted that relevant negotiations be conducted between senior statespersons. The State Department authorized direct dialogue between the U.S. ambassador to Czechoslovakia, U. Alexis Johnson, and the Chinese ambassador to Poland, Wang Ping-Nan. Before the talks, Johnson clarified that any progress in bilateral relations was contingent on China's release of all U.S. military and civilian prisoners.[95]

Official letters from the U.S. military and the State Department to POW/MIA families depicted the talks in Geneva as a crucial channel for the liberation of any POWs who had been detained by the PVF/KPA; this was an exaggeration. In September 1955 Johnson introduced the 450 List as "other practical matters," besides the primary goal of repatriating known U.S. civilian detainees and Chinese students. Wang refused to discuss this roster, claiming it was an issue for the MAC. PVF/KPA representatives at the sixty-seventh MAC meeting agreed to investigate the 450 List to keep the United States at the bargaining table. Johnson claimed he raised that list "only for the record," as a negotiating ploy, never expecting any progress. By November 1955, Johnson felt negotiations over recovering the alleged prisoners from China were deadlocked.[96]

Johnson nonetheless followed the State Department's instructions to insert this issue into dialogue with his PRC counterparts occasionally. The department insisted on capitalizing on the 450 List in Geneva because it saw this venue as a favorable second front on the POW/MIA issue and a way to vent pressure from domestic POW/MIA activists. The issue had to remain secondary, however, because the department did not want China to exploit the activists' pressure as a basis for making demands on the United States. It insisted that details of negotiations over the 450 List would be publicized only when China refused to accept the list, thus redirecting domestic furor towards the PRC.[97]

The State Department preferred the Geneva channel over the MAC, despite its perception of the slim odds for progress. In a memorandum to the secretaries of all service branches in October 1956, the department conceded that the POW/MIA issue had been barely mentioned since October 1955 but proposed reviving it. In part, this was because the State Department perceived the release of fifteen airmen captured during the Korean War and imprisoned by China for espionage in mid-1955 as the fruits of the two countries' communication prior to the Johnson-Wang talks. It also commented that the KPA was cooperative in returning the

95. Xia, *Negotiating with the Enemy*, 78, 90; Johnson and McAllister, *The High Hand of Power*, 234, 242.

96. Johnson and McAllister, *The High Hand of Power*, 252–53, 258.

97. "Return of UNC Personnel Who Are Still in Communist Custody," 26 April 1954 (microfilmed), roll 18, cabinet 44, entry A1-1225, RG59, NARA.

U.S. soldiers' remains that were occasionally found in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). The State Department believed the United States should focus on China and turned the POW/MIA issue in Geneva into propaganda and a pretext to frustrate Chinese diplomatic motives.[98] Johnson continued to challenge Wang with the 450 List, but not a single POW/MIA's fate was revealed by the time their negotiations moved to Warsaw in September 1958.

POW/MIA as a Catchword for Domestic Anti-communism Campaigns

The Truman administration exploited claims about unlawfully detained POWs to defend its plan of preventing PVF/KPA prisoners from repatriation at the cost of U.S. soldiers' lives to a war-weary population.[99] After the war, the U.S. government continued to propagate this rumor to garner domestic support for the Cold War,[100] and some POW/MIA families indeed expressed their hatred of communism. Just as President Nixon's POW propaganda backfired after the Vietnam War, though, the military's handling of the POW/MIA issue after the Korean War became a public relations disaster. Without effecting the return of alleged POWs, the federal government faced the charge of being too feeble to confront the communist bloc.

While familial ties were a natural reason for soldiers' families to incorporate tirades against China or the Soviet bloc into their expression of personal suffering, their choices of primary targets were influenced by specific mobilizers. Foremost were those who supposedly compromised U.S. efforts to conquer its communist opponents, the basis of the POW/MIA issue. General Clark was perhaps the first prominent figure to hold domestic policymakers responsible. In a news conference on 6 August 1953, Clark stated that he had been under significant political pressure from his superiors to terminate the war without a final victory or the release of all POWs.[101] Within hours, POW/MIA families began to urge the White House to use any possible means, including war, to liberate prisoners.[102]

The flow of POW/MIA inquiries into Washington peaked in December 1953, which marked the moment that the myth of withheld POWs became widespread among ordinary Americans. On 10 December, Joseph McCarthy delivered a long tirade against imagined domestic communist saboteurs. He proclaimed that "on September 10 of this year, the United States Army announced that there were

98. An untitled attachment to the Memorandum for the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Navy, the Secretary of the Air Force, "Actions to Obtain the Release of Prisoners of War," 8 October 1956, box 159, entry A1-3118B, RG59, NARA.

99. Allen, *Last Man*, 131.

100. Young, *Name, Rank, and Serial Number*, 138–39.

101. *Hearings on Cold War, Korea, WWII POWs*, *Hearings before the Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, Senate, 102nd Congress, Second Session, 10–11 November 1992 (U.S. Government Publishing Office, 1993), 21–22.

102. The earliest telegram covering the issue of unreturned POW that I have found is Vincent A. Harrold to the president, 6 August 1953, box 17, entry A1-1020, RG330, NARA.

nine hundred American military men […it] knew that […] had been living and had been prisoners of the Chinese Communists who are unaccounted for as of September 10." Banging his rostrum, he exclaimed that the POWs had either been murdered or were languishing in "blood-stained dungeons," all due to the country's loss of national honor and its leaders' failure to remove communists from the U.S. government.[103]

It is unclear how many Americans actually heard McCarthy's speech,[104] but five days later, a nationally syndicated article on it by right-wing columnist David Lawrence unleashed a flood of POW/MIA inquiries.[105] Lawrence drew a parallel between the supposedly living 944 POWs "whom the Chinese Communists have refused to return […] spirited away to hiding places behind the Iron Curtain" and the military stalemate in Korea as a means of censuring a government purportedly infiltrated by communist sympathizers. In particular, Lawrence reproached the State Department for doing nothing despite knowing that the 944 men were alive and charged the United Nations with indifference toward the soldiers who had sacrificed under its banner; later, he accused U.S. allies of continued trading with communist enemies.[106]

Distressed families who believed their loved ones were held by China echoed Lawrence's article. They sent copies to the White House, the military, and other officials, and stressed that this article had prompted them to demand more active measures to rescue the alleged prisoners. On 30 December 1953, for instance, Senator Alexander Wiley (R-WI) wrote to Secretary of State John F. Dulles, noting that his constituents' recent questions were well-supported by Lawrence's article. Wiley suggested Dulles recruit McCarthy to handle the POW/MIA issue, along with China diplomacy more generally.[107]

103. Joseph McCarthy, "Speech in front of the Current Affairs Club (Richmond, VA) on December 10, 1953," audio file from the Joseph R. McCarthy Papers, Raynor Memorial Libraries, Marquette University (Milwaukee, WI).

104. Mrs. Fred R. Pfalzgraf to President Eisenhower, 22 December 1953, box 707, entry NM3-363E, RG407, NARA. The author admitted that she listened to McCarthy's speech. Lawrence's article convinced her that McCarthy's claim was credible. Lawrence's article was printed all over the country, and the author of this letter claimed to have cited it from *Buffalo Evening News* on 16 December 1953.

105. A huge number of letters from POW/MIA families, with clips of Lawrence's article are archived in box 707, entry NM3-63E, RG407, NARA. Lawrence's article was titled differently (if even titled) in different newspapers. This article had slightly different versions in each newspaper. Most of the clippings are not dated or lack provenance. To locate a version of this article directly in a newspaper, see David Lawrence, "Indifference toward Fate of 944 GI Captives Alleged," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 17 December 1953, 10.

106. I am using a clip attached to Mrs. Alma M. Flynn to the President, 19 December 1953 and a longer version of Lawrence article (also a clip) attached to John S. Myette to the president, 19 December 1953. Both are from box 707, entry NM3-63E, RG407, NARA.

107. Alexander Wiley to John Foster Dulles, 30 December 1953, SDCDF 611.95A241/12-3053, RG59, NARA.

Most officials confined themselves to verbal expression of sympathy, though, and Korean War POW/MIA families received fewer official endorsements and public attention than their Vietnam War counterparts. Their calls for rescue were spontaneous, isolated, and disorganized. Unlike the primarily middle-class Vietnam War POW/MIA families, most were not confident about making speeches or writing newspaper columns.[108] They were less able to afford television or radio advertising to voice their concerns and shape public opinion. To prevent POW/MIA issues from overheating, moreover, federal authorities stressed the lack of evidence for the postwar survival of the prisoners, and contemporary social norms frowned upon dissenters and forestalled the birth of dissenting organizations.[109] One missing prisoner's mother commented: "I lie awake at night composing strong letters to the State Department. Then I never send them because I am afraid the State Department will call me a Communist."[110] Korean War POW/MIA families had to cloak their pressure on U.S. authorities in contemporary grassroots anti-communist campaigns.

Yet some families refused to remain silent. Fighting Homefolks of the Fighting Men (FHFM), run by Eugene Guild, was the most (and probably the only) influential Korean War POW/MIA group before the 1980s. Guild launched FHFM in December 1950 as a group protesting Truman's policy of avoiding an all-out war against communism, fearing such a stance would render his son's sacrifice in Korea less meaningful. FHFM did not mention POW/MIAs among its three initial aims: removing any restraints on the Korean War; using nuclear weapons; and deposing Truman and his fellow Democrats.[111] He later targeted Eisenhower with similar rhetoric. In 1953, Guild avowed his unwavering support for McCarthy's effort to eradicate communism from American life.[112]

This coincided with the incorporation of the POW/MIA issue into FHFM's platform; Guild once remarked that McCarthy was the sole statesman who transcended partisan politics to accuse China and North Korea of holding U.S. POWs.[113] In September 1953, Guild approached the Defense Department and requested the home addresses of the 944 allegedly unrepatriated POWs and those then listed as MIAs.[114] People who embraced the notion of holding Truman

108. Pash, *In the Shadow*, 22, 47–49; Allen, *Last Man*, 134.

109. Masuda, *Cold War Crucible*, 7–8.

110. *Return of American Prisoners of War*, 53.

111. Eugene R. Guild to the Editor, "Use A-Bomb Now, Hero's Dad Urges," *Glenwood Post*, 7 December 1950, 1; "Captain Guild's Wake Up Fight Gathering Speed," *Glenwood Post*, 28 December 1950, 1; "Father of Glenwood Korean Casualty Gives Address at Funeral Here Sunday," *Glenwood Post*, 10 May 1951, 2.

112. Eugene R. Guild, "Public Forum", *Glenwood Post*, 15 January 1953, 3.

113. Eugene R. Guild, "McCarthy Broke the Conspiracy", 7 December 1953, file 502B, box F14, Hall-Hoag Collection of Dissenting and Extremist Printed Propaganda, Brown University Library, Providence, RI (hereafter HHC).

114. Eugene R. Guild to Public Information Officer, Department of Defense, 19 September 1953, box 814, entry NM3-363E, RG407, NARA.

and Eisenhower responsible for the abduction of POWs became the FHFM's supporters. By 1955, Guild claimed that the organization's membership included the relatives of 350 soldiers.[115] He distributed printed and radio tirades against the administration, citing the unreturned prisoners. According to his flyers, he syndicated his claims "in 100 metropolitan dailies throughout the country" and reserved a column in the *Denver Post* to seek support.[116]

Examples of FHFM flyers demonstrate how Guild aligned himself with McCarthy via the POW/MIA issue. One of the FHFM's logos depicted an American soldier, his right hand tied to a pole as his left arm fights Stalin, and Truman stands aloof. Guild also called for a naval blockade of China to coerce it to release prisoners.[117] Guild further satirized the United Nations as "the Public Safety Commission of Chicago" chaired by "Al Capone and his hoodlums."[118]

What accords the FHFM some historical significance was that Guild managed to mobilize around seventy mothers and widows of POW/MIAs to picket the White House and U.N. headquarters in April 1954. While this earned him some attention, notably including press photographs of weeping women lining the sidewalks near the two buildings, its outcome was negligible. Guild and his followers failed to meet with the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations or the U.N. secretary-general.[119] By the time Guild reached Washington, D.C., White House staff members, perceiving that he was exploiting human suffering, asked the military to handle the FHFM visitors.[120] According to Guild, on 21 and 22 April, FHFM members stood on Pennsylvania Avenue with protest slogans and sashes reading "Mothers of Forgotten Men," but they were snubbed.[121] It was unclear whether he had offered his support to McCarthy at the Army-McCarthy hearings launched on 22 April, but he drummed up publicity by shaking hands with anti-communist hardliners like Senator William

115. Eugene R. Guild to Dorothy Hall, 2 February 1955, file F648, box F14, HHC.

116. Guild's undated open letter on FHFM stationery, in collection BHS 328-141 Carnegie Library of Boulder, CO.

117. "At Long Last the President Remembers America's Forgotten Men," FHFM bulletin no. 54-232, 25 November 1954, folder HH154-1-1, box 46-4, HHC.

118. "Complaint to the Federal Communication Commission on the Failure of Radio Station KOA to Afford Both Sides Equal Time on the Air in a Political Controversy over the United Nations," FHFM bulletin no. 266A, 15 April 1955, box 250, William F. Knowland Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley (hereafter WFK).

119. "DAG and IKE Have Patience," FHFM bulletin no. 54-244, 13 January 1955, file No. 156B-43, box F-14, HHC.

120. The information is based on two handwritten notes in box 1285, White House Central Files (WHCF)-General Files, Eisenhower Library. One is dated 29 March 1954; the other is undated.

121. "DAG and IKE Have Patience." Guild and some FHFM members were invited to Capitol Hill for a hearing in front of military leaders, but a full record of their hearing was unavailable.

F. Knowland (R-CA), with whom he had been communicating to spread his anti-Truman agenda.[122]

Guild's unpopularity with most members of the federal government alienated him from his compatriots, and FHFM fell into oblivion. A mother from Pennsylvania who had heard about her son's capture in Chinese propaganda rejected Guild's invitation to lead her state's chapter of FHFM. Although she was unhappy with Eisenhower's policies, she felt Guild's anti-government campaign would not aid her son's return.[123] Some residents of Guild's hometown regarded him as a public nuisance and feared he would give the city a bad name through his "rabble-rousing."[124] Guild, for his part, complained that federal agencies had sabotaged FHFM by deterring members from participating in activities.[125]

Against the backdrop of the Red Scare and the military setback in Korea, irrespective of their interest (if any) in Guild's activities, POW/MIA families expressed a sense of obligation to help the country prepare for war against the Soviet Bloc. Numerous Americans, meanwhile, questioned the volition and even the manhood of repatriated Korean War prisoners who might have collaborated with their captors; yet, conversely, they regarded the missing prisoners allegedly languishing in secret camps and resisting communist brainwashing as symbols of unbreakable courage. The country's failure to rescue them underlined the cowardice of its top leaders.

For many people, the enervation of the U.S. military started with Truman's decision to dismiss General Douglas MacArthur. In 1952, a prisoner's mother argued that had MacArthur not left Korea, the war would have ended (presumably in victory), and her son would have been liberated.[126] Eisenhower was also regarded as lacking the necessary prowess to defeat communism. A POW/MIA mother warned that if he continued to be so craven, she would confront Mao Zedong herself and tell him that there were American women who had more courage than their leader to liberate their sons, or to retaliate if they were murdered in prison.[127]

Defending U.S. "traditions" was critical to mobilizing its people to fight the Cold War and to resist the propaganda of the Soviet Union; locating every missing soldier came to be an indispensable component. The U.S. military had assumed a

122. Bob Considine, "America's Forgotten Men," a news clip without provenance, as file No. 51B-11, box F-14, HHC.

123. "Mrs. Baumer Says Ike 'Too Busy' to See Her," newspaper clipping of unknown date and origin, box 17, entry A1-1020, RG330, NARA.

124. "Captain is Dedicated to Prisoners' Return," *Mirror-News* (Los Angeles, CA), 18 December 1959 (https://latimesblogs.latimes.com/thedailymirror/2009/12/paul-v-coates-confidential-file-dec-18-1959.html).

125. FHFM Bulletin no. 261, n.d., folder HH154 SIFR, box 46-4, HHC.

126. Mrs. John Lessman to William F. Knowland, 31 January 1952, folder Prisoners China 1, box 282, WFK.

127. Mrs. H. L. Stiter to President Eisenhower, 27 January 1955, SDCDF 611.95A241/1-2755, RG59, NARA.

duty to search for the missing since the Civil War,[128] and abandoning POWs meant defaulting. Many people worried that without such a commitment, Americans would be less willing to serve in future wars. William J. Flittle, having learned of General Clark's comment on the possible detention of thousands of POWs, reminded Eisenhower that he had an "absolute obligation" to regard the missing combatants as individuals rather than just counting them, "unless we have become completely crass and material."[129] Being "material" was tantamount to adopting Marxist materialism, and thus handing a victory to the USSR. After reading Lawrence's article, one man asserted that because Eisenhower had forgotten the soldiers on the 944 List, it was no surprise that graduates of West Point and Annapolis were opting for civilian jobs after fulfilling their minimal service requirements.[130] A navy reservist's letter to the State Department in March 1954 contrasted Eisenhower's silence on the POW issue with Theodore Roosevelt's prompt decision in 1904 to send warships to free U.S. citizens kidnapped in Morocco. The author asked how Eisenhower could convince him and his two sons, as well as millions of others, to sacrifice themselves in the next war.[131]

POW/MIA families also called for a more aggressive stance against the communist bloc, reasoning that this would be a deserved punishment for withholding U.S. prisoners and a necessity to defeat communism globally. Unsurprisingly, given China's decisive role in the Korean War, those with such views concentrated their fire on Sino-U.S. relations. Eisenhower followed a containment path by embargoing China to undermine its economy and internal stability, but his administration had contemplated easing the embargo to drive a wedge into the Sino-Soviet alliance.[132] The official U.S. stance on trade with China aligned well with the POW/MIA families, but these families, particularly Guild's supporters, wanted to ensure the embargo would be executed faithfully. Rita van Wees held those advocating trade with China responsible for the endless incarceration of her son. The United States failed to liberate the POWs, she claimed, because of "pressure from England and our many business men [*sic*], who care nothing about our country, or our suffering sons, only the dollar matters."[133] She argued that each dollar China earned from the United States would prolong the POWs' detention.[134]

128. Drew G. Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (Vintage Books, 2008), 229.

129. William J. Flittle to President Eisenhower, 27 October 1953, box 707, entry NM3-363E, RG407, NARA.

130. T. Raymond Rathbone to the Secretary of War, 26 December 1953, box 707, entry NM3-363E, RG407, NARA.

131. Homer Ferguson to Ben H. Brown, 26 March 1954, SDCDF 611.95A241/3-2654, RG59, NARA.

132. Simei Qing, *From Allies to Enemies: Visions of Modernity, Identity, and U.S.-China Diplomacy, 1945–1960* (Harvard University Press, 2007), 204.

133. Rita van Wees to Howard Kyle, 21 August 1958, box 17, entry A1-1020, RG330, NARA.

134. Rita van Wees to Paul A. Fine, 12 January 1960, SDCDF 611.95A241/1-1960, RG59, NARA.

Although the United States never officially declared that it would make any political concessions to China to facilitate accounting for its missing personnel, many POW/MIA families felt obligated to forestall such a capitulation. In January 1954, after hearing a rumor that China was going to use the combatants on the 944 List to force its admission to the United Nations, a soldier's mother asked: "is the United States of America too fearful to demand the accounting for and return of our men?" and "are we afraid to enforce the return of our own [POWs]?"[135] A navy reservist urged Eisenhower not to enter into any bargain over POWs proposed by China. He feared that if China gained anything through locating missing U.S. servicemen, they would be motivated to abduct more Americans during future conflicts.[136]

Fire was also directed at U.S. allies to remove those who might sabotage its anti-communist crusade. In 1957's *The Isolationist Impulse*, Selig Alder wrote that the stalemate in Korea united isolationists against Truman's Korean policies. Most isolationists disapproved of supporting U.S. allies in Europe and advocated striking a crushing blow against Asia's communists without consulting the Europeans.[137] POW/MIA families often targeted U.S. allies for not serving what they thought of as Americans' interest; isolating China as a means of forcing it to return the supposed captives. Lawrence's article, for instance, bemoaned U.S. allies' lack of support for liberating the POW/MIAs, although the United States financed and defended them. Van Wees echoed Lawrence's discourse, arguing that Europe only cared about what it could get out of the United States, without respecting the lives of Americans, particularly those who were missing, like her son.[138] Another parent of a missing soldier asked Eisenhower if he was going to exert "discipline" on "appeasing allies."[139] Some people appeared to regard U.S. allies and the USSR equally as obstacles the United States faced in attempting to retrieve its lost warriors.[140]

During the 1960s and 1970s, upon seeing the evolving war in Vietnam and domestic left-wing social reforms, determined Korean War POW/MIA campaigners attempted to prevent U.S. society from repeating its setback in Korea, and adopted Vietnam War-era rhetoric. Van Wees left a considerable number of petitions in presidential archives. She worried that the United States had not learned

135. Catherine H. Haag to John Foster Dulles, 10 January 1954, SDCDF 611.95A241/1-1054, RG59, NARA.

136. Robert T. B. Iverson to President Eisenhower, 20 August 1954, SDCDF 611.95A241/8-2054, RG59, NARA.

137. Selig Alder, *The Isolationist Impulse: Its Twentieth-Century Reaction* (Collier, 1961 [1957]), 406–9, 427.

138. Rita van Wees to John Foster Dulles, 29 December 1953, SDCDF 611.95A241/12-1953, RG59, NARA.

139. A. P. DeRosier to President Eisenhower, 16 January 1954, box 252, entry NM3-363E, RG407, NARA.

140. Petitioners to William F. Knowland, 18 June 1956, folder POW, box 283, WFK.

its lesson in Korea and had "abandon[ed]" POW/MIAs again in Vietnam.[141] On 13 September 1965, she disparaged Martin Luther King Jr. for hijacking the nation's leaders, deeming his friendly gesture towards "Red China bandits" unacceptable to loyal Americans. She regarded King and his supporters as "vile traitors" who "plead for the worst enemy in our history," comparable to the alleged communist saboteurs in the 1950s whose actions had supposedly resulted in her son going missing.[142]

Guild also evoked the Korean War during the Vietnam War. He was particularly upset by Lyndon Johnson and his fellow liberals' reluctance to mount a crusade against the Soviet Union, as well as their focus on voting rights. He contended that the president "fights not to win, but for political negotiations […] he denies to his soldiers loyalty, and ties their hand in the name of 'peace'," like Truman and Eisenhower.[143] In response to Nixon's Vietnamization policy, Guild argued that the withdrawal of U.S. troops should be proportional to the number of U.S. POWs released by Hanoi.[144]

U.S. Representative Clement J. Zablocki (D-WI), who had organized the 1957 hearing on Korean War prisoners, once invited Guild to voice his opinions about the Vietnam War in Congress, when the American public was eager to learn how Nixon would end the war and secure the release of POWs.[145] Guild was not endorsed by influential Vietnam War POW/MIA organizations, though, possibly due to his call for escalating the war. The first organizer of the National League of POW/MIA families, Sybil Stockdale, for example, did not pay much attention to Guild. Guild also had a rather hostile attitude toward H. Ross Perot.[146] Some of those groups nevertheless welcomed reinforcement by van Wees and other determined Korean War POW/MIA campaigners. This enabled the Korean War activists to remain active in POW/MIA affairs and launch their own organizations in subsequent decades.[147]

141. Rita van Wees to Lyndon B. Johnson, 2 September 1966, folder ND9 V, box 42, WHCF-ND, Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library and Museum, Austin, TX (hereafter Johnson Library).

142. Rita van Wees to Lyndon B. Johnson, 13 September 1965, Rita van Wees, WHCF-Name Files, Johnson Library.

143. Eugene R. Guild to Lyndon B. Johnson, 16 March 1965, and "Cattle?" 5 October 1965, Bulletin no. 479, BHS 328-141, Carnegie Library of Boulder, CO.

144. Elzene E. Estes to Richard M. Nixon, n.d., folder Gen. ND18-3 CO165 February 1–28, 1970, box 3, series ND18-3, WHCF-Subject Files, Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA. Guild's propaganda material is attached to this letter.

145. *American Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia, 1971, Hearings before the Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific Developments of the Committee on Foreign Affairs*, House of Representatives, Ninety-Second Congress, First Session, March 23–25, 30–31, April 1, 6, 20, 1971 (U.S. Government Publishing Office, 1971), 190–97.

146. "Just A Minute, Please," n.d, unnumbered flyer, file 274A, box F14, HHC.

147. Author's interview with Ann Mills-Griffith, director of the National League of American Prisoners & Missing in Southeast Asia, Falls Church, VA, 17 April 2018 and author's phone interviews with Robin Piacine, 20 April 2018 and Donna D. Knox, 24 April 2018. The latter two are leaders of the Coalition of Families of Korean and Cold War POW/MIAs.

Conclusion

Missing soldiers are an inevitable tragedy of war. Many perish in remote areas. Prisoners succumb to their wounds, air raids, or guards' violence, without their death recorded. Clerical errors also cause the disappearance of prisoners from paper trails. When two sides reconcile and discuss the whereabouts of the missing, the odds of a given missing person being accounted for increase. One side can also defeat the other decisively and order it to surrender all intelligence on missing persons.

The Korean War ended in a stalemate, however, and cooperation between the U.S. military and the PVF/KPA was out of the question. Once reunification of Korea by force was ruled out, both sides opted for political offensives at Panmunjom. With armistice talks deadlocked on the issue of voluntary POW repatriation, the U.S. military introduced the allegation that the PVF/KPA would detain UNC prisoners after the armistice, in part to downplay its own responsibility for prolonging the war; the PVF/KPA retaliated with similar claims. Both sides introduced heavily flawed POW rosters; after the armistice, they were less interested in accounting for their missing personnel than in exploiting the POW/MIA issue. Their charges and countercharges were to highlight the other side's inhumanity before an audience of countries that had yet to choose a side in the Cold War.

Domestically, the POW/MIA issue, as conceived by the U.S. military and diplomats, was employed to mobilize support for the Korean War, and subsequently the global anti-communist crusade. This achieved some success, but also backfired in some ways, much as it would after the Vietnam War, when again, the United States could neither defeat its enemy nor rescue any alleged prisoners. POW/MIA families wished to indict those responsible for the military disasters. In the Korean War era, their enemies were not only foreign communists, but also domestic policymakers and U.S. allies reluctant to launch an all-out war against the Soviet Bloc.

These families were uninterested in targeting domestic social reformers, though, given that the 1950s did not witness a revolution in Americans' mentality, culture, or social norms. Those dynamics curtailed their chances of securing endorsement from the wider American public and high-profile officials. When they saw the United States failing again in Vietnam, determined Korean War POW/MIA campaigners warned the country not to repeat the tragedies of the 1950s.

This study thus argues that a prototype for the post-Vietnam War POW/MIA campaigns existed in the wake of the Korean War; some POW/MIA rhetorics can even be traced to 1945. POW/MIA campaigns should be seen as products of an era when the military power of the United States was unable to win major conflicts and had to co-exist with former enemies that denied it access to their territories, a situation that the American public could not easily accept.

POW/MIA campaigns in the United States today are still dominated by the Vietnam War POW/MIA families, even though many more combatants went missing in Korea. The Korean War's status as the "forgotten war" and the demography of its POW/MIA families help explain this. Being a POW/MIA

campaigner after the Korean War meant doubting the authorities' sincerity in ascertaining missing soldiers' fates, given that the military had never announced to the domestic public that any of the missing soldiers on the 944/450/389 Lists were alive beyond the armistice. These campaigners, who advocated aggressive policies against communism, ran the risk of being deemed subversive; consequently, they garnered limited public support. Their disorganized efforts remain a footnote to U.S. history, but their campaigns deserve historical contextualization within the wider Cold War scholarship. As an increasing number of countries follow the U.S. lead in seeking to retrieve their fallen combatants (killed during the Second World War and/or the Cold War), POW/MIA issues will rise in salience as a theme of transnational commemoration of the Cold War and even the reinterpretation of World War II stemming from the diplomatic realignments since 1945.

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Operation Sky Shield: NORAD's Influence on SAC's Tactics

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Richard R. Johnson

Abstract

Early in the Cold War, the U.S. Air Force's Strategic Air Command (SAC) used strategic bombing tactics from World War II, despite growing evidence that high-altitude formation bombing was vulnerable to Soviet air defenses. From 1960 through 1963, SAC took part in large-scale air defense exercises with the North American Airspace Defense Command (NORAD) called Operation Sky Shield. These exercises revealed weaknesses in SAC tactics, prompting SAC to make significant changes, such as adopting low-altitude single-sortie flights, passive radar jamming, structural modifications to existing bombers, and canceling planned high altitude bomber designs. These changes increased SAC bomber survivability.

Introduction

The Strategic Air Command (SAC) of the United States Air Force (USAF), along with the U.S. Navy's ballistic missile submarines, was a primary U.S. nuclear deterrent force during the Cold War. To be effective in this role against the Soviet Union, or any other potential adversary, SAC had to be a credible threat capable of successfully delivering nuclear weapons to the heart of the enemy nation.[1] In the first fifteen years of its existence, SAC relied mostly upon manned bombers rather than ballistic missiles, and used the strategic bombing tactics of World War

1. R. Frank Futrell, *Ideas, Concepts, Doctrine: Basic Thinking in the United States Air Force, 1907–1960, Volume I* (Air University Press, 1989), 214–40; Walton S. Moody, *Building a Strategic Air Force* (Air Force History and Museums Program, 1995), 155–75.

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II—high-altitude formations of bombers that provided mutual defense. SAC continued to rely upon bomber speed and altitude to overcome enemy air defenses, aided by defensive tail gunners and proactive radar jamming measures.[2]

In the late 1950s, the vulnerability of SAC's manned bomber tactics to Soviet air defenses gradually became apparent, and SAC explored potential remedies. Yet, it continued to emphasize manned bombers and obsolete tactics. From 1960 to 1963, SAC instituted numerous changes in bomber procurement and tactics to enhance survivability. These changes coincided with SAC's participation in three annual, large-scale air defense exercises with the North American Airspace Defense Command (NORAD) called "Sky Shield." During the first Sky Shield exercise in 1960, NORAD detected and intercepted most SAC bombers, revealing SAC's vulnerabilities to an integrated air defense system. In the next two Sky Shield exercises, SAC rapidly changed its tactics and weapons systems to improve their survivability.

Immediately after the first Sky Shield exercise, SAC began replacing high-altitude formation tactics with low-altitude missions flown by individual bombers. SAC quickly retired bomber designs that were incapable of low-altitude flying and improved the low-altitude handling of the bombers that remained. SAC modified electronic countermeasure tactics to emphasize passive jamming, decoys, and low-altitude operations, while increasingly pursuing standoff weapons, such as cruise missiles and intercontinental ballistic missiles.

This article traces the role of the Sky Shield exercises in contributing to rapid, major changes in SAC tactics. The Sky Shield exercises were the largest aerial war games conducted in U.S. military history, and their outcomes contributed to many changes in air defense tactics. Despite the declassification of these war games almost two decades ago, scholars have paid scant attention to the Sky Shield exercises. Roger Mola provided a brief overview of the exercises, and James Davitch recently examined their important geopolitical aspects.[3] Aside from these works, these enormous air defense exercises are mainly absent from Cold War and SAC historiography.

While a fair body of literature exists about SAC, including popular histories, works on nuclear strategy, and studies examining SAC's organizational culture and leaders, there is little attention paid to SAC's tactics. This is odd, as strategic bombing was a significant component of warfare during the twentieth century, and SAC played a major role in Cold War deterrence. SAC was only a deterrent, however, if it could deliver nuclear weapons to the heart of the Soviet Union.

2. Strategic Air Command, *SAC Manual 50-30: B-36 Gunnery* (Strategic Air Command, 1954), 6; U.S. Air Force, *AN 01-5EUJ-1 Flight Handbook USAF Series B-36J Aircraft* (Headquarters, U.S. Air Force, 1953), 230–31.

3. James M. Davitch, "A Shield in the Sky: The Vertical Geopolitics of Transcontinental Air Defense" (Ph.D. dissertation, Virginia Tech, 2023); Roger A. Mola, "'This Is Only a Test': Long Before the United States Felt the Threat of Terrorism, the Military Grounded the Airlines to Prepare for World War III," *Air and Space Smithsonian* 16, no. 6 (2002): 50–55.

SAC's tactics were how it planned to accomplish its nuclear role. No scholarly works exist regarding the tactics SAC employed, how those tactics changed, or the role the Sky Shield exercises, among other factors, played in prompting these changes. This article is a first step in addressing this missing piece of SAC and Cold War history.

This article begins with a brief overview of SAC's role, early development, and the tactics it embraced. SAC continued using World War II-style, high-altitude formation bombing tactics and relied on bomber speed and altitude to avoid enemy air defenses. Next, the article will reveal the early evidence that SAC's tactics were becoming vulnerable to jet interceptors, integrated radar networks, and surface-to-air missiles. SAC explored methods for overcoming its vulnerabilities, such as experimenting with low-altitude flying and stand-off weapons, but moved in a slow, bureaucratic fashion. The article will demonstrate that SAC performed poorly in the first Sky Shield exercise in 1960, with large numbers of SAC bombers being detected, tracked, and intercepted by NORAD assets. With SAC's failure in the exercise on full display for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, SAC's leadership made rapid changes that transformed many aspects of SAC. SAC abandoned formation tactics in favor of individual attack sorties. Extremely low-altitude flying replaced high-altitude tactics, and bomber designs that performed poorly at low altitude—including brand new bombers—were phased out of service in just a few years. Tactics regarding the use of standoff weapons changed, and SAC pursued ballistic missiles with greater urgency. While other factors were simultaneously influencing these changes, SAC's poor performance in the first Sky Shield exercise provided the urgency the organization needed to overcome bureaucratic inertia and make rapid change.

The Strategic Air Command

During the first fifteen years of the Cold War, SAC was America's primary nuclear deterrent force. Under the direction of General Curtis LeMay, SAC grew in strength and capabilities, unaware that its tactics were becoming obsolete. SAC's primary mission was the long-range strategic bombing of the enemy's military-industrial base, a mission that played a prominent role during World War II. As part of this mission, SAC inherited the nation's nuclear strike role.[4] Lemay, SAC's second and most influential commander, built SAC's reputation and capabilities. While the navy pursued ballistic missiles as its primary form of nuclear weapons delivery, LeMay and many top air force leaders placed greater trust in manned bombers. While not wholly opposed to missiles, LeMay questioned the reliability and accuracy of the early, liquid-fuel missile designs available during the 1950s.[5] By 1960, LeMay had created a force of more than two thousand modern bombers

4. Headquarters, Strategic Air Command, *The Development of Strategic Air Command, 1946–1981: A Chronological History* (Headquarters, Strategic Air Command, 1 July 1982), 6–7.

5. Fred Kaplan, *The Wizards of Armageddon* (Simon and Schuster, 1983), 117–21.

and more than a thousand tanker and reconnaissance aircraft.[6] LeMay strived to make SAC a credible nuclear deterrent.

In 1954, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles introduced the U.S. policy of massive nuclear retaliation in response to major national security threats, warning potential enemies that the U.S. would not confine its retaliation to the size of any enemy's initial attack.[7] Foster's massive retaliation policy required SAC to remain a credible threat.[8] LeMay kept SAC ready for war at a moment's notice by maintaining one-third of SAC's combat assets on constant alert, ready to take off on nuclear combat missions within minutes of receiving an attack order.[9]

SAC also subjected crews to constant drills and bombing practice under all weather conditions. Bomber wings frequently faced surprise operational readiness inspections that evaluated compliance with policies and procedures, maintenance issues, base security, and the ability to launch aircraft within a specified period.[10] Bomber crews made practice bombing runs on scoring sites throughout the world.[11] Units were ranked on their scores from these exercises and inspections constantly. Officers within high-performing units advanced their careers quickly, while those in low-performing units could see their careers destroyed. There was constant pressure for error-free performance and strict adherence to SAC standards.[12] Credible U.S. nuclear deterrence depended upon SAC's ability to perform its mission.

SAC relied on speed and altitude to overcome Soviet air defenses. Each successive bomber type introduced by SAC throughout the 1950s and planned for the 1960s flew higher and faster than its predecessor. The B-36 bomber, which entered service in 1948, could fly 25 percent faster and 45 percent higher than the B-29 bomber it replaced.[13] In 1951, the swept-wing, all-jet B-47 entered service, flying as high as the B-36, and 40 percent faster.[14] Increases in altitude and speed continued with the procurement of the B-52 in 1955, the B-58 in 1960, and the B-70 bomber, which was planned to enter service in 1968 with an operating altitude of 80,000 feet and a maximum speed three times the speed of sound.[15]

6. Headquarters SAC, *The Development of Strategic Air Command*, 87–93.

7. Fred Kaplan, *The Wizards of Armageddon* (Stanford University Press, 1991), 174–80.

8. Melvin G. Deaile, *Always at War: Organizational Culture in Strategic Air Command, 1946–62* (Naval Institute Press, 2018), 89–118.

9. Deaile, *Always at War*, 191–97.

10. Deaile, *Always at War*, 112–16; Robert O. Harder, *Flying from the Black Hole: The B-52 Navigator-Bombardiers of Vietnam* (Naval Institute Press, 2009), 87–107.

11. Deaile, *Always at War*, 106–8; Harder, *Flying from the Black Hole*, 71–77.

12. Deaile, *Always at War*, 112–16.

13. Boeing Aircraft Company, *Boeing B-29 Superfortress: Some Flying Information* (Boeing Aircraft Company, 1944), 3–4; Marcelle S. Knaack, *Encyclopedia of U.S. Air Force Aircraft and Missile Systems, Volume II: Post-World War II Bombers 1945–1973* (Office of Air Force History, 1978), 54–55.

14. Knaack, *Encyclopedia of U.S. Air Force Aircraft*, 156.

15. North American Rockwell, *B-70 Aircraft Study Final Report, Volume I* (North American Rockwell, April 1972), 29–30.

Before 1960, SAC flew most of its missions in high-altitude formations, like strategic bombing conducted during World War II. Operation Big Wind, a nuclear attack exercise conducted over France in March 1956, is an illustrative example. This exercise involved forty B-47 bombers taking off from bases in the U.S. and flying at 20,000 to 35,000 feet in ten cells of four bombers each. The four bombers separated from one another by five hundred feet of altitude and five hundred feet of horizontal distance within each cell. The force crossed the North Atlantic and stayed in formation until it reached the Normandy coast. There, the bomber cells split into individual sortie flight paths for the last hundred miles or so to their respective targets, still maintaining altitudes above 20,000 feet. After the simulated bomb release, the bombers rejoined their formations for the return flight.[16] SAC's leaders believed these tight formations provided greater mutual defense, with each tail gunner covering a different sector of the sky and allowing the bombers to coordinate their electronic countermeasures jamming efforts.[17]

To aid in penetrating enemy air defenses, SAC equipped its bombers with chaff and radar jamming equipment. Chaff (thin metal strips released into the air to reflect radar energy) overwhelmed a radar operator's screen with multiple target objects, making it difficult to differentiate the bomber from the false radar returns.[18] An electronic warfare officer (EWO) operated electronic radar jammers.[19] Using antennas mounted on the underside of the bombers, EWOs scanned radio frequencies for enemy radar signals and then directed a jamming signal directly at the radar to cause interference. While the equipment could jam multiple enemy radars simultaneously, splitting the jamming across more than one radar weakened the strength of each jamming signal. Flying in formation allowed the EWOs to divide up the enemy radars to jam, with each bomber focusing on jamming a different radar with a full-strength signal.[20] In this way, the bombers provided mutual support in the electromagnetic realm.

Throughout the 1950s, SAC engaged in joint training exercises with USAF Air Defense Command (ADC) and U.S. Army Air Defense Command (ARADCOM) units at the local level. In most of these exercises, a cell of SAC bombers penetrated an air defense radar sector protected by an ARADCOM surface-to-air missile (SAM) site.[21] These frequent small exercises allowed the bomber EWOs to

16. Headquarters, 4th Air Division, *Operations Order 23-56, Annex D* (Headquarters, 4th Air Division, March 6, 1956), 1–14.

17. Meyers K. Jacobsen, *Convair B-36: A Comprehensive History of America's "Big Stick"* (Schiffer, 1997), 287; Strategic Air Command, *SAC Manual 50-30: B-36 Gunnery*, 6.

18. U.S. Naval Air Warfare Center, *Electronic Warfare and Radar Systems Engineering Handbook* (U.S. Naval Air Warfare Center, October 2013), 10–15.

19. U.S. Naval Air Warfare Center, *Electronic Warfare Handbook*, chapter 2.

20. Walter J. Boyne, *Boeing B-52: A Documentary History* (Janes, 1981), 118–19; Jacobsen, *Convair B-36*, 287; U.S. Air Force, *AN 01-5EUJ-1 Flight Handbook USAF Series B-36J Aircraft*, 230–31.

21. John A. Martini and Stephen A. Haller, *An Interim History and Preservation Plan for*

practice detecting and jamming radar signals, while also giving the air defense crews opportunities to test new methods for overcoming these jamming techniques.[22] SAC seemed a formidable nuclear force capable of delivering assured destruction to the Soviet Union. SAC was ready for nuclear war, or so it thought.

Initial Weaknesses Revealed

Despite SAC's growth in size, its adoption of new weaponry, and the constant readiness training, vulnerabilities in SAC tactics gradually became apparent. SAC's leadership either ignored the weaknesses or moved slowly in addressing these vulnerabilities. David Barno and Nora Bensahel suggest that military innovation, especially in peacetime, is often slow, hampered by bureaucracy, and shaped by the goals of political and senior military leaders.[23] Likely because of sunk costs, SAC continued its reliance on speed, altitude, and formation flying to protect its manned bombers, while slowly examining other options.

The Department of Defense was concerned about the vulnerability of manned bombers to the Soviet integrated air defense system as early as 1950, with some proposing intercontinental missiles as an alternative.[24] SAC initially saw intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) as a supplement to manned bombers but not a replacement. General Thomas Power (SAC's commander after LeMay) wrote, "Regardless of the missile program, it is the opinion of this headquarters that the continued advance in the art of manned flight to high altitudes and long ranges should be at all times a priority objective of the Air Force's development programs."[25] While SAC had amassed thousands of long-range bombers by 1960, it fielded fewer than 120 Atlas and Titan I intercontinental missiles.[26] In 1960, SAC was primarily a bomber force.

Nike Site SF-88L, Fort Barry, California (National Park Service Golden Gate National Recreation Area, 1998), 20; Roger Thorne, "When the Cold War Cast its Shadow upon the Great Valley: The Paoli / Valley Forge Nike Missile Base, 1954–1964," *Tredyffrin Easttown History Quarterly* 49, no. 4 (December 2012): 92–127.

22. Richard F. McMullen, *The Aerospace Defense Command and Antibomber Defense 1948–1972, ADC Historical Study No. 39* (Aerospace Defense Command Headquarters, 1973), 88; David F. Winkler, *Searching the Skies: The Legacy of the United States Cold War Defense Radar Program* (United States Air Force Air Combat Command, 1997), 19, 35–36.

23. David Barno and Nora Bansahel, *Adaptation Under Fire: How Militaries Change in Warfare* (Oxford University Press), 10–28.

24. Albert Wohlstetter, Fred Hoffman, R. J. Lutz, and Henry S. Rowen, *Selection and Use of Strategic Air Bases, R-266* (RAND, April, 1954), v–xli; RAND, *Protecting U.S. Power to Strike Back in the 1950s and 1960s, R-290* (RAND, 1 September 1956), 1–4.

25. General Thomas S. Power, *Memorandum to the USAF Director of Requirements, AFHRA Call No. K243.01V4, IRIS No. 00484805* (Headquarters, Strategic Air Command, 30 March 1953), 1–2.

26. Headquarters, Strategic Air Command, *SAC Missile Chronology, 1939–1988* (Headquarters, Strategic Air Command, May 1990), 21–28.

A lack of intelligence on potential targets within the Soviet Union hampered SAC's war planning process during the 1950s. The Soviet Union had been a closed society for decades, and existing maps were outdated. In addition to identifying targets, SAC navigators needed information about radar navigation waypoints (large solid objects, such as prominent buildings, bridges, mountain tops, etc.), that provided radar returns at night or in inclement weather to help with navigation.[27] At the time, aerial reconnaissance was the only real method available for gathering this intelligence.[28]

SAC and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) engaged in risky, covert reconnaissance flights deep within the Soviet Union throughout the 1950s to gather targeting and navigation intelligence data.[29] Despite the risk of sparking a nuclear war, SAC covertly engaged in hundreds of these overflights of the Soviet Union from 1947 through 1960.[30] These covert missions also revealed intelligence on the Soviet Union's growing air defenses.[31]

SAC employed the same airframes for their bombers and reconnaissance aircraft, such as the RB-29, RB-36, and RB-47, using the same bodies as the B-29, B-36, and B-47.[32] As with its bombers, SAC's reconnaissance aircraft relied on speed, altitude, electronic countermeasures, and defensive guns for safety. The Soviets, however, made significant progress in radar, anti-aircraft weapons, and fighter-interceptor capabilities.[33] Most notably, the Soviets developed surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) to destroy high-altitude bombers; they entered service in 1955.[34] By 1958, Soviet interceptors had shot down eleven U.S. reconnaissance aircraft over Soviet airspace and damaged at least five more.[35]

SAC thus had tangible evidence that speed and altitude were no longer proving sufficient to protect SAC aircraft over the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, in a classified 1957 briefing, LeMay stated, "At the present time the losses which

27. Harder, *Flying from the Black Hole*, 94–95.

28. John T. Farquhar, *A Need to Know: The Role of Air Force Reconnaissance in War Planning, 1945–1953* (Air University, February 2004), 93–100.

29. William E. Burrows, *By Any Means Necessary: America's Secret Air War in the Cold War* (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2001), 41–76.

30. Burrows, *By Any Means Necessary*, 319–35; U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW / MIAs, *U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs Compendium of Summarized Minutes* (U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW / MIAs, 8 November 2017), 30–36.

31. Alexander L. George, *Intelligence Value of Soviet Notes on Air Incidents, 1950–1953: Research Memorandum No. 1348* (U.S. Air Force RAND Project, 15 October 1954), 1–11.

32. Burrows, *By Any Means Necessary*, 95–109.

33. James T. Quinlivan, *Soviet Strategic Air Defense: A Long Past and an Uncertain Future* (RAND, 1989), 7–8.

34. Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Scientific Intelligence, "The Soviet SA-2 Surface-to-Air Missile System," *Scientific Intelligence Digest* 65-6, No. 436 (June 1965): 20–25; Michael Gruntman, "Intercept 1961: From Air Defense SA-1 to Missile Defense System A," *Proceedings of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers* 104, No. 4 (April 2016): 883–90.

35. U.S.-Russia Joint Commission, *Compendium of Summarized Minutes*, 30–36.

the Soviet air defense system can inflict upon the B-47 / B-52 force would not prevent us from winning the air power battle."[36] LeMay's statement ignored the reconnaissance flight losses and demonstrated resistance to acknowledging the weaknesses in SAC's tactics.

That same year LeMay became deputy chief of staff of the air force, relinquishing command of SAC to his understudy, General Thomas Power.[37] Power had previously headed the Air Research and Development Command, and in that role was involved with the development of new "penetration aids" to help improve bomber survivability. Despite LeMay's insistence that SAC could still overcome Soviet air defenses, the pursuit of penetration aids such as the GAM-72 Quail decoy and GAM-77 Hound Dog cruise missile revealed SAC concerns regarding bomber vulnerability.

The GAM-72 Quail was an autonomous, jet-powered decoy launched from the bomb bay of B-52s that appeared indistinguishable from a B-52 on enemy radar. These decoys could cause enemy air defenses to divide their attention between the real bomber and the decoys. The first Quails entered service in 1960.[38] The GAM-77 Hound Dog was a large, supersonic, autonomous cruise missile carried under each wing of the B-52 bomber for striking targets up to a thousand miles away. The Hound Dog allowed SAC bombers a stand-off capability to strike targets deep in the Soviet Union without flying all the way to the targets.[39]

Under Power's command, SAC began experimenting with low-altitude flying to reduce detection by Soviet air defense radar. This did not go well. Aircraft have inherent design characteristics that determine the qualities of their flight. Engineers optimally designed SAC bombers for long-range, high-altitude flying. Their aerodynamic shapes and handling capabilities were not designed for flying in dense, low-altitude air, or for hard maneuvering around terrain features such as power lines, buildings, or mountains.[40] Additionally, when bombers drop a nuclear bomb from high altitude, they have a reasonable length of time to escape the blast area as the bomb falls to the ground. At lower altitudes, the bombers did not have as much time to escape the nuclear blast safely. SAC experimented with ways to overcome these obstacles.[41]

36. LeMay, *The Operational Side of Air Offense*, 6.

37. Brent D. Ziarnick, *21st Century Power: Strategic Superiority for the Modern Era* (Naval Institute Press, 2018), 5.

38. Kenneth P. Werrell, *The Evolution of the Cruise Missile* (Air University, September 1985), 125–28.

39. U.S. Air Force, *General Operational Requirement 148 Memorandum* (U.S. Air Force, 15 March 1956); Werrell, *The Evolution of the Cruise Missile,* 121–22.

40. Boyne, *Boeing B-52*, 108.

41. Strategic Air Command, *History of the Strategic Air Command, 1 January 1958 – 30 June 1958: Historical Study No. 73, Volume I* (Strategic Air Command, 1958), 1; Walter J. Boyne, "The B-47's Deadly Dominance," *Air Force Magazine* 96, no. 2 (February 2013): 82.



B-52F taking off with AGM-28 Hound Dog missiles [U.S. Air Force]

The low-altitude flight characteristics of the B-47 and B-52 proved poor. The B-52 responded to low-altitude turbulence with buffeting so severe that the aircrew members had trouble reading their instruments—the tossing about caused aircrew injuries and airsickness.[42] On 23 June 1959, a B-52D flying at 500 feet above ground level had its entire tail section ripped off by turbulence. The bomber instantly crashed, killing all on board.[43] A month later, during a similar low-altitude test, turbulence ripped off the vertical fin of another B-52. Flying gingerly, the test pilot crew landed safely, but SAC thereafter restricted its B-52 crews from flying below 1,500 feet above ground level while investigating these problems.[44]

Boeing also began experimenting with modifications to improve the B-52's low-altitude handling. These included shortening and reinforcing the vertical tail, moving the tail gunner into the main crew compartment, new TF-33 engines with greater range at low altitude, and terrain-following instrumentation. These modifications eventually appeared in the last models of B-52s produced, the G and H models.[45]

The B-47 experienced even greater catastrophic accidents due to low-altitude flying. Because the B-47 was smaller and more maneuverable than the B-52, SAC developed a way for the B-47 to toss its nuclear bomb far away to escape the blast

42. Boyne, *Boeing B-52,* 108–11.
43. Boyne, *Boeing B-52,* 112.
44. Boyne, *Boeing B-52,* 112–13.
45. Boyne, *Boeing B-52*, 103–13, 154.

area. In the low-altitude bombing system (LABS) maneuver, the B-47 approached the target at high speed and low altitude. At a predetermined point, the B-47 pulled up into a steep climb. Released while climbing, the bomb followed an arc to the target like an artillery shell. As the bomb flew upward, the B-47 performed a roll and dived away from the target. This violent maneuver put distance between the bomber and the nuclear detonation, but it also put tremendous stress on the bomber's airframe.[46] Combined with the stresses of low-altitude flying in general, B-47s received fractures in their wings and began to break apart in flight.

On 13 March 1958, for example, a B-47 in Florida broke apart in flight just minutes after takeoff. On the same day, a B-47 broke apart over Oklahoma. Eight days later, another B-47 flying a low-level training mission in Florida disintegrated when it pulled up to begin its bomb toss.[47] Throughout the rest of 1958, six more B-47s broke apart due to structural fatigue failures on low-altitude missions.[48] SAC reacted in April 1959 by banning both the LABS maneuver and flying below 1,000 feet above ground level. The B-47 was also limited to no faster than 357 mph airspeed, prevented from pulling more than 1.5 G-forces, and limited to banks of no more than 30 degrees.[49] A structural fix, called the Milk Bottle program, was implemented in 1959, but structural fatigue problems continued.[50]

SAC already was designing the replacement aircraft for the B-47 and B-52 at the time of these tests. Staying with SAC's reliance on speed and altitude for defense, the B-58 (the anticipated replacement for the B-47) was a sleek, delta-winged medium bomber designed for high-altitude flight at twice the speed of sound. Having similar range as the B-47 at high altitude, the B-58 was more than twice as fast and flew 50 percent higher. SAC planned to acquire more than a thousand B-58s and put them into service in 1958.[51]

The B-52's replacement was to be the B-70, a huge, futuristic heavy bomber that cruised at 77,000 feet and three times the speed of sound. SAC expected the

46. Aerospace Structures Information and Analysis Center, *The History of the Aircraft Structural Integrity Program* (Aerospace Structures Information and Analysis Center, 1980), 7–13; Boyne, "The B-47's Deadly Dominance," 82.

47. Strategic Air Command, *History of the Strategic Air Command, 1 January 1958–30 June 1958*, 165–66.

48. Aerospace Structures Information and Analysis Center, *The History of the Aircraft Structural Integrity Program*, 7–13; Boyne, "The B-47's Deadly Dominance," 82.

49. Aerospace Structures Information and Analysis Center, *The History of the Aircraft Structural Integrity Program*, 10; Major General Thomas P. Gerrity, Commander of the Oklahoma City Air Material Area (OCAMA), *Memorandum 0CG-4-9M-E to Commander Air Material Command*, 10 April 1958, Maxwell AFB, AL, Air Force Historical Research Agency (hereafter AFHRA).

50. Aerospace Structures Information and Analysis Center, *The History of the Aircraft Structural Integrity Program*, 13; Boyne, "The B-47's Deadly Dominance," 83.

51. R. Cargill Hall, "The B-58 Bomber: Requiem for a Welterweight," *Air University Review* 33, no. 6 (November–December 1981): 44–56.

XB-70 prototype to fly by the early 1960s with the production version entering service by 1970.[52] SAC believed their experiments with low-altitude flying ceased by 1960, but future events proved them wrong.

NORAD

While the Soviet Union strengthened its air defenses, the U.S. did the same through the North American Airspace Defense Command (NORAD), established in 1958. NORAD assisted Canadian and Mexican defenses against air attack while coordinating the air defense of the continental United States and Alaska.[53] NORAD coordinated early-warning radar stations, airborne radar aircraft, navy picket destroyers, and civilian air traffic control radars. A large computer network coordinated data from overlapping lines of radar coverage, providing a centralized image of airspace activity over the continent. Fighter-interceptors from the Canadian Air Force or the USAF Air Defense Command (ADC) were the first line of defense against hostile aircraft. The second line of defense was a series of SAM sites operated by the U.S. Army Air Defense Command (ARADCOM), concentrated around major U.S. cities.[54]

These air defense units discovered valuable lessons through a decade of small training exercises against SAC bombers.[55] Pilots of interceptor aircraft learned to overcome radar jamming and find bombers in weather or at night.[56] Army ARADCOM SAM units also developed countermeasures to overcome bomber radar jamming techniques.[57]

Coordinating such a joint force was a challenge. NORAD's second commander, General Lawrence Kuter, took charge in mid-1959 with the responsibility for forging NORAD's various components into a well-coordinated command.[58] Kuter immediately planned an elaborate, realistic, and continent-wide exercise to test NORAD's operational readiness. Kuter's staff planned an audacious exercise

52. North American Rockwell, *B-70 Aircraft Study*, I, 29–30.

53. Headquarters NORAD, *Historical Review of North American Aerospace Defense, 1946–1970* (NORAD Command History Division, 1 October 1970), 56–61.

54. Headquarters NORAD, *Historical Review of North American Aerospace Defense*, 43–55.

55. Cole Merle, "W-25: The Davidsonville Site and Maryland Air Defense, 1950–1974," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 80, no. 3 (Fall 1985): 240–60; Schaffel, *The Emerging Shield*, 223–30.

56. Bruce Gordon, *The Spirit of Attack: Fighter Pilot Stories* (The Ewings, 2023), 41–44.

57. Army, *FM 44-1, U.S. Army Air Defense Employment,* 104; NORAD / CONAD, *North American Air Defense Command and Continental Air Defense Command Historical Summary, July–December 1959*, 78–79; NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, *North American Air Defense Command and Continental Air Defense Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960* (NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, May 1961), 71–75.

58. Brian D. Laslie, *Architect of Air Power: General Lawrence S. Kuter and the Birth of the US Air Force* (University of Kentucky Press, 2017), 161–69.

involving hundreds of SAC bombers in the role of aggressor aircraft.[59] Kuter obtained the initial approval of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for this international exercise.[60]

Now called "Sky Shield," the exercise was set for 10 September 1960, between 1:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). During the exercise, civil air authorities grounded all civilian air traffic over Canada and the U.S. for safety.[61] Immediately before the exercise, a large SAC strike force would take off from bases in the U.S. and travel beyond the range of NORAD radars, conducting airborne refueling along the way.[62] At 1:00 a.m. EDT, the SAC bombers would proceed back toward the U.S., heading for mock targets across North America. NORAD would try to detect, track, and intercept the bombers. Teams of NORAD and SAC officers evaluated the performance of both NORAD and SAC units.[63]

Sky Shield I

The SAC strike force of 300 B-47 and B-52 bombers, supported by tanker aircraft, lifted off from SAC bases across the United States as planned.[64] The SAC aircraft left NORAD-controlled airspace and disappeared over the horizon.[65] At 1:00 a.m. EDT, SAC launched its attack on North America. SAC designated half of the bombers to attack at high altitudes above 20,000 feet, flying in formations of three to five. The SAC crews hoped to mask the actual number of bombers approaching in each cell, as the radar returns from the individual bombers would merge into one "dot" on NORAD early warning radars.[66] The other 150 SAC bombers approached at lower altitudes. Because of the safety restrictions imposed

59. NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, *North American Air Defense Command and Continental Air Defense Command Historical Summary, July–December 1959* (NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, May 1961), 59–60.

60. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1959*, 60–61.

61. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 69–70.

62. Lyle L. Knudsen and Austin H. Brown, *SAC Safe Passage in Exercise "Sky Shield"* Operations Analysis Technical Memorandum No. 27 (Headquarters Air Defense Command, 20 October 1960), 1–3.

63. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 69–70.

64. Headquarters Second Air Force, *Second Air Force Historical Summary July–December 1960: Volume I* (Headquarters Second Air Force, January 1961), 247–50; Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, *History of the Fifteenth Air Force: July through December 1960 Volume I* (Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, 1961), 68–69; NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary*, 70.

65. Knudsen & Brown, *Safe Passage in "Sky Shield": Operations Analysis*, 3–5.

66. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 71–72.

over the last three years, low-level bombers could not fly below 1,000 feet over water or 1,500 feet over land. Most stayed between 2,000 and 3,000 feet.[67]

The SAC bombers began emitting jamming signals as soon as they detected NORAD radar sweeps. To simulate Quail decoys, SAC's Second Air Force added ten B-57s (a smaller tactical / reconnaissance bomber) to their high-altitude bomber formations. Once detected by NORAD radars, the B-57s separated from their B-52 formations and tried to draw attention away from the real bombers, just as the Quails would do.[68] As SAC bombers neared their targets, they dispensed chaff as well.

The 4228th Strategic Wing at Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, contributed a cell of four B-52Es to the exercise. Each bomber had two targets. The bombers approached the Georgia coastline from the Atlantic Ocean in tight formation at 35,000 feet, separated by only 500 feet. As they neared the coastline, they descended to 2,000 feet and fanned out, line abreast with a horizontal separation of approximately 20 miles. All four aircraft jammed the radars they detected and dispensed chaff frequently during their overland route. They completed mock bombing runs on specific cities, airfields, and dams across South Carolina and Georgia before landing back at their home base. The exercise evaluators assigned to the wing recorded the mission as a complete success.[69]

Not all participants were so fortunate. The 4134th Strategic Bombardment Wing at Mather Air Force Base, California, contributed four B-52Ds assigned to strike NORAD radar stations and interceptor bases in Alaska. Approaching across the Pacific Ocean, these four bombers passed far south of the early warning radar stations on the Aleutian Islands. Three of the bombers flew in a cell formation around 35,000 feet, while the fourth flew alone at 2,000 feet above the ocean. After passing the Aleutians, the bombers turned north and proceeded directly towards Alaska, jamming radars along the way. The three bombers at altitude reported multiple interceptions by F-102 and F-101 fighters, beginning when the bombers were still more than a hundred miles out to sea; the lower-altitude B-52 reached its targets unmolested.[70]

Eight B-52Ds of the 92nd Strategic Bombardment Wing at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington, approached from the North Pole. Four of the bombers flew in formation above 20,000 feet, while the remaining four continued at 2,000 feet. As soon as the higher-altitude bombers crossed into Canada, they heard NORAD radio transmissions vectoring interceptors to their location. Canadian

67. Headquarters Second Air Force, *Historical Summary July–December 1960*, 247–50; Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, *History of the Fifteenth Air Force: July through December 1960*, 68–69; NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 72–73.

68. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 70.

69. U.S. Air Force Directorate of Command History, *4228th Strategic Wing Historical Summary, September 1960* (Strategic Air Command, 1960), 30–33.

70. Headquarters 4134th Strategic Wing, *History of the 4134th Strategic Wing: 1 September 1960–30 September 1960*, 18–19.

and American fighters intercepted the four higher-altitude bombers multiple times, despite the bombers' use of chaff, radar jamming, cloud cover, and darkness to avoid detection. The lower altitude bombers experienced no interceptions.[71]

F-102s from the 317th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, intercepted many SAC bombers during the exercise. NORAD control centers homed in on the bombers' jamming signals and guided fighters towards them; the fighter pilots located the bombers using their infrared heat-targeting sensors. One interceptor pilot noted that the bombers seldom made any serious evasive maneuvers in response to the fighters, being restricted by the structural safety rules from climbing faster than 500 feet per minute or making sharp heading changes.[72]

ARADCOM evaluators stationed at SAM sites near Boston and Newark observed a total of sixteen SAM engagements with SAC bombers. Despite the use of radar jamming, NORAD successfully warned the missile batteries about twelve approaching bombers. The SAM batteries switched radar frequencies often and used multiple radar antennas at different locations to maintain radar locks on the bombers. Evaluators determined these missile sites "killed" all twelve bombers in their area. These missile batteries also locked onto additional radar targets that the evaluators could not confirm were bombers and not chaff false radar returns.[73]

In the end, NORAD radars detected and tracked 81 percent (243 out of 300) of the SAC bombers. While SAC jamming and chaff affected air defense radars to some extent, NORAD radar and missile operators often used tactics to overcome the jamming.[74] Rather than hide the bombers, the jamming signals alerted NORAD radar operators to the bombers' presence. NORAD personnel used multiple radar sites to triangulate the jamming signals to find the general headings, distances, and altitudes of the SAC bomber formations from these signals. NORAD radar operators often temporarily turned off their radars when they became saturated by jamming signals, only to turn them back on once the bombers shifted their jamming attention to another radar site.[75] The exercise evaluators determined that SAC's electronic countermeasures "failed to defeat NORAD's radar systems in any significant way."[76] SAC's reliance on active radar jamming and mutual jamming support in formations failed to produce the effects SAC anticipated.

71. Headquarters 92nd Bombardment Wing, *History of the 92nd Bombardment Wing (Heavy) and 92nd Combat Support Group: 1 through 30 September 1960* (92nd Bombardment Wing, October 1960), 29–31.

72. Gordon, *The Spirit of Attack*, 34–44.

73. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 74.

74. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 71.

75. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 76–77.

76. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 76–77

Of the 730 interceptor sorties NORAD directed against SAC bombers and decoys, approximately half scored a "kill" on a bomber, and many bombers were intercepted multiple times by different fighters as they flew to their targets.[77] Evaluators recorded 402 SAM site engagements against attacking bombers during the exercise, with 93 percent resulting in a successful missile lock on a bomber long enough to be considered a kill.[78]

The Sky Shield exercise revealed the vulnerability of SAC's tactics against an integrated air defense system. NORAD successfully detected, intercepted, and targeted most of its bombers. SAC needed to make significant changes to remain a credible nuclear deterrent.

The Fallout

General Kuter briefed the joint chiefs on the results of Sky Shield, indicating the exercise had assessed NORAD's air defense system successfully. Kuter considered NORAD's performance unsatisfactory, however, because 20 percent of SAC bombers reached their targets unmolested. Kuter remarked that every bomber that slipped through undetected would equal an American city destroyed in a real war. Kuter also noted communications failures between various NORAD units and concluded his briefing by recommending a similar exercise occur on an annual basis to help NORAD improve.[79] Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates and the joint chiefs immediately approved planning for a Sky Shield II in 1961.[80]

SAC's reaction was hostile. General Power feared reputational damage from the exercise. Most of SAC's bombers were tracked, intercepted, and locked on by SAMs.[81] If SAC failed to penetrate U.S. airspace and reach targets in an exercise, it ceased to be a credible threat to Soviet ambitions. Power went on the defensive in his briefing, presenting a list of complaints to justify non-participation in future Sky Shield exercises.[82]

Power stated that Sky Shield had been of no value to SAC and suggested the exercise differed too much from a real war, preventing any valid analysis of SAC's performance.[83] Power noted, for instance, that altitude safety restrictions prevented SAC bombers from flying as low as they would in a real war.[84] He pointed out that SAC planned to deploy more than a thousand bombers during a

77. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 71.

78. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 71.

79. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 78–79.

80. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 79.

81. McMullen, *The Aerospace Defense Command and Antibomber Defense*, 115.

82. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 71.

83. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 71–72.

84. NORAD / CONAD, NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960, 71–72.

real attack, so a strike force of 300 bombers did not simulate the proper saturation of enemy air defenses a real attack would bring. He rationalized that these nuclear weapons would degrade large portions of enemy defenses as they reached their targets. Power added that the exercise needlessly diverted large numbers of SAC bombers and crews from their real-world nuclear alert mission, thus making the nation vulnerable to a Soviet attack during the exercise.[85]

Power recommended that SAC and NORAD continue to collaborate only in smaller, regional exercises.[86] General Kuter countered that there was no substitute for a large-scale, command-wide exercise like Sky Shield.[87] The joint chiefs agreed and approved Sky Shield II. To broker peace between Kuter and Power, the joint chiefs agreed to Power's demand that the exercise not evaluate the performance of SAC. Power reluctantly agreed to this proposal in June 1961.[88] This decision also revealed the powerful influence SAC's commander, with a direct line of communication to the president regarding nuclear launch decisions, had with the joint chiefs. The joint chiefs scheduled Sky Shield II for 14 October 1961, from noon to midnight EDT. As in the first Sky Shield, civil air traffic remained grounded throughout the exercise.[89]

SAC planning for Sky Shield II relied heavily on NORAD's evaluation report from the Sky Shield I exercise.[90] This report revealed NORAD's greatest weaknesses were in detecting and intercepting the lower-altitude bombers, and overcoming chaff. Even though the lowest altitudes SAC bombers had flown were around 2,000 feet, NORAD had detected only 55 percent of these bombers. Even bombers that initially approached at higher altitudes but then descended to lower altitudes proved difficult to track below 3,000 feet.[91] The curvature of the earth and terrain features such as mountains did a better job of interfering with NORAD radar detection than did SAC active jamming.

Lacking good look-down radar capability, NORAD's early warning radar planes and interceptors struggled to detect the lower-altitude bombers, being

85. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 74; NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, *North American Air Defense Command and Continental Air Defense Command Historical Summary, January–June 1961* (NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, November 1961), 79.

86. NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, *North American Air Defense Command and Continental Air Defense Command Historical Summary, July–December 1963* (NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, May 1964), 83.

87. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, January–June 1961*, 79–80.

88. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, January–June 1961*, 79–80.

89. Headquarters, Strategic Air Command, *History of Headquarters Strategic Air Command 1961: SAC Historical Study no. 89* (Headquarters Strategic Air Command, 1962), 66.

90. Headquarters NORAD / CONAD, *Analysis of Exercise Sky Shield: Technical Memorandum No. 12* (Headquarters NORAD / CONAD, 19 November 1960), 1.

91. Headquarters NORAD / CONAD, *Analysis of Exercise Sky Shield*, 4.

unable to differentiate low flying aircraft from ground clutter such as terrain.[92] Interceptor pilots found that the heat given off by the surface of the earth confused infrared, heat-seeking sensors, again making it difficult to pick out the lower-altitude bomber from the terrain.[93] Interceptor pilots also struggled to identify the lower-altitude bombers visually in poor weather conditions or darkness.[94] Only 25 percent of the interceptors directed against lower-altitude bombers found their targets, and their active jamming signals led to their detection.[95]

The report emphasized that active jamming signals alerted NORAD to the presence of SAC bombers, and radar systems detected formations of bombers more easily than individual aircraft because of their larger radar returns. Chaff had been the most effective radar countermeasure SAC employed, especially against SAMs. Unlike active jamming, which emanated signals from one point in the sky (i.e., the bomber), chaff created a cloud of interference throughout an area within which the bomber hid. Chaff blinded SAM sites long enough for the bomber to pass safely. NORAD radar operators also had been unable to differentiate between the B-52s and the B-57s acting as decoys. Many interceptors and SAM sites had diverted to address these decoys, suggesting the Quail decoy would be effective once it entered service.[96]

SAC mission planners therefore created new attack plans that emphasized single sorties of bombers rather than formations. Most bombers would penetrate North American airspace at lower altitudes, climb to higher altitudes only to simulate bomb release while deploying chaff to blind radars in the area. They would use active radar jamming sparingly, to avoid alerting NORAD radars to the presence of the bombers early. Jamming would target radars or interceptors that had already begun to focus on the bomber.[97]

Sky Shield II

Sky Shield II began as planned on 14 October 1961; the scenario differed from the first exercise. A swarm of hostile aircraft began by penetrating NORAD radar defense lines as the first wave of a mock conventional attack. This first aggressor force consisted of 26 SAC B-47 bombers, with 450 tactical and electronic jamming aircraft from the USAF Tactical Air Command (TAC), the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Marine Corps, and eight Vulcan B.2 strategic bombers from Britain's Royal Air Force (RAF). These aggressor aircraft launched from foreign bases in Europe, the Pacific, the Caribbean, and from aircraft carriers at sea. This initial attack

92. Peter Tait, *Introduction to Radar Target Recognition* (The Institution of Engineering and Technology, 2009), 328–46.

93. Tait, *Introduction to Radar Target Recognition*, 355–56.

94. Headquarters NORAD / CONAD, *Analysis of Exercise Sky Shield*, 4.

95. Headquarters NORAD / CONAD, *Analysis of Exercise Sky Shield*, 4.

96. Headquarters NORAD / CONAD, *Analysis of Exercise Sky Shield*, 1–17; NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1960*, 71–75.

97. SAC, *History of Headquarters Strategic Air Command 1961*, 65–67.

triggered a simulated nuclear response by the U.S., requiring a large SAC bomber force to leave North American airspace quickly while NORAD assets tracked and intercepted the attacking tactical force.[98] After SAC's bomber and tanker force disappeared over the radar horizon, this force of B-47s and B-52s returned as aggressors, simulating a full Soviet nuclear attack.[99]

When the exercise began and hundreds of tactical aircraft engaged in mock attacks on military bases and the national command and control network, a force of 26 SAC B-47s penetrated from the Arctic Ocean and flew individual sorties at altitudes around 500 feet. These B-47s had all completed the "Milk Bottle" structural reinforcement program but still were careful about making abrupt climbs or heading changes.[100]

As planned, NORAD alerted SAC about the mock attack, which triggered the nuclear strike force portion of the exercise.[101] SAC launched 269 B-52 and B-47 bombers, along with 198 KC-135 tankers. Once the SAC bomber force was beyond NORAD radar coverage, it turned around and joined the aggressors. This second-wave attack utilized a mixture of low- and medium-altitude routes flown by individual aircraft, rather than high-altitude formation flying.[102]

In accordance with General Power's demands, SAC's performance during Sky Shield II was not reported formally.[103] SAC's official historical summary for 1961 only noted the number of sorties generated, christening the exercise a success.[104] NORAD's historical summary for the period of July through December 1961, however, revealed that the changes in SAC tactics improved the survival rate of SAC's bombers. NORAD's greatest weakness was its inability to defend against selective electronic countermeasures, jamming, and chaff in combination with low-level attacks.[105] The RAF account of the exercise only mentions NORAD interceptors engaging aircraft above 20,000 feet.[106]

A formation of eight B-52Fs from the Seventh Bomb Wing at Carswell Air Force Base, Texas, flew north at high altitude to a point north of Hudson Bay, where they refueled from KC-135 tankers. The eight bombers then turned south,

98. Headquarters NORAD, *Operations Order 3-61, "Sky Shield II"* (NORAD, September 20, 1961), 1–5; SAC, *History of Headquarters Strategic Air Command 1961*, 67–68.

99. SAC, *History of Headquarters Strategic Air Command 1961*, 68.

100. Andrew Brookes, "V-Force operational deployment and readiness," *RAF Historical Society*, Journal 26 (2001): 64.

101. SAC, *History of Headquarters Strategic Air Command 1961*, 68.

102. SAC, *History of Headquarters Strategic Air Command 1961*, 68.

103. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, January–June 1961*, 79–80.

104. SAC, *History of Headquarters Strategic Air Command 1961*, 68.

105. NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, *North American Air Defense Command and Continental Air Defense Command Historical Summary, July–December 1961* (NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, January 1962), 65.

106. Brookes, "V-force Operational Deployment," 63–64.

split onto different flight paths, and descended to 500 feet above ground level. For one of the bombers, K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base in Michigan was the first target. This bomber crossed Lake Superior, skimming just above the waves, before pulling up to altitude just in time to simulate a bomb drop on the base. The bomber then dove back down to 500 feet and headed southwest toward its second target, an ARADCOM SAM site near South Bend, Indiana. The B-52 crossed Michigan without a single interception by a fighter or missile lock by a SAM.[107]

Changes in NORAD's training and technology development efforts following Sky Shield II are also telling. After the exercise, NORAD prioritized developing an ability to detect and intercept low-level aircraft.[108] ADC and ARADCOM requested low-level intercept training programs with SAC, which began in February 1962.[109] NORAD also pursued an airborne electronic jamming system that could direct signals downward.[110] As NORAD would not have wanted to jam its own radar and SAM sites, and NORAD assets were not deployed over enemy nations, it appears this technology would be directed against low-flying enemy intruders.[111]

Sky Shield III

NORAD requested a third exercise, and the joint chiefs approved Sky Shield III, scheduled for 3 September 1962. SAC's participation again remained unevaluated.[112] The third iteration again involved tactical aircraft as an initial attacking force prompting a simulated nuclear retaliatory strike by SAC. The SAC retaliation force again would return as a second wave of the aggressor force. The total aggressor strike force consisted of 536 tactical and SAC aircraft, of which NORAD detected 67 percent.[113]

Sky Shield III was the last such large-scale exercise conducted between NORAD and SAC. Because of the Cuban Missile Crisis in the fall of 1963, the

107. Chris Adams, *Inside the Cold War: A Cold Warrior's Reflections* (Air University Press, 1999), 114.

108. NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, *North American Air Defense Command and Continental Air Defense Command Historical Summary, January–June 1962* (NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, November 1962), 79.

109. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, January–June 1962*, 79–80.

110. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, January–June 1962*, 77.

111. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, January–June 1962*, 77.

112. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, January–June 1962*, 81.

113. NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, *North American Air Defense Command and Continental Air Defense Command Historical Summary, July–December 1962* (NORAD / CONAD Directorate of Command History, February 1963), 79–82.

exercise for that year was cancelled, and austerity measures applied by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara ended support for the exercises.[114] Compared to the results of Sky Shield I, NORAD's performance had degraded across the two subsequent exercises. NORAD's official history described the results of the last exercise as "disappointing to NORAD" and a "low success rate."[115] Whether SAC's changes in tactics caused the degraded NORAD's performance was not revealed.

Changes in SAC Tactics

While signs of changes in SAC tactics appear as early as 1957 in response to reconnaissance aircraft losses over the Soviet Union, these changes became more dramatic after the Sky Shield exercises. According to Barno and Bensahel, changes in large, bureaucratic military organizations are often slow and hampered by the traditions and sunk-cost fixations of senior leaders. Under the pressures of combat, battlefield adaptation is much faster and shaped by conditions on the ground.[116]

The realistic wartime simulation that was Sky Shield revealed SAC weaknesses before an audience of senior military and political leaders. This produced changes like wartime adaptation. Despite the fears of Power and other SAC leaders, the Sky Shield exercises taught them lessons that, when applied, improved the functionality and nuclear deterrence of SAC. Most evident were low-altitude, individual-sortie flying, changes in aircraft procurement, modifications to existing bomber designs, and greater investment in stand-off weapons.

SAC training and tactics shifted to low-level flying after the Sky Shield exercises.[117] SAC implemented technological fixes to improve the low-level flying capabilities of its bombers. SAC phased out aircraft models that could not adapt to low-altitude operations and cancelled new high-altitude bomber designs. In cooperation with the Federal Aviation Administration, SAC established seven special air routes across the continental U.S. through which SAC bombers could fly low-level training missions.[118] After 1961, upgraded models of the B-52 flew at low altitude, and SAC pilots became adept at skimming above the trees at only a few hundred feet above the ground. Some flew so low they had to increase their altitude in banking turns so that the 185-foot-long wings of the bomber did not strike objects on the ground.[119]

114. NORAD / CONAD, *North American Air Defense Command and Continental Air Defense Command Historical Summary, July–December 1963*, 91–92.

115. NORAD / CONAD, *NORAD Command Historical Summary, July–December 1962*, 81.

116. Barno and Bansahel, *Adaptation Under Fire*, 10–28.

117. Walter J. Boyne, "Fifty Years of the B-52," *Air Force Magazine* 84, no. 12 (December 2001): 54; Rebecca Grant, "Altitude: Contrary to Popular Opinion, Lower is Not Always Best," *Air Force Magazine* 84, no. 10 (October 2001): 52–54.

118. Hopkins, *The Development of Strategic Air Command*, 82.

119. Branby, "Special Feature: The B-52 Stratofortress," 4–5; LTC Bobby J. Payne, interview by Dale Dexheimer, 18 February 2011, Veterans History Project, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (hereafter VHP).

In 1962, SAC consulted mathematicians from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to create a plan for hundreds of individually coordinated, low-level flight paths for SAC bombers attacking the Soviet Union. Flying a low-level route to its targets posed significant risks of bombers colliding with one another or flying too close to each other's nuclear blasts. Therefore, SAC developed a complicated plan of flight paths and mission times to avoid these conflict risks and maximize disruption of the Soviet air defense network. Some targets had multiple strikes. For such targets, planners assigned bombers different routes from different directions, spaced far enough in time to avoid each other's nuclear blasts.[120]

Bomber procurement changed too, as the B–58 entered service in 1960 to replace the B-47. Designed for high-altitude, supersonic flight, the B-58 proved difficult to handle at low altitude, and 20 percent of B-58s crashed by 1965.[121] Low-level flying also significantly increased fuel consumption and limited range for the B-47 and B-58 medium bombers.[122] Because of its unsatisfactory low-altitude performance, SAC phased out the B-47 as a bomber by 1966.[123] Production of the B-58 ended in 1961, right after Sky Shield I, with only 116 of the expected 1,000 B-58s built, and SAC phased the B-58 out of service by 1970.[124] The secretary of defense cancelled the B-70 bomber project in 1961 because of cost overruns and its inability to penetrate Soviet integrated air defenses.[125]

This left the B-52 as the mainstay bomber for SAC. The long fuselage, long wings, and high tail stabilizer of the A through F models of the B-52 received undue stress when subjected to low-level maneuvering around terrain features. Boeing therefore developed structural and avionics fixes to address some of the problems presented by low-altitude flying. All 350 B-52 C through F models received the Modification 1000 Stability Augmentation System upgrade that included new avionics sensors, hydraulically-assisted flight controls, and strengthened wings. This upgrade began in 1962, corresponding with the Sky Shield aftermath.[126] Boeing also conducted a major redesign for the last two models of B-52 produced, the G and H models. These models had a smaller, robust tail fin, reinforced wings, greater internal fuel capacity, and significantly improved low-altitude flying characteristics.[127]

120. Michel III, *The Eleven Days of Christmas*, 60–65; Wayne Thompson, *To Hanoi and Back: The U.S. Air Force and North Vietnam 1966–1973* (Smithsonian Institute Press, 2000), 271–72.

121. Elliott V. Converse, *Rearming for the Cold War: 1945–1960* (Historical Office of the Secretary of Defense), 489.

122. Walter J. Boyne, "The Long Reach of the Stratojet," *Air Force Magazine* 81, no. 12 (December 1997): 68–71.

123. Boyne, "The B-47's Deadly Dominance," 83.

124. Converse, *Rearming for the Cold War*, 489.

125. John T. Greenwood, ed., *Milestones of Aviation: National Air and Space Museum* (Hugh Lauter Levin, 1989), 289.

126. Boyne, *Boeing B-52*, 103–13, 154.

127. Bryan Branby, "Special Feature: The B-52 Stratofortress," *Air & Space Power Journal* 35, no. 4 (December 2021): 4–5; Payne interview, 18 February 2011, VHP; Lindsay Peacock,

The Phase II Electronic Countermeasures upgrade program began for all B-52s in 1961. These upgrades corresponded with the lessons learned from Sky Shield. While SAC improved the radar jamming equipment, the greatest modifications included increasing the amount of chaff carried, adding room for two Quail decoys, and adding flare dispensers to confuse the infrared sensors on interceptors and heat-seeking missiles. It relocated the radar detection and jamming antennas to its sides and upper surfaces, as the bombers would now operate below enemy radar signals and interceptors.[128] B-52 avionics and electronic countermeasures upgrades after 1965 also included a camouflage paint scheme for the upper surfaces to help it blend in better with the terrain when viewed from above.[129]

SAC also expanded its use of penetration aids after the Sky Shield exercises. By 1963, all B-52 bombers carried two Quail decoys and two Hound Dog cruise missiles when assigned to nuclear alert duties.[130] Intended initially to strike primary targets, the Hound Dog's gyroscopic navigation system proved unreliable at ranges beyond a few hundred miles.[131] After Sky Shield I, therefore, the Hound Dog was re-tasked for use against enemy air defenses. The supersonic missile would now race out a hundred miles or so ahead of the B-52 and detonate its nuclear warhead in an air burst to disable enemy radar and radio stations via electromagnetic radiation impulses, thus making a hole in the defenses through which the B-52 could pass.[132] SAC subsequently repurposed the Hound Dog as an anti-air defense weapon. SAC issued a design order, in 1964, for a smaller, purpose-built, nuclear-tipped, supersonic cruise missile to perform this task. This became the AGM-69 Short-Range Attack Missile (SRAM), which entered service in 1972. Thereafter, B-52s carried six SRAMs in place of each Hound Dog while on nuclear alert.[133]

The Sky Shield exercise years appear as a watershed in SAC's embrace of the ICBM. Missile development was slow before 1960, primarily due to technological barriers such as liquid fuel and poor reliability.[134] The ICBM models fielded before the first Sky Shield exercise were few and swiftly retired before 1965.[135] The Titan II and Minuteman series of ICBMs developed after the Sky Shield exercises were fielded in the many hundreds.[136] The Sky Shield exercises were not

B-52 Stratofortress (Osprey, 1987), 35–36.

128. Boyne, *Boeing B-52*, 113–21, 154.

129. Boyne, *Boeing B-52*, 113–14; Werrell, *Evolution of the Cruise Missile*, 125–28.

130. Werrell, *Evolution of the Cruise Missile*, 125–28.

131. Werrell, *Evolution of the Cruise Missile,* 121–22.

132. Ziarnick, *21st Century Power*, 160.

133. U.S. Air Force Systems Command, *AGM-69A SRAM Explosive Components Surveillance Program Summary Report* (U.S. Air Force Systems Command, January 1975), 1–3; Werrell, *The Evolution of the Cruise Missile,* 122–24.

134. Neufeld, *Development of Ballistic Missiles*, 142–49.

135. Stephen R. Garcia and Terrill L. Kemp, *The ICBM Modernization Briefer's Handbook* (Air University, 1988), 17–20.

136. Garcia and Kemp, *ICBM Modernization*, 21–24.

solely responsible for the ICBM growth in the latter 1960s, but they revealed the vulnerability of manned bombers to an integrated air defense system.

Conclusion

During the Cold War, nuclear defense policy required that SAC present a credible threat of nuclear annihilation to any prospective attacker. In the first several years of the Cold War, especially as the number of SAC bombers grew exponentially and began standing alert with live nuclear bombs, SAC likely did pose a sincere threat to the Soviet Union. As Soviet air defenses became stronger and more sophisticated, however, and air defense weaponry improved, SAC's reliance on manned bombers and free-fall nuclear bombs rendered the U.S. vulnerable. SAC saw evidence of this in losses of reconnaissance aircraft over the Soviet Union. SAC did not abandon its reliance on speed, altitude, and formation flying to protect its manned bombers, although it slowly examined other options for reducing bomber vulnerability. In the aftermath of the Sky Shield exercises, however, SAC made sweeping changes at a fast pace.

This work begins to address the scholarly absence regarding SAC tactics, and expands the existing literature on SAC operations, complementing the work of Melvin Deaile, Robert Harder, and Brent Ziarnick.[137] It contributes to the historiography of nuclear weapons strategy. Scholars such as Francis Gavin and Edward Kaplan argued that by the 1960s, a "nuclear revolution" in policymaker thinking had occurred. Top American policymakers, they argued, accepted nuclear war as unwinnable, resulting in mutual assured destruction for all participants. Thus, policymakers reasoned they only needed a minimal nuclear capability to deter nuclear adversaries.[138]

Other scholars argued that nuclear-armed states continued to engage in power politics and competition, pursuing ways to "win" a nuclear war, or at least create a threat credible enough to pressure an adversary into concessions. Scholars unsupportive of the nuclear revolution perspective offer the deployment of Pershing II intermediate-range nuclear missiles in Europe, and the "Star Wars" Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), as examples.[139]

137. Deaile, *Always at War*; Harder, *Flying from the Black Hole*; Brent D. Ziarnick, *To Rule the Skies: General Thomas S. Power and the Rise of Strategic Air Command in the Cold War* (Naval Institute Press, 2021).

138. Mark S. Bell, *Nuclear Reactions: How Nuclear-Armed States Behave* (Cornell University Press, 2021); Francis J. Gavin, *Nuclear Weapons and American Grand Strategy* (Brookings Institution Press, 2020); Edward Kaplan, *To Kill Nations: American Strategy in the Air-Atomic Age and the Rise of Mutually Assured Destruction* (Cornell University Press, 2015).

139. Brendan Rittenhouse Green, *The Revolution that Failed: Nuclear Competition, Arms Control, and the Cold War* (Cambridge University Press, 2020); Keir A. Lieber and Daryl G. Press, *The Myth of the Nuclear Revolution: Power Politics in the Atomic Age* (Cornell University Press, 2020)

While the present article focused on SAC's decision-making, it reveals that SAC rejected any notion of mutually assured destruction. The evidence is clear; SAC believed nuclear weapons had to be effective to deter the Soviets. SAC adapted to changing Soviet air defenses to remain a viable nuclear threat. Through changes in tactics, technologies, and aircraft procurement, the USAF did not content itself with a minimal nuclear deterrent but continued to adapt in response to its Soviet adversary.

Finally, the present article contributes to the discussion of military innovation as a remarkable example of military adaptation. Barno and Bensahel suggest that military innovation is often slow, hampered by bureaucracy, and shaped by the goals of political and senior military leaders. Battlefield adaptation takes place at the operational level, faster, often under the pressures of combat, and shaped by conditions on the ground and the drive to survive.[140] The Sky Shield exercises provided a realistic wartime simulation that revealed SAC weaknesses at the operational level, but did so in a way that highlighted these limitations to senior military and political leaders. This was unique in that the rapid changes in SAC tactics and aircraft occurred during peacetime, but under simulated combat conditions.

The Sky Shield exercises embarrassed SAC before the multinational joint forces of NORAD, the joint chiefs, and the secretary of defense. The aftermath of Sky Shield I saw SAC shift from high-altitude formation bombing to low-altitude penetration by solo sorties. Within three years, SAC made significant modifications to the B-52 that improved its handling and survivability at low altitude. In less than five years, SAC completely changed its inventory of aircraft, cancelling the two newest bomber designs and eliminating the B-47 that proved unsafe in low-altitude operations. SAC modified the tactics with which its cruise missiles would be employed. Finally, by the late 1960s, SAC supplemented its bombers with large numbers of ICBMs. The Sky Shield exercises were one major catalyst for these changes.

140. Barno and Bansahel, *Adaptation Under Fire*, 10–28.

The 2024 Adams Center Cold War Essay Contest Winner

Imperium in Imperio: GI Joe's Jurisdiction in Early Cold War Taiwan

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Kuan-Jen Chen

Abstract

The presence of American GIs in Cold War Taiwan was a double-edged sword for Chiang Kai-shek's Chinese Nationalist government. He needed American military aid to sustain his regime, so he granted American GIs diplomatic immunity. This posed a challenge, however, as it evoked memories of extraterritoriality that contradicted the official historical narrative and thus undermined the regime's attempt to transform Taiwan's population into Chinese citizens. This embarrassing situation forced Chiang to initiate negotiations with the U.S. This paper demonstrates that the negotiations resulted in a win–win outcome. The U.S. maintained partial jurisdiction, while the KMT struck a balance between its relationship with the U.S. and its governance over Taiwan.

Introduction

News of crimes committed by American GIs around the world has been heard from time to time. In East Asia, the most notable examples are the U.S. forces in Japan and South Korea. While these American forces provide a boost to local business and the economy, there are constant issues of military discipline, particularly sexual violence, that repel locals and generate waves of requests for

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American forces to be withdrawn.[1] As one of America's allies, however, the issue concerning the status of American GIs in Taiwan has been undervalued,

Taiwan has had a similar experience to that of its neighbors, yet it is also distinct. Unlike Japan, a former enemy of America defeated by the latter, and South Korea, a divided country undergoing decolonization and state-building, Taiwan had a hybrid experience of colonization by imperial Japan and de-Japanization/re-Sinicization by Nationalist China, resulting in this island's peculiarity within the Cold War historical context. By examining the jurisdiction of American GIs in Taiwan, a society more intricate than its neighbors, this article contributes a historical lens to the dynamic interaction between the U.S. and Taiwan during the Cold War.

This article discloses that the presence of American GIs and their exclusive jurisdiction in Taiwan were embarrassments for Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist government. This related to Chiang's contradictory attitudes toward the American Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) that aimed to help Chiang rebuild and strengthen Taiwan's military in the face of a potential invasion by mainland China. Chiang required America's military assistance and materials to secure his fragile regime in Taiwan. While Chiang was displeased with America's interference in his military deployment, the survival of his regime hinged on American military assistance. Accordingly, Chiang was compelled to grant diplomatic immunity to all American GIs in the early 1950s.

This essay argues, however, that granting American GIs exclusive jurisdiction developed into a double-edged sword for the Nationalist government. It could maintain relationship with the U.S. and secure America's support, but it also contradicted the Kuomintang's (KMT [Chinese Nationalist Party]) official historical discourse, according to which Chiang Kai-shek was leading the Chinese people to free themselves of extraterritoriality, and America's initiative to revoke its extraterritoriality in 1942 was testimony to the close friendship between the U.S. and Nationalist China. The KMT attempted to resolve the issue of GIs' jurisdictional status by ending their diplomatic immunity in the early 1950s, but the labyrinthine circumstances delayed the conclusion of these efforts until 1965.

The KMT's goal in the negotiations was to resume its jurisdictional powers such that these aligned with its historical narratives. This investigation of these long-drawn-out negotiations over American legal jurisdiction in early Cold War Taiwan demonstrates the difficult relationship between a Cold War superpower and its local partner. This essay also asks why the negotiations between the U.S. and Taiwan took over ten years, and argues that the different legal systems complicated the status of GIs in East Asia, despite their alignment in the Cold War chess game. To maintain its global Cold War framework, the U.S. deployed soldiers to the territory of its allies. The different legal systems and understandings of law,

1. "Okinawa de kōgi shūkai, beigunkichi e no hantai uttaeru [Protest rally held in Okinawa against U.S. military bases]," *Reuters*, 19 June 2016 (https://reurl.cc/ez7VpQ).

however, meant that the U.S. government had to claim exclusive jurisdiction over its overseas soldiers to maintain morale and the willingness to uphold the *Pax Americana*. The KMT government in Taiwan could not alter its legal system or tolerate exclusive U.S. jurisdiction, however, as this would suggest an "imperialist unequal treaty system." This paper shows how decision-makers in Taipei achieved a win–win outcome by striking a balance between the U.S.–Taiwan relationship and jurisdictional independence.

Last but not least, this study discloses that issues of jurisdiction in early Cold War Taiwan went beyond diplomacy and directly concerned the KMT's governance of Taiwan, which was a key factor prompting the Nationalist government to conclude a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with the U.S. Compared to Germany, Korea, and Vietnam—divided at that time but previously united countries or colonies—Taiwan (Republic of China [ROC]) had some unique features. As a result of the Chinese Civil War, Chiang's Nationalist government retreated to Taiwan, a society composed primarily of Han Chinese but with different historical memories of Nationalist China because of its experience under Japanese colonial rule.

The KMT, through its campaign of de-Japanization and re-Sinicization, consolidated its governance over Taiwan by transplanting its historical narrative. In this way, the local Taiwanese could be transformed from subjects of imperial Japan into Chinese citizens and come to accept the KMT's official historical discourse, which claimed it was due to the unremitting efforts of Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek to abolish the unequal treaty system—including extraterritoriality—that the Republic of China was entitled to equal status in the international community.

America's exclusive jurisdiction in early Cold War Taiwan, however, contradicted such historical discourse. The Chinese Nationalist government claimed to have abolished U.S. extraterritoriality in China in 1942, but nine years later, the U.S. re-acquired this special right in Taiwan. This weakened the Taiwanese people's recognition of the authority of the Chinese Nationalist government. This article demonstrates that, according to the SOFA signed in 1965, while the KMT did not completely end America's exclusive jurisdiction, it nevertheless used the occasion to forge an image of successful U.S.–Taiwan negotiations in the public media, which aligned with its official historical discourse to legitimize its regime in Taiwan.

GIs in Taiwan: An Embarrassment for Chiang Kai-Shek

The Chinese Nationalist government's retreat to Taiwan in 1949 following the Chinese Civil War, coupled with the establishment of the Cold War framework in Asia, vexed the U.S. Although the U.S. continued to support Taiwan militarily, politically, and financially due to Taiwan's geostrategic significance on the western Pacific rim, Chiang and his followers in Taiwan were a political burden for decision-makers in Washington, D.C. American politicians sought to maintain the status quo in the Taiwan Strait, yet Chiang, upon his retreat, did not

anticipate a prolonged stay in Taiwan. He considered his presence temporary and felt confident of his eventual return to the mainland.[2] This prompted the Truman administration to regard Taiwan with perplexity. President Truman adopted a wait-and-see stance, but the debate in Washington over Taiwan's defense was uneasy prior to the outbreak of the Korean War.[3]

After the Korean War broke out in June 1950, the situation changed. The U.S. military took the opportunity to underscore Taiwan's geostrategic value. Given the low morale of the remnants of his routed armies and his depleted military materials, Chiang urgently sought America's assistance for his final asylum.

The U.S. military understood. U.S. Commander of the Far East Douglas MacArthur tasked Deputy Chief of Staff Alonzo Fox with establishing the Far East Command Group in Taiwan to act as a liaison between MacArthur's headquarters in Tokyo and Chiang's Nationalist government in Taipei.[4] Its primary objective was to conduct a comprehensive assessment of Chiang's military capabilities. After Fox returned to Japan, he submitted an extensive assessment of Chiang's military strength, which observed that the KMT's forces were ill-trained, ill-coordinated, and unprepared to defend Taiwan.[5] It recommended that "appropriate technical assistance be provided to Free China [the Republic of China]."[6] American Chargé d'Affaires to Taiwan Karl L. Rankin was of a similar opinion and believed that "[the] U.S. can obtain a good return for a fairly small investment on the island."[7]

Fox's report had the potential to play a pivotal role in reshaping Washington's Taiwan policy in the midst of a political whirlwind. The U.S. sent a MAAG to Taiwan to help rebuild the Nationalist armed forces in accordance with the 1949 draft of the U.S.–ROC Mutual Defense Treaty.[8] The MAAG was activated on 23 April 1951. Major General William C. Chase, then deputy commander of the U.S. Third Army at Fort McPherson, Georgia, was appointed chief of the MAAG in Taiwan. His main task was to train the Nationalist army to maintain

2. Isabelle Cheng, "Saving the Nation by Sacrificing Your Life: Authoritarianism and Chiang Kai-shek's War for the Retaking of China," *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 47, 2 (2018): 55–86.

3. John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace: Inquiries into the History of the Cold War* (Oxford University Press, 1987), 76–89.

4. "Establishment of Formosa Survey Committee by General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allies Powers," 15 August 1950, box 4258, Department of State Decimal File, Record Group (RG) 59, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (hereafter NARA).

5. "Fox Survey Group Report," 8 December 1950, box 4258, RG 59, NARA.

6. "History of Army Section, MAAG, Taiwan: 1951–1953," no date, box 1, Records of the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, RG 319, NARA.

7. "Mr. Rankin's Views Regarding Military Aid to Formosa and Use of Nationalist Troops in the Far East," 28 February 1951, box 4258, RG 59, NARA.

8. History Compilation Office, Ministry of Defense, ROC, *Meijun guwentuan zai Tai gongzuo koushu lishi* [*U.S. MAAG-Taiwan: An Oral History*] (Ministry of National Defense of Taiwan, 2008), 10.

its internal security and strengthen its self-defense. This military assistance was provided not in support of Chiang's plan of counterattacking mainland China, but "in furtherance of the foreign policy of the United States."[9]

Growing numbers of American GIs arrived in 1955 after the establishment of the new U.S. command in Taiwan. The MAAG was not a combat unit but an advisory group, tasked with providing military assistance to the Nationalist government. After Washington integrated Taiwan into its defensive perimeter, the U.S. established the Formosa Liaison Center in April 1955; it was renamed the U.S. Taiwan Defense Command (USTDC) in November of that year.[10] As a pivotal Cold War outpost, Taiwan became woven into Washington's strategic framework.

The arrival of the American GIs and the establishment of the MAAG and USTDC were embarrassments for Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang had a complicated view of American military assistance, fluctuating from great expectations to distrust, but he was unable to completely end the reliance on the U.S. Chiang was expected to welcome the arrival of American GIs, because the MAAG's establishment had the potential to boost the morale of his regime, especially since the State Department's issue of the *China White Paper* in August 1949 had tarnished Chiang's international and domestic reputation. Because the MAAG was revitalizing Chiang's stagnant military forces and repairing his shaky relationship with the Truman administration in the wake of Chiang's "loss" of China, it offered an excellent opportunity for Chiang to strengthen his position both domestically and abroad.

According to the *Central Daily News*, Chiang had a cordial meeting with Chase one month after the establishment of the MAAG, expressing satisfaction with the MAAG's work and praising the remarkable results achieved by Chase in a short space of time. This serves as evidence of the effective collaboration between the KMT government and the U.S.[11] The KMT offered this as propaganda to prove that the U.S. had done an about-face and was now supporting the Nationalist government to regain the lost territory of mainland China.[12]

As Chiang realized how far his expectations were from reality, however, his relationship with the U.S. grew increasingly fragile. In Chiang's diaries, he unequivocally expresses his distrust of the MAAG: "American Military Advisory Group came to Taiwan, it is suspicious of our government, it is always a means of the Departments of State and Defense to destroy me."[13]

9. "History of Army Section, MAAG, Taiwan: 1951–1953," no date, box 1, RG 319, NARA.

10. Letter from R. H. Wiltamuth to Robert R. Smith, 26 September 1966, box 266, Records of HQ, U.S. Army, Pacific, RG 550, NARA.

11. "The President received Rankin and Chase, praising the work of the American MAAG," *The Central Daily News* (*CDN*), 28 June 1951.

12. "The U.S. sent MAAG to assist in strengthening Taiwan's defense capabilities," *CDN*, 22 April 1951.

13. Chiang Kai-shek, *Chiang Kai-shek Diaries* (*CKSD*), *1917–1972*, June 1951, last month's introspection, Academia Historica, Taipei, Taiwan (hereafter *CKSD*).

The presence of American GIs in Taiwan left Chiang in a dilemma. On the one hand, his hope of launching a counterattack against mainland China was dependent on American military aid and material support. On the other hand, the MAAG's establishment in Taiwan interfered with Chiang's plans to deploy military personnel and expand the army, as well as limiting his autonomy in strategic decision-making.[14] This hampered Chiang's ambitious military initiatives. To Chiang's mind, the MAAG was a metaphorical watchdog dispatched by Washington and engaged in a power struggle over the deployment of Nationalist military personnel.[15]

Notwithstanding Chiang's inherent distrust of and dislike for MAAG, he realized that his regime could not survive without the assistance of American GIs. Chiang openly commended the GIs for their exceptional military expertise. In the years following the establishment of the MAAG, Chiang noted in his diaries that he personally had gained substantial military insights and observed notable advancements in the education and military capabilities of the Nationalist forces.[16] Given the imperative of survival in Taiwan, he was compelled to accept American assistance at the cost of greater American involvement in his military deployment and his regime's subjection to U.S. surveillance.

Exclusive Jurisdiction of American GIs: A Double-edged Sword

Following the influx of American GIs into Taiwan, jurisdiction became a pressing issue for the Nationalist government. It was not a new issue, but an ongoing one when the U.S. became involved in the China theatre in 1942. While the U.S. proposed relinquishing its consular jurisdiction and extraterritorial rights in China, it signed an agreement with Chiang's government, maintaining the exclusive jurisdiction over American military in China in 1943.[17] American soldiers' misbehavior led the wartime U.S.–China relationship to become, as described by historian Zach Fredman, a "tormented alliance."[18]

While American GIs stayed in mainland China after the Second World War to help the Nationalist government rebuild the country,[19] issues of military discipline caused tension with Chinese society due to America's exclusive jurisdiction over military personnel. America's exclusive jurisdiction over military personnel in China was supposed to expire six months after the end of the war,

14. *CKSD*, 18 June 1955.

15. *CKSD*, 21 January 1952; 5 April 1952; 12 April 1952, last week's introspection.

16. *CKSD*, 8 October 1957 and 16 April 1955.

17. Yanqiu Zheng, "A Specter Extraterritoriality: The Legal Status of U.S. Troops in China, 1943–1947," *The Journal of American-East Asian Relations* 22 (2015): 17.

18. Zach Fredman, *The Tormented Alliance: American Servicemen & the Occupation of China, 1941–1949* (University of North Carolina Press, 2022), 3, 135–54.

19. "Cooke held a press conference to state the mission of U.S. forces in China," *Shun Pao*, 1 October 1946; Edward J. Marolda, *Ready Seapower: A History of the U.S. Seventh Fleet* (Department of the Navy, 2012), 21.

but the US extended this agreement by one more year in 1946.[20] Consequently, countless road accidents and instances of rape perpetrated by American GIs were reported.[21] The egregious behavior of American GIs in mainland China fueled deep-seated discontent amongst the Chinese, who felt powerless.[22] Because the Nationalist government was relying on American assistance to rebuild China, the KMT turned a blind eye to the crimes.[23]

The issue persisted after Chiang retreated to Taiwan in 1949. Chiang's reliance on the U.S. left him no alternative but to grant diplomatic immunity to the MAAG in terms of jurisdiction. As regards jurisdiction over American GIs overseas, the Americans had established a significant precedent within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which the U.S. had signed on 4 April 1949; article VII stipulated that within any NATO member country, the U.S. had "the right to exercise exclusive jurisdiction over persons subject to the military law of that State with respect to offences, including offences relating to its security, punishable by the law of the sending State, but not by the law of the receiving State."[24]

This framework found application in Taiwan as well. Before the arrival of the MAAG in April 1951, the Truman administration had been assisting Chiang's government by supplying military materials "for the defense of Taiwan against potential attacks."[25] On 31 January 1951, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires to Taiwan Karl L. Rankin and Minister of Foreign Affairs George K. C. Yeh concluded that personnel dispatched from the U.S. government, including those on temporary assignments, should be considered as part of the U.S. Embassy and "under the direction and control of the Chief of the United States Diplomatic Mission."[26] This decision was incorporated into the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement that came into effect on 9 February 1951.[27] According to this agreement, following the establishment of the MAAG, all of its members (67 army; 4 navy; and 63 air force) were entitled to diplomatic immunity.[28] The agreement stipulated that the

20. Yanqiu Zheng, "A Specter Extraterritoriality," 19.

21. Chunmei Du, "Jeep Girls and American GIs: Gendered Nationalism in Post-World War II China," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 81, 2 (2022): 353–54.

22. Jiaoxing Wang, "Meiguobing zai Qingdao de baoxing [The atrocities of American soldiers in Qingdao]," *Shiyuwen*, 23 (1947): 16.

23. Chunmei Du, "Jeep Girls," 355.

24. "Agreement between the Parties to the North Atlantic Treaty regarding the Status of their Forces" (https://reurl.cc/jW5pmM).

25. Karl L. Rankin to Dr George K. C. Yeh, 30 January 1951, 11-07-02-13-06-032, Diplomatic Archives (DA), Archives of the Institute of Modern History (AIMH), Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan.

26. Rankin to Yeh, 30 January 1951, 11-07-02-13-06-032, DA, AIMH.

27. "Status of U.S. Government Officials Assigned or Attached to MAAG Performing Services Pursuant to Government to Government Agreements," 18 September 1974, 11-07-02-13-06-032, DA, AIMH.

28. "China, U.S. Exchange Notes on Assistance to MAAG Personnel," *China News*, 4 November 1952; "History of Army Section, MAAG, Taiwan: 1951–1953," no date, box 1, RG 319, NARA.

U.S. "shall have the right to exercise exclusive jurisdiction over any offenses which may be committed in Formosa [Taiwan] by MAAG personnel."[29] Consequently, their jurisdiction came within the purview of the U.S. Embassy in Taipei.[30]

Attempts by the Nationalist government to limit such jurisdiction after the MAAG's establishment were unsuccessful. Both sides signed the MAAG Administrative Agreement, which came into effect on 1 November 1952, and all members of the MAAG and their dependents henceforth were entitled to diplomatic immunity.[31] While the Nationalist government initially hesitated, as the inclusion of civilian employees was excessively broad,[32] it ultimately accepted this requirement given the urgent need for U.S. military assistance.

Jurisdiction over American GIs became a pressing issue in the mid-1950s. By 1955, in the army alone, the numbers had grown to 645 officers, 29 warrant officers, and 1,210 enlisted men.[33] The MAAG's expansion in Taiwan implied, in the words of historian Alexander V. Pantsov, that "[u]nder Washington's wing, Chiang was completely secure."[34]

Following the establishment of the USTDC in 1955, the American military presence in Taiwan expanded again. Between 1954 and 1965, approximately 4,000 U.S. armed forces personnel were deployed in Taiwan (peaking at 20,000 in 1958, because of the Second Taiwan Strait Crisis).[35] While some units, such as the U.S. Navy Medical Research Center, were assigned directly to the MAAG, other units, such as the U.S. Matador Unit, the U.S. Navy Auxiliary Communication Center, the Armed Forces Network in Taiwan, the U.S. Taiwan Defense Command, and the U.S. Air Task Force 13, operated with diplomatic immunity similar to that of their MAAG counterparts until a new jurisdictional agreement could be finalized. The KMT government granted diplomatic immunity to all American military units as a pragmatic move.

The American GIs' exclusive jurisdiction not only embarrassed Chiang but evolved into a double-edged sword. While it strengthened Chiang's relationship with the U.S. in order to obtain more military and financial support, such jurisdiction in early 1950s Taiwan was inconsistent with the KMT's official historical narratives

29. "Supplementary Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the National Government of the Republic of China on the Mutual Defense Assistance Program," 27 July 1951, DA, 11-07-02-13-06-031, AIMH.

30. "The issue of the status of American GIs in the ROC should be addressed as soon as possible," *The Zhengxin News* (*ZN*), 7 June 1963.

31. "Status of MAAG Technical Representatives," 18 September 1974, 11-07-02-13-06-032, DA, AIMH.

32. No title, 15 April 1952, 11-07-02-13-06-031, DA, AIMH.

33. "History of Army Section, MAAG, Taiwan: 1951–1953," no date, box 1, RG 319, NARA.

34. Alexander V. Pantsov, *Victorious in Defeat: The Life and Times of Chiang Kai-shek, China, 1887–1975*, trans. Steven I. Levine (Yale University Press, 2023), 454.

35. M. Taylor Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation: Cooperation and Conflict in China's Territorial Disputes* (Princeton University Press, 2008), 245.

concerning the revocation of extraterritoriality. The extraterritorial rights are thus a remarkable page in the history of China's national humiliations. During World War II, Chiang was proud to revoke consular jurisdiction and extraterritorial rights from the U.S. and the U.K. His sense of joy is evident in his diaries:

> On Double Tenth Day, I was informed that the U.S. and the UK took the initiative to renounce their extraterritoriality in China and to work on new treaties. It is the main goal that Premier [Sun Yat-sen] pursued throughout his life in support of revolution. I am very pleased that I can achieve it on my own and it is the only good thing in my life.[36]

For Chiang, the abolition of extraterritoriality by the U.S. and the U.K. was a pivotal moment in China's history, a triumph over the national humiliations endured since the Qing dynasty. This evolved into the KMT's historical narrative, in which the father of the nation, Sun Yat-sen, tirelessly advocated for the abolition of unequal treaties, which his successor, Chiang Kai-shek, achieved.[37] The revocation of extraterritoriality, however, occurred "entirely under Chiang's leadership" and was "the outcome of the Chinese people's struggle and the collective efforts of the nation to achieve independence."[38] It became the cornerstone of the Chinese Nationalists' official historical narrative, allowing the Chinese people to finally lay to rest the specter of the unequal treaty system inherited from the Qing dynasty.

When the American GIs arrived, their jurisdiction transformed the KMT's achievement of abolishing extraterritoriality on the mainland into a historical burden on Taiwan. Just a decade before, the U.S. revoked its extraterritorial rights, yet now these rights re-emerged in Taiwan. The facts undermined the credibility of the Nationalist Chinese governance of Taiwan. The KMT's historical narrative had been ingrained into the collective consciousness of the mainland Chinese. After 1949, however, only two million mainlanders had fled to Taiwan, where the Nationalist government now faced the task of reconciling with the local Taiwanese population.

While Taiwan was predominantly inhabited by Han Chinese (Hokkien and Hakka), their historical experiences had diverged from those of their mainland counterparts. Following the 1894–95 First Sino–Japanese War, Taiwan fell under Japanese rule. The Taiwanese became subjects of the Japanese empire until 1945; accordingly, they did not share Nationalist China's experience of state-building with those from the mainland. As historian Fupian Chen argues, the Taiwanese "did not experience the wave of Chinese nationalism in person."[39]

36. *CKSD*, 10 October 1942.

37. Qing Ye, "Feichu bupingdeng tiaoyue mianmianguan [The various perspectives of the abolition of unequal treaties]," *Wenzhaiyuebao* 3 (1943): 10–13.

38. Ye, "Various Perspectives," 10–13.

39. Fupian Chen, "Rizhi zhongqi zhi Ererba shijian qianhou Taiwan zhi rentong jiuge—yi jingying wei zhude fenxi [The Entanglement of Taiwan Identity from the Middle of Japanese Rule Period to 228 Incident—Analysis Based on Taiwanese Elites]," *Shida Taiwanshi xuebao* 2 (2009): 150.

In addition to the disconnections in historical memories between Taiwanese and mainland Chinese, pro-Japanese sentiment remained strong amongst the Taiwanese due to the KMT's misrule in the immediate postwar period and the February 28 incident, an iconic uprising against the Nationalist government in 1947.[40] According to a U.S. State Department report, "pro-Japanese feeling and influence have increased rather than decreased during recent years."[41] As Rankin noted, the Taiwanese people looked back on "the period of Japanese control as the golden age."[42]

In response to the pro-Japanese (as well as anti-Chinese) sentiment, the Nationalist government embarked on a campaign of de-Japanization and re-Sinicization, seeking to align Taiwanese historical memories with those of mainland China.[43] Education served as an effective means of achieving this goal, which, as historian Jennifer Liu argues, was "crucial to the government's assimilationist ideas […]."[44] The Chinese Nationalist government attempted to eradicate the imprint of Japanese colonialism by educating Taiwanese in "Chinese language, history, and citizenship" in primary schools.[45] By instilling in Taiwanese students "the political values and behavioral norms of 'modern' Chinese citizens,"[46] these former subjects of imperial Japan could be re-created as Chinese citizens. This inadvertently planted the seeds for conflict over the jurisdiction of American GIs in Taiwan, which contradicted the historical narrative the KMT sought to impart.

A Demonstration of Anti-American Sentiment in Taiwan

The Liu Ziran Incident (also known as the May 24 Incident or the Taipei Riot) and its fallout are representative of the friction between the KMT's successful transplantation of its historical narratives local Taiwanese and its relationship with the U.S. On 20 March 1957, Major Liu Ziran, who came from mainland China, was killed by Sergeant Robert G. Reynolds, a member of the MAAG. Reynolds claimed Liu had looked at his wife through a bathroom window and, when

40. Tsui-lien Chen, "Quzhimin yu zaizhimin de duikang: yi 1946nian 'tai ren nu hua' lunzhan wei jiaodian [Decolonization vs. Recolonization: The Debate over 'T'ai-jen nu-hua' of 1946 in Taiwan]," *Taiwanshi Yanjiu* 9, 2 (December 2002): 189–90; "The Current Situation on Taiwan," 4 May 1951, box 4254A, RG 59, NARA.

41. "Pro-Japanese Sentiment and Japanese influence in Taiwan," 3 May 1950, box 4254, no title, RG 59, NARA.

42. "Interdepartmental Meeting on the Far East," 1 March 1951, box 4258, RG 59, NARA.

43. Ian Rowen and Jamie Rowen, "Taiwan's Truth and Reconciliation Committee: The Geopolitics of Transitional Justice in a Contested State," *International Journal of Transitional Justice* 11, 1 (March 2017): 100.

44. Jennifer Liu, *Indoctrinating the Youth: Secondary Education in Wartime China and Postwar Taiwan, 1937–1960* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2024), 150.

45. Liu, *Indoctrinating the Youth*, 149–50.

46. Liu, *Indoctrinating the Youth*, 152.

Reynolds intervened, he observed Liu holding a long object. In what he claimed was self-defense, Reynolds shot Liu twice.[47] Reynolds faced an American court martial, was acquitted, and left Taiwan shortly thereafter.

The acquittal ignited anti-American sentiment in Taipei. On 24 May, local Taiwanese, in alignment with mainland Chinese sentiments, erupted into rioting in Taipei, breaching the walls of the U.S. Embassy, targeting Americans, and sparking a crisis.[48] The Taipei Riot illustrates the KMT's successful transplantation of historical memories in the local Taiwanese, who had experienced the Japanese colonial period but were educated within the KMT system. Like the Chinese mainlanders who had moved to Taiwan after 1949, these local Taiwanese expressed discontent with America's exclusive jurisdiction, as it called to mind a chain of national humiliations dating back to the Qing dynasty. The local Taiwanese participated in the riots alongside their Chinese counterparts, shouting slogans, tearing down the American flag, and damaging the American embassy.[49] They regarded the exclusive jurisdiction over American GI as *tequan* (special right).[50]

The May 24 Incident also shows that the KMT's transplantation of historical narratives was going to strain the ties between the U.S. and the Nationalist government. Four days after the riot, U.S. Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson stated that the riot "apparently does highlight the need for taking another look."[51] The riots stirred negative sentiment in America. "It should be made perfectly clear to the Chinese Nationalist Government," said Senator Henry Styles Bridges (R, New Hampshire), "that any further violence against the sovereignty of the United States absolutely will not be tolerated."[52] Chiang realized the incident would be detrimental to his relationship with the U.S., so he swallowed his pride and issued an official statement.[53]

The Liu Ziran Incident was a sobering lesson for the Nationalist government. The KMT needed to manage widespread anti-American sentiment in Taiwanese society,

47. "Report of dealing with the accident in Taipei City," 12 June 1957, 11-07-02-14-02-032, DA, AIMH.

48. Kuo-cheng Lee, "1957nian Taibei Liu ziran shijian ji 1965nian Meijun zaihua diwei xieding zhi qianding [The Liu Tzu-jan Incident at Taipei of 1957 and the Signature of the 'Status of Forces Agreement with the Republic of China in 1965]," *Dongwu Zhengzhi xuebao* 14 (2006): 1–32; Tzu-Hsiang Tseng, "Liu ziran shijian zaitan [Revisiting the Taipei Riot]," *Taiwan wenxian jikan* 65, 2 (2014): 295–329; Stephen G. Craft, *American Justice in Taiwan: The 1957 Riots and Cold War Foreign Policy* (The University Press of Kentucky, 2016).

49. "The list of perpetrators being prosecuted," *ZN*, 15 June 1957.

50. "Compatriots! It is not the time to be swayed by our feelings and act rashly," *ZN,* 25 May 1957.

51. "Anti-American Riots in Formosa," 11 June 1957, DO 35/5910, The National Archives, London (hereafter TNA).

52. "Formosan Riots: American Comment," 1 June 1957, DO 35/5910, TNA.

53. "Message of President Chiang Kai-shek to the nation on the riots in Taipei on May 24, 1957," 1 June 1957, 11-13-01-02-002, DA, AIMH.

as it did not want a repeat of the Taipei Riot. Although similar events occurred, such as the 1959 Ma Xiaojun vehicular homicide and the 1964 Changhua rape case,[54] they did not escalate like the Liu Ziran Incident. This was a consequence of Taipei's effective management of public opinion. The Nationalist government contained the potential for backlash and thus ensured stability in Taiwan. This nuanced approach allowed the government to preserve the alliance with the U.S. while safeguarding the integrity of its historical narrative. This was merely an expedient, though. If the Nationalist government did not want another crisis that could destroy the U.S.–Taiwan relationship, it needed a new agreement on jurisdiction.

Protracted Negotiations

Chiang needed to address the conflicts between his attitude toward the presence of American soldiers, his reliance on American assistance, and jurisdiction over American GIs in Taiwan. The most direct approach would be an agreement with the U.S. on the jurisdiction over American armed forces, but this was no easy process.

The U.S. had initiated negotiations in 1955, but times were tumultuous for the Nationalist government. It had suffered territorial losses, including Yijiangshan and the Dachen Islands earlier that year, and there was a constant threat of conflict between Beijing and Taipei. Because the U.S. believed it would be difficult to conclude the negotiations while military operations were taking place near the Nationalist-held islands just off of the mainland, it delayed the negotiations.

The 1957 Liu Ziran Incident prompted discussion about issues related to jurisdiction over American military personnel, because the rise in anti-American feeling was not limited to Taiwan; it was also rampant in Japan, South Korea, Okinawa, and the Philippines. Washington reviewed the fundamental assumptions of its East Asian policy, but made no new proposal.[55] The 1958 Second Taiwan Crisis, however, led the U.S. to propose a simple agreement akin to the one granting diplomatic immunity to the MAAG, but for all U.S. forces. Taiwan rejected this, as its final goal was to completely regain its jurisdiction from the U.S. military.[56]

The points of dispute centered on jurisdiction and custody rights, with the U.S. seeking maximum control over both. The U.S. aimed to preserve the framework granting exclusive jurisdiction over its overseas troops. Although the Department of State was attempting to return jurisdiction to host countries in order to mitigate conflict with allies, the Department of Defense saw the matter differently.[57] The Pentagon believed that "a capricious court system abroad might not see to it that the punishment fits the crimes."[58] It deemed it necessary to extend the scope of

54. Fredrick F. Chien, *Chien Fu huiyilu* [*Memoirs of Dr. Fredrick F. Chien*] (Commonwealth, 2005), 90–92.

55. "Formosan Riots: American Comment," 1 June 1957, DO 35/5910, TNA.

56. "The explanation of Minister of Foreign Affairs Shen Chang-huan," 6 November 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-054, DA, AIMH.

57. "Status of Forces Agreement," *The Washington Post*, 6 August 1965.

58. "Status of Forces Agreement," *The Washington Post*, 6 August 1965.

the American constitution and legal system to the countries where it deployed forces, particularly countries whose legal systems differed from that of the U.S.

While the U.S. renounced its extraterritoriality in China in 1942, it did not completely trust the legal system of the Nationalist government when Chiang retreated to Taiwan. The Pentagon regarded the KMT's legal system as failing to uphold human rights. These concerns were not groundless. According to Taiwan's Code of Criminal Procedure at the time, during a criminal investigation, it was not possible for a defendant to request a lawyer unless being prosecuted by a prosecutor.[59] This would have been considered unacceptable within the American legal system, as it meant that American military personnel would be unable to receive fair treatment during an investigation, which would be detrimental to the following trial.

The Nationalist government thought it not so much a matter of human rights, according to Deputy Minister of Justice Cha Liang-chien, as Taiwan having adopted "the civil law system, differing from [America's] common law system."[60] In 1949, fearing that the CCP would launch a revolution in Taiwan, the KMT had implemented martial law. Under the KMT's one-party system, cases of unfair judgement and forced confession could occur from time to time. Thus, the Pentagon insisted on largely exclusive jurisdiction over American military personnel in Taiwan.

As neither the U.S. nor Taiwan was prepared to make concessions regarding the scope of Taiwan's jurisdiction, the negotiations remained inconclusive until 1965. The U.S. preferred to use the existing SOFA as a blueprint; it did not want an agreement with Taiwan that extended beyond the established framework governing U.S. overseas military deployments, particularly with regard to jurisdiction over American GIs.

In agreements regarding the status of U.S. armed forces, Japan, NATO, and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) had adopted a principle whereby the host country relinquished its right to jurisdiction to the U.S. but could recall it under specific conditions. Taiwan wanted to amend these further, driven by the KMT's desire to show Taiwan as a major power and to avoid appearing amongst the Taiwanese as having signed another unequal treaty. If Taiwan had a SOFA with the U.S. like those in place with NATO and Japan, it would help the KMT blunt the double-edged sword and resolve the contradiction between the special right of American GIs' exclusive jurisdiction and the KMT's official historical narratives.

The U.S. and Taiwan could not refer to the former's agreements with Japan and NATO, however, as those were conducted through secret exchanges.[61] In Washington's view, moreover, Beijing and Taipei were in a state of division, and

59. "The explanation of Deputy Minister of Justice Cha Liang-chien," 6 November 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-054, DA, AIMH.

60. "The explanation of Deputy Minister of Justice Cha Liang-chien," 6 November 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-054, DA, AIMH.

61. "The explanation of Minister of Foreign Affairs Shen Chang-huan," 6 November 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-054, DA, AIMH.

Chiang remained as ambitious as ever to launch a counterattack against mainland China. In other words, war and peace were in a state of coexistence across the Taiwan Strait, which differed from the situations involving NATO and Japan. The U.S. therefore was unwilling to extend a SOFA beyond the framework of NATO, so it tended to limit the scope of SOFAs with other host countries as much as possible.[62]

The U.S. tended to use the SOFA applied in the FRG and signed on 3 August 1959 as a blueprint for negotiations with Asian countries,[63] including South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines.[64] The SOFA with the FRG was more detailed than the others and allowed the U.S. to form more comprehensive treaties with its regional partners. This reduced the potential for conflict over the jurisdiction of American military personnel.[65]

Taiwan accepted America's proposal. According to Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), using the SOFA with the FRG as a blueprint would not create the impression that the Nationalist government was abasing itself in international society. This is because while Germany was a defeated country, it joined NATO in 1955 and was thus considered equal to other NATO countries.[66] In this way, the KMT could uphold its historical narrative that the ROC, under KMT leadership, was on par with other major powers after WWII.

Although the U.S. and Taiwan achieved a preliminary consensus, the scope of Taiwan's jurisdiction was a stumbling block in the negotiations. In the early 1960s, the U.S. proposed that three types of cases—security offences against the ROC, murder, and rape—could fall under Taiwan's jurisdiction. Taiwan was unable to accept America's proposal, however, requesting that in addition to the types of cases listed, the proposal should also adhere to general standards. In March 1963, Taiwan proposed a draft requesting jurisdiction over six specific types of cases: security offences against the ROC; offences causing death; rape; drug trafficking; arson; and currency counterfeiting. The U.S. strongly opposed this.[67]

62. Yan-bo Kuo, "1965nian zai Hua Meijun diwei xieding de yiding ji qi Yaji beijing [The conclusion of the 1965 Status of Forces Agreement in Taiwan and its inter-Asia connections]," in *Qianyan yu liudong: Zhongtan Lengzhan de yaji lianjie* [*Frontiers on the Move: Revisiting Inter-Asia Connections in the Cold War*], ed. Shu-Fen Lin, Iam-Chong Ip, and Zi-Qiao Yang (National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University Press, 2024), 79.

63. The full name is "Agreement to Supplement the Agreement Between the Parties to the North Atlantic Treaty Regarding the Status of Their Forces with Respect to Foreign Forces Stationed in the Federal Republic of Germany" (https://reurl.cc/va2Knk).

64. "The explanation of Deputy Minister of National Defense Ma Jizhuang," 6 November 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-054, DA, AIMH.

65. "The explanation of Minister of Foreign Affairs Shen Chang-huan," 6 November 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-054, DA, AIMH.

66. "The explanation of Minister of Foreign Affairs Shen Chang-huan," 6 November 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-054, DA, AIMH.

67. Letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Executive Yuan, 5 June 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-056, DA, AIMH.

The sticking point was vehicular offences causing death. Collisions involving American military vehicles and the local Taiwanese, including pedestrians, bullock carts, and pedicabs, were frequent. While these traffic accidents might seem trivial, they had the potential to provoke local discontent. Consequently, the KMT government was eager to gain jurisdiction over vehicular homicide to prevent a resurgence of anti-American sentiment. The U.S. considered the traffic situation in Taiwan fundamentally different from that in the FRG, however, so traffic accidents causing death could not fall under Taiwan's jurisdiction.

Regarding Taiwan's request for general clauses, the U.S. considered Taiwan's legal system as different from its own. The two sides defined major types of cases differently, which could lead to disputes.[68] Again, the negotiations became deadlocked.

In February 1964, the U.S. tried to meet Taiwan halfway by comparing an agreement with Taiwan to agreements with NATO and the FRG, and by adopting the wordings of the SOFA with the FRG. This allowed Taiwan to recall its waivers of jurisdiction for cases of crimes relating to Taiwan's national security, robbery, and rape (including attempt and accomplices), and for crimes resulting in death, but it did not include the general standards.[69] Taiwan could not accept America's proposal without the general standards, for the KMT intended to use these to extend its jurisdiction.

In April 1965, the U.S. conceded that the Nationalist government could recall its jurisdiction in special cases infringing upon Taiwan's administration and jurisdiction.[70] This expanded Taiwan's jurisdiction, thus satisfying Taiwan's demands for general standards. Taiwan also gained jurisdiction over cases of arson and drug trafficking. For other types of cases, Taiwan could exercise jurisdiction with the approval of both the U.S. and Taiwan.[71]

Taiwan's MOFA determined that the parties had achieved a mutually acceptable position, with the U.S. signaling reluctance to compromise further. Taiwan recognized that the international situation did not allow it to put its foot down, as prolonged delays in negotiations could diminish its leverage, especially as the U.S. was finalizing agreements with South Korea and the Philippines on the jurisdiction of American forces. Once the U.S. concluded the SOFAs with these two Asian countries, it would use them as a blueprint for the agreement with Taiwan.

This limited Taiwan's room for negotiation. Consequently, Taiwan anticipated increasingly challenging circumstances.[72] After weighing the pros and cons, the

68. "The explanation of Minister of Foreign Affairs Shen Chang-huan," 6 November 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-054, DA, AIMH.

69. "Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Executive Yuan," 5 June 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-056, DA, AIMH.

70. "Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Executive Yuan," 5 June 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-056, DA, AIMH.

71. "The explanation of Minister of Foreign Affairs Shen Chang-huan," 6 November 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-054, DA, AIMH.

72. "Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Executive Yuan," 5 June 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-056, DA, AIMH.

Nationalist government signed the agreement with the U.S. in 1965. The agreement comprised twenty articles detailing jurisdiction and custody. Besides the MAAG, no American military personnel, including members of the civilian component and dependents, would have diplomatic immunity. According to Article 14, the Nationalist government had "jurisdiction over the members of the United States armed forces or civilian component, and their dependents, with respect to offenses committed within the Agreement Area and punishable by the law of the Republic of China."[73] While Taiwan waived the primary right of executing its jurisdiction and custody to the U.S., it claimed it could recall its waiver of jurisdiction in such cases as detailed below:

> Security offenses against the Republic of China;
>
> Offenses causing the death of a human being, robbery, and rape, except where the offenses are directed against a member of the United States armed forces or the civilian component, or a dependent; and
>
> Attempts to commit such offenses or participation therein.[74]

Taiwan thus regained a degree of jurisdiction in Taiwan. Arguably, the U.S. and Taiwan were both winners though. The U.S. won because the agreement did not go beyond its established framework for global military deployment. It preserved partial diplomatic immunity within Taiwan, moreover, thus ensuring that jurisdiction over American military personnel remained primarily under U.S. law. By respecting host country sovereignty, though, the U.S. resolved a thorny issue with its Asian allies and avoided "a lot of diplomatic embarrassment."[75] While the Nationalist government did not abandon its legal system entirely, it did make adjustments in order to align with aspects of the American legal framework. An American soldier accused of a crime that came under Taiwan's jurisdiction, for instance, was entitled to request legal representation during the investigation.[76] Furthermore, the Nationalist government was obligated to furnish English-speaking aides to assist defendants, and the U.S. government retained the right to dispatch representatives to observe both investigation and trial.[77]

73. "Agreement between the Republic of China and the United States of America on the Status of United States Armed Forces in the Republic of China," 31 August 1965, 11-01-05-10-01-003, DA, AIMH.

74. "Agreement between the Republic of China and the United States of America on the Status of United States Armed Forces in the Republic of China," 31 August 1965, 11-01-05-10-01-003, DA, AIMH.

75. "Status of Forces Agreement," *The Washington Post* (6 August 1965).

76. "Notice of dealing with criminal cases committed by American military personnel in the Republic of China," 14 April 1966, 11-07-02-13-05-055, DA, AIMH.

77. "Notice of dealing with criminal cases committed by American military personnel in the Republic of China," 14 April 1966, 11-07-02-13-05-055, DA, AIMH.

Taiwan also won because it recovered certain jurisdictional powers, particularly in cases involving arson, death, drug trafficking, infringements of national security, and rape. These specific areas had been sources of tension, capable of provoking anti-Americanism in Taiwanese society. The status of American GIs under the Rest and Recuperation (R&R) program during the Vietnam War, moreover, demonstrates that the successful conclusion of the U.S.–Taiwan SOFA laid the groundwork for the Taiwanese government to handle exceptional cases. The U.S. designated Taiwan as one of the countries for its R&R program, allowing American GIs to take holidays in America's allies in the western Pacific.[78] Without the U.S.–Taiwan SOFA, all GIs on the R&R program would have been granted diplomatic immunity, like their colleagues stationed in Taiwan; however the SOFA provided the Taiwanese government with a basis to limit their legal status.

The status of these R&R GIs was not explicitly regulated in the U.S.–Taiwan SOFA, though, which led to differing opinions between Washington and Taipei. While the U.S. attempted to retain diplomatic immunity for these R&R GIs out of concerns for morale, Taiwan insisted they be regarded as members of USTDC who did not have immunity.[79] When these GIs, who had been undergoing intensive wartime stress, were wasted, brawls, traffic accidents, and sexual misconduct against Taiwanese locals would occur frequently. If these GIs had diplomatic immunity, it could have worsened Taiwan's official relationship with the U.S. Consequently, the U.S. regarded the GIs on the R&R program as members of USTDC, without diplomatic immunity, at Taiwan's insistence.

Shaping a New Image of GI Joe

Following the conclusion of the SOFA with the U.S., the KMT was confronted with a conundrum: it needed to reconcile its historical discourses with the negotiated outcome. The SOFA granted the Nationalist government a victory to some extent, as it regained certain legal rights, and it had made use of the protracted negotiations to reshape public opinion. Mirroring its earlier endeavors in mainland China, the KMT leadership led the Taiwanese to believe it was striving to conclude a fair agreement with the U.S. While the agreement granted jurisdiction to the KMT government in specific types of crimes committed by American soldiers, however, some Americans, including members of the MAAG, retained diplomatic immunity. "After this agreement came into effect," said Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Shen Chi, "under the terms, three-fourths of American GIs would fall under the jurisdiction of the Nationalist government,

78. Zach Fredman, "The U.S. Military's R&R Program in Taipei, 1965–1972," in *The Vietnam War in the Pacific World*, ed. Brian Cuddy and Fredrik Logevall (University of North Carolina Press, 2022), 125–37.

79. "The analysis of the legal status of American military personnel on R&R in Taiwan during the Vietnam War," 10 December 1965; "Minutes," 14 December 1965; "Cable from Chow Shu-kai to MOFA," 10 January 1966, 11-07-02-13-05-113, DA, AIMH.

leaving only one-fourth with diplomatic immunity."[80] For the KMT, this was the best possible compromise given its urgent need for U.S. military assistance.

The KMT government therefore pronounced the outcome of the negotiations a "milestone in the history of [the] Sino [ROC]–U.S. relationship."[81] It also asserted that this agreement would not only strengthen the relationship between the two sides but also serve as a foundation for "contributing to the destruction of the source of disaster [communism] and maintaining peace and happiness for humanity."[82] Nationalist officers thus found the outcome acceptable and satisfactory.

The outcome of the negotiations, however, caused discontent amongst Taiwanese who had internalized the KMT's historical narrative. As far as they were concerned, whatever unit those who committed crimes belonged to, Americans were Americans: a group of exotic outsiders. A statement made by a member of the local Taiwanese elite, Chen Hsing-sheng of the Taiwan Provincial Consultative Council, shows the perception of one of the many Taiwanese who were born during Taiwan's Japanese colonial period and underwent Japanization but were educated under the KMT after 1945.

Upon graduating from National Taiwan University, Chen taught at an agricultural vocational senior high school in Hsinchu. His educational journey spanned the transitional period between imperial Japan and Nationalist China, which shaped his understanding of history and connections with Nationalist China. In the 1960s, Chen was elected as a councilor of the Taiwan Provincial Consultative Council. During his tenure, he advocated for revising the agreement governing the status of U.S. forces in Taiwan by raising the banner of the "Father of the Nation" (Sun Yat-sen). He contended that although this agreement was not an unequal treaty, it could lead to confusion amongst the populace. Chen argued that, as a permanent member of the United Nations (U.N.) Security Council, "Taiwan's civilization was on par with other nations. Therefore, allowing American soldiers special status in Taiwan was not only a disgrace for the United States but also a humiliation for our country."[83] Chen's view sheds light on the perspective of a local Taiwanese whose historical understanding was interwoven with the KMT's official historical narratives and put particular emphasis on Sun's endeavors to abolish unequal treaties in China.

Chen's statement made the KMT vigilant, as dissatisfaction with the SOFA amongst the Taiwanese could pose risks and potentially strain the U.S.–Taiwan relationship. Chiang needed to preserve his relationship with the U.S. in the 1960s, as his regime relied on Washington's backing to maintain his regime's

80. No title, 13 November 1965, 11-07-02-13-05-054, DA, AIMH.

81. "A new milestone of the history of Sino-U.S. relationship," *The United Daily News*, 1 August 1965.

82. "A new milestone of the history of Sino-U.S. relationship," *The United Daily News*, 1 August 1965.

83. "The proposal for the revision of the agreement regarding the status of American GIs," 23 May 1966, 003-03-07OA-01-5-3-01-05001, Database of Historical Documents of Taiwan Provincial Council, Library of Taiwan Historica, Nantou, Taiwan.

position internationally. Since the mid-1960s, the Nationalist government had faced numerous challenges arising from its position in international society, and it thus needed America's support.

The number of countries emerging from decolonization and state-building, and seeking entry into the international community was growing. A significant number of third-world countries that supported Beijing were joining the U.N.. They advocated for the ROC to be replaced by the People's Republic of China (PRC) as the legitimate Chinese government at the U.N.[84] As a superpower at the U.N., the U.S. could support Chiang by impeding the PRC's admission.

In this context, the KMT was wary of events like the May 24 Incident occurring to destroy its relationship with the U.S. Accordingly, the Nationalist government sought to portray the negotiations with the U.S. as successful and the treaty as equal. The KMT's mouthpiece, *The Central Daily News*, stated that the agreement was founded on the "principle of mutual respect for sovereignty with meticulous attention" and emphasized its significance in comparison with agreements the U.S. had signed with other nations.[85] In an interview with a Taiwanese journalist, Director General of the Department of North American Affairs Tsai Wei-ping pointed out that "although English was the language used in negotiations, the U.S. could not exploit this advantage."[86] This helped the KMT to shape the public perception that this agreement was not an unequal treaty that would create national humiliation but rather a symbol of the Nationalist government leading the Taiwanese people to stand on a par with other countries.

It is noteworthy that the newspaper used the term *huomianquan* (immunity) rather than *tequan* (special right), which it had used for the Taipei Riot, to describe the SOFA with the U.S. This reflects a neutral stance in the Mandarin language, as *huomianquan* carries less historical baggage than *tequan*, which evokes memories of unequal treaties and consular jurisdiction. In addition, the Nationalist government emphasized this agreement as a significant step forwards in U.S.–Taiwan friendship and cooperation.[87] The KMT claimed the agreement would not only serve as a "foundation for resolving administrative and juridical disputes," but that it could also be "deemed beneficial for fostering friendly cooperation and even joint anti-communist campaigns between the two sides."[88]

84. "The proposal for the revision of the agreement regarding the status of American GIs," 23 May 1966, 003-03-07OA-01-5-3-01-05001, Database of Historical Documents of Taiwan Provincial Council, Library of Taiwan Historica, Nantou, Taiwan.

85. "After the agreement regarding the status of American GIs came into effect," *CDN*, 13 April 1966.

86. "After undergoing hundreds of negotiations over eleven years, the finalisation of the agreement regarding the status of American GIs secures the interests of citizens," *CDN*, 14 April 1966.

87. "After the agreement regarding the status of American GIs came into effect," *CDN*, 13 April 1966.

88. "After the agreement regarding the status of American GIs came into effect," *CDN*, 13 April 1966.

Building upon the narrative of close U.S.–Taiwan friendship, the KMT government underscored that the agreement was not only generous but reasonable.[89] The KMT used the media to change the portrayal of American GIs, framing the outcome of the negotiations as laying the foundation for a closer friendship between the U.S. and Taiwan. This narrative aligned with the KMT's political agenda, emphasizing the collaborative efforts of the ROC and the U.S. in leading the anti-communism campaign in Asia. The Nationalist government deftly navigated the MAAG's continued entitlement to diplomatic immunity by avoiding direct mention of it to the greatest extent possible.

Conclusion

This article argues that the prolonged negotiations over the jurisdiction of American GIs were not just a matter of the relationship between the U.S. and Taiwan; they were also a convergence of modern China and post-colonial Taiwan within the context of Cold War dynamics. It demonstrates the double-edged influence of American GIs in Taiwan. First, it underscores the contradiction between Chiang's reliance on U.S. military assistance and his antipathy toward American interference in his plan of counterattacking the mainland. Regardless, the Nationalist government was compelled to grant diplomatic immunity to American GIs, in alignment with America's broader global military deployments. Second, this article emphasizes the contradiction between the KMT's historical narratives and the American soldiers' extraterritoriality in Taiwan. The diplomatic immunity granted to American GIs was an embarrassment to the Nationalist government when it was trying to consolidate its governance over Taiwan by reconnecting the historical memories of Taiwanese locals, which had become disconnected from those of the Chinese Nationalists, with the narratives of those who had arrived from mainland China.

To manage this double-edged sword, the Nationalist government needed to negotiate with the U.S. and achieve an outcome that aligned with its historical narratives. The protracted nature of the negotiations regarding the jurisdiction over American GIs in Taiwan prompts us to reconsider the subtle relationship between the U.S. and its local partners. Although the U.S. and its allies had similar democratic values and regional geostrategic concerns, American GIs did not always get on with the locals, given their differing understandings of history, legal systems, culture, and customs. Neither the U.S. nor Taiwan wanted to make concessions. Hence the negotiations remained inconclusive between 1955 and 1965.

After a decade of negotiations, consensus was achieved in 1965, marking a milestone. The agreement represented a win–win: for the U.S., because America maintained its partial exclusive jurisdiction; and for Taiwan because it recovered some of its jurisdiction rights in cases capable of provoking anti-American sentiment.

89. "The spirit is more important than form, the practicality is more significant than articles," *ZN*, 16 April 1966.

After the agreement was signed, the KMT sought to shape public opinion via the press and solidify the connection between the historical memories of the Taiwanese people and the political narratives of the Chinese Nationalists. The KMT emphasized Chiang Kai-shek's leadership and how he had led the people to equal status with other nations, much as he had done in 1942 in mainland China.

The gap in Taiwanese historical memory was connected to the influx of individuals from mainland China during the negotiations. This period provided the KMT with an opportunity to consolidate its governance over Taiwan by orchestrating a comprehensive transformation of Taiwanese identity, from a predominantly Japanese-influenced identity to one deeply rooted in Chinese heritage.

The presence of American GIs, the protracted negotiations over their legal status, and the aftermath of these events compel us to rethink the dynamic interactions between the U.S. and its local partners. It was through these processes that Washington maintained its global, Cold War framework for *Pax Americana*. These regional disputes over jurisdiction serve to enhance our comprehension of Cold War history beyond the superpowers' struggle for supremacy. The tapestry of Cold War history was, to a considerable extent, woven by the reciprocal influences between the U.S. and its local allies.

Book Reviews

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Worth a Second Look

The Dark Path: The Structure of War and the Rise of the West. By Williamson Murray. Yale University Press, 2024. ISBN 978-0-3002-7068-6. Notes. Index. Pp. 488. $40.00 (hardback).

Williamson Murray—Wick to his friends, of whom this reviewer was one—was a prolific strategic and operational military historian. He wrote or edited over twenty books, including studies of the American Civil War, the interwar period, and World War II, taught at Ohio State University as well as Marine Corps University and the Naval War College, and had close ties with the U.S. military and Department of Defense. In person he was loud, generous, occasionally bombastic, frequently funny, opinionated, and brilliant.

This book is his last, completed shortly before he died in 2023 and published posthumously. It exhibits his strengths, and occasional weaknesses, and reflects what he describes in his acknowledgments—a touching tribute to the doctors who kept him alive during protracted illness and to his wife, a historian in her own right—as his "explosive and boisterous behavior."

The Dark Path is a compressed history of war, chiefly in Europe and the United States, from the sixteenth century to contemporary times. It belongs in the same class, then, as similar works by Cyril Falls (*A Hundred Years of War*, Duckworth, 1953) Theodore Ropp (*War in the Modern World*, Duke University Press, 1959), Michael Howard (*War in European History*, Oxford University Press, 1976), and Richard Arthur Preston, Alex Roland, and S. F. Wise (*Men in Arms*, Praeger, 1975). Like those earlier works, it has its virtues and defects but is a solid introduction to give to undergraduates—with, to be sure, some cautionary advice.

What makes Murray's book unusual is his attempt to structure the book around five "revolutions in war," which he divides into "social" and "military" revolutions. Some of this is familiar (e.g. the second and third revolutions being the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution), and some of it feels a bit forced (thus, the fourth revolution is the combination of the previous two). This thematic approach is interwoven with excellent, if partial, condensed histories of

the wars throughout this period, where Murray's strengths at combining economic and demographic analysis on the one hand and operational history on the other come to the fore.

Whether the narrative bears out the thematic argument is less clear. Indeed, the whole idea of revolutions will sit poorly with many historians. One of Murray's predecessors, Cyril Falls, in his comparable book insisted that on the whole the art of war has made fairly steady, evolutionary progress (if that is the right word) through the ages.

Curiously, Murray does not articulate what is in fact the most important of his themes as such: that is his relentless focus on attrition as an underlying phenomenon of war. Throughout the book he dismisses the notion of the decisive battle and insists on the underlying grinding away of material and human attrition as the dominant force in war. This is not surprising; his first work, a pioneering study of attrition in the *Luftwaffe* made that point with exceptional clarity. Lavish in both condemnation and praise, as was his wont, he is contemptuous of generals like Robert E. Lee who thought it possible to win wars with big battles; he is an admirer of political leaders like Lincoln, Churchill, and FDR, and of generals like Grant and Eisenhower, who knew how to apply the logic of attrition to achieve success in war. He is a liberal humanist in his sympathies but a brutal realist in his depiction of what war is and how it is won.

Not surprisingly, the book draws heavily on his wide range of published work. Not exclusively, however, as the sources cited indicate. Murray's focus on Europe and the U.S. comes at the expense of much depth on Asia, where references to some works (John Toland's *The Rising Sun*, Bantam, 1971) will raise eyebrows. But by and large he taps many of the most important contemporary works of military history relevant to his interests.

Murray had an unusual career for a military historian, to include time not only in military educational institutions but in association with Defense Department's fabled Office of Net Assessment and at the Institute for Defense Analyses. It contributed materially and intellectually to some of his best work, to include his three-volume study, edited with Allan Millett, on military effectiveness. Those associations caused him to address some large questions: how should one define military effectiveness? How can one recognize it in peacetime? How does technological change affect the conduct of war? Do the things militaries do to become operationally effective (his obsession here was with the German army) cause them often to become strategically ineffective?

Like Wick himself, this book is stimulating, frustrating, enlightening, flawed, insightful and engrossing. It is a good introduction to an original and in its own way, delightful mind.

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Williamson "Wick" Murray, one of the leading military historians of his generation, spent six decades studying, teaching about, and (as an air force officer in Southeast Asia) participating in warfare. He wrote or co-wrote well-regarded books on the Civil War, interwar military developments, World War II, the Iran-Iraq War, the first part of Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the future of war, among others. He edited or co-edited eighteen more volumes, including the highly influential *Military Effectiveness* (with Allan Millet, 3 vol. Cambridge University Press, 1988), *The Making of Strategy* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), and *The Dynamics of Military Revolution* (Cambridge University Press, 2001). All of this work was mutually reinforcing; what he learned by in-depth examination of one war or theme helped shape his understanding of other conflicts and of the nature of war in general—though his views on the latter never moved very far from what he gleaned from "the two greatest theorists of war" (p. 8), Clausewitz and Thucydides.

His last book, *The Dark Path,* offers readers three main things. First, a concise survey of the broad sweep of Western military history from 1500–2024, focused at the socio-political and strategic levels, but integrating substantial consideration of tactics, operations, and technology. Second, scattered throughout the analytical narrative, many opportunities to observe the author connecting particular developments to the generalities of warfare, as decades of scholarship and teaching had led him to understand them. Third, the presentation of a new framework to structure and help explain the ways the character of war changed over time, even while its essential nature remained unchanging.

The overall argument is a variation on the conceptualization of "Revolutions in Military Affairs" in relation to more sweeping "Military-Social Revolutions" that was introduced in *The Dynamics of Military Revolution.* Murray argues there have been five of the latter since 1500: the creation of the modern state and the standing army, starting 1500; the Industrial Revolution, starting 1750; the French Revolution, starting 1789; the marriage of the last two as a new revolution, starting 1861; and the Scientific-Computing Revolution, starting 1944. Each comprised from two to nine lesser "Revolutions in Military Affairs." The first encompassed "the gunpowder revolution; development of ocean-going navies; *trace italienne* fortifications; the seventeenth-century tactical revolution," for example; the last embraced "nuclear weapons; computers; precision strike; [and] artificial intelligence" (p. 9). This series was precipitated by the introduction of gunpowder weapons to Europe's intensely competitive system of "fractious, warlike and ambitious states" (pp. 11–12), which created the "restless willingness to innovate and adapt" (both technologically and socially) that drove these revolutions. They, in turn, shaped the "Western way of war" and ultimately led to the global dominance of the West (pp. 18, 2).

The bulk of the book is essentially a chronological, analytic narrative. The thesis seems intended to organize the narrative, rather than the narrative serving to prove the thesis. It is, however, an excellent survey of the conduct of Western warfare: lucid, learned, concise, insightful, and up-to-date (as demonstrated in 64 pages of endnotes). Murray had a gift for finding telling quotations and anecdotes that enliven the text and enlighten the reader. Equally illuminating are the

quantitative data he frequently supplies, particularly statistics dealing with finance, economics, and the production and expenditure of materiel.

As he discusses the wars of the past Murray freely, and often acerbically, renders judgment on military and political leaders, particularly their strategic choices. Though he is not unwilling to mete out praise (for example to Grant, Bismarck, and Churchill), he frequently attributes failures to "incompetence." That is a manifestation of the more general point that Murray is exceptionally willing to state his conclusions forcefully: "Few of those who have started wars have bothered to connect the means available to the goals that the war was supposed to achieve" (p. 6).

The quest for decisive battle never succeeds; wars are instead won by "attrition and political support" (p. 18). "The history of war after 1500 is a series of revolutions in how soldiers fought" (p. 43). The outcome of the Second World War was determined by "the naval and air wars in the Mediterranean, in the Atlantic, and over Europe" (p. 290), which in turn were determined by economic power and scientific-technological innovation (pp. 273, 351). Recent American wars in Iraq and Afghanistan "were mere dismal replays" of Vietnam (p. 372). These are stimulating assertions, whether one ultimately accepts them or not.

Because *The Dark Path* is engagingly written, concise yet rich with specific detail, and organized by a reasonable but also debatable thesis, it would be a strong choice as a core textbook for a military history survey course. It would also serve well a graduate student in military history finishing preparation for comprehensive exams (especially one whose coursework had focused on war-and-society issues rather than more strictly military matters), or an active-duty officer looking for a broad overview of warfare written by someone attuned to military history's potential to be of practical benefit for the self-education of war-fighters. It is a worthy capstone to the arch of Murray's distinguished scholarly and teaching career.

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Xiongnu: The World's First Nomadic Empire. By Bryan K. Miller. Oxford Studies in Early Empires. Oxford University Press, 2024. ISBN 978-0-1900-8369-4. Maps. Illustrations. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xi, 362. $85.00 (hardback).

This volume skillfully combines the past two decades of archaeology of the Xiongnu era with historical texts older than 2,000 years. Brian Miller is the rare scholar who is equally capable of breathing new life into Chinese-language historical sources as well as enlivening archaeological interpretations. This book provides an up-to-date account of a fearsome military power that shaped East and Central Asia for centuries between 2,200 and 1,900 years ago. This is a tale of conflict but also of skilled diplomatic, economic, and social management that brought prosper-

ity to the imperial core and offered an attractive pattern of political identity and power to regional rulers.

Miller does not shy away from the military potential of Eurasian society, but the major throughlines of this book are the adaptability of governmental structures, and the control of capital in Xiongnu society. The wealth that flows through the society is generated by animals as well as the control of valuable objects and parallel diplomatic exchanges.

The opening of the book covers definitions and human ecology of herding in Eurasia. Pastoral nomads are often presented as marginal characters; Miller seeks to place them center-stage, even though most of the rich political history is drawn from non-Eurasian sources. The term "horde" is chosen as a collective of nomadic pastoralists. The dissonance conjured by this choice perhaps highlights the uniqueness of Eurasian political organization.

The second chapter covers the cultural geography of the eastern steppe, using the oft-repeated phrase "those who draw the bow" to encompass the people of eastern Eurasia. The moniker is both a self-identification and an over-arching cultural background. This also reveals one of the unresolved questions of the book: who were the Xiongnu? Through the text we see the term used for a political entity, an ethnicity, a form of political practice, and an inclusive empire.

If you know one thing about the Xiongnu, it is the story of the rise of Chanyu Modun, the figure most associated with the emergence of the Xiongnu polity in the second century BCE. The book dwells less on the legends, though, than on the creation of imperial governing systems and military successes that solidified Modun's power. Power descended through a regularised system of high administration from the great leader through clearly defined paths of power to the local level.

The history of the first century of the Xiongnu polity is one of conflict with the Han empire. The primarily sedentary, agrarian Han, dwelling in the valleys and plains of riverine East Asia were unable to contain the mobile Xiongnu forces. This conflict was not fought on an equal footing until later generations, when new identities and technologies emerged along the frontier.

A new synthesis of the everyday economy is one of the strengths of this book. We see pastoral nomadic mobility and an economy of dairy and domestic animal products through archaeological data. In addition, there is direct evidence of farming, mining, and industrial metal and ceramic production. One of the most fascinating aspects of the archaeology of Eurasia is the study of fashion. Miller returns many times to dress styles and elaborate belt elements, here called "beastly badges" because of their depiction of animals, worn by Xiongnu and others to demonstrate their status and perhaps regional identities.

Small settlements, cemeteries, farms, and villages have been found across the Xiongnu world, along with larger towns and elaborate, elite palatial structures. These multi-acre enclosures, centered in east-central Mongolia, contain tile-roofed palaces and ornate gates. To look at larger-scale elite society, Miller focuses on his own excavations in western Mongolia, building a narrative of long-range family connections and elite power.

At the nadir of the Xiongnu, the turn of the first century BCE, a resurgent Han empire, now fielding effective cavalry forces, pushed into the Xiongnu heartland in Mongolia. The weakened Xiongnu rulers were also unable to hold the fealty of neighbouring Eurasian groups who grew in power at their expense

Out of this multi-centric competition emerged the second great chanyu of the Xiongnu, Huhanye (c. 50–30 BCE). This was an age of empires; the Han, Parthians, and Xiongnu dominated Central and East Asia. Throughout the region, Xiongnu styles became dominant. Their control of long-distance trade increased, evidenced by the growth of exotic goods in their heartland. Within the Xiongnu domains, massive and deep platform tombs were built. The evocative writing of Miller's book gives a good sense of the transformation of the Xiongnu from their original practices of power to the new style of a Eurasian superpower.

The Xiongnu political system was held together by a carrot and stick of redistributive wealth and threat of force. Once this is lost, individual leaders go their own way and order disintegrates. The final chapter covers the end of the Xiongnu story. Miller marks the end of the political regime not by Han incursions, but by rising Eurasian powers, the Xianbei and Kushan from east and west, respectively. This is not the end of Xiongnu material culture, however; it continued in Mongolia for centuries.

Miller closes by highlighting how the Xiongnu became both prototype and archetype for Eurasian power for centuries. In an illustration of the impact of Xiongnu governing ideology, he addresses the oft-suggested connection between the Xiongnu and the Huns of the Roman world. This long-standing idea is effectively dismissed based on the political structure of Hunnic society compared those of the Xiongnu.

This detailed and approachable volume will interest anyone curious about the grand sweep of the political history of Eurasia and East Asia. Those who want to read an up-to-date history of the Xiongnu polity or explore the unique political conditions of Eurasia should read it.

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Infantry: A Global History. By Jeremy Black. Pen & Sword Military, 2025. ISBN 978-1-3990-5047-0. Notes. Pp. vi, 216. $34.95 (hardback).

Infantry as a genre or branch presents a problem to the military historiographer; despite being the backbone of the majority of armies throughout history, its diverse nature belies a simple survey analysis of it, which is why so few of them exist. *Infantry: A Global History* is one such effort by Jeremy Black, prolific author of military history and non-resident Senior Fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute. It forms an entry into his series on military branches. *Infantry* is a brief,

chronological survey of the topic across all of recorded history that seeks to deconstruct numerous myths about it and return it to its rightful place as the core of most military activities across human history.

Black begins *Infantry* by noting the difficulty of writing a global survey history of such an expansive and ill-defined term as "infantry." He rightly illustrates that the organization and practice of foot soldiers throughout humanity's history eschews easy theses and conclusions, and even periodization. A warrior fighting on foot with a spear and a soldier remote-controlling a drone might both be said to be infantry, but connecting them and their experiences is difficult, especially in a short work. As a result, Black opts for a chronological survey focused on the post-1500 period.

He begins with short chapters on "Antiquity" and medieval Europe before a series of chapters devoted to each century from 1500 to the present. He moves through the material in each chapter at a rapid pace, alternating between short paragraphs and block quotes from relevant primary sources, the vast majority of which are from English/British authors. Given the short length and massive scope of the work, no subject is treated in any level of detail, as befits a brief survey. Its arguments and analysis provide an introduction to one of the subjects taught in courses on strategic studies, military history of Europe and America, and history in professional military education.

Perhaps the most prominent theme in *Infantry* is Black's pervasive deconstruction of myths, both practical and historiographical, about the subject. He notes throughout the book how infantry is often relegated to a lesser role and prominence in narratives of military history, particularly in histories of the modern era. He argues persuasively in the book's latter half that infantry remains the core of militaries to the present, despite arguments to the contrary like the "Revolution in Military Affairs" and those about armor in World War II, to cite two prominent examples. He notes the wide variety of roles that infantry has played and continues to play in military activities, whether in traditional combat, counterinsurgency, or support to government activities like policing. In this, he effectively challenges the decades of accreted historiography minimizing, or even ignoring, the central role of infantry in conflicts like the world wars.

Infantry somewhat suffers both from its approach and its organization. On the former count, despite being subtitled *A Global History*, it is essentially a history of British infantry, with examples from other countries only sprinkled throughout. This becomes especially apparent in the chapters "Nineteenth Century" and "Twentieth Century." The former discusses the Napoleonic Wars almost entirely through the lens of the Peninsular War and Waterloo, while the latter spends a great deal of time quoting British soldiers in the world wars while largely eliding or outright ignoring other conflicts during the century like the French and Chinese wars in Vietnam, for one example.

On the latter count, the post-1500-heavy chronological approach hamstrings both the coherence and the thesis of the book. The preface and introduction are

written in a stream-of-consciousness style that makes them difficult to read or discern a coherent thesis in. The first two body chapters, "Antiquity" and "Medieval," cover millennia in a few brief pages, resulting in a series of vignettes only loosely connected to each other. It is not until the conclusion that Black's thesis and methodology become clear. Readers are encouraged to read it as the introduction.

Infantry is a brief survey of the titular subject that centers itself on the British experience of the branch. It provides an introduction to the topic that will be useful to hobbyists, public historians, and students in introductory or survey classes on military history.

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The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency.

War Underground: A History of Military Mining in Siege Warfare. By Earl J. Hess. University Press of Kansas, 2025. ISBN 978-0-7006-3841-3. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 355. $54.99 (hardback).

For much of its history, underground warfare meant military mining (aka sapping), the process of attacking a fortified position by digging beneath it, and this forms the primary focus of this wide-ranging yet often detailed study spanning three millennia. The author has written a genuinely original book on a subject overlooked by reason of its technical nature and being literally hidden from view. This brief review cannot do justice to the breadth and detail of this scholarly work, written in a clear and straightforward style by an eminent historian of the Civil War.

Originating in the ancient Near East, for its first two thousand years, military mining was accomplished by burning out timber props to collapse fortress walls. Archaeological excavation of mine tunnels provides an astonishing insight into the nature of such warfare at the siege of Dura-Europos in 165 CE.

The application of gunpowder to military mining from the fifteenth century brought both innovation and regulations. Sébastien Le Prestre de Vauban's codification of siege warfare advocated surface sapping followed by mining, overcoming the difficulty of ventilating longer galleries by firing mines to form craters as cover for new entrances.

Hess finds, however, that gunpowder does not alter the existing pattern of sieges as "difficult and prolonged" (p. 68) with mines often not decisive, even when they succeed in terms of destruction, as a second barrier was frequently encountered and infantry assaults failed. At many sieges, mining simply was avoided altogether.

Experiments by the French engineer Bernard Forest de Bélidor in 1739 showed how camouflet charges, which did not crater the surface, could be used to destroy an opponent's tunnels, a tactic used in intense underground combat at the Siege of Schweidnitz in 1762.

From the seventeenth century, codification, and the formation of professional corps of sappers and miners, in place of temporary hirings in time of war, saw a widening divergence between civilian and military mining practice. Hess implies a British tradition of favoring civilian miners, although mention might have been made of the Siege of Gibraltar and the enlistment of regular miners in the British Army in 1772. In the Peninsular War, although the "British emerged as the most active siege-mining force" (p. 102), he does not address the inadequacy that led to the formation in 1812 of the Royal Sappers and Miners and the establishment of a military engineering school at Chatham.

Escalation of mining in the Crimean War saw Russian engineers under Eduard Totleben make innovative use of electrical detonation, geological strata, and trained listeners. Hess gives a detailed account of technological advances in the nineteenth century, in particular in relation to developments in civilian mining and explosives. As might be expected, this insight is at its best for the U.S. Civil War. Again, the twin themes recurring are the presence of civilian professionals in the armies, with no regular military engineers involved in the famous Petersburg mine, and the frequent failure of infantry attacks even after the successful firing of mines. Significantly, Hess shows that mining was used as much against field entrenchments as permanent fortifications, a trend that continued during a major resurgence of siege operations in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5.

In tracing a "trajectory" (p. 273) towards the intense mining of the First World War, he understates the European downgrading of fortress warfare at the end of the nineteenth century that also scaled back siege troops and training. In 1914–15, when military mining escalated to an unprecedented extent, German and French engineers rooted their methods in nineteenth-century practice, while the civilianized British Tunnelling Companies simply ignored the manuals. Free to use their own methods, they placed multiple mines beneath German positions, but the "age-old difficulty of linking siege mining with infantry attacks persisted" (p. 242).

The author's reliance on published English-language sources is most evident in the chapters on the First World War. The shift away from mining for offensive operations, seen by Hess as occurring in 1917, had already been made by France and Germany in late 1915. Only the British, lagging tactically, and with mines placed ready-but-unfired beneath German lines, persevered with the tactic. The nineteen mines fired at Messines on 7 June 1917 were the swansong of military mining, but a new study of this battle is needed to separate the mythology of their impact from the reality of an all-arms assault against German in-depth defense.

Hess highlights the few instances of true military mining after 1918, ending with Dien Bien Phu in 1954, although I would have liked his analysis of mines at Aleppo in 2014. He shows the use of the subterranean realm in conflict to be

stubbornly persistent: "mining morphed into a new kind of underground warfare by and for the weak when faced with opponents who controlled air space and dominated battle grounds" (p. 285). In the Middle East, "insurgent forces have increasingly adopted tunnel warfare for shelter, infiltration, and small-unit surface combat" (p. 283). This book should bring underground warfare from the background to the forefront of the study of past and current conflicts.

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Crusader Criminals: The Knights Who Went Rogue in the Holy Land. By Steve Tibble. Yale University Press, 2024. ISBN 978-0-3002-7607-7. Maps. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Indes. Pp. vii, 364. $35.00 (hardback).

The crusading movement brought about a significant demographic shift in the eastern Mediterranean, drawing large numbers of young men to the region. Rather than the devout pilgrims or pious warriors who have long dominated both scholarly and popular narratives, Steve Tibble argues that many of these crusaders were socially marginal figures whose criminal behavior was far more pervasive than traditionally acknowledged. He contends that the crusades not only attracted such men in disproportionate numbers but also fostered the conditions that allowed lawlessness to flourish over time. The result is a provocative study that challenges long-standing assumptions about who the crusaders were and what life was like in the Latin East.

Organized into twenty-seven chapters and grouped into six thematic sections, the book explores a wide range of criminal behaviors, including murder, piracy, outlawry, and vice. Tibble opens with the phrase "round up the usual suspects," a nod to the 1940s' film *Casablanca* (p. 5). The familiar reference underscores a central claim in the book, that in both fiction and history, the "usual suspects" are often young men with surplus energy and limited socially sanctioned outlets. When gathered in large numbers, such men often turned to criminal behavior, as was the case during the crusades.

Tibble argues that significant climatic changes in the century before 1095 triggered major demographic movements that drew tens of thousands of young, armed men to the region, where they engaged in near-constant warfare. This volatile convergence of environment, migration, and militarization created ideal conditions for criminal behavior to thrive.

One of the book's strengths lies in its engaging storytelling and thematic organization. Tibble presents accounts that are often unfamiliar, even to specialists. Some illustrate what modern observers might consider petty crime, such as widespread gambling in religious houses and efforts by religious orders to suppress the practice. Others reveal more disturbing patterns of violence and disorder. Particularly chilling are the "murderous priests" and "murderous monks" described

in chapters 14 and 15. Perhaps the most striking takeaway is Tibble's portrayal of criminality as a regular feature of daily life in the Crusader States. This idea permeates nearly every chapter.

One especially ingenious reading of evidence appears in Tibble's interpretation of domestic architecture. He argues that the thick stone walls and heavy locks of dwellings in the Latin East offer a visceral reminder of the persistent fear that shaped daily life (p. 55). While one might wonder whether the scarcity of timber influenced the choice of stone as a building material as much as psychological concerns, Tibble's analysis remains original and provocative.

In several cases Tibble's use of Western evidence would be more persuasive if paired with corresponding examples from the East. He often draws on sources from Western Europe and infers that similar—or worse—crimes occurred in the Crusader States because of the concentration of young men. The chapter on "Women and Justice," for instance, begins with several gruesome accounts of violence against women, all drawn from Western contexts. The reader is left to assume that conditions in the East must have been even worse, based on Tibble's claim that "the social and demographic groups most likely to be serious criminals, particularly young men, were also those most likely to be attracted to the medieval Holy Land" (p. 77). While the reasoning may be plausible, the lack of direct Eastern evidence weakens the argument and leaves the reader to infer more than conclude.

A related issue appears in Tibble's treatment of the crusades as an outlet for criminal punishment. He suggests that convicts in the West were drawn to crusading in significant numbers. Yet the examples he provides—including two of the knights involved in the murder of Thomas Becket—do more to highlight the penitential aspect of crusading than to show that criminals fled to the East in droves. Given the vast number of crusaders and the relatively few whose journeys can be tied to specific crimes, it may overstate the case to present this as a major pathway of criminal migration. It is equally plausible that the evidence he presents underscores the penitential dimension of crusading, and not the "get-out-of-jail card" Tibble suggests (p. 40).

Crusader Criminals makes an important contribution to crusades historiography. Tibble writes in a style that is accessible to both popular and scholarly audiences, and his use of diverse sources and provocative arguments challenges readers to reconsider familiar narratives. His most significant contribution lies in drawing attention to the often-overlooked culture of violence and disorder that shaped daily life in the Latin East. Even when one might question his interpretation of particular evidence, Tibble succeeds in reframing essential questions about who the crusaders were, what motivated them, and what kind of world they helped to create.

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Crescent Dawn: The Rise of the Ottoman Empire and the Making of the Modern Age. By Si Sheppard. Osprey, 2025. ISBN 978-1-4728-5146-8. Maps. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 528. $40.00 (hardback).

In *Crescent Dawn*, Si Sheppard, associate professor of political science at Long Island University, contends that the first truly global war was fought between the rising Ottoman Empire and its rivals in Europe, Africa, and Asia. Sheppard makes the case that this global war had an impact well into the modern age due to the legacies of global expansion among the rival Islamic societies vying for power in North Africa. This included the Mamelukes in Egypt, the Sharifate of Marrakesh, and the Safavid Empire of Persia, as well as the various clientele states, allies and vassals throughout the Indian subcontinent as well as Southeast Asia and the European religious and political entities with whom they were in contact.

Crescent Dawn has a mix of modern secondary, and primary source material from European scholars but also sources from the Middle East, North Africa, Southeast Asia. Sheppard uses these sources to defend and reinforce his thesis. Sheppard makes an even more credible case for the formation of the modern world in his treatment of the centuries long conflict between the various European powers from the downfall of Constantinople in 1453 to the internecine conflicts between rival religious factions within what would be considered Christendom, be it Catholic or Protestant. Sheppard cites examples of the unifying nature of Ottoman expansion in the case of Malta in 1565, the "Reconquista" of the Iberian Peninsula and the expansion of Ottoman influence into North Africa and the Indian Ocean, as well as what is today the Malacca Straits, leaving a tangible, lasting impact on the modern world.

Crescent Dawn also traces the rise in organizational principles over large empires to include a more standardized taxation system based upon religious and ethnic grounds, as well as a revolution in the means of raising an army under a central authority with high levels of professional long standing leadership. This book is distinctive in the study of Ottoman history, particularly among recent publications, in that it is a global history of the Ottoman Empire and its place in world affairs rather than an insular one such as Christopher de Bellaigue's *The Lion House* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2022) or *The Ottomans: Khans, Caesars, Caliphs* by Marc David Baer (Basic Books, 2021). While both Baer and de Bellaigue have produced valuable works to forward the study and interest in Ottoman history, Sheppard has produced a more approachable and more engaging historical narrative that introduces both concepts and characters in the context in which they lived while explaining the long-lasting impact of decisions made by the Ottomans as well as the reactions of their neighbors.

In short, "Crescent Dawn" is a valuable addition to Ottoman historiography as well as early modern European history due to its use of both primary and secondary sources and its readability. It would be suitable for the general reader of history

as well as the beginning specialist in Ottoman history due to its well-stocked bibliography and works cited section. Sheppard also has made good use of the maps he has chosen to include in the various sections that are a help to the reader as a general reference tool.

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Britons and their Battlefields: War, Memory, and Commemoration since the Fourteenth Century. By Ian Atherton. Oxford University Press, 2024. ISBN 978-0-989-1285-9. Index. Pp. 330. $45.00 (hardback).

For those who believe that time erodes memory and that the past is buried beneath layers of progress, Ian Atherton's *Britons and their Battlefields* is a commanding reminder that landscapes of war do not quietly disappear. The memories and markings of war linger, transform, and resurface through the stories we tell, the monuments we raise, and the rituals we preserve. At the heart of the book lies a simple but profound thesis: battlefield commemoration is not static. Rather, it is a dynamic, socially constructed process that reveals as much about the present as it does about the past. "The past does not simply endure," Atherton argues, "it is remade—on hillsides, in churchyards, along rural byways—by each generation that seeks to claim it" (p. 4). From the battlefield crosses of Towton to the carefully tended cemeteries of the Western Front, each memorial is a cultural artifact, shaped by the politics, values, and tensions of its time. The significance of post-battle rituals, such as dealing with the dead and wounded by marking graves with battlefield crosses, celebrating crucial victories with markers and monuments, and raising new statues to honor the fallen, are key in shaping the long-term memory of yesterday's battles.

Organized chronologically over seven centuries, the book spans the fourteenth century to the post-Brexit present and offers a longitudinal survey of how battles like Towton (1461), Naseby (1645), and the Somme (1916) have been remembered, contested, and commodified. Atherton raises an enduring question: what does it mean to "remember" war through land and to re-remember through centuries? He places battlefield commemoration in conversation with broader themes of nationhood, identity, religious conflict, imperialism, and modern memory. For a deeper, multi-layered analysis of battlefield commemoration, Atherton combines a *longue durée* approach and an interdisciplinary lens that draws on history, memory studies, nationalism, heritage studies, spatial politics, archaeology, and "the work of the dead" concept with careful attention to both state-led and vernacular practices.

One of the most striking aspects, and a particular strength of the book is its analysis of the "vernacular memory" of ordinary Britons. While state-sponsored monuments and elite-driven commemorations often dominate the memory landscape, Atherton dedicates rich attention to local practices: folk songs, parish

memorials, family stories, and local guides that imbue the richness of our recollections. He observes that "for much of British history, commemoration was a village act before it was a national one" (p. 87). This insight adds both intimacy and texture to what could have remained a top-down narrative.

Atherton's treatment of modern conflicts is equally compelling. His chapters on the First and Second World Wars reveal the complicated layering of older commemorative traditions atop new sites of trauma. The pilgrimage to Ypres and the Somme, for example, is shown not simply as homage to the fallen, but as a continuation of a medieval ritualistic logic that had long valorized sacred ground. In his analysis of the Falklands and Gulf War commemorations, he cautions against the "routinization of reverence," where battle remembrance risks becoming performative and detached from historical understanding.

If there is any weakness in the manuscript, one could argue that more comparative references to larger European practices might have enriched the analysis, especially given the shared commemorative trends after 1918. A further exploration into how digital memory (through apps, virtual tours or online archives) is reshaping battlefield interaction in the twenty-first century might have added to a more contemporary feel to the narratives. However, these are minor critiques of what is otherwise a masterful volume.

Britons and their Battlefields is a timely intervention amidst resurgent nationalism and debates about imperial legacies. Atherton urges us to see commemoration not as an innocent act of heritage, but as a politically inflected decision with real implications. "Every plaque, every monument, every poppy field is a choice. It tells us less about what happened and more about who we think we are now" (p. 362). This observation should give pause to those engaged in memorial design, curriculum building, or public policy. At a time when public monuments and historical memory are being reconsidered across the Western world, Atherton reminds us that the physical remnants of conflict, the fields, stones, and plaques, are never neutral. They are reflections of contemporary values as much as historical events. The British memory of war is not fixed in stone or soil but continually rewritten in the present tense.

Britons and Their Battlefields will appeal to a broad audience, including military historians, scholars of memory and identity, heritage professionals, and general readers with an interest in how war continues to shape the British cultural landscape. This book should be essential reading for military historians, memory scholars, and anyone concerned with the long shadow of war over national identity. It is a deeply humane and thoughtful reminder that remembering war is as much about the living as it is about the dead.

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Camps: A Global History of Mass Confinement. By Aidan Forth. International Themes and Issues. University of Toronto Press, 2024. ISBN 978-1-4875-8828-1. Maps. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Pp. vii, 280. $32.95 (paperback).

"But does a focus on Nazi atrocities overshadow awareness of other camps and other crimes?" This is not the central question of Aidan Forth's *Camps* but it is an unavoidable one, considering a historical study of camps, or "demarcated institutions that contain or confine categories of people … as a preventive measure, often in a moment of perceived emergency … " (p. 2). Forth chronologically spans the globe in this accessible volume, looking for key moments to explore when and how societies respond to "perceived emergencies" (most frequently war) by identifying threatening groups, rounding them up, and detaining them in facilities strikingly similar in structure—or concentration camps. Through a series of thematic essays, Forth deftly tackles an unwieldy subject topic and moves across time and space to uncover how camps are a natural byproduct of war and have a shared history well before (and beyond) World War II.

Rather than simply provide a march through the "differences and peculiarities" of camp systems or provide a comprehensive definition of a "camp," Forth wants to "highlight shared patterns and regularities … " across time and space (p. 11). Ascertaining similarities in how societies have identified and defined the enemy through dehumanizing language and how these patterns reproduce themselves in similar architectural structures and bureaucracy in camps, Forth succeeds in providing "an integrative history that provokes discussion and facilitates comparison" (p. 11). From slave plantations and native reservations in the northern hemisphere during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to post-World War II displaced persons camps, *Camps* is organized into eight essays that focus on historical case studies, including British workhouses and the Soviet gulag, to explore, for example, global industrialization and imperialism. Whether concentration camps or "other carceral venues" (a vague term that Forth could more explicitly define earlier in the book), the spaces of confinement that Forth includes—regardless of region or time—were (and continue to be) "emanations of a more diverse and pervasive repertoire of modern statecraft" (p. 2).

Forth's discussion of camps as a product of modern statecraft lends itself well to military historians looking to connect their work to studies on detention and containment. The influence of war on the development and shifts in the structures and operations of camps changed by the outbreak of the Second World War, but the "dynamics of military conquest and a regular resort to emergency powers" that characterized colonialism from the seventeenth through the early twentieth centuries are a steadfast. In the "Military Captivity" essay, Forth argues that the First World War "intensified dynamics of total war" already in place in an earlier era of colonization (as seen in the concentration camps that were a key feature of the Boer War) but suggests that "professional command structures displaced the

psychological burden of killing from individual soldiers to automatic weapons and anonymous bureaucracies … " (p. 83). When combined with total war's ability to "blur distinctions between soldiers and civilians" while "forc[ing] citizens to draw clear boundaries between 'us' and 'them'," states emphasized "military necessity" at the risk of violating civil and human rights to isolate enemies. This created a "rupture and a pivot" in global approaches to camps in decades to come. Here, Forth is not arguing that characteristics of camps during World War I were entirely new or unique; rather, he is suggesting that it serves as a moment for military historians to reflect on a genealogy of concentration camps.

If much of Forth's book does not seem groundbreaking, this should not detract from its immense value. Forth is clear that he is not treading new ground in the study of camps, but he is doing the heavy work of synthesizing across specialties to offer foundations for new inquiries that cross the boundaries of time, conflict, and space. A specialist in the Nazi *Konzentraitionslager* might not find new information in his essay on "Conquest and Genocide in Nazi Empire," but an expert in Japanese American incarceration during World War II might glean valuable and comparative insights into how such a program was structured and how to carefully craft a conversation that pulls on key, structural similarities without drawing direct connections between the two sets of wartime concentration camps.

At times, Forth's focus tends to wander (a challenge with some of the subsections designed to provide closer looks at certain features of specific camp systems while posing questions to facilitate conversations), and he sometimes blurs the distinction between "camps" and other detention systems including workhouses and prisons, but this can hardly be held against him when tackling such an unwieldy subject. This book is highly recommended for advanced undergraduate and graduate students as well as specialists looking for ways to broaden their scope and audiences.

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Near and Far Waters: The Geopolitics of Seapower. By Colin Flint. Stanford University Press, 2024. ISBN 978-1-5036-3981-2. Illustrations. Notes. Index. Pp. 246. $26.00 (paperback).

This present-minded approach to the geopolitics of a rapidly evolving conflict of economic interests between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the United States of America (USA) has to be read in the light of President Trump's imposition (and intermittent removal and adjustment) of a series of eye-watering tariffs he claims will punish nations that, in his judgment, have exploited existing trade terms to damage American economic interests, thus returning manufacturing jobs to the USA. It should be clear that if his measures have the effect he seeks, they will make the search for a diplomatic off-ramp for the trans-Pacific tensions even harder.

It is important to note that neither of the protagonists in this drama are seapowers. Flint uses this classic, single-word formulation when discussing Mahan's work; however, Mahan, the most "geopolitical" of maritime strategists, deliberately divided the word into the term "Sea Power" because he understood that being a seapower was primarily an identity, a cultural-political choice that informed strategy. Being a cultural seapower enabled a group of small states, among them ancient Athens, to adopt an asymmetric Sea Power strategy because they privileged the sea for war, trade, and culture, and had pluralistic political systems and dynamic economies. Historically, they chose to be seapowers because they were too small to compete with contemporary great powers.

Writing for American naval officers and statesmen in the late 1880s, just as the USA began to challenge British global hegemony, Mahan created a strategic concept to support the extension of American hemispheric security and economic expansion, including newly acquired Hawaii. After the Spanish-American War of 1898, America became an Asian power and, a decade later, conducted a classic "Far Waters" deterrent exercise when the "Great White Fleet" dropped anchor in Tokyo Bay without warning, a signal of intent that anticipated the events of 1945. In geopolitical terms, China and the USA are continentally focused political, military and economic hegemons, modern Roman Empires, while Britain, the last seapower Great Power, saw itself as the heir of Athens, Carthage, and Venice.

The primary strategic tool of seapower states has always been economic pressure, while Julian Corbett's famous line of 1911 "except in the rarest cases" did not limit seapower strategy to the projection of a necessarily small British Army (at that date, five divisions, a force with no strategic significance). Corbett was referencing the British total economic warfare strategy enabled by the naval blockade of Napoleonic Europe between 1803 and 1814, blockades that shattered the economies of Russia and Central Europe, destabilizing Napoleon's imperium without the need for a major military effort on Britain's part. Britain did not raise conscript armies; it waited for allies to provide foot soldiers.

The assumption that a future trans-Pacific conflict would find a solution on land reflects America's continental/military culture, which assumes all wars will resemble those analyzed by Clausewitz (who only mentioned the sea once), ending in a great land battle and/or the capture of the enemy's capital city. Nuclear weapons and geography make such an outcome highly unlikely in the current case. Furthermore, the critical role of economic pressure in the ongoing trans-Pacific stand-off was obvious long before 2025. Dominion over the global economy is the main prize in a "war" that is already underway. The only question is how it might evolve, and if either side is prepared to escalate.

In 1941, targeted American economic pressure presented Japan with a rapidly closing window of opportunity. To date the PRC's headline preparations have focused on naval security in its "near" waters, and reducing the potential impact of the economic pressure, notably with the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which highlights the nature of those concerns. It also links backwards to the Russian Trans-Siberian Railway that, along with the explosive growth of interest in naval

strategy that followed Mahan's 1890 *Influence of Sea Power*, sparked Halford Mackinder's famous "Geographical Pivot" paper of 1904.

Mackinder debated those ideas with Julian Corbett in the leading contemporary British think tank and aboard a British battleship, while the intellectual synergy between Mahan and Mackinder is obvious in Mahan's 1900 *The Problem of Asia*, which anticipated key themes of Mackinder's paper. Construction costs and slow trains made the Trans-Siberian uneconomic in peacetime and limited its strategic value. History suggests the BRI and other Chinese attempts to minimize the impact of hostile sea control are unlikely to meet expectations. The central argument of *Near and Far Waters*, that the USA has access to China's "near waters," but China does not yet have access to those of the USA, is persuasive. This highlights key alignments. Would Russia support China in a sub-nuclear conflict with the U.S. and its significant allies? Or would any such conflict play out within the economic sphere, with the 2025 tariff round as an escalatory step?

Critically neither the PRC nor the USA is currently, or ever likely to become, a seapower. Seapowers, as opposed to Mahanian Sea Powers, have always been small, agile, and politically inclusive, privileging trade, maritime specialization and industries over autocracy, land, and agriculture. Seapower is an intelligent response to weakness, available to small, dynamic, and inclusive states with maritime or insular locations, not an assertion of power. Meeting the challenge of this clash of agendas and political models may hinge on the recognition that the open oceans belong to neither party; they must be shared. Corbett stressed that economic warfare has a serious impact on neutrals, and their opinions had to be taken into account. In 1812, the economic impact of the British blockade of Napoleonic Europe led United States to declare war. Britain could not relax the blockade without losing the much larger war with France. How this might play out in the future must remain uncertain, but there is plenty of evidence to examine.

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Men of God, Men of War: Military Chaplains as Ministers, Warriors, and Prisoners. By Robert C. Doyle. Naval Institute Press, 2024. ISBN 978-1-6824-7418-1. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 205. $34.95 (hardback).

A military's relationship with religion is as ancient as human society. Priestly officers and their assistants accompanied even the legions of Rome. The sprawling continental republic that is the United States is no exception. Chaplains have accompanied America's military formations since its inception. The sociological contours of this (sometimes peculiar) relationship, especially in its modern contexts, have been the subject of considerable examination. Robert C. Doyle, in *Men of God, Men of War*, continues this project, assessing the contributions of American military chaplains through their varied roles from the revolution to the present.

Doyle's text is different in that it is something of a retrieval of historical biography, rather than a strict product of modern historiography, especially in a field often dominated by sociological considerations. His interest is not in the politically fraught and perhaps somewhat tired analysis of how the chaplain corps purportedly represents a synthesis of militarized American civil religion, or how it balances its wide-ranging pluralist commitments, but is rather in the personal, in illustrating how American military chaplains have served and continue to serve at that precise moment of ministry to service members. He relies not on archival sources or even wider engagement with scholars in religious studies, but on "personal narratives and studies" (p. 146) that accentuate the noble elements of this service. Of special interest is his treatment of chaplains as prisoners of war, an admittedly underexplored topic, and how American military chaplains in harrowing conditions often exemplified bravery, resistance, and self-sacrifice in ways that are nothing short of heroic.

Doyle's efforts are commendable, and his reflections on the limits of historiography in the book's last chapter—that it is less science, more art—are especially poignant. The text's strength is rooted in this key, unspoken recognition: that conversation on American military chaplaincy often gravitates around ideology. In other words, much of our academic wrangling about the American civil religion (and chaplaincy as one of its many tributary streams) is what it purports to represent, or what it says about the American character, or what its clergy are promoting theologically, or what it is doing to shape the mentality of service members or the public in either positive or deleterious ways. What is lost in these (often axe-grinding) conversations, however, is a view of the specific, of those incredible, often moving moments when chaplains have wept, celebrated, bound wounds, or even sacrificed themselves for the service members in their care.

Doyle's text is replete with examples of chaplains of diverse faiths who endured tremendous hardship to honor the sense of obligation they felt for their fellow service members. That these anecdotes could be dismissed as merely anecdotes in wider academic discussion is something of a crime. Doyle argues, for example, that "personal captivity narratives are indeed primary data" (p. 146). I agree wholeheartedly.

Some readers may feel that Doyle's project falls short in his engagement with a philosophy of historiography and what role personal narrative should play in its contribution to history. He only teases at this throughout the text, and especially in its last chapter. An earnest engagement with a sociological analysis of chaplaincy also may have helped in bulking up the rigor of the text. These critiques are somewhat thin, though, as they are likely beyond the scope of Doyle's efforts. Doyle's hope is not to craft a history text in the formal sense, but to tell a story that reflects what he sees as the virtuous characteristics of the American military chaplaincy when it has shone at its brightest. It is in this sense that the text succeeds.

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Till the Extinction of this Rebellion: George Rogers Clark, Frontier Warfare, and the Illinois Campaign of 1778–1779. By Eric Sterner. Westholme, 2024. ISBN 978-1-5941-6425-5. Maps. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. vii, 164. $29.95 (hardback).

Eric Sterner delivers a compelling narrative of George Rogers Clark's impressive, and often neglected, Illinois Campaign of the American Revolutionary War. Managing a paucity of contemporary sources, *Till the Extinction of this Rebellion* seeks to cut through the biases of nineteenth- and twenty-first-century historiographies to understand Clark's 1778 campaign "in the context in which it took place" (p. xi). Such a contextual focus inevitably runs the risk of smoothing over the social and political complexities of the eighteenth-century northwestern borderlands. Yet Sterner dutifully balances the challenges of a story "best served by understanding people and events through their biased and limited perceptions" (p. xiv) with historical analysis of borderlands politics. The result is an excellent addition to the military history of the American Revolution that places the strategic mind of George Rogers Clark on par with those of George Washington and Nathaniel Greene while not getting bogged down by the brutal realities of frontier warfare.

Eric Sterner is no stranger to borderlands history of the American Revolution. Holding a BA from American University and two MAs from George Washington University, he has published *Anatomy of a Massacre: The Destruction of Gnadenhutten, 1782* (Westholme, 2020), exploring the diverse viewpoints and accounts of the Gnadenhutten massacre, as well as *The Battle of Upper Sandusky, 1782* (Westholme, 2023), an analysis of Colonel William Crawford's military campaign into the Ohio Country. Sterner is also a regular contributor to the *Journal of the American Revolution* as well as the *Emerging Revolutionary War Era* history blog writing on topics from the 1776 American raid on Nassau to Revolutionary-era Thanksgiving celebrations. The 1778 Illinois Campaign fits squarely within Sterner's previous scholarship of the frontier campaigns and revolutionary politics.

Sterner's George Rogers Clark is not the heroic "Conqueror of the West" as nineteenth-century historiography has dubbed him, nor is he merely a racist, brutal frontier fighter as twentieth-century historians have frequently characterized him. Instead, he occupies a more complex middle ground, a strategic mastermind willing and able to exploit the ever-shifting social and political landscape of the Illinois country. With few resources and less manpower than he hoped for, Clark relied on his strategic mind to achieve success.

Sterner provides several compelling instances of Clark's use of "psychological warfare" to gain military allies among the mixed Catholic, French, and Native communities. Among such examples are Clark's utilization of French fears about Americans to his advantage as well as his skirting of conventional Native council protocol to appear in a greater position of power. In the former example, Sterner argues that Clark first played upon the existing negative views that the French inhabitants of Cahokia held about Americans to slowly "reveal his version of the generosity and fairness he hoped would bring the people of the Illinois Country to

his side." (p. 49). In the latter instance, Sterner contends that Clark chose to forego the established Native council conventions such as gift-giving and diplomatic speeches to "establish psychological dominance" with "firmness and domineering them through barely veiled threats" (p. 60).

Sterner balances the more outrageous aspects of Clark's personal letters and memoirs with the daily letters of second-in-command Captain Joseph Bowman and British Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton. By utilizing these "on the ground" sources, Sterner fulfills his goal of exploring the Illinois Campaign through the limited perceptions of its participants "to understand them the way they understood themselves and one another (p. xi). As he notes, this narrative is not one that passes moral judgments on the horrors of frontier warfare but rather one that explores the events of the campaign within the context of such an environment. The result is a depiction of Clark already well-acquainted with the everyday realities of life on the fringes of European empires in North America and able to exploit such realities for his military goals. To readers not previously familiar with frontier warfare, the harrowing accounts of scalping and execution can often seem exceptionally brutal. While Clark and Hamilton may have been acclimated to such occurrences, a more in-depth examination of these everyday dangers earlier in the book would have served to better acclimate readers.

Till the Extinction of this Rebellion delivers a concise retelling of George Rogers Clark's 1778 Illinois Campaign. Sterner bypasses the nineteenth-century triumphalist view of Clark as well as the twenty-first-century dismissiveness to distil a narrative entirely contained within the context of the late eighteenth-century Illinois borderlands. Sterner's history is one that presents the 1778 campaign as close as possible to how contemporaries may have perceived it. Readers interested in the American Revolution, borderlands warfare, and early American Indigenous history will find much to enjoy.

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Purpose and Power: US Grand Strategy from the Revolutionary Era to the Present. By Donald Stoker. Cambridge University Press, 2024. ISBN 978-1-0092-5726-8. Maps. Figures. Notes. Index. Pp. ix, 859. $44.99 (hardback).

Donald Stoker's *Purpose and Power* is an impressive and ambitious book. Stoker's project is nothing less than examining and explaining the United States' grand strategy over 250-plus years. One of Stoker's aims is to provide useable history, to help readers better understand "new challenges resembling old ones" by highlighting the historical context of—and options for—current American grand strategy in confronting and countering Russia, China, and Iran (p. 702). The book is intended for a wide public, and it is accessible and remarkably approachable for a work well over 800 pages. The chapters are clear, mostly jargon-free, and

well-organized, with subheads that spell out content, chronologically arranged by presidential administration, and excellent, succinct concluding sections. It is a very "assignable" book, in part or in whole.

Purpose and Power is a work of historical synthesis. It relies on secondary sources, though at times it delves deftly into archival sources. The emphasis is on what is known as DIME: diplomatic, information, military, and economic strategies. They comprise the key elements of grand strategy for Stoker (pp. 8–11) and appear in every chapter as organizing categories.

Stoker opens with a short section on definitions and meaning. He adopts a fairly traditional view of grand strategy as the domain of high policy makers, enacted by nation-states, and defined by the "coordinated use of the various elements of national power" (p. 1). He also rejects definitions that require grand strategies to be long-term as an "artificial requirement ignoring the reality of changing political aims and an international environment in perpetual flux" (p. 7). Stoker thus acknowledges that the U.S. did not always have a grand strategy. Some efforts were aimed at the distant future, and at times, U.S. strategies and interests have been opaque at best. He asserts, however, that U.S. leaders frequently debated, developed, and applied grand strategies, which he intends to reveal in hopes they will "teach readers how to *think* about political aims and grand strategy" (p. 11).

Stoker draws out four core, guiding thematic objectives that centered U.S. strategy from the Revolutionary War to the present: security, sovereignty, expansion, and democracy. The book is at its best considering the intersection of diplomatic and military strategy. This is particularly true when dealing with conflicts such as the Civil War, World War II, the early Cold War, and the "hot peace" in Korea (chapters 9–11). Keen insights abound as well as sharp assessments and judgments of leaders, strategic thinking, and decision-making. There is a lot of blame for Woodrow Wilson (p. 257), a lot of credit for Franklin Roosevelt and his inner circle, and a cutting critique of Harry Truman's lack of ability (p. 343). Stoker concludes with a compelling and incisive appraisal of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, which put "enormous faith in unproven theoretical ideas" and thus created "poor foundations for analysis, undermined American strategic thinking, and proved destructive in Vietnam" (p. 415).

This is conventional diplomatic and military history. The actors are presidents, military leaders, secretaries of state and cabinet officials. Stoker often cites other synthetic histories in declarative judgement, and while this is hardly problematic, at times these statements stand in for the voices and actions of the individuals or groups, or do not do justice to new directions in historical scholarship. Stoker's dismissal of the Anti-Imperialist League (AIL) as an "odd coalition," and his lack of attention to the complicated ways in which both "large policy" advocates and anti-imperialists deployed, rejected, or adapted to racial hierarchical thinking (p. 203) is but one example. In the same section, though, Stoker is spot-on about military strategy in the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War, and on the strategic consequences of the counter-insurgency in the Philippines.

A similar concern emerges around "the Indians" in the early sections of the book and a lack of attention to new work on Indigenous diplomacy. I longed for more nuanced ways of understanding Indian Removal and deeper exploration of the connections between Stoker's security-sovereignty-expansion themes. These seem to demand a more multidirectional approach. Andrew Jackson, for example, the architect of Indian Removal, comes across much more favorably than recent scholarship tends to depict him (pp. 86–97).

The international diplomacy of slavery at times is out of focus as well, yet it was critical to the strategic thought and actions of the first several generations of U.S. policymakers. Path-breaking scholarship epitomized by Matt Karp's *This Vast Southern Empire* (Harvard, 2016) has focused on slave power diplomacy and shown how Southern policymakers and diplomats pursued a range of strategic efforts. I wondered, too, why there was not more on the Haitian Revolution and the revolutions in Latin America, given how American policymakers and citizens alike were attuned to the revolutions in their midst and how Stoker emphasizes the significance of the Monroe Doctrine after 1823.

Such concerns about detail arise in any review of a vast historical account. Synthesis is tremendously hard. Stoker is to be applauded for his ambition and the result. Historical insights are useful in thinking through contemporary challenges. I also agree with many of Stoker's introductory claims about the limits of theorizing about grand strategy; however I wish he had pulled more from recent scholarly work. This scholarship has aimed to "rethink" the history of American grand strategy, pointing out conceptual and historical problems in a top-down and nation-state approach, layering in the voices of indigenous peoples, peace activists and INGO leaders, missionaries, and others integral in shaping U.S. strategic culture, thought, and policy. More of that would round out the voices and insights in *Purpose and Power*. As it stands, Stoker has produced an important book that will provoke thought and argument and thus deserves a wide readership.

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Wargaming Waterloo. By Charles J. Esdaile. Marine Corps University Press, 2023. ISBN 979-8-9862-5944-4. Illustrations. Color photographs. Notes. Appendixes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xxvii, 319. Free download: https://www.usmcu.edu/Portals/218/Wargaming%20Waterloo_new%20web_1.pdf.

For the U.S. Marine Corps to publish *Wargaming Waterloo* seems an unusual choice. The Marine Corps cites two explanations: "the simulation of complex war situations—is becoming increasingly more relevant to political and military discourse as U.S. armed forces lean more heavily on it as a training tool to hone warfighters' decision-making skills and to shape defense plans and policies." In addition, wargaming "is also an excellent tool for understanding past conflicts " (p. v). The

author is well-known for his numerous, scholarly books on the Napoleonic period. Several admirable volumes stand on the shelf behind me as I write this. A second surprise came when I realized that the author and I share acquaintance with many of the scholars and wargamers he mentions. His book is dedicated to the memory of Donald Featherstone, for instance, whose book on wargaming with miniature lead soldiers inspired me, as a young teenager, to develop a lifetime passion.

The book has eight chapters beginning with "The History and Development of Wargames." A nine-page conclusion offers "Some Thoughts on the Wargame as a Research Tool." Embedded within the text are many extended examinations of board game and miniature wargame mechanics. This is tough sledding for any but the most enthusiastic gamer. For readers keenly interested in Napoleonic history, however, the text, and particularly the discursive footnotes, are chock full of gems.

Esdaile asserts that his research on the battlefield's terrain offers "the most detailed piece of its sort that has ever been published" (fn. 3, p. 37). Having walked the field myself in three different decades, I agree. Esdaile uses his knowledge boldly to go against received wisdom that La Haye Saint and Hougoumont were "the keys to victory" (p. 42). He explains, "To write thus in defiance of the insistence of so many authorities that either Hougoumont or La Haye Sainte were the key to the Battle of Waterloo may seem foolhardy, but a close study of the ground makes it all but impossible to take such claims at face value" (fn. 8, p. 42). Such thought-provoking notions reward the careful reader who follows the trail of text and footnotes.

The footnotes are less fortunately used for the author to dismiss apparent rivals and critics. At least eleven footnotes are devoted to David Chandler's writings. Esdaile pronounces the late historian's work as error-laden and worse. In full disclosure, Chandler became a good friend, although similarly thin-skinned, greeting me for the first time by referring to my published criticisms with, "Oh, so you are that James Arnold." And again, full disclosure, I too am one of Esdaile's targets (presumably because of my published comments) in a footnote where my work is labeled nonsensical (fn. 33, pp. 84–85).

The important subtext of the book is to assess whether Napoleon had a reasonable chance to win the battle and whether a victory would have had history-altering, strategic consequences? The book's numerous gaming simulations come close to proving that Napoleon had, at best, low odds of defeating the Duke of Wellington at Waterloo before the Prussians arrived on the field. Esdaile makes an even stronger case that even if Napoleon had won Waterloo, the allied coalition would have achieved its goal of deposing the emperor: "Not counting the Spaniards and Piedmontese … Napoléon would also have to contend with a first wave of 150,000 Austrians, Bavarians, Badeners, and Württembergers and 168,000 Russians" (p. 230). Later, citing one of his previous works, Esdaile writes, "a defeat for Wellington at Mont Saint Jean [Waterloo]would merely have seen that commander pull back to the impregnable haven of Antwerp and Blücher retire on the Rhine, while the Austrians and Russians poured across the frontier further south in overwhelming numbers" (p. 283).

Does *Wargaming Waterloo* achieve its stated aims? I cannot judge if it will "hone warfighters' decision-making skills" (p. v). Yet it is clear that today's military establishments have used wargames for planning purposes. Renowned game designer James Dunnigan noted that, in Esdaile's words, "the spate of wargames modelling clashes between NATO and the Warsaw Pact that appeared in the uncomfortably hot latter years of the Cold War were reportedly seized on with great avidity by the Russian Army" (p. 25). Esdaile adds, "According to some accounts, the Gulf War of 1991 was actually planned using a commercial board wargame titled Gulf Strike" (fn. 40, p. 25). As for the more general audiences, I can confidently say this book does help a reader better understand what happened at Waterloo and why.

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Cherokee Civil Warrior: Chief John Ross and the Struggle for Tribal Sovereignty. By W. Dale Weeks. University of Oklahoma Press, 2023. ISBN 978-0-8061-9491-2. Maps. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 231. $24.95 (paperback).

Born during George Washington's first term as president, John Ross lived to see the end of the American Civil War as principal chief of the Cherokee Nation. It was on Ross's shoulders that fate placed the task of leading the Cherokee through an era marked by tragedy for those viewed by white Americans as standing in the way of their "manifest destiny."

The product of marriage between a Cherokee woman and Scottish trader, Ross received a classical education and rose quickly in Cherokee society. After a stint as an officer in a regiment of Cherokee that served in the War of 1812, he established Ross's Landing on the Tennessee River and transformed the area into a center of settlement and commerce in the Cherokee lands that whites subsequently renamed Chattanooga. By 1820 Ross was a leading figure on the Cherokee National Council and headed delegations to Washington to deal with efforts by the United States to get the Cherokee to cede their lands to white settlers. After playing a major role in the effort to draft a constitution for the Cherokee Republic, Ross was elected principal chief in 1828 and held that office until his death in 1866, leading the tribe through the dispossession of their lands in Georgia and the "Trail of Tears" of the 1830s that brought to tribe to modern-day Oklahoma.

These events provide the backdrop to W. Dale Weeks's *Cherokee Civil Warrior* and its study of the difficulties Ross and the Cherokee faced negotiating the war between the United States and the Confederate States of America. Weeks chronicles how, as Ross calculated how best to serve his nation's interests and initially determined that a stance of neutrality was preferable, he had to deal with the alacrity with which other nations aligned with the Confederacy. In addition, Ross had to manage divisions within his tribe as Stand Watie and other Cherokee (many associated with the shadowy Knights of the Golden Circle) responded positively to

appeals from Confederate authorities to support the rebellion. Unfortunately, seeing in it the best bet for preserving Cherokee sovereignty, given what was perceived as abandonment by officials of the United States government, Ross relented in August 1861 to appeals from Confederate agent Albert Pike after the Confederate victory at Wilson's Creek and entered an alliance with the Confederacy.

As the tide of the war in the trans-Mississippi turned in favor of the United States the following year, Ross was taken into custody by Federal authorities and traveled to Washington, as he had before, to present his case and that of his people to an American president. There, Weeks argues, "Ross's faith in the process of constitutional law found a friend" (p. 143) in Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln and Ross agreed that the federal government had failed to meet its treaty obligations when it effectively abandoned the Indian Territory in 1861, and Ross's decision to align with the Confederacy could be seen as a response to coercion. Thus, Weeks argues, with Lincoln in the executive mansion, treaty relations between the Cherokee and the federal government would have been restored as they were before.

Lincoln's assassination, however, brought the decidedly unsympathetic Andrew Johnson to the presidency. Weeks describes how Johnson and the people he appointed to deal with the Cherokee did not share Lincoln's constitutional scruples. Nor did they have Lincoln's willingness to acknowledge that it was failures on the part of the federal government that were responsible for Ross's decision to align with the Confederacy. Consequently, they took a hard line toward the Cherokee and the other nations in the Indian Territory. This was made abundantly clear, Weeks demonstrates, at the Fort Smith Council of September 1865. There representatives of the federal government held Ross responsible for Cherokee abrogation of its treaty obligations in 1861, insisted on his being removed as principal chief of the Cherokee Nation and, Weeks argues, set the stage for sweeping changes to Indian policy advocated by Ely Parker that resulted in the end of the policy of dealing with the Cherokees and other tribes as independent, autonomous nations in 1871.

Weeks presents all of this in a readable, efficient study, drawing from extensive research into both primary sources and previous literature, that presents a narrative and arguments that are illuminating and cogent. Some readers may quibble with the stretches of the narrative in which Ross disappears and wish for tighter focus and more detail on his activities throughout the book. Still, Weeks merits praise for offering interesting and useful perspectives on the unsuccessful struggle of Native Americans to defend their societies in the face of white expansionism, as well the complex story of the American Civil War in the Trans-Mississippi.

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Nat Turner, Black Prophet: A Visionary History. By Anthony E. Kaye with Gregory P. Downs. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2024. ISBN 978-0-8090-2437-7. Maps. Notes. Index. Pp. viii, 321. $30.00 (hardback).

The story of Nat Turner has always been a compelling one for historians, and many would think it difficult to add to the voluminous work already done on him. Anthony Kaye's work, however, provides an important new view of Turner as a military leader. The approach to writing this work was both interesting and tragic. Kaye, whose idea and research this work came from, passed away before being able to complete it. At the request of Kaye, Gregory Downs took up the project and did most of the writing, stating, "The form of authorship on the title page reflects our understanding that this book would consist of his arguments and research but my words" (p. xxiii). This unique writing, and the expertise of both authors, brings us a strong take on Nat Turner and the period in which he lived. Kaye's goal was to examine Turner in a new way, as a general, and he was successful, as he expands our understanding of Turner and the world that shaped him.

While Turner has been explored as a leader, an abolitionist, a visionary, and many other things, placing him in his proper context as a military leader in a progression of African American revolt campaigns helps to deepen our understanding of him. The early chapters of the book explore Turner's background in various settings, giving the reader a refresher on the many different aspects of Turner's world—as a Methodist, as a prophet—and how those identities fit within the era in which he lived.

In the fourth chapter, the book moves the discussion to that of Turner as a warrior, exploring his military side. Turner decided to battle as a result of his understanding of the Book of Revelation and its calls for apocalyptic battles and the end of the world. Turner saw a war coming through his visions and his understanding of the Bible, and began to try to convert others to his cause. It was not easy going, as his escape from slavery and his return, on his own, influenced how many of the people he hoped to lead viewed him. Turner, of course, focused on his Black neighbors, and many of his early followers came from the area in which he grew up. He kept his plans quiet, knowing that other revolts had been curbed by too much talk, and "[f]or the beginning, at least, their plan was for a religious war that was also a race war" (p. 119).

After numerous signs that influenced him, Turner targeted 22 August 1831 to strike. Turner the general began to emerge: "Nat took his role as military commander seriously, drawing upon a widespread understanding that slave rebellions were wars, an understanding shared across much of the Black Americas in this period" (p. 133). The book then takes on the feel of a more traditional military history, reviewing Turner's campaign, his goals, and how he and his men performed. Downs compared Turner's generalship to his opponents, just as any other military history would, and found some of them wanting. Turner had to balance military goals with the goals of his men, and the book discusses the issues of their plans for Parker's Gate and Jerusalem.

Turner never made it to Jerusalem, as the enemy response and their sheer numbers spelled doom for the rebellion. His men were defeated, and Turner went into hiding; "Nat's actual body hid near a fence … his legend walked the earth" (p. 210). For this to end, the enemy had to track him down and make an example of him, which led to Turner's execution. The final chapter of the book, fittingly called "Legacies," reviews the effect and influence of Turner. Turner, in the end, was an important figure in transmitting the cause of rebellion through American, and world, history: "History travels both back into the past and ahead into the future" (p. 257). As much as Turner was influenced by earlier rebellions, he influenced the fight for freedom until the Civil War.

Kaye's research through Downs's words is an excellent addition to the field. Anyone who wants to understand not just Turner but the era that influenced him should add this book to their reading list. Turner needs to be seen in his proper light as a military leader inspired by and inspiring others, who did what he could with the forces that he had, but lost to an overwhelming enemy. The forces that tried to make him into a symbol for why others should not follow his example instead created him as a beacon for others to follow.

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Sedition: How America's Constitutional Order Emerged from Violent Crisis. By Marcus Alexander Gadson. New York University Press, 2025. ISBN 978-1-4798-2888-3. Notes. Index. Pp. 253. $32.00 (hardback).

In the nineteenth-century United States, constitutional change often happened at gunpoint. Legal scholar Marcus Alexander Gadson's *Sedition* makes that argument using a series of case studies from the decades surrounding the Civil War. The argument might seem obvious, as the U.S. Constitution was written just after the War for Independence and the most significant amendments came after the Civil War. Gadson's story, though, is mostly about state constitutions, a welcome shift in focus.

Gadson's book is about the exercise of raw, coercive power in constitution making. This is a refreshing departure from the philosophical debates that dominate most constitutional history. Still, Gadson begins with a philosophical problem: Why were American constitutions so susceptible to violent change? Gadson's answer is that state constitutions had to answer impossible questions. What does popular sovereignty mean? Who gets to define who comprises the people, and how? "What does 'liberty' mean" (p. 7)? Certainly enslavers and enslaved people had different answers to the last question. That there was an inherent instability in the fiction of popular sovereignty is the central insight of Edmund S. Morgan's *Inventing the People* (Norton, 1988). Gadson's book explores the material consequences of resting constitutional order on slippery concepts.

The first three chapters look at moments of violent constitutional change in the 1830s-1850s. Chapter one looks at the "Buckshot War," a nearly-violent election controversy in Pennsylvania in 1838. The state had slogged through a long convention to revise the state constitution that resulted in the disfranchisement of Black voters. Whigs and Democrats disputed the gubernatorial and legislative election results, weaponizing uncertainty from the recent suffrage changes. The militia was called up, and a standoff ensued. Eventually each side backed down, and there was a peaceful settlement. The next two pre-Civil War cases were increasingly violent. Gadson's analysis of Rhode Island's Dorr War of 1841–1842 emphasizes how the Dorrites and the conservatives each mustered violence to defend competing constitutions. That theme carries through to chapter three, which examines the well-known violence between free-state and pro-slavery forces in Bleeding Kansas over a confusing array of competing constitutions.

The second half of the book looks at how Southerners used violence to overthrow Reconstruction-era multiracial democracy and restore White supremacy in the former Confederacy. Gadson describes this as the "spirit of 1861" rising against the "spirit of 1868" (pp. 101, 138). Chapter four is about Arkansas, where conservatives failed to block the ratification of the Republican-written 1868 constitution. A violent (on both sides) gubernatorial election four years later led to the re-election of a conservative Republican, however, followed by a revision to the state constitution that ensured "Black people were no longer part of 'the people'" of Arkansas (p. 136).

The next chapter narrates perhaps the quintessential story of Reconstruction-era White redemption. "South Carolina's [1868] constitutional convention was in some ways the most egalitarian political gathering in American history," and possibly "the high-water mark in this country's attempt at multiracial democracy" (p.141). The mixed-race convention established a political system that also enfranchised a huge proportion of White men, who had previously lacked the vote. As a result, the Ku Klux Klan, and unmasked Democrats, unleashed a war against Black political power in 1876 that first resulted in dueling governments, and then with the triumph of one-party, White rule. The federal government did not intervene, as national politicians were caught up in the contested presidential election of 1876. Finally, Gadson examines the rise of multi-racial fusion politics in North Carolina and its defeat in 1898 with the Wilmington Massacre. This was a coup enacted by thousands of White vigilantes who blocked Black men from the polls and killed tens, if not hundreds, of people. States that looked to overthrow multi-racial democracy in subsequent years "looked to Wilmington for inspiration" (p.198).

This is a well-written and timely book. Most of the episodes Gadson narrates will be familiar to U.S. historians. Each case study relies on existing scholarship and a smattering of accessible primary sources—newspapers, convention records, and state constitutions themselves. Gadson does not challenge existing narratives or interpretations of the events. This is clearest in the discussion of Reconstruction and Redemption-era coups to re-establish White supremacy. There is a huge literature on the subject—focusing especially as Gadson does on disfranchisement—from C. Vann Woodward to J. Morgan Kousser—that Gadson avoids disputing.

Military historians will wish that Gadson offered more sustained analysis of the moments when militias or the standing army intervened, or almost did.

Nevertheless, the sum is greater than the parts. For historians, the book offers a sober reminder that the Redeemers drew on a well-developed repertoire to force constitutional change from some groups modern historians might find more sympathetic. Gadson clearly aims to reach audiences beyond academia. As he notes in a thoughtful epilogue, because of January 6, Americans cannot pretend violence has not infected constitutionalism. Read this book to learn how violence became an endemic part of American constitutionalism.

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Late to the Fight: Union Soldier Combat Performance from the Wilderness to the Fall of Petersburg. By Alexander F. Caillot. Conflicting Worlds. LSU Press, 2025. ISBN 978-0-8071-8383-0. Maps. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 282. $50.00 (hardback).

The U.S. government mobilized manpower to fight the Civil War by calling on state governors to raise volunteer regiments for national service. It did so in ten separate calls from April 1861 to war's end four years later. The response to those calls generally was enthusiastic in 1861 and 1862, but tended to lessen during the last half of the war. Historians have long considered the "late war" enlistees to have been less patriotic, more driven by the high bounties offered them as the war dragged on, and less reliable off and on the battlefield. Scholars have cited elevated desertion rates among the later war volunteers and their lackluster combat records to argue that they were in it just for the money or to avoid the national draft that had been instituted by the federal government in March 1863. That draft had many loopholes and was crafted really to inspire more volunteerism than to drag able bodies into the army.

In recent years, a handful of historians have begun to upend that old interpretation. William Marvel, in *Lincoln's Mercenaries: Economic Motivation among Union Soldiers during the Civil War* (Louisiana State University Press, 2018), pointed out that even early war enlistees tended to receive some degree of extra remuneration for joining regiments and staying in service, or that they found army pay, as low as it was, better than what was available in their local economies across the North. Edwin P. Rutan II, in *High-Bounty Men in the Army of the Potomac: Reclaiming Their Honor* (Kent State University Press, 2024), intensely studied the late war regiments that reinforced the Army of the Potomac, the Union's major field force in the Virginia theater. He found that the economic factor was not as important to the late war enlistees as previously thought; that their desertion rate was comparable in most cases to earlier war units, and that their combat record also was comparable to the Union Army as a whole. The differences between early and later-war volunteers were not so great as previously argued, a conclusion Rutan reached after discarding old

interpretations and looking at the subject in new ways, such as examining statistical data on a wide range of issues associated with enlistment and army service.

Alexander F. Caillot joins this small but growing stream of research on late war enlistees and their units by focusing on two regiments as case studies. The 31st Maine and 17th Vermont were raised as a result of President Abraham Lincoln's call for troops in February 1864. They barely recruited enough men by the onset of the Army of the Potomac's Overland Campaign against Richmond in early May that year. Both regiments were part of the Ninth Corps and saw heavy action in eight engagements during that campaign and the following Petersburg campaign, which came to an end a week before the Army of the Potomac compelled the surrender of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox on 9 April 1865.

In his thoroughly researched and carefully considered study, Caillot uses a three-step construct to gauge combat performance. It starts with unit cohesion, an idea that is pretty self-explanatory, and moves on to a fuzzier idea: "combat power." While acknowledging the viewpoint of several other historians on how to define that concept, Caillot settles on an effective definition that includes the role of leadership and unit maneuver in efforts to damage the enemy while minimizing one's own losses. The third step involves analysis of battle casualties.

In all three steps, Caillot concludes that these two regiments of New Englanders performed roughly as well as any of the early war regiments of the Union Army. They "maintained moderate to high levels of cohesion." They also "showed their determination to accomplish battlefield objectives," although not always winning those objectives (p. 211). Casualty rates were high, with 45 percent of the personnel in the 31st Maine and 36 percent of the men in the 17th Vermont listed as killed, wounded, captured, or missing during their one year of war service (p. 212). In short, their histories mimic rather than contradict those of the early war regiments.

In addition to addressing the issue of early versus late war enlistees, this splendid study is a strong contribution to our understanding of military effectiveness on the small unit level, a topic richly deserving of much more attention than it has received from Civil War historians.

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The Sixth Wisconsin and the Long Civil War: The Biography of a Regiment. By James Marten. Civil War America. The University of North Carolina Press, 2025. ISBN 978-1-4696-8423-9. Maps. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 286. $35.00 (hardback).

In *The Sixth Wisconsin and the Long Civil War,* James Marten, a professor of history emeritus at Marquette University, paints a sympathetic landscape of the men who enthusiastically and innocently went to war to save the Union. Instead of the expected quick and glorious victory, they endured an unimaginably long and

brutal journey that would forever change those who survived. The book's chapters run chronologically, taking the reader along with the regiment through the entire war and into the follow-on years. Marten's most laudable and unique contribution to Civil War literature is his vivid description of all the major challenges to their survival both during and after the Civil War beyond the actual fighting that these Wisconsin soldiers endured. This included illness, wound recovery, brutally long and hot forced marches, horrific mass burial efforts, and many post-war struggles. The many personal vignettes of individual soldiers tackling these harsh realities grabs readers by the heart and threads the collective souls of the men of the Sixth Wisconsin straight into their regimental legacy.

After Fort Sumter, men all over Wisconsin responded, and companies and regiments were soon formed, including the Sixth. The motivations of the Wisconsin volunteers, like those in other states, varied "from patriotism … to a desire for adventure" and even "peer pressure, and some to a hatred of slavery…" (p. 25). Additionally, given a statewide depression at the start of the Civil War, many likely joined for the simple reason that they needed a steady paycheck (p. 26). When the regiment arrived in Virginia for duty, they were assigned to what would become known as the "Iron Brigade." Under the initial strict training regimen of John Gibbon, the brigade became "one of the best units in the Army" (p. 48).

The book details the regiment's wartime bonding during tough fighting in several battles in late 1861 through August 1862. The Sixth's soldiers then met their true baptism of fire on 17 September 1862 during the Battle of Antietam, where they were caught in a "hailstorm" of enemy fire that typified this bloodiest single day of the Civil War. Marten points out that after this point, and for the rest of the war, the Sixth Wisconsin effectively was not the same regiment. It had only 200 of its original 1,000 members (p. 77), and while some of the wounded would make their way back into the regiment, the Sixth would have new volunteers, and eventually draftees, that filled the void left by the killed, wounded, discharged, and captured. For those original soldiers who remained, the carnage of the early battles triggered a steady shift from the aggressive, devil-may-care attitude of the well-trained Sixth, to a more battle-seasoned wisdom, where surviving the war and going home became equally omnipresent with winning battles.

On the first day of fighting at Gettysburg in July 1863, while staging a valiant defense that covered the rest of the retreating Union forces, the Iron Brigade was nearly destroyed. One company in the Sixth had only six men fit for duty from the 111 men that left Wisconsin more than two years earlier (p. 90). This underappreciated "fateful hour" at Gettysburg would remain the Iron Brigade's most triumphant and tragic moment of the war (p. 97). The Sixth continued its hard fighting for the remainder of the war, albeit with a predominantly strong majority of non-original members.

Marten's account of non-battle related material includes the fact that the Civil War ushered in the new era of the widespread use of hospitals in the United States. He also delves into the combat support roles that many soldiers occupied

and discusses the toll that disease and wounded men had on the ranks. Marten's second-to-last chapter covers the fight to get veterans' benefits to Sixth Wisconsin men who survived the war, particularly those that were disabled, along with pensions for widows of those that that died in the war. The final chapter of *The Sixth Wisconsin* details the rise of veteran organizations and the meetings and reunions they helped organize.

Despite its many positive aspects, it is sometimes hard to follow the story within each chapter because of Marten's literary technique of blending individual experiences with the larger battles and events. The narrative within each chapter sometimes bounces back-and-forth from chronological storytelling to theme-driven tangents that leave the reader sometimes trying to place these tangents within broader context of the Civil War chronology. The plentiful vignettes straight from the soldiers' mouths, however, is the very thing that elevates the book and makes it so interesting.

Overall, *The Sixth Wisconsin* is an excellent addition to any Civil War library because it uniquely examines the perspective of individual members of one regiment across the entire expanse of the conflict and into the postwar years beyond.

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Reckoning with the Devil. By Court Carney. Louisiana State University Press, 2024. ISBN 978-0-8071-7153-0. Notes. Index. Pp. xii, 213. $44.95 (hardback).

Court Carney is a professor of history at Stephen F. Austin State University. He has written two books on the history of music, but his third work returns to the topic of his master's thesis with fresh eyes and the maturity of an established scholar. Nathan Bedford Forrest, an antebellum slave trader, enlisted in the Seventh Tennessee Cavalry and three months later was commissioned a lieutenant colonel, ending the war with three stars. He possessed charisma, an aggressive demeanor, and impressive results. Friends and foes dubbed him "The Wizard of the Saddle," due to his seeming ability to move large cavalry forces undetected to fall upon Union troops without warning but with relentless ferocity. He is most closely associated with the 1864 events at Fort Pillow, where troops under his command refused to accept the surrender of African American troops and instigated a massacre of them on 12 April. Forrest remained a viable threat after Lee's surrender and debated continuing the fight in Texas before accepting the Confederate defeat.

After the war, Forrest moved between financial schemes, trading upon his name and reputation. In 1868, he was selected to lead the Ku Klux Klan, under the title "Grand Wizard." Despite helming a virulently anti-Black organization, he repeatedly supported Black Tennesseans, praised Union troops, and called for racial reconciliation, making it far harder for the modern reader to simply clas-

sify Forrest as a White supremacist of the Lost Cause ideology. Carney diligently untangles competing truths about Forrest, and finds him a pragmatist, dedicated to the pursuit of power and prestige until his 1877 death.

Carney provides a superb overview of the literature surrounding Forrest and shaping perceptions of him, both as a hero and a villain. Forrest left relatively few written records, emboldening later writers to ascribe a wide variety of beliefs to him. At Fort Pillow, for example, the situation was at best chaotic, and there is little direct evidence of Forrest ordering the slaughter or putting an immediate stop to it. Those events loomed large in Forrest being repeatedly denied a presidential pardon, although after publicly campaigning for Andrew Johnson's re-election, he received one in July 1868.

In 1905, the city of Memphis erected a bronze statue of Forrest and unveiled it with a flurry of speeches praising the long-dead general. Of course, the statue was created two generations after the war, as younger citizens sought to establish the social norms of the early twentieth century. But the discussion remained essentially local. Forrest did not become a national discussion topic until Andrew Nelson Lyle's 1931 hagiography portrayed him as a Confederate hero on par with Lee and Jackson. Shelby Foote's *Shiloh* expanded the myth of Forrest as unparalleled cavalryman and played a heavy role in Ken Burns's influential documentary.

Carney finds that gender, sexuality, and masculinity are central to understanding Forrest, although here, the support offered is less substantial than that found in the rest of the work. Forrest is indelibly linked with race and racism, and he certainly leveraged racial tension for his own benefit. Ultimately, Forrest has meant many different things to various groups. The lack of complete information about him has led to many deliberate attempts to fill in the blanks, resulting in a hyper-politicized figure whose supporters and detractors go to great lengths to prove their viewpoint. Forrest ultimately matters because society confronts the same problems across generations, and he is a good focal point to see the general shift of attitudes and opinions, to include the removal of the Memphis statue in 2017.

In the modern sense, Carney's work fits well into an ongoing, broad re-evaluation of Confederate leaders. Far more nuanced examinations of them are finally moving past the mythology, both positive and negative, and the discussions fit into broader political, cultural, economic, and social lines. It is a fascinating study of a complicated subject and deserves a place on the shelves of scholars of the Civil War and its memory.

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Confederate Sympathies: Same-Sex Romance, Disunion and Reunion in the Civil War Era. By Andrew Donnelly. Gender and American Culture. The University of North Carolina Press, 2025. ISBN 978-4696-8559-5. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. vi, 287. $32.95 (paperback)

For over a century, American historians have explored the Reconstruction era and struggled to articulate when and why it concluded, enabling the erosion of its advances in civil rights and racial equality. In *Confederate Sympathies*, Andrew Donnelly offers a new culturally oriented analysis on this political phenomenon. His bold and innovative study re-examines familiar narratives of nineteenth-century memory through a lens long overlooked: male same-sex intimacy. Bridging the political history of the Civil War and Reconstruction with the emergence of modern sexual identity, Donnelly argues that homoerotic narratives, far from being marginal, played a central role in shaping the broader understandings of war, loss, and national reunion. This is not merely a book about sexuality in the Victorian era. It is an investigation into how national memory is constructed—about who is remembered, who is mourned, and what kinds of relationships become legible in moments of political crisis.

The study begins in the antebellum era, when the romantic male friendship was resolutely normalized throughout the nation's social politics. He notes that during this period American society was heavily divided along gender lines, since public life typically took place within single-gender environments. Interactions between men and women outside the context of courtship or marriage were often seen as risky, threatening one's social standing, future opportunities, or even physical well-being. As a result, same-sex intimacy offered a sense of stability and security and, therefore, was seen as safe and respectable. This norm transcended both political party and geographic location, as male romantic relationships were institutionalized as a "conservative, stabilizing force and as a representative unit of white male fraternity," in both North and South (p. 31). Donnelly reads widely—novels, memoirs, newspapers and even political cartoons—to highlight how homoerotic sentimentality was embedded in the broader cultural Zeitgeist of the era.

The Civil War then came and permanently violated this social paradigm. Donnelley identifies the disruption of the male romantic dynamic as part of a broader "crisis in gender" caused by the conflict, as it destabilized traditional concepts of manhood and womanhood. Literature from both sides reoriented its focus from the joys of male companionship to that of men suffering. Southern sentimentalism transitioned to the collective mourning of deceased Confederate soldiers, as their mass-distributed images represented the loss of virgin male purity, particularly youthful heroes like Major John Pelham. Meanwhile, Northern narratives describing the brutalization of Union prisoners quickly replaced the stories of slaves as the perceived victims of Southern cruelty.

After the war, literary works, particularly those of Henry James, grieved the loss of the previously normalized male relationships primarily those of prewar "chums" from North and South whose homoerotic bonds were broken by the conflict. Many in the Gilded Age laid this demise at the feet of the cause of abolitionism, enabling a wider Northern retreat from racial equality and the project of Reconstruction. Conclusions such as this provide a thoughtful and necessary challenge to the assumption that the history of same-sex intimacy is inherently tied to progressive political agendas.

Donnelly's impressive grasp of nineteenth-century politics and American historiography bolster his argument throughout. He assiduously tracks these social and literary sexual constructs as they are represented in characterizations of the various parties and candidates before and after the war. Every political faction from Jacksonian Democrats to Mugwumps utilized sexual imagery in their campaigns, frequently castigating the opposition with gendered epithets. He also contextualizes his various socio-political interpretations of male intimacy within the traditional American historiographical schools of Charles Beard, William Dunning, and Richard Hofstadter. When attempting to incorporate the field of science into the analysis, though, the thesis loses its bearing. His assessment of the study of "sexology" during the Civil War presents an unclear intersection of medicine, psychology, race, economics, and morality in explaining the conflict and loses connection with the book's established argumentative framework.

Regardless, this study succeeds in its broader goal of demonstrating that the Civil War, and the postbellum cultural reaction to it, formally codified heterosexuality as the accepted normative and homosexuality as the taboo deviant standard in the national consciousness. The war forever destroyed the romanticized male relationship construct, prompting a disillusioned population to nostalgically lament its loss as another collateral casualty of the sectional conflict.

While it is unclear what place human sexuality will take in broader American historical narrative of the nineteenth century moving forward, the evidence presented in this volume makes a compelling case for inclusion future analysis of Reconstruction. More importantly, this book offers a useful template for integrating political and cultural history in which historians can gain a fuller understanding of this pivotal era and beyond. Donnelly has written an intellectually ambitious book that deserves a central place in any conversation about Civil War memory, sexuality, and the social structures of national identity.

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Five Flags: The Warship that Reshaped the World. By Stuart Buxton. Stackpole Books, 2025. ISBN 978-0-8117-7723-0. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Pp. v, 348. $34.95 (hardback).

Five Flags encompasses a sweeping history of an orphaned ironclad that, while serving under five different flags, became embroiled in a host of far-flung, late-nineteenth-century national conflicts. Spawned by the American Civil War, this doughty warship best known as the Confederate States Steamer (CSS) *Stonewall* was completed too late for service in that theater, and so began the long tale of its varied associations. Author Stuart Buxton rightly claims in his preface that "Fragments of the five-nations warship's story have been told, here and there, in the context of the American Civil War for more than 150 years," but it has never been rolled out before as a complete work of history. Certainly, this story deserves to be told.

Conceived by the resourceful Confederate naval agent James Dunwoody Bulloch as a weapon to wrest control of the Mississippi and New Orleans from Union invaders, and built in France—the first European power to field an ocean-going ironclad—this beast of a warship possessed the potential to be a game-changer, but only if it could be spirited away incognito, joined up with its crew and armament in a remote anchorage, rendezvous with other European-built Confederate vessels, cross the boisterous Atlantic Ocean, and surprise a 500-ship-strong U.S. Navy. A lot of "ifs."

As is usual with such complex schemes, whatever could go wrong did go wrong. And this was all before the five-flags ship, reincarnated following the evaporation of its original mission, showed up on the far side of the planet in, of all places, feudal Japan. There the sturdy French-built ironclad did make a difference and was instrumental in the success of naval forces supporting the Emperor Meiji's rule of Japan.

The author weaves the complex fabric of *Stonewall*'s career over thirty-two chapters, all of a comfortable length, fifty pages of detailed notes, and a select biography. The publishers did not grant this book an index and, even more distressing for a work of such international scope, not a single map. The book's dust jacket yields a succinct author c.v. that, after a brief web search, confirms that he is an independent scholar with business experience in Asia that might benefit a book ending in Japan. The writing is lively and engaging in many passages but occasionally reverts to pop jargon; on p. 29, for example, it is stated that the Confederate ironclad *Atlanta* was "crowd-funded" with donated jewelry.

As with any compelling history, the devil is in the details, and here the eager reader will meet with frustration. The subject of this book requires a certain amount of synthesizing of its background history to create context, and any story encompassing a ship that flew five flags across many different theaters of war has a lot of background. Instead of keeping his diversions to a minimum and tying them together coherently, the author often delves into details wholly unnecessary. Thus, the book

attempts to tell, in many complex nutshells, a history of ironclad warships, details of a naval expedition to Paraguay, the progress of the land battles of the Civil War, an account of army maneuvers during Prussian-Danish wars, and an exhaustive summary of the insurrections, fights, massacres, multiple s*eppuku*s, and atrocities endemic in mid-nineteenth century Japan. And all this without the aid of a single map.

Such diversions into historical detail would be tolerable except that errors of fact accompany them. Bearing on the French paternity of *Stonewall*, for example, on p. 25 we are told that Louis Napoleon's namesake warship *Napoleon* was rebuilt as the first ocean-going ironclad, *La Gloire*. Not so; they were two different vessels, the first a wooden-screw two-decker, and the second an ironclad steam frigate. Another stumble occurs on p. 56 regarding the fate of the Union's *Casco*-class ironclads, where "miscalculated weights resulted in the *Chino* [sic] sinking in the East River as soon as she launched." In fact, the *Chimo*, when launched from a Boston shipyard, floated easily, although deeper than calculated. Adding to the narrative confusion, the author's handling of marine and naval nomenclature is, shall we say, challenged.

In summary, the story behind this book, that of the five-flags ironclad known as *Stonewall*, is compelling and worthy of a wider audience. This warship's final service under the flag of Japan is relatively unknown, and the author deserves credit for bringing its adventures to life as well as he has. Pulling *Stonewall*'s complex, multi-national story together in one volume fills a missing gap in the naval histories of this era. But *Five Flags*' imperfections render it difficult for your reviewer to recommend this book to serious students of naval history.

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The Pacific's New Navies: An Ocean, its Wars, and the Making of US Sea Power. By Thomas M. Jamison. Military, War, and Society in Modern American History. Cambridge University Press, 2025. ISBN 978-1-0095-5974-4. Figures. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. viii, 292. $35.99 (paperback).

In the final decades of the nineteenth century, the United States began replacing its wooden fleet, left over from the American Civil War, with a new generation of modern, steel-hulled warships, which defeated the Spanish navy in the 1898 Spanish-American War. In contrast to works that emphasize this "New Navy" as a response to developments centered on the North Atlantic, Jamison seeks to add a Pacific perspective. He argues that the U.S. built the new navy as a reaction to the growth of small, modern navies in Japan, China, Chile, and Peru. Drawing upon archives in the United States, Chile, and Peru, among others, Jamison highlights the impact of the American Civil War on these four navies as well as the significance of Californian concerns about these foreign, Pacific fleets in the creation of the new navy.

Jamison begins in the 1860s by showing how Civil War surplus equipment and American naval personnel came to Pacific nations seeking to expand their naval capabilities, especially Peru. The experience of the industrial-poor Confed-

eracy, which relied on innovation and torpedoes (underwater mines) proved easily transferable to Pacific states with limited native shipbuilding capacity. Peruvian use of these tactics and weapons against a Spanish bombardment in May 1866 highlighted the utility of such Civil War surplus. Japanese acquisition of a Confederate ironclad, as well as Japan's invasion of Taiwan in 1874, led to interest within the Chinese Qing dynasty in Confederate torpedoes-based coastal defenses.

The resulting naval arms races between Chile and Peru on one side of the Pacific Ocean, and Japan and China on the other led the U.S. Navy to fall behind technologically in the decades after the Civil War. Chile's armored cruiser *Esmeralda* (commissioned in 1884) carried rifled guns, armor, and electrical control systems superior to contemporary American warships. Jamison emphasizes U.S. Navy officers' sense of inferiority to these Pacific navies in contrast to the work of historians such as Kenneth Hagan, who cast the post-Civil War U.S. Navy as sufficient for policing growing American holdings and interests.

Arms races in the Pacific led to conflict in wars between Chile and Peru (1879–1884) and Japan and China (1894–1895). Chilean and Japanese successes in these conflicts established these navies as strong regional forces against which the U.S. Navy measured itself. Such measurement was aided by the creation of the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) in 1882, which increased the navy's organizational capacity to take stock of Pacific naval developments. American navalists ultimately succeeded in securing the construction of new armored cruisers in 1883. The use of these cruisers in the 1890s in crises with Chile gave the U.S. Navy a sense of having caught up to Chile. Japanese victory in the First Sino-Japanese War then brought Japan to the fore as the U.S. Navy's rival in the Pacific, eclipsing Chile. While concerns over the security of California played a significant role in rivalry with Chile, Hawaii became the site of rivalry and tension with Japan.

This work's emphasis on the Pacific casts the U.S. Navy's steel cruisers of the late 1800s as intended to provide a regional navy equal or superior to other regional navies in the Pacific. Jamison's conclusion notes that this Pacific orientation should not be understood as fully supplanting concerns about European threats to the U.S. east coast and Caribbean as the origins of the new navy. Rather, this work rebalances our understanding by showing the vital role played by innovation and conflict in the Pacific in the creation of the new navy, itself a first step in the United States' rise to great power status in the twentieth century.

This important work adds to a growing body of scholarly work on the U.S. Navy in the period between the Civil War and World War I. The book's emphasis on Pacific naval developments and asymmetric naval warfare in the late nineteenth century carries contemporary overtones for the 21st.

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The views presented in this review are those of the author alone and do not represent the views of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.

Defining the Mission: The Development of US Strategic Military Intelligence up to the Cold War. By Scott A. Moseman. Studies in Civil-Military Relations. University Press of Kansas, 2025. ISBN 978-0-7006-3810-9. Photographs. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 394. $54.99 (hardback).

In *Defining the Mission*, Scott A. Moseman draws upon government records and personal papers to analyze the formation and bureaucratic evolution of the U.S. Navy's Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) and the U.S. Army's Military Intelligence Division (MID) from 1882 to 1947. Adapted from Moseman's doctoral dissertation, this book supplements the sparse historiography on the administration of U.S. military intelligence organizations. Over ten chronological chapters, Moseman describes how the ONI and MID underwent constant adjustments in organizational structure and objectives.

Moseman's central thesis is that this instability stemmed from ONI and MID officers struggling to collect "strategic intelligence"—information about a country's military intentions and capabilities—amidst widespread confusion over how to define and use strategic intelligence, successive peacetime demobilizations and budget reductions, and jurisdictional battles with other departments (p. xiii). Military officers and politicians prioritizing "operational intelligence"—locations, intentions, and capabilities of military forces deployed in a particular theater of operations—and "domestic security"—counterintelligence, securing military facilities, censorship, and background checks—further undermined ONI and MID performance as strategic intelligence organizations (p. xiv).

Moseman's first two chapters describe how the ONI and MID emerged during the "managerial revolution" as bureaucratic centralization and professionalization reshaped American government and business during of the late nineteenth century (p. 10). He writes that a "Hamiltonian" pursuit of global military and industrial power prevailed against a "Jeffersonian ethos" favoring an agriculture-based economy enlarged through continental expansion (p. 30). "Hamiltonian navalists and Army reformers" advocated for military intelligence apparatus capable of investigating potential overseas adversaries (p. 53). The navy duly established the ONI in 1882, inspiring the army to follow suit in 1885 with the MID. As strategic intelligence organizations, the ONI and MID primarily processed information collected by their respective networks of military attachés.

Chapter three explains how the 1898 Spanish-American War undermined the ONI and MID; neither organization had the capability to provide operational intelligence required by troops in the field. ONI attained representation on the newly formed Navy General Board in 1900, and the MID joined the Army General Staff upon its establishment in 1903, but Moseman writes in chapter four that Progressivism's reliance on government regulation overburdened both organizations in bureaucracy. ONI influence declined, and the MID dissolved when the Army War College absorbed it in 1908.

World War I rejuvenated the ONI and MID through funding and manpower. In chapter five, Moseman argues that because American allies provided the United States with foreign intelligence, the ONI and MID (which attained independence from the Army War College in 1918) pursued domestic security missions defending American territory from sabotage and espionage.

The ONI and MID focused on domestic security during the early interwar period, a response to the Red Scare and isolationist sentiments (chapter six). Chapter seven describes how both organizations reprioritized strategic intelligence and even contributed to war plans during the 1930s. Moseman argues in chapter eight that despite this reorientation, neither organization developed protocols and lines of reporting necessary to predict Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. Poorly designed bureaucracies were responsible for American forces being caught unawares.

Chapter nine covers the ONI and MID's World War II expansion. Despite initially prioritizing domestic security, by war's end both organizations provided strategic intelligence to American military leadership. Ironically, just as bureaucratic centralization birthed the ONI and MID, so did these processes demote them in the intelligence hierarchy. After the 1947 establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) as the primary American strategic intelligence organization, the ONI and MID adjusted missions to produce lower-level operational intelligence for their respective departments (chapter ten). Moseman concludes his analysis with a brief but useful chapter summarizing ONI and MID historiography.

It should be noted that Moseman mentions strategic intelligence capabilities in the U.S. Marine Corps but focuses on the ONI and MID, frequently shifting the narrative between these two organizations. This can be disorientating and obscure the central arguments in each chapter. Chapter sections discussing public perceptions about strategic intelligence are also interesting but can distract from the author's broader analysis. Finally, Moseman identifies the ONI and MID as "strategic military intelligence organizations," but it is worth questioning if this label can be applied consistently, considering the priority both organizations often placed on domestic security missions (p. 1).

Despite these reservations, *Defining the Mission* is a valuable source for intelligence and military historians. This book is particularly useful for those researching nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American intelligence organizations. Readers should be aware this book contains limited discussion about signals intelligence and no discussion about individual espionage and intelligence operations. Scholars studying interpersonal and interdepartmental rivalries within the U.S. government, however, will find much information of value. By shining light on the U.S. military's struggle to craft strategic intelligence organizations, this work makes a valuable contribution to the study of military intelligence.

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The Work of Empire: War, Occupation, and the Making of American Colonialism in Cuba and the Philippines. By Justin F. Jackson. The University of North Carolina Press, 2025. ISBN 978-1-4696-6032-5. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 398. $37.95 (paperback).

In *The Work of Empire*, Justin Jackson presents an engaging look at the multi-faceted and multi-layered nature of American colonization. He does so by examining the crucial place of labor within the American occupation of Cuba and the Philippines and how that became a contested space between America and those they wished to develop.

The greatest strength of this work is its perspective on the colonial occupation and engagement with diverse historiographical schools. Jackson joins many in challenging a top-down or simplified view of the metropole simply acting upon the periphery in a colonial context. He also pushes back against earlier views of seeing those in Cuba or the Philippines as simply collaborators or resisters. Instead, Jackson champions a subaltern view of the entire period through the lens of laborers. All facets of the colonial project were dependent on local labor and, as such, provided more agency to those who worked or could organize laborers than is generally believed. He goes even beyond the occupation with U.S. enlisted men as a further subaltern perspective compared to their officers, whose dominance over labor and the local sexual economies illustrated their lesser position.

What Jackson highlights is that the efforts in Cuba and the Philippines were a multi-layered negotiation that occurred in terms of labor and identity through the public works of the colonial project. Jackson organizes his book around the use, identity, and contestation over labor in this context. He argues that labor was as crucial, if not more so, than military force as "labor acted as an engine for colonizing by martial means" (p. 9). Any projection of force in a colonial project required the involvement of localized knowledge and labor.

Work of Empire is well organized to develop his themes of negotiation across a broad swath. His first section concerns knowledge. This section is in line with works such as *Intermediaries, Interpreters, and Clerks* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2006) in that the dependence of colonial officials on localized knowledge gave an opening for resistance and agency on the part of the colonized. Local knowledge was crucial, as it was needed in the initial invasion of Cuba to help U.S. soldiers who possessed little knowledge and less than useful maps of the island.

If such knowledge was a help in Cuba, it was a critical requirement in the Philippines where U.S. officers knew almost nothing and suffered from deep language barriers. In the Philippines, language became the coin of cooperation and resistance. The Filipino elite who spoke Spanish were able to gain great power in interactions with the U.S., but just as much local resistance gained power due to the necessity of interpreters to assist U.S. forces. Jackson highlights a translator, Teodoro Sandico, who served as a double agent, surveilling pro-annexationist Filipinos and even organized a nationalist militia.

Yet for every Sandico there was also a Tomas Torres. Torres was a local who in 1899 helped guide U.S. forces to a path that helped them outflank 1,000 entrenched Filipinos south of Manila. As the war in the Philippines became one of insurgency, however, local knowledge became more prized and feared. Jackson notes that American post-war memoirs remained haunted by images, real or imagined, of false Filipino guides.

The dependence on local knowledge went beyond warfare. His second chapter on organizing labor highlighted the limitations of American knowledge in their attempts to rationalize labor according to Western visions of a modern society and economy. Taylorist visions came into conflict with, and often lost, to local elites whose patronage networks served, as Jackson pithily puts it, as sub-contracted sovereignty that U.S. officials had to rely upon.

His second section focuses on infrastructure. Public works were seen as a cornucopia that would provide multiple benefits to the U.S. and the subject populations. A major element of the infrastructure efforts concerned roads. One cannot help but think of *Life of Brian*, as "the roads go without saying," but Jackson highlights how they represented the attitudes of those building it with one officer suggesting these projects transformed the locals into "'peaceful workers' who 'opened the way to their own civilization'" (p. 152). Roads were viewed as a way to rationalize transportation, improve the economy of the colonies, and enable power projection.

Yet the vision of modernity provided by the roads, complete with a paternalistic attitude that it would help usher the people of Cuba and the Philippines into modernity and a capitalist economy, belied the reality of their construction. Far from a top-down mandate accomplished merely by an order, the projects involved heady negotiations and contested sovereignty. In the case of the Philippines, for example, the dependence on local patrons, or datus, simply reinforced local sovereignty and put the lie to the Progressive Era paternalist attitude of many of the U.S. officers leading such projects. The infrastructure projects contained their own logic as well. As Jackson documents, the Cuban republic was forced to continue public work projects in the manner of the U.S., as it had become so engrained in the society and economy and thus became "prisoners of history" (p. 190).

In his final section, bodies, Jackson moves onto question of race and gender looking at the marginalized position of Chinese laborers and sex workers. Chinese laborers were crucial in providing initial labor for the U.S. in the Philippines but quickly became part of a multi-racial contest in which they were excluded in order to garner support from the Filipino population. A further turn against using Chinese laborers was that it hurt military discipline among the enlisted men; one officer suggested it made them "develop an inability to carry a bucket of water or clean a gun"(p. 218). It is in labor, as well as the attempt to practice bio-discipline on enlisted and sex workers alike, that Jackson highlights the subaltern status of the enlisted men as well.

Jackson's work is an insightful and engaging look at the nature of colonial occupation and the ways in which the U.S. experience was one of negotiation and

contestation rather than a simplistic picture of dominance. As such it is a useful addition to understanding the nature of U.S. occupation, Progressive Era attitudes, and the dependence of any occupying force on localized knowledge. As Jackson concludes, noting that the U.S. efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq championed public works alongside deep reliance on local workers and knowledge, *The Work of Empire* is a subject that remains highly relevant.

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The Race With No Finish Line: Assessing the Strategy of Regional Great Power Competition. By Martin Skold. Marine Corps University Press, 2023. ISBN 979-8-9853-4040-2. Illustrations. Appendix. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 407. (paperback). Free download: *https://www.usmcu.edu/Portals/218/Race%20with%20No%20Finish%20Line_web.pdf*

This is essentially a PhD thesis on the pre-1914 Anglo-German naval race presented as the basis for an understanding of state practice in international relations, and vice-versa. As such, there is a clear drive for relevance, with an argument in favor of viable endgames and finishing lines held to derive from a necessary conceptual clarity. Goals are presented as resources as well as desired ends, with these resources permitting the necessary relocation through prioritization. That is presented as American relations with both China and Russia. Skold also argues for linkages, not least in terms of a hierarchy of hegemony whereby a state may "control" (p. 374) the global commons but be challengeable where vulnerable in particular regions. Understanding the last requires strategic clarity, and Skold frequently turns to arguments of the need for this skill, not least in choosing the correct metrics of assessing power, risk and possibilities.

This, then, is essentially a dual-book, one that Skold seeks to weave together. Some will feel that he has succeeded, but others will be less confident. It is certainly difficult to be up-to-date on pre-war Anglo-German relations, both naval and diplomatic, and I would have preferred a reference to key recent works, notably (but not only) by David Morgan-Owen and Thomas Otte. There is also value to be found in the work of Nicholas Rodger, as well as more recent studies by Andrew Lambert than that cited. Noone can assess all, but there is a somewhat dated feel to some of the citations, one that is particularly problematic due to the fast-developing character of the subject.

Possibly, as a result, Skold would have been well-advised to ditch the Anglo-German dimension and, instead, focus on America versus China over the last quarter-century and into the future. There is also a lack of originality in the account of the naval race, its causes, course, contexts and consequences.

As far as the theoretical approach to analyzing strategy is concerned, that is interesting, albeit not particularly novel, and maybe could have benefited from a

consideration that was less systems-based. The value of such social science vistas is compromised by the inherent granularity of international relations, the play of domestic political circumstances, the agency attempted by other powers, and the inherently political and intrinsically subjective character of the formulation and pursuit of goals and valuation of means and resources. This political character ensures the need to understand chronological specificities in terms of the particular pressures of individual conjunctures and the issues and opportunities that come to the fore at those moments. The "why?" is not systems-based. Ultimately, the future is too important to be left to the social scientists. Look what a mess so many of them have made in seeking control and influence over the last century.

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All the World at War: People & Places, 1914–1918. By James Charles Roy. Pen & Sword Military, 2023. ISBN 978-1-3990-6032-5. Photographs. Notes. Index. Pp. ix, 724. $62.95 (hardback).

In *All the World at War*, James Charles Roy introduces readers to the broad strokes of the First World War. This includes not only some of the most notable battlefields—Tannenberg, Verdun, and Passchendaele are all present—but also political machinations from Whitehall in England to the Winter Palace in Russia. Some parallel civilian crises also make it into the text, including Ireland's Easter Rising in 1916 and the Halifax Explosion of December 1917. It is an overview that is fun to read; its academic merit is less certain.

The book is roughly divided into three parts. The first four chapters explore Europe at the turn of the twentieth century and give readers an overview of the politics and personalities that pushed the world towards war. The second section, consisting of eleven chapters, covers the war and other events between 1914 and 1918 in roughly chronological order, with each chapter presented from a different perspective. This helps the narrative feel global, or at least broader than just the Western Front. The final five chapters address the end of the war, its immediate aftermath, and some of its long-term ramifications.

Roy's writing is the book's greatest strength. The text is clear, easy to understand, and engaging to read. His style veers towards the acerbic, occasionally producing descriptions that are almost Churchillian. In assessing the performance of General Sir Ian Hamilton at Gallipoli as the landings at Suvla Bay foundered, for example, Roy writes that "Instead of ruthlessly firing every slacker in sight … Hamilton maintained the correct decorum of a British general, and barely raised his voice" (p. 147), indicting both Hamilton and the broader British military institution with one stroke. Those without either a military or historical background will find the narrative accessible, as it is entirely free of jargon. Likewise, Roy tends to avoid getting caught up in the minutiae of the fighting. Certain characters—

mostly politicians and generals in command of the various field armies—make frequent appearances, but readers are not asked to get lost in the mud of Flanders trying to follow a specific battalion through the chaos of combat.

While Roy undoubtedly has done a great deal of research, he is not a scholar of the First World War, and his sources reflect that. Few of them are from the past 25 years; as a result, his conclusions are outdated. The argument is a return to the "lions led by donkeys" school of thought, in which the responsibility for the catastrophic human cost of the war is laid solely at the feet of generals (and, to a lesser extent, politicians) who are entirely unconcerned about casualties and are unwilling, or unable, to learn how to fight a new style of war. More recent scholarship has demonstrated that this is a view that lacks nuance and it has generally fallen out of favor.

Additionally, the ambitious scope of the work renders soldiers and civilians largely invisible. To cover so many events, Roy is forced to limit his analysis mostly to military and political elites. Only rarely do the men doing the fighting appear, and usually only to provide a pithy quote about the ineptitude of their commanders or the futility of whatever offensive is underway. Similarly, smaller belligerent nations are mentioned in passing, with effectively no analysis of how they participated in the war; colonial troops are almost entirely absent. The exception to this rule is found in chapter seven, when the author discusses Gallipoli and therefore the Australians and New Zealanders in some depth. Other colonies and dominions pop up sparingly, if at all. Moroccan and Algerian troops, for example, are afforded a single sentence in chapter 8 (Verdun), despite being present at other engagements mentioned in the text.

Non-specialists hoping for an introduction to global events from 1914 to 1918 and beyond will find just that in *All the World at War*. Academics may find an unknown anecdote or two within its pages, but they will not find any substantial contributions to the historiography, which has largely moved beyond Roy's analysis. The book has no listed sources. Both the bibliography and specific citations are hosted on the author's website, making them inconvenient at best. Though the book is published by a trade press—Pen & Sword—their failure to insist on adhering to a minimally accepted level of academic citation is unfortunately a significant weakness. Ultimately, *All the World at War* is a thoroughly readable book, but one that was regrettably outdated even before its publication.

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Soong Mayling and Wartime China, 1937–1945: Deploying Words as Weapons. By Esther T. Hu. Rowman & Littlefield, 2024. ISBN 978-1-6669-2861-7. Figures. Notes. Appendix. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xv, 311. $130.00 (hardback).

Soong Mayling [this review maintains the spelling used in the book instead of the Hanyu Pinyin version, Song Meiling] was one of the most globally renowned women in the Second World War. Though often referred to as "Madame Chiang

Kai-shek," she was much more than simply the wife of China's wartime leader. She was a political actor in her own right, an apt informal diplomat, and involved in military planning. Esther T. Hu's monograph is an in-depth study of Soong's wartime career, affirming her importance in China's domestic mobilization and foreign affairs.

The book "investigates both Soong Mayling's visible and invisible labor" (p. 6), detailing her intellectual and religious foundations, and her implementation and promotion of a range of activities as an independent individual actor, a personal and political partner of Chiang Kai-shek, and a key representative of the Republic of China. The book also addresses the personal costs of Soong's wartime work, namely on her health (e.g., pp. 157–59).

Soong Mayling and Wartime China comprises three parts. The first focuses on military contributions; the second covers "women's work" and the third, "diplomacy at home and abroad." There are some common threads among different chapters, namely Soong's strong connections with Christian institutions and actors, and the strength of her American ties dating back to her childhood, when she was educated in the United States.

The stated focus of the book is the period between 1937 and 1945, when China and Japan were engulfed in an all-out war that preceded the start of the Second World War in Europe. It also covers Soong's actions in earlier years, however, namely the launch of the New Life Movement in 1934 and the Xi'an Incident in 1936, both announcing Soong's role in civilian mobilization and high-level negotiations that expanded in later years.

The book details Soong's activities as Chiang's interpreter and her role as secretary-general of the Chinese air force from 1936 to 1939, when she was involved in procuring military equipment. The book reassesses some well-covered events, such as the 1943 Cairo Conference, and lesser-known episodes, such as the rapprochement of Xinjiang's ruler, Sheng Shicai, with Chiang's Nationalist government, placing Soong Mayling at the center of analysis.

The three chapters dedicated to diplomacy are particularly relevant to those interested in China's international position in the Second World War. Hu shows how "Soong Mayling persistently strove to win recognition of China by the world powers" (p. 189) and "helped lay the cultural foundations in preparation for China's role as a global power postwar" (p. 265). The book offers a new look at the role of elite women in public diplomacy through the cases of Soong's relationships with Eleanor Roosevelt and Isobel Cripps, the latter the president of United Aid to China Fund, an unresearched British initiative. Hu also addresses Sino-Indian interactions during the war, showing a cordial relation between the Chiangs, Gandhi and Nehru, and highlighting Soong's views on China and India's global role for the postwar. She stated that the "future peace and prosperity of Asia will depend on the twin pillars of Chinese and Indian resistance against aggression" (p. 116).

The book also makes a compelling case for Soong's role as leading mobilizer of women within China, promoting wartime work and improved conditions, namely increased literacy and rights such as shorter working hours and paid mater-

nity leave (p. 110). As head of the Women's Advisory Council of the New Life Movement, the National Chinese Association for War Relief, and the Wartime Association for Child Welfare, Soong Mayling interacted with other visible and vocal Chinese women, such as Wu Yifang or Hu Lanqi ("the first female major general appointed by the Nationalists' Central Military Commission," p. 100), and although those interactions are mentioned, their nature and evolution could have been explored further. Both Wu and Hu remained in mainland China after the communist victory in 1949.

The written and spoken word was germane to Soong Mayling's persona. Hu compares her to Churchill (p. 8), though her "First Lady" image is also stressed, and in the latter the comparison is with Eleanor Roosevelt. The book makes good use of records of Soong's radio broadcasts and other speeches, covering their content and reception. It shows, for example, that despite the lack of clear military support for China from the U.S. and Britain in the late 1930s, public opinion in those countries met Soong's rallying in support of China "with respect and approval" (p. 49).

Hu anchors her study in a wide array of archival and published sources in Chinese and English, including, among others, Chiang Kai-shek's diaries, Roosevelt's presidential papers, and Soong Mayling's wartime publications. It convincingly argues for a methodology of "transnational and multilingual research" to approach a subject like Soong (p. 10).

The book is aligned with important historiography from the past decades (works by Hans van de Ven, Rana Mitter, Jay Taylor, et al.) that has reassessed the role of the Nationalist government and policymakers and China's contributions to the Allied victory in World War II. Whilst it doesn't shy away from showing admiration for its main subject, it does engage briefly with some of the criticism leveraged at Soong and her family, with less flattering passages reserved for her elder sister, Soong Ai-ling.

Overall, this is a welcome contribution to the scholarship on China in a global Second World War, and on gender in war and diplomacy more broadly. It will be of great interested to scholars and students of modern China and World War II.

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Manstein Kriegstagebücher und Briefe, 1939–1941. By Roman Töppel. Brill Schöningh, 2025. ISBN 978-3-5067-9488-8. Photographs. Maps. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xxiii, 648. $52.00 (hardback).

One can argue quite credibly that Field Marshal Erich von Manstein was Germany's finest general during the Second World War. Unlike Rommel or Guderian, he possessed both operational and strategic acumen at the highest level. He formulated the famous "Sickle Stroke" (*Sichelschnitt*) concept, which turned the

Schlieffen Plan of 1914 on its head and led to the stunning victory over France in 1940. Following the debacle at Stalingrad in 1942/43, he stabilized the southern front in Russia despite facing odds of 6:1. Despite these and other battlefield successes, he was cashiered by Hitler in early 1944.

While we must wait until German military historian Roman Töppel has completed his final two volumes on Manstein to learn more about the field marshal's towering role as a commander on the Eastern Front, for now historians can applaud the publication of the initial volume of Töppel's planned trilogy: *Manstein: Kriegstagebücher und Briefe* (*1939–1941*).

Simply put, this first volume is a brilliant piece of historical scholarship. The book covers Manstein's military career from the spring of 1939 through the Polish and French campaigns and to the spring of 1941. Making extensive use of his subject's personal diaries and letters, as well as key primary/secondary materials (e.g., the diaries of German officers in Manstein's orbit), Töppel brings to light many new details while also exposing errors and falsehoods in sources long cited by historians (e.g., Guderian's memoirs and the "pseudo diary" of Hitler's army adjutant, Gerhard Engel). The primary text is laid out in five chapters, each magnificently edited and annotated by the author.

Töppel begins by examining Manstein's role in the Polish campaign of September/October 1939, in which he served as chief of staff to *Generaloberst* Gerd von Rundstedt's Army Group South. During this short campaign, Manstein demonstrated his superior talents at the operational level of war, making critical decisions and mastering crisis situations, as Töppel notes, with "circumspection and composure" (*Umsicht und Gelassenheit*) (p. 545).

The core of the book (almost 400 pages) covers the period from October 1939 through June 1940, addressing in granular detail Manstein's central role in shaping the operational concept for *Fall Gelb* (the attack on France and the Low Countries) followed by a detailed account of the actions of his XXXVIII Army Corps in that campaign. Töppel, in fact, offers completely new perspectives on the famous "Sickel Stroke" plan, in the process, turning our understanding of the origins and execution of this plan on its head.

Initial planning for the impending French campaign by the German Army High Command (OKH) was orthodox and unimaginative. Unimpressed by the ideas of his General Staff, Hitler in the fall of 1939 began to think along very different lines, proposing a major assault out of southern Belgium through the Ardennes Forest (universally considered untraversable for armored forces) to push in behind and encircle the majority of Anglo-French forces. Hitler's bold idea, however, was summarily rejected by the more conservative and risk-averse OKH.

Unknown to the German dictator, *Generalleutnant* von Manstein—now serving as *Stabschef* to Rundstedt's Army Group A (the former Army Group South)—had also been advocating a major advance through the Ardennes, where British and French forces would least expect the Germans to strike. In fact, Manstein had submitted such a plan to OKH repeatedly over a period of several months, only to be snubbed and eventually sent off to command an infantry corps in early February

1940. (The jealousy, indeed animosity, of Chief of the Army General Staff Franz Halder toward Manstein is well-documented by Töppel.)

On 17 February 1940, Manstein finally got the chance to brief his plan to Hitler, who saw in it a powerful confirmation of his own strategic thinking. Despite Halder's efforts to sabotage what is known to history as the *Sichelschnitt* plan, the die was cast. It is at this point that Töppel recasts our understanding of the plan.

For decades, military historians (e.g., the late John Keegan) have referred to *Sichelschnitt* as the "Manstein plan." As Töppel illustrates, however, it was not primarily Manstein's plan that was put into play; rather it was Hitler's significantly more radical concept. Unlike Hitler, Manstein never proposed massing the bulk of German armor in the Ardennes, thus stripping Army Group B (the northern strike force) of its strong panzer forces. Manstein wanted Army Group B to administer a crushing defeat to the Allies in northern Belgium, throwing them back on the Somme River, where Army Group A was to deliver the coup de grâce.

Thus, the only concept that Hitler's and Manstein's plans had in common was that Army Group A (reinforced) would deliver a crippling blow by striking unexpectedly from southern Belgium and the Ardennes (the essence of *Sichelschnitt*); moreover, the decision to establish a clear *Schwerpunkt* (point of main effort) in the sector of Army Group A, by massing seven of the ten panzer divisions there, was Hitler's alone. Yet as Töppel argues, without Manstein's support Hitler likely would not have prevailed with his "Sickel and Stroke" plan against a skeptical General Staff.

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The Making of Auschwitz: The Largest Killing Factory of All Time. By Ian Baxter. Pen & Sword Military, 2025. ISBN 978-1-0361-2139-6. Maps. Photographs. Appendices. Notes. Bibliography. Pp. vi, 230. $49.95 (hardback).

Ian Baxter delivers a fine addition to his sixty books in the Images of War series and to our understanding of Nazi Germany. In this recent work, Baxter details the evolution of Auschwitz from a labor camp in 1940 to a mass killing machine in 1943 and its partial destruction in 1944 before Soviet forces entered the camp in January 1945. The photographs within offer a haunting view into the killing factory. Most poignant are the images of the awaiting victims. They look fatigued rather than afraid as they await their execution. An image on page 172, though, offers a stark contrast. Taken between crematoria IV and V at Birkenau, it shows a woman being restrained by three men as she fights to look and turn the other way. In other photographs, most notably on pages 168–69, some of the Jewish prisoners appear to be smiling. The photos of the people show the effects of Auschwitz's development and connect the broader array of images within the book to its readers.

Each chapter concludes with several pictures of receipts, memos, letters, contracts, design plans, and images of Auschwitz-Birkenau as it grew from a camp for

10,000 to 100,000 people supporting the industrial, political, and military requirements of the Nazi war effort. The book draws on a vast source base of documents that became available after the Cold War. The source list includes, among other things, plans, letters, telegrams, work site labor reports, financial negotiations, and requests for material allocations. The sources also include pictures from the author's trips to Auschwitz-Birkenau. His photographs enable the reader to see how the site has changed from its peak of operations to the present day.

This book reveals what is beneath the Nazi murder statistics and uncovers how the Germans conceptualized, built, and utilized the camp, and then attempted to cover up the atrocities that occurred at Auschwitz-Birkenau. It is a story about meticulous, ideologically driven bureaucrats striving to deliver results, even when "success" remained largely unachievable due to limited resources and a changing political and military environment. Baxter shows how Auschwitz transitioned from a labor camp early in the war to an extermination camp after the Wannsee Conference in January 1942. Simultaneously, Rudolf Hoess, the commandant of Auschwitz, dealt with the effects of disease on forced labor, the constant breakdowns of the crematoriums and over-stressed chimneys, while Heinrich Himmler and Adolf Eichman increased the number of victims transported to Auschwitz-Birkenau leading to the continued strain on the crematoria, the housing, and the sanitation.

Baxter taps into a fascinating insight that military veterans will likely understand, and it echoes throughout the book. He describes a discussion between Hoess and Himmler after Himmler visited Auschwitz to examine its operations. Hoess told Himmler, "For an SS officer, there are no difficulties. His task is always to immediately overcome any difficulty by himself" (p. 69). As the number of prisoners transported to Auschwitz increased along with the demands on the gas chambers and crematoria, Hoess needed to maintain a facade of efficiency and effectiveness, especially when high-ranking officials like Himmler came to check on operations. A recurring example of the no-fail mentality of the SS officers identifies how camp officials attempted to build the barracks and out-buildings without proper equipment, labor, or materials. Another instance discusses when contractors prematurely signed off on a crematorium's operational effectiveness, in some cases, without appropriate testing, to compensate for the reduced operational capacity of others that were overstressed and some with broken chimneys.

This book sheds light on the cold reality of a society under Nazi rule that came together to develop the largest killing factory within Nazi Germany. Many have written about the complicity of Germans in the Holocaust. Still, the way Baxter describes the objective details of the camp's operations and the people involved in developing and operating the concentration camp leaves the reader with an uneasy feeling. The major industrial partners that helped build the camp included Topf and Sons, Huta of Kattowitz, and Robert Koehler of Myslowitz, to name a few of the forty-six private firms involved in various projects ranging from building construction and drainage to furnace construction, chimneys, and the delivery of materials. Baxter highlights the generous contracts and receipts to the develop-

ment partners, and he places them front and center in Auschwitz's development throughout the book further illustrating the breadth of people complicit in the murder of millions for personal and corporate benefit.

This book is for general readers interested in the Holocaust and the bureaucracy of Nazi Germany during World War II, as well as for historians who want a novel way of viewing the factories of murder. It also makes a great addition to any home library, as the pictures within serve as a terrific reference and reminder of how simple architectural and design plans can evolve into one of the largest killing factories of all time.

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Armies Afloat: How the Development of Amphibious Operations in Europe Helped Win World War II. By John M. Curatola. Modern War Studies. University Press of Kansas, 2025. ISBN 978-0-7006-3861-1. Maps. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 326. $44.99 (hardback).

Mastering especially complex tasks tends to demand dedicated skill and expertise as well as specialized equipment. In warfare, the inherently competitive dynamic raises further challenges to what fundamentally represents a struggle to learn and adapt in the face of difficult and dynamic problems. Amphibious operations constitute a particularly stark problem set, and in *Armies Afloat*, John Curatola works to describe and explain the way in which the U.S. Army worked to establish an amphibious capacity in the Mediterranean and European Theater of Operation.

The book is organized in a fashion that sets a context and then spotlights key actions: Operation Torch (North Africa), Operation Husky (Sicily), Operation Avalanche (Salerno, Italy), Operation Shingle (Anzio, Italy), Operation Overlord (Normandy, France), Operation Dragoon (southern France). Each chapter provides constructive detail about factors ranging from command relationships to tactics to technologies to doctrine, providing the reader simultaneously with granular information about specific battle actions and with an overall vision of the U.S. Army as a learning institution that grew into a mutually effective force with its U.S. Navy and U.S. Army Air Force (USAAF) partners. Curatola ensures that the reader does not mistakenly imagine amphibious operations to be simple or easy, or expect that a nonchalant hand-wave of factors like logistics lead to outcomes other than disaster.

The overarching theme is one of successful learning, and Curatola takes aim at what he deems an "overly harsh" view of Operation Overlord representing "a flawed victory" (p. 243) because of the risk of such characterizations assuming away the myriad difficulties involved in preparing, executing, and sustaining a large-scale amphibious assault. Earlier contributions to the literature have cited Omaha Beach

as a flawed victory because the shortfalls in areas like technological capabilities and doctrinal precepts raise prospects of defeat and are sure to be paid for through additional blood. Readers who engage with the growing literature have an opportunity to appreciate how costly flaws can be, that a dazzling array of problems can arise through exigent factors that lie beyond the realm of such faults, and that effective institutional learning in war demands not only vigilance in identifying and addressing such challenges but also an ability to do so with greater alacrity than one's adversary can counter or mirror.

Curatola draws on a strong array of valuable sources from the literature and from the relevant archives. The book also benefits from the inclusion of several valuable images, ranging from maps that complement descriptions of landing areas to photographs of the various kinds of ships, craft, and other equipment which was developed to facilitate amphibious operations.

By necessity, and as the author straightforwardly acknowledges, this book focuses on the U.S. Army in the Mediterranean and the European Theater of Operations. The U.S. Navy predictably factors into this study in important ways, though, with Admiral Kent Hewitt standing as an especially celebrated figure as a consequence of his efforts to enable effective joint operations between naval and ground units. The book demonstrates an interest in advancing Hewitt's profile, which heretofore met inadequate recognition, in Curatola's perspective.

The book further describes the USAAF's growing participation after Operation Husky, and it notes the USAAF's underwhelming engagement during the war's early amphibious operations. Marine actions of the Pacific lie beyond the work's scope, and the book makes British activities form essentially a hazy blur, except for discussion of the hosting of pre-D-Day U.S. forces who were massing and training in Great Britain before June 1944. In this sense, the book is truly about the U.S. Army afloat.

Armies Afloat explores wartime institutional learning and the history of U.S. amphibious capability in important ways. Far too often, casual readers of history presume D-Day exists in a sort of contextless vacuum. That mistake shortchanges an understanding of what was involved in setting the stage for the cross-channel attack and about the actions that followed D-Day to embody its strategic significance. Studies of U.S. amphibious actions in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy help build a more complete picture of the war and of the process by which U.S. amphibious assault abilities matured. The chapter about Operation Dragoon, paired with the concluding chapter's reference to the Rhine River crossings, helps guard against a myopic fixation on Operation Overlord, demonstrating how different battles and campaigns fit together to support victory. *Armies Afloat* is engaging and rewarding to read, and Curatola's contribution is a valuable one.

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Spitfires: The American Women Who Flew in the Face of Danger during WWII. By Becky Aikman. Bloomsbury, 2025. ISBN 978-1-6355-7656-6. Photographs. Bibliography. Notes. Index. Pp. ix, 345. $31.99 (hardback).

Atheris Avidi ("eager for the air") was not only the motto of the British Air Transport Auxiliary, or ATA, but a way of life for twenty-five brave American women who flew for the ATA during World War II. In *Spitfires*, Becky Aikman chronicles the lives of these women and the trails they blazed for the women who would follow. It is a human story about women who were "brave enough to live as if they already possessed the rights that women would fight to win over the next eighty years" (p. 284).

The book profiles a group of women from various backgrounds who answered the call to serve in the ATA, beginning with Jacqueline "Jackie" Cochran in 1941. Cochran, an American aviator, set her sights on commanding a "flying force of American women" (p. 11). Although she did not argue that women should fly in war zones, she did advocate for their talents as ferry pilots to transport aircraft to "free up men for more important duties" (p. 12). After unsuccessful lobbying attempts in the U.S., Jackie Cochran turned her sights to the British Air Transport Auxiliary, who gave her the authority to choose the pilots who would become the first American women to fly military aircraft.

In March 1942, Cochran sent telegrams to seventy-six women flyers across the United States inviting them to volunteer for service in the British ATA. Cochran promised paid contracts, transportation to England, and the opportunity to gain experience piloting combat aircraft. By the end of August of 1942, six ships transported twenty-four American women to Liverpool for their assignments with the ATA. Cochran flew to England ahead of the others and was the twenty-fifth American aviator to join the ATA. The Americans were among 168 women from around the world who served in the ATA during World War II.

The stories of the lives of these women as told by Beck Aikman underscores the power of purpose and the importance of legacy. Like Cochran, the women selected to join the ATA were not perfect and often far from the demur creatures their societies expected. Tenacious pilots like Winnabelle Pierce, Virginia Farr, Hazel Jane Raines, Dorthy Furey, Nancy Miller, Ann Wood, and others, often referred to as the Atta-Girls, "strove for the sky and all it represented—freedom adventure, challenge, pleasure, respect, purpose" (p. 284), forging a path for women decades later.

A couple of things elevate this book beyond other historical works on women's roles in World War II. First, it provides an unapologetic and unashamed account of the women's personal and professional lives. Told through personal journals and personnel evaluations during their training in the ATA, the work shows the failures and successes without attempting to romanticize the American women who served. Other authors may be tempted to hide some of the flaws of the heroines, but Aikman allows the reader to become immersed in the thoughts, feelings, and exploits of the women she chronicles, providing a rich sense of history and pride.

Second, the work is extremely well-written and -researched. The book contains excerpts from several of the women's diaries and journals, interviews with family members, personal letters, mementos shared with family members, and an interview with the only remaining Atta-Girl, Nancy Miller, who at the time was 105 years old, and Nancy Miller's niece. Additionally, footage of interviews with some of the pilots, newspaper articles from the era, eyewitness reports, and technical information about the aircraft helped the author focus on the why behind the what for so many of the Atta-Girls. By taking these two approaches, the book reveals how the Atta-Girls forged a culture that changed lives—not just for the pilots, but for their families, for many who encountered them during their lives, and for those who would follow in their footsteps.

Spitfires stands as a significant contribution to both military and women's history literature. Ultimately, Aikman's work is not just a story about pilots or women. It is a story that proves courage and competence know no gender. The Atta-Girls would not only break barriers in the skies but also establish a legacy that inspired generations of female aviators to come. Through their willingness to cross an ocean and defy societal expectations, the Atta-Girls not only served their wartime mission with distinction but fundamentally changed what was possible for women in aviation and beyond. Their story reminds the reader that progress often begins with individuals brave enough to live as if the future they envisioned had already arrived.

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The Good Allies: How Canada and the United States Fought Together to Defeat Fascism during the Second World War. By Tim Cook. Penguin Random House, 2024. ISBN 978-0-7352-4820-5. Figures. Notes. Index. Pp. 568. $30.00 (hardback).

In January 2025, U.S. President Donald Trump spoke publicly about using economic force to annex Canada, a threat he repeated over subsequent months. To many observers on both sides of the 49th parallel, it was inconceivable that an American president would question the sovereignty of his country's closest ally and trading partner openly, let alone threaten to make Canada the 51st state. After all, the two countries had spent decades forging a close, cooperative relationship that, for over a century, had been touted as a model of how a Great Power and a smaller state could live side-by-side in relative harmony and mutual prosperity. In many respects, but especially militarily and economically, the bilateral partnership had been forged during the Second World War, a subject that Tim Cook ably explores in his authoritative book, *The Good Allies*.

Canada's leading military historian over the last two decades, Cook has published widely on subjects related to Canadian involvement in the world wars, from multi-volume overviews of these conflicts to more focused works on the experiences of Great War soldiers or the actions of Canada's wartime leaders.

Feeding a public desire for military history, these studies have been written for general audiences and yet have drawn on Cook's mastery of extant scholarship and deep research in primary sources. *The Good Allies* is no exception. In it, Cook provides a look at the Canada-U.S. relationship from the lows of appeasement in the 1930s through to the highs of victory over the Axis in 1945, with some commentary on the subsequent legacies of these events. Mixing high politics and everyday experiences of wartime, his subjects range from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King to munitions plant workers, seamen, and frontline soldiers. The result is a comprehensive history of how Canadians and Americans fought the war while managing a somewhat fraught relationship as the United States fully emerged as a global power with vast and varied interests. Given current events, the book is vital reading. It also will endure as a scholarly work.

While the handful of specialists in Canada-U.S. relations will find few surprises in the text, general readers should find much food for thought. Part of the value of Cook's study is that it allows for a comparative focus on the commonalities and differences of the Canadian and American experiences up to and during the war. One finds, for instance, both King and Roosevelt dealing with the internal pressures of managing entry into the conflict, the Canadian leader with French Canadians and anti-imperialists, and the U.S. president with isolationists. Regrettably, both governments dealt similarly with their Japanese populations.

While the book is a look at bilateral relations, sensibly Cook does not neglect Britain, for as historian Jack Granatstein noted decades ago in a famous essay, British weakness in the war forced Canada into American arms. Cook documents the close military, scientific, intelligence, and economic cooperation between Canadians and Americans, which produced the alliance between the two countries. He emphasizes the points of friction, from Ottawa's concerns over American threats to sovereignty in Canada's north, to disagreements over garrisoning Iceland or the handling of relations with the Vichy French and Free French. Throughout, the narrative moves deftly from the map rooms of the various statesman to the frontlines, with plenty of deft analysis along the way.

Cook has fortune on his side, for *The Good Allies* has arrived just as the Canada-U.S. relationship seems poised to take a sharp turn away from the eight-decade partnership forged amid the Second World War. Cook's book will stand as the standard study of the wartime genesis of that partnership.

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Operation Rype: A World War II OSS Railway Sabotage Mission in Norway. By Frode Lindgjerdet. Casemate, 2023. ISBN 978-1-6362-4134-0. Maps. Photographs. Bibliography. Notes. Index. Pp. vii, 242. $37.95 (hardback).

In World War II publishing, the "secret war" continues to generate a mountain of literature. Spies, codebreaking, undercover operations, and operatives have taken center stage in the way we remember the war and, based on the popularity of the genre, the number of books is only likely to grow. It isn't an altogether positive phenomenon, frankly; most of the works are written by enthusiasts who rarely bring to their subject any sort of rigorous scholarly analysis.

That indictment definitely does not apply to Frode Lindgjerdet, a Norwegian soldier and scholar at the country's military museums. His topic is Operation Rype ("grouse"), a U.S. special operation on Norwegian soil in the closing months of World War II, led on the ground by none other than the later-head of the CIA, William Colby. The force belongs to NORSO (Norwegian Special Operations Group), ski infantry recruited from the 99th Infantry Battalion (separate) and Norwegian-speaking immigrants to the U.S. Their mission is sabotage: rail lines, bridges, and German transport bottlenecks in the high north. It's hard to imagine Hollywood will not come calling at some point.

To his credit, Lindgjerdet refuses to get carried away with the cinematic nature of it all, pointing out the warts in the operation and asking tough questions. Rype was plagued with problems from the outset. Conceived late in the war, in January 1945, the operation was intended to prevent the Germans from evacuating their troops from occupation duty in Norway and somehow reinserting them into the main battlefronts of Europe.

It was a sensible mission, perhaps, but things went wrong early and often. Only four of the original eight transport flights made it to the original drop zones in northern Norway: unpredictable mountain weather, faulty instruments on the converted B-24 Liberators, and pilot error were the predictable culprits. The first teams were inserted into the Snåsa mountains on 24 March, but they were manifestly too weak and undersupplied to undertake the mission. Colby and his men sat for weeks, waiting.

One team accidentally parachuted into neutral Sweden and was interned for the duration. A later B-24 failed to find its drop point and crashed on the return flight at Walliwall in the Orkney Islands; another crashed on Plukkutjønn mountain. Soon the force was running out of everything: supplies, ammunition, and above all food. For survival, Colby and NORSO had to rely on the traditional native American pemmican, a dense mixture of dried meat, fat, and berries, ideal for long sojourns in the wilderness.

When enough men finally had landed (or were recruited from the local Norwegian resistance), Colby found out that his maps were wrong (p. 116). The Nordland railway, their key operational target, was nowhere to be seen. In the end they stumbled forward, blew one bridge at Tangen and wrecked a couple of kilometers

of the Lurudal-Agle railway. It was, to put it mildly, an underwhelming harvest for such an extensive and dangerous operation.

It's easy to dismiss all these troubles as part of the uncertainty of war. All military operations run into walls, of course. Lindgjerdet argues that Rype's problems ran deeper, however. Special operations, by definition, have political implications. Washington never consulted with the Norwegian government-in-exile in London about recruiting Norwegian immigrants for insertion into their old homeland. Relations between the U.S. and the British, the traditional special operators in Norway, were strained from the outset, a particular problem since the British would be responsible for so much administrative and logistical support.

Britain wanted Rype to keep its hands off the Norwegian resistance, a force that London had cultivated assiduously during the war. Poaching Norwegian resistance fighters, which Colby definitely did, was therefore a source of friction for the Anglo-American coalition. As for the local Norwegians, they were more than a bit puzzled as to why the Americans were so determined to prevent the Germans from leaving Norway. Wasn't that the purpose of having a resistance in the first place; to drive out the enemy?

From here, the waters get even murkier. On 2 May, by which time Colby and everyone in NORSO knew that the war was coming to an end and that the Nordland railway had ceased to have any strategic value, the team engaged a five-man German patrol. All five Germans were killed. Unquestioned at the time, the action has since generated accusations that Colby disarmed the five Germans and then had them executed. Lindgjerdet has been a sober narrator throughout, and he's sober here, too, noting that no period testimony or surviving records are available to verify the atrocity. Perhaps, he notes, Colby's later reputation and that of the entire CIA has been read backward into the historical record. The CIA kills people all the time, so the reasoning goes, why would they refrain from doing it back then?

We'll probably never know. Suffice it to say this book is excellent: meticulously researched, engagingly written, and judicious in its verdicts. Operation Rype deserves more attention than it has gotten, particularly in U.S. circles. But despite the derring-do and the courage—not to mention the skis—it won't be an easy movie to make.

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Hitler's Deserters: Breaking Ranks with the Wehrmacht. By Douglas Carl Peifer. Oxford University Press, 2025. ISBN 978-0-1975-3966-8. Figures. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. vii, 299. $34.99 (hardback).

Douglas Carl Peifer's *Hitler's Deserters* brings the issue of German military deserters into the English-language academic arena, examining both the historical reality of Wehrmacht deserters and interpretations of this phenomenon. A profes-

sor at the U.S. Air War College, Peifer studies military and diplomatic history, focusing on Germany during and after World War II. His latest book investigates those who deserted from the German military during World War II, explicitly excluding SS and Waffen-SS deserters because these services were closely tied to the Nazi Party and had their own, independent justice systems.

Peifer asks why some German soldiers chose to desert while most did not and how postwar German society understood desertion. His analysis considers the military justice system, the society from which soldiers were conscripted, and individual accounts. Though the exact number of German soldiers charged with desertion or "undermining military morale" (p. 36) during World War II is unknown, many more soldiers were convicted and executed for these crimes than in the British and U.S. militaries, or in Germany during World War I. Peifer traces the evolution of the military justice system during the Weimar period and the influence of racialized ideas on its views of defendants, creating a clear picture of how military officials understood and punished desertion.

Deserters' motivations varied, though Peifer finds that fear of punishment and war weariness were the most common reasons cited for desertion. Balancing statistics with individual accounts, Peifer effectively demonstrates that "there was no typical deserter" (p. x) and cautions, "Equating desertion with resistance is a stretch in most cases" (p. 176). The individual cases he cites run the gamut from Jakob Bug, a Jehovah's Witness who refused to report for conscription, to Willi Herold, who went on a killing spree following his desertion. Extant documents including court martial records and interviews with foreign powers present differing challenges in determining deserters' motivations, but Peifer acknowledges these limitations and grounds his analysis in both the documentary record and an understanding of Nazi societal and military norms, examining not only the individual cases but the broader context in which they occurred.

This combination of specific examples and broader trends may have been more effective, however, if the cases had been more integrated into the analysis. The two example chapters (Ch. 1 and 5) consist of multiple, back-to-back narratives of vastly different experiences, and they lack a cohesive theme or argument. Isolating the examples in separate chapters made it more difficult to connect the individual experiences to the societal factors and broader trends that Peifer highlights. The few instances when specific individuals are cited in other chapters, such as the case of Willi Herold, strengthen the analysis and make the individual narratives more noteworthy.

Peifer bookends his analysis with the postwar debates about deserters, contrasting East and West German views of deserters and tracing the evolution of the issue in the public and political spheres. While East Germany perceived the Wehrmacht as a pillar of the Nazi state and took a relatively positive view of deserters, West German officials continued to view deserters negatively, though the emerging West German literati of the 1950s saw the deserter as a symbol of freedom and individualism. By the 1970s, West German peace activists were celebrating "desertion as a form of resistance" (p. 237) and, in the 1990s, German courts began to

reverse rulings that had upheld deserters' convictions. The issue was not fully settled until 2009, when all convictions for desertion and related crimes were overturned.

Peifer draws on the vast body of German-language literature to bring the issue of Wehrmacht deserters into the English-language academic sphere. Acknowledging the difficulties of Wehrmacht-era legal jargon, he relies upon English equivalents, providing the German terms in parentheses and notes. The work thus is accessible to a broad English-language readership, including those who lack a strong foundation in legal history. Readers interested in issues of desertion and military justice will find this book worth purchasing, though experts in German legal history might prefer more discussion of the translation choices. The book will also appeal to scholars of postwar popular memory and military loyalty.

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Josephine Baker's Secret War: The African American Star Who Fought for France and Freedom. By Hanna Diamond. Yale University Press, 2025. ISBN 978-0-3002-7998-6. Maps. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. viii, 326. $35.00 (hardback).

At first glance, the "secret war" alluded to in this book's title seems to be a misnomer, given that Josephine Baker's clandestine activities on behalf of the French Resistance and government-in-exile during World War II were just one aspect of her contribution to the Allied cause. Her status as a famous dancer, singer, and actress meant that much of her service in fact consisted of public performances designed to boost troop morale, many of which received considerable press coverage.

A more likely explanation for the word choice is that, rather than the nature of Baker's wartime exploits, the title refers to the lack of scholarly attention they have received. As author and historian Hanna Diamond explains in the book's opening pages, this oversight is partly due to Baker, who rarely spoke about her experiences. In addition, while there are several autobiographies that discuss Baker's life during that period, they are fraught with inconsistencies and embellishments, as are the memoirs of her fellow spy and former lover, Jacques Abtey.

Where others have relied almost exclusively on these questionable accounts for their work, Diamond merely uses them as a starting point, subjecting them to rigorous cross-examination in order to, in her own words, "tell [Baker's] wartime story via a critical engagement with the sources" (p. xv). She succeeds admirably; by far, the greatest strength of this book is the quantity and quality of Diamond's research. The bibliography contains a wide variety of international archives and periodicals as well as a lengthy list of secondary sources, and the extensive footnotes are a testament to her close scrutiny of Baker's autobiographies and patchy memoirs.

Equally impressive is Diamond's ability to focus her discussion on those aspects of Baker's war service that can be verified instead of those that may sound tantalizing (for example, the use of her chateau as a center of Resistance activity and the hiding spot for a secret radio) but are not supported by historical evidence. While at times she offers an educated guess about what might have happened, Diamond's speculation never crosses the line into outright assumption.

The narrative, which proceeds chronologically, is for the most part clearly written and well-organized. Most fascinating are the sections centered around the theme of identity and its many meanings for Josephine. As an intelligence operative, she was able to leverage her celebrity status to help her succeed in an environment where standing out was normally a detriment. As a Black woman born in the United States, her contact with African American soldiers during the war ignited a desire to fight racism that lasted the rest of her life. As a French citizen, Baker's love for her adopted country and its people inspired her to remain in Europe and support the Free French movement as a spy, entertainer, and finally a uniformed officer in the Women's Air Force Auxiliary.

While not serious enough to detract significantly from the story, the narrative does have some minor issues. There are a few incorrect dates—on page 152, for example, Baker's ENSA tour is described as taking place in July 1942 instead of 1943; and on page 94 there is a bizarre "see above" reference to an event last mentioned nearly forty pages earlier. In addition, Diamond tends to overuse block quotations; in one section of chapter four, there are fifteen in the span of just ten pages.

By necessity, telling Baker's wartime story must involve discussion of the context in which she conducted both her clandestine operations and concert tours. In addition to the complexities inherent in the world of espionage, she often found herself caught in the middle of infighting between various factions of the French intelligence services and tensions between the French government and its colonial subjects in North Africa. As an expert on the social and cultural history of France during World War II, Diamond is well-suited to the task of explaining how these complicated subjects relate to Baker's experiences. While some of these background sections are a bit longer and more detailed than some readers will find necessary, she always steers the discussion back to Baker.

While much is still not known (and probably never will be) about Josephine Baker's activities during World War II, the details of her service that can be verified nonetheless tell an incredible story of a woman who used her unique talents to gather and pass along vital intelligence, help friends escape occupied Europe, campaign tirelessly for de Gaulle and the French Resistance, and bring entertainment and joy to thousands of troops who desperately needed it. Hanna Diamond's diligent efforts to share that story with a wider audience have resulted in a well-researched and interesting book that represents a valuable contribution to the body of work on Baker's life and legacy.

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The Battle of Manila: Poisoned Victory in the Pacific War. By Nicholas Evan Sarantakes. Oxford University Press, 2025. ISBN 978-0-1999-4885-7. Maps. Photographs. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 508. $29.99 (hardback).

In *The Battle of Manila*, Nicholas Evan Sarantakes employs a "whole of army" approach to analyze the dynamics that preceded and characterized the conduct of the battle for Manila. The invasion of Luzon was driven by three main objectives: liberating Manila; establishing a base for the forthcoming invasion of Japan; and ensuring open sea lines of communication. Sarantakes argues that while the liberation of Manila represented a formal victory for the American army, it should also be viewed as a poisoned victory because of the extensive destruction General Douglas MacArthur aimed, but failed to prevent. The author contends that MacArthur should have provided clearer strategic guidance for his forces and failed to consider the secondary effects on the inhabitants and infrastructure during the city's liberation. In hindsight, the brutalities and atrocities committed by the Japanese during their occupation and the subsequent defense of the city raise an enduring question: why?

Nicholas Evan Sarantakes is a distinguished professor of strategy and policy at the United States Naval War College. He possesses a doctorate from the University of Southern California and has authored seven books. His expertise is prominently showcased in *The Battle of Manila*, where he offers comprehensive insights into the U.S. Army's order of battle, the strategic and tactical perspectives of military leaders on both sides of the battle, and detailed analyses of the conditions that influenced various elements of combat operations. Furthermore, he adeptly explores the influence of topography and climate on military engagements.

In his comprehensive analysis of warfare, Sarantakes skillfully examines the strategic, operational, and tactical dimensions of military engagements. The invasion of Luzon, a crucial event in the Pacific War, significantly contributed to the overarching national objective of Japan's unconditional surrender. Sarantakes investigates General MacArthur's strategic vision, which was connected to his goal of liberating and preserving Manila from enemy control. From the beginning, MacArthur emphasized the importance of minimizing damage during the city's liberation—a commendable aim that, paradoxically, complicated the operational and tactical objectives on the ground. Against this complex backdrop, the decisions made by the commanders of the 6th Army and XIV Corps, along with the dedicated divisions under their command—most notably the courageous 37th Infantry Division—are portrayed vividly.

The narrative transports readers from the initial landings in the expansive Lingayen Gulf to the harrowing urban combat that unfolded as American forces faced a relentless enemy. The Japanese were committed to inflicting punishment on the Filipino populace and eradicating their culture of resistance, leading to catastrophic consequences. Ultimately, the battle for Manila resulted in widespread devastation and tragic losses, highlighting the futility of the Japanese efforts, which were already doomed from the outset. The battle for Manila serves as a prime example of successful

and effective joint operations, showcasing not only the military strategies employed but also the personal narratives interwoven within the broader historical context.

The complex relationships among the commanders, often marked by tension rather than camaraderie, highlight the critical importance of sound character and integrity in leadership roles. This battle vividly portrays the intricate dynamics of collaboration among senior military leaders, revealing their strengths, shortcomings, and the often-unpredictable nature of command under duress. Sarantakes offers profound insights into the nature of combat operations, traversing the spectrum from tactical maneuvers to grand strategic decisions. Through his extensive research, he brings life to events that transpired decades ago, reminding readers of the enduring bravery, daunting challenges, and significant achievements of the American forces in the Pacific Theater, particularly during the liberation of the Philippines.

Sarantakes exemplifies remarkable scholarly insight through his extensive and meticulous research, drawing from a diverse array of resources. He draws from a wide-ranging collection of sources, which not only enhances the accuracy of the historical events recounted in his book but also adds depth to the narrative. He delves into the archives of official military records and immerses readers in the personal narratives captured in the diaries of both American and Japanese soldiers, skillfully weaving their distinct perspectives into a cohesive narrative.

Each account is meticulously detailed, capturing the essence of the human experience in warfare. Sarantakes presents these stories compellingly, resonating with readers from all walks of life and allowing them to forge a deeper connection with the diverse experiences of soldiers. His historical narratives authentically convey the complexities of human experiences in combat, immersing readers in vivid and evocative portrayals of the Battle of Manila. Sarantakes provides an invaluable chronicle of urban warfare, serving not only historians but also imparting timeless lessons for all military leaders. Ultimately, he enriches our understanding of what it means to engage in conflict and highlights the resilience of the human spirit amidst the fog of war.

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The Quislings: The Trials of Norwegian Wartime Collaborators 1941–1964. By Anika Seemann. Cambridge University Press, 2025. ISBN 978-1-0092-1230-4. Pp. xi, 328. Photos. Appendices. Bibliography. Index. $110.00 (hardback).

This is an important book, and it deserves to reach a wide audience. It is the first comprehensive English-language examination of the so-called "treason trials" carried out by the Norwegian government after World War II. Between July 1945, when the first cases were brought to court, until 1957, when the last individuals sentenced for treason were released from prison, the Norwegians convicted and

sentenced more than 20,000 of their own citizens for collaborating with the Germans during the occupation of Norway. No other Western European country prosecuted so many of its citizens for treasonous activities during World War II.

As Anika Seeman explains, given the unprecedented scale of the collaboration that had taken place after the invasion of Norway in 1940, the Norwegian government decided from the outset to take a "pragmatic response" to treason by designating membership in the *Nasjonal Samling*, the Norwegian Nazi Party, "as the central criterion for criminal punishment" (p. 299). Since these home-grown Nazis were a "party of traitors" (p. 67) who not only had collaborated with the Germans but had actively work to destroy the Norwegian government-in-exile in London, this made perfect sense. But this also meant that thousands and thousands of Norwegians were subject to prosecution simply because they had been *Nasjonal Samling* members. Some had played trivial or ambivalent roles in the *Nasjonal Samling*, however, which made their prosecutions problematic. Was it lawful to convict a Norwegian based solely on their membership in the *Nasjonal Samling* without any showing of criminal intent, much less proof of wrong doing? Even if lawful, was it fair? Was it just? Much of *The Quislings* wrestles with the answers to these questions.

While the title of this book might suggest that much of the narrative would be devoted to the trial of Vidkum Quisling, this is not the case. His prosecution was important, because he was the first leader of a national socialist party to be tried, and so his trial "had an enormous symbolic significance, both nationally and internationally" (p. 130). Yet *The Quislings* devotes only six pages to the trial, and this makes sense because Seeman's intent is not to focus on high profile prosecutions in Norway but rather to "push scholarship on the trials beyond questions of justice and legality" toward an understanding of the trials "within a broad political and social context." (p.16)

With this perspective, Seeman looks at the issues involving clemency and rehabilitation, and the "increasingly fragmented" (p. 8) opinions about the trials among academics, church leaders, industrialists, politicians and the public generally. While the majority of Norwegians supported the prosecution of collaborators, and the Norwegian government hoped that the trials would rebuild faith in public institutions and demonstrate their moral authority, some critics argued that it had been a mistake to prosecute thousands of collaborators. In their view, the trials should have been limited to key collaborators during the occupation, like Quisling. As the horrors of the occupation faded into the past, others argued that the trials ran counter to the need to heal divisions in post-war Norwegian society rather than seek retribution.

The Quislings concludes that the trials were necessary because the public pressure to punish the collaborators was immense. The German occupation had been a humiliating experience for Europeans in general, and for Norwegians in particular. Not only had they been unable to resist the Germans militarily but the vast majority of occupied countries had "unheroically adapted to life under Nazi occupation" (p. 304).

While the intent of the post-war treason trials in Norway was to punish those who had allied themselves with the Germans, the trials were also about avoiding extra-judicial retribution as had occurred in France and Italy, where hundreds of collaborators were killed without legal process in so-called "mob justice." While the trials were by no means perfect, they ultimately were accepted by most Norwegians "as an inevitable epilogue to the tyranny that the German occupation had brought" (p. 293). A final note: Anika Seeman is Norwegian, and this background has given her an insight into the culture, politics, and societal issues surrounding treason trials that sets this book apart from other works on war crimes prosecutions. She is to be commended for writing this excellent treatise on an important post-World War II event.

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Crisis and Crossfire: The United States & The Middle East Since 1945. By Peter L. Hahn. Potomac Books, 2025. ISBN 978-1-6401-2577-3. Maps. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 312. $29.95 (paperback).

Peter L. Hahn is Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor of History at the Ohio State University and has written several monographs on U.S. diplomacy in the Middle East. This second edition of *Crisis and Crossfire* draws on his previously published scholarship as well as memoirs of key policymakers, published journalistic accounts, and publicly available primary sources for the chapters on twenty-first-century events.

Hahn successfully accomplishes four main goals: to evaluate U.S. policy in light of the Cold War and post-Cold War international orders; to demonstrate how the U.S. attempted to shape nationalist movements to serve its interests; to document the many attempts to broker a peace deal between Israel and the Palestinians; and to record increasing U.S. involvement in the Middle East, culminating in wars in the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq. As the first edition came out in 2005, the bulk of the new material in this volume expands and continues the narrative from that time until 2024. Hahn organizes his narrative thematically, so there is some chronological repetition in the chapters and many cross-references to events that are mentioned in one chapter but explained in another one.

Starting with a brief survey of missionary work in the nineteenth century, Hahn notes that the U.S. initially deferred to Britain and France in the pre-World War II era. Access to oil and commercial interests drew U.S. involvement before, during, and after the Second World War. At the onset of the Cold War, U.S. policy aimed to prevent Soviet expansion or power projection in the Middle East. Hahn notes that in retrospect, Josef Stalin proved far less interested in the Middle East than policymakers assumed, and Nikita Khrushchev followed a more pragmatic

than ideological approach to the region. Hahn documents the approaches of each presidential administration in the Middle East from Harry Truman through Joe Biden. His overview makes clear how frequently U.S. policy, particularly toward the question of Israel and Palestine, was affected by positioning of the president's political party for domestic presidential and midterm congressional elections.

Even so, intransigence on both sides prevented a lasting peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. When Donald Trump came to office, he altered the U.S. approach, "essentially abandoning the two-state solution and affirming Palestinian subservience to Israel" (p. 189). Ultimately, Hahn observes the limits of U.S. influence: "whether the United States promoted a peace process or refrained from promoting a peace process did not seem to make a difference in the devolution of Israeli-Palestinian relations into violence and tragedy" (p. 240).

A focus on anti-Soviet containment in the Middle East initially hampered U.S. responses to emerging threats from Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism. Only with the collapse of the Soviet Union did the U.S. address violent Islamic extremism. Political violence also emerged in the region due to "high birth rates and economic underdevelopment," which left "youthful populations with few opportunities to improve their standard of living, and authoritarian regimes left little room for peaceful, democratic reform" (p. 145). Islamic fundamentalism provided a worldview that would replace the secular regimes of the region with one centered on religion. While Islamists gained some political influence in the late 1980s and early 1990s, their popularity waned by the late 1990s in most nations save Afghanistan.

Hahn provides sufficient context to understand U.S. intervention after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, in Afghanistan after September 11, 2001, and in Iraq in 2003. Though he explains the motivations of Osama bin Laden well, readers could benefit from insights into why the Taliban supported bin Laden and why Saddam Hussein projected non-existent weapons of mass destruction capabilities. He covers the major shifts in U.S. policy in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, paying particular focus on the surges in both places. Hahn's conclusions about the strategic costs of the wars are over-simplified, though: the wars "distracted U.S. leaders from such emerging rivals as China, restricted the Pentagon's ability to develop and deploy modern weapons, and reduced public ardor for military service" (p. 213). Each of these developments is more complex than he presents here.

Crisis and Crossfire is an effective historical overview of U.S. policy in the Middle East, easily adaptable for undergraduate courses, the casual reader, or a quick reference. It provides solid background for readers interested in the Gaza War, Iran, and other hot spots. As with any work that deals with current events, the situation on the ground has changed since publication, ensuring benefits for future updates to the text.

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Bubbleheads, SEALs, and Wizards: America's Scottish Bastion in the Cold War. By D. G. Mackay. Whittles, 2024. ISBN 978-1-8499-5554-6. Photographs. Notes. Pp. ix, 240. $24.95 (paperback).

Since the end of the Cold War, some scholars and writers have turned their attention to how that contest played out in discrete geographic areas, paying particular attention to location-specific weapons or activities. (See, e.g., John Clearwater, *U.S. Nuclear Weapons in Canada* (Dundurn Press, 1999), Gretchen Heefner, *The Missile Next Door; The Minuteman in the American Heartland* (Harvard University Press, 2012), and David W. Mills, *Cold War in a Cold Land; Fighting Communism on the Northern Plains* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2015).) David Mackay, a former British Army officer and researcher, has produced a study about the role of the United States military and intelligence organizations in Scotland in this period. *Bubbleheads, SEALs and Wizards* recounts American efforts to stage submarines there; to operate facilities to collect electronic intelligence, provide navigational assistance, and communicate with U.S. forces; to maintain airfields, Special Operations training areas, and munitions magazines (including for nuclear antisubmarine weapons); and to launch (over the course of twenty-seven days in 1956) 103 high-altitude, camera-equipped balloons towards the USSR and its satellites.

This makes for an interesting story. Much of the book covers the U.S. Navy's activities in Scotland from 1961 to 1992. This is appropriate given the significant role that nuclear Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) played in American Cold War defense strategy. Early SLBM designs (Polaris and Poseidon) had a limited range. By anchoring a floating submarine tender in Holy Loch and locating various support functions nearby shoreside, the U.S. Navy's missile boats saved two weeks by travelling there rather than to the United States for refit and crew changeovers. Had a forward-deployed location not been operated and submarines had to routinely return to the United States for supplies, repair, and crew swaps, their time submerged on station would be reduced and made U.S. deterrent efforts more costly and cumbersome.

The operation of Submarine Squadron (SUBRON) 14 was a very visible undertaking, and one that was essential to U.S. deterrent posture. Indeed, Mackay recounts that after the U.S. Air Force's land-based Intermediate-range Ballistic Missiles were removed from Turkey in connection with the resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis, their role was assumed by SUBRON 14 boats sent to the Mediterranean Sea. The U.S. Navy's presence in Holy Loch continued until longer-ranged Trident SLBMs entered the inventory. This permitted the submarines to more readily transit to and from U.S. east coast bases while remaining in range of their targets. Consequently, related activities in Scotland ended.

In describing each U.S defense or intelligence activity or installation, Mackay provides a workable explanation. He relies on many of the standard secondary sources, which are likely familiar to specialists. He supplements his account by calling upon some archival materials. By far this book's most important contribution, how-

ever, is the anecdotes, asides, and observations revealed in the 150 or so interviews the author undertook of military personnel associated with the functions in Scotland. Specifics about operational tasks are intermixed with reflections about mundane aspects of military life, which Mackay aptly summarizes as focusing on "nitty-gritty, repetitive daily tasks" (p. xi.). Perhaps this is done to excess. Readers learn, for instance, that hardcopy printouts of electronic intelligence data gathered from sites in Scotland were hand-carried to Prestwick airport and then sent in mailbags to the United States. Payroll tasks for the communication site at Thurso were first handled in Londonderry until a local disbursing office was opened in 1977.

The book references several individuals who became prominent. This includes Lieutenant Commander William Crowe, who was the skipper of the submarine USS *Trout* before ultimately becoming the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Laurel Clark, a navy physician stationed in Scotland who was named an astronaut and was killed in the space shuttle *Columbia* accident. A notorious character also appears; for twenty years navy sailor John Walker, who served aboard submarines stationed in Scotland, provided the Soviets with classified data that allowed the USSR to know much about what went on at Holy Loch and the vessels that transited there and elsewhere, and what the U.S. had discerned about the Soviet submarines they were arrayed against.

Bubbleheads, SEALs and Wizards has shortcomings. Eager to make a point, the author may exaggerate the centrality of the Scotland-based activities to the U.S. conduct of the Cold War, and the extent to which this made that area an especially attractive target for Soviet attacks in the event the conflict turned hot. The discussion of the U.S. nuclear command, control, and communications infrastructure is garbled. The absence of an index is lamentable. The surname and title of a Reagan-era National Security Council staffer is incorrect. The pacing and organization of the book, and some verbiage, may also disappoint scholars.

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Spetsnaz: A History of the Soviet and Russian Special Forces. By Tor Bukkvoll. Modern War Studies. University Press of Kansas, 2024. ISBN 978-0-7006-3791-1. Illustrations. Figures. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. vii, 282. $34.99 (hardback).

Tor Bukkvoll's history of *spetsnaz* forces is sure to become the seminal English-language work on these troops. Bukkvoll covers the Russian special operations forces (SOF) origin story, their apogee during the latter half of the Cold War, a decline in fortunes that mirrored the 1990s malaise of Russia in general, and their modern operations. While *Spetsnaz* details the training and operations of these forces, it also takes care to differentiate between the units and forces that often get lumped together as Russian *spetsnaz* ("special purpose"). But this book does

more than narrate a specialized SOF history. Through Bukkvoll's work, the reader gains insight into political competition between government organs, leadership pressures on units to provide quantifiable results, and the learning (and forgetting) that occurs in military institutions.

The creation of *spetsnaz* troops in the 1950s saw many of the problems that would plague Russian military forces during other times of economic scarcity. In the first decade of their existence, *spetsnaz* focused on *khozsposob*, but this "self-reliance" didn't mean surviving in the wilderness—it meant building your own training facilities (p. 4). For naval *spetsnaz*, state economics and a focus on large-scale production meant divers would not receive much specialized equipment until the 1960s (p. 27). Only in the past decade did state funding and technological advances enable Russian SOF to become a force multiplier. Too often, specialized equipment was seen as an unaffordable luxury, something to be husbanded (pp. 94–95, 147).

Spetsnaz, unlike regular forces, were willing to take initiative when they saw an opportunity, which sometimes meant just grabbing a weapon and going (pp. 7, 212). Such flexibility for junior officers and soldiers was essential to exploit SOF abilities fully. Low-level freedom of operation, for instance, and close cooperation between *spetsnaz* and helicopter units in Afghanistan was responsible for many of the gains they managed. This was especially true during Operation ZAVESA, which aimed to cut supplies being delivered from Pakistan. The Turkestan Military District was unable to convey to the General Staff the importance of such operational-level learning, however, and such hard-fought lessons would be forgotten by the 1990s (p. 98).

A recurring problem confronting Russian *spetsnaz* is the disconnect between their mission set and their employment. This is not a new observation—Roger Beaumont wrote about misapplied elite forces decades ago—but it is an important one. In theory, *spetsnaz* missions include special reconnaissance, sabotage behind enemy lines, and elimination of strategic threats. Yet, the preparation for such missions is often shortchanged by exigencies. The author illustrates this with a story about the 2nd *Spetsnaz* GRU (military intelligence) Brigade entering Kharkiv in February 2022; a dozen-plus SzGRU were killed when moving in column down a main boulevard (pp. xv–xvii). For the first half of the Afghan War, SzGRU was focused on aimless (but easily quantified) "'capture and destroy'" missions (p. 74). In the First Chechen War, SOF were denied mobility assets and sent to perform ordinary infantry missions (p. 142); SOF still lacked vehicles in the second war. Time and again, shortages meant *spetsnaz* deployed as light infantry (p. 143).

When *spetsnaz* forces were utilized as intended they often achieved strategic objectives. In the 1968 uprising, *spetsnaz* seized the airport and other buildings in Czechoslovakia before the arrival of follow-on troops (p. 45). SHTORM-333 brought together the *spetsnaz* Muslim Battalion, KGB Alphas, and SOF from the KGB training unit (KUOS, *Kursy Usovershenstvovania Ofitserskogo Sostava*) to decapitate the Afghan government. Despite some snafus, including guises that made the GRU indistinguishable from local defenders, this was an operational success (p.

60). In 1992, the 15th SzGRU Brigade gathered up tactical nuclear warheads in Kazakhstan and delivered them to special rail cars (p. 131). Special Operations Command and the 45th *Spetsnaz* played key roles in Syria and Kazakhstan, respectively.

Russian racism makes an appearance at points in Bukkvoll's history. A Chukchi (ethnic Siberian group) KGB *spetsnaz* was created, ostensibly because they could better handle arctic conditions (p. 35). Rewards from SHTORM-333 seemed to favor Slavs while ignoring Central Asians (p. 61). First Deputy Defense Minister Sergei Sokolov's view that "these peasants in wide trousers" (referring to mujahideen) would not accomplish much against the Soviets ultimately proved misguided (p. 64). It is also probable that senior postings were reserved for ethnic Slavs. During the Soviet period there were already set-asides for sons of communist leaders (dubbed *volosatiki*, or "parasites") (p. 19).

A comment about sources: the reliance on memoirs and *spetsnazs*' own reports mean some license is probably taken. "Popular Fronts," for example, were a common moniker for post-Soviet former communists. Was Major Oleg Golybin's suggestion to the Kulobis in Tajikistan that they should call their forces the Popular Front the reason for this group's name (p. 139)? Perhaps not.

Other authors have looked at the issue of *spetsnaz*, but these were usually first-hand accounts, as with Valdimir Rezun. So, absent another *glasnost* or Mitrokhin Archive redux, it is hard to imagine a future history of Russian SOF that will equal what Bukkvall has accomplished here in terms of *spetsnaz* organization and operations, while imparting wider lessons about the Russian military.

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The Farthest Valley: Escaping the Chinese Trap at Chosin Reservoir. By Joseph Wheelan. Osprey, 2024. ISBN 978-1-4728-5979-2. Maps. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 384. $32.00 (hardback).

The battles around the Chosin Reservoir in late 1950 constitute one of the most memorable events of the Korean War. The U.S. First Marine Division and supporting army troops found themselves surrounded by numerically superior Chinese forces; safety lay down a mostly narrow road 78 miles long. At the time, many (especially the Chinese), believed the American situation was hopeless. It turned out not to be, at least for the marines. This story has been told before, perhaps most notably by Roy Appleman. Wheelan tells it mostly through secondary sources. He brings something special to this table, however; his father, who served in B Company/7th Marines, fought at Chosin and survived. We understand immediately Wheelan's commitment to this story.

The 1st Marine Division and its army colleagues were in North Korea thanks to General Douglas MacArthur's plan to end the war in Korea with a decisive victory over communism. Although Chinese troops had already appeared, he

discounted any serious Chinese intervention. The marine division headed north toward the Chosin Reservoir as part of the army's X Corps. General Ned Almond, its commander, shared the view of his staff, which "discounted the intelligence" (p. 51) concerning the presence of Chinese forces. To those who suggested caution, Almond replied: "We're still attacking and we're going all the way to the Yalu … . Don't let a bunch of Chinese laundrymen stop you" (p. 154).

To Wheelan, Major General Oliver Smith and his regimental commanders are the heroes of this story. The author describes Smith as an "intellectual with common sense" (p. 50). He moved cautiously and accumulated supplies along the route north. When the Chinese attack came in late November, the marines were mostly ready. The initial assaults were turned back, but with heavy losses on both sides; Chinese forces had roughly a "four to one advantage" (p. 110) in manpower. At Hagaru, Smith initially had only two-thirds of a marine battalion (plus some miscellaneous units) available for defense. A single marine company, isolated at so-called Fox Hill, fought off repeated fierce attacks. All of this occurred amidst "mind numbing cold" (p. 247). The marines at Yudam-ni fought their way out of the trap and rescued the Fox Hill defenders.

Wheelan makes clear the central role of airpower in saving the division. As he says, "air-strikes eviscerated enemy troops;" sometimes as many as 40–60 planes were available in support (pp. 227, 233). Marines used that "unneeded" airfield to fly out casualties and fly in replacements. They again attacked south, towards Koto-ri. Then they made a final lunge toward Hungnam and safety.

The army found itself in deeper difficulties. Its forces were smaller and more dispersed. Furthermore, their units contained large numbers of Korean conscripts who spoke little or no English. Lieutenant Colonel Don Faith's army battalion, for instance, "consisted of 745 American soldiers and about 300 Korean recruits" (p. 147). The situation of the three battalions east of Chosin seemed hopeless. The marines lacked the strength to rescue them, yet Almond perceived no danger. Faith saw the situation more clearly: "We knew we were trapped and couldn't expect help … . It looked like Custer's Last Stand was going to be re-enacted" (p. 183). Ultimately, though, survivors from these and other army units formed a provisional battalion and helped achieve the marine breakout.

Wheelan makes clear that no matter what the Americans suffered, it was far worse on the other side. Indeed, it is astonishing that the Chinese fought so well. Chinese solders "generally moved at night" (p. 62) to avoid aerial observation. They lacked "coats, gloves, [and] winter shoes. Many attacking Chinese "had not eaten in two days" (p. 161), and when food was available it consisted of "three yams apiece" (p. 181). Chinese tactics relied on "frontal assaults" (p. 111), and the Chinese wounded often froze to death (p. 182). Thousands of marines had the macabre experience of seeing fields of "Chinese frozen stiff" (p. 304).

Wheelan's method of telling this story is unique, in my experience. Most authors provide rich paragraphs; Wheelan writes an endless string of sentences. An example from the section on Hell Fire valley: "They ran out of grenades, and a 75 mm recoilless rifle that had done such good service was disabled. At 4:30am, the

60th Division's chief political officer, Xu Fang, sent a captured American officer down to the road with a surrender demand. McLaughlin and a British commando went out to parley, hoping to stall until help could arrive, or until some trapped men could slip away. McLaughlin began the negotiations by brashly demanding that the Chinese surrender. But it made little impression, he said" (p. 199). Thus Wheelan keeps us sharply focused on the immediate experience.

Wheelan does not sugarcoat the outcome. It was a "strategic defeat" (p. 331) during which more than 11,000 marines became casualties (p. 330). It did save the U.S. Marine Corps from Harry Truman's wrath, though. This book certainly makes the case, so clearly made by David Halberstam earlier, that Chosin was a "masterpiece of leadership on the part of … officers, and of simple, relentless, abiding courage on the part of the ordinary fighting man" (p. 298).

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Militarization and Democracy in West Germany's Border Police, 1951–2005. By David M. Livingstone. German History in Context. Camden House, 2024. ISBN 978-1-6401-4151-3. Figures. Bibliography. Index. Pp. vii, 328. $120.00 (hardback).

David M. Livingstone's *Militarization and Democracy in West Germany's Border Police, 1951–2005*, chronicles militarized borders while challenging how historians contextualize policing and normalization in West Germany (the Federal Republic of Germany, or FRG) after Nazism. Livingstone draws throughlines from the Weimar era and even earlier through the early years of the twenty-first century, reframing our understanding of policing and militarization over time. In so doing, Livingstone resists assessing periods of German history in a vacuum. He effectively grounds the militarization of border police in West Germany in a global context, drawing on examples from the Korean demilitarized zone, policing in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s, decolonization, and evolving border police institutions in the German Democratic Republic (GDR, aka East Germany).

Over several chapters, Livingstone identifies sociopolitical debates about the nature of the border police, its potential undermining of democracy in West Germany, and the fear of communist subversion from the GDR. In chapters 3 and 4, Livingstone assessed the members themselves: the traditionalists seeking "rigid discipline" (p. 83); former Nazis; and recruits who challenged marriage bans and other social conventions. The West German border police (*Bundesgrenzschutz*, or BGS) utilized film and other cultural sources to drive home the values articulated by the Federal Republic more broadly as non-military, a "defensive civilian state" to construct civic national identity through hypermasculinity (p. 116). Because the role of the BGS was ambiguous, recruiters faced challenges in fulfilling person-

nel goals; this was also complicated by the so-called "economic miracle," which dropped unemployment to record lows.

Livingstone's study stands as a corrective to the study of German history as discrete, disparate chronological eras, in particular "across the caesura of 1989–1990," setting reunification apart from the rest of postwar German history (p. 11). Livingstone's analysis highlights the roles of veterans of the First and Second World War as well as how individuals were shaped by the political violence of the interwar era. Konrad Adenauer, for example, sought to establish a force for "internal [...] security" (p. 27) in the context of an emergent communist Germany to the east. It was unclear whether the border police would be a vessel for rearmament or a federal police force; these debates illustrated the long shadow of the Nazi period and concerns about conflict with the Soviet Bloc.

In the second chapter, Livingstone deftly describes how the first BGS was recruited and assembled; the initial recruits were overwhelmingly combat veterans, rather than civilian police. Members of the Social Democratic Party (SPD) viewed this momentum as a reinforcement of, rather than a challenge to, previous militarization and authoritarianism. Considerations of cost—no small issue to Germans with memories of the post-WWI hyperinflation—revealed contradictions in the perception of mission. Was the BGS organization centrally focused on cross-border smugglers and the black market, or would the BGS be called upon to reinforce or buttress the military? This debate extended to the training and rhetoric at the border police academy in Lübeck and "embarrassing incidents" surrounding BGS members in public (pp. 68–71).

Extrapolating from the theoretical example presented by Joan Wallach Scott in regards to gender, Livingstone most notably contributes to the scholarship on border policing through the lens of training. BGS training reinforced continuities related to racial and religious identity that ostensibly required combat tactics to protect. Livingstone highlights Christianity and an embedded social conservatism that needed "reframe[ing]" in the wake of Nazism (p. 157). The BGS embodied a philosophy that centered martial masculinity, anti-unionism, and militarized police in the event of war or domestic tumult.

Yet the ambiguous role of the BGS in relation to other policing or military organizations means that its legacy is complicated. In the wake of the 1972 Munich Olympic games, continued debates over federalism and police sovereignty resulted in uneven responses to entities and events like the Red Action Front (RAF), terrorism, anti-nuclear protests, and shifts in border policy. Whether the BGS was police or paramilitary became a matter of "professionalization" and modernization, and the BGS gained a generation of leaders whose service consisted of policing rather than combat.

Slow structural change is evident in the gendered context of the BGS. The grudging admission of women to the BGS relegated them to desk jobs or administrative support. Here, Livingstone posits that a militarized BGS did more to solidify entrenched cultural norms than upend them. This affirmation reflects the West German tendencies to paper over the history of Nazism and the Holocaust

while normalizing legacies of the Wehrmacht. As the two Germanies approached reunification in 1990, differences in how the border police were organized and categorized required re-evaluation of BGS members and prosecution of former East German guards, recalling for many denazification or even Nuremberg. Finally, in 1994, the essential function of the BGS as a policing body was articulated in law.

Overall, Livingstone's work intervenes in several historiographies: post-World War II Germany, the Cold War, the history of law enforcement, policing, and militarization, and militarized borders. It is a meticulously researched book and, though there are some errors throughout (mostly misspellings and an incorrect year here and there), well-written. Livingstone makes sure to remind readers of his overall thesis throughout the text, analyzed both chronologically and thematically. Considering the relevance of the topics he covers for our current environment, it is a timely addition to the scholarship.

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Hollywood's Imperial Wars: The Vietnam Generation and the American Myth of Heroic Continuity. By Armando José Prats. University of Oklahoma Press, 2024. ISBN 978-0-8061-9375-5. Photographs. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 316. $45.00 (hardback).

Wars are fought literally on the battlefield and symbolically in film, TV, and mass media, with the latter often providing the legitimation of the former. Professor Armando Prats's study of *Hollywood's Imperial Wars* makes the claim that generations of U.S. citizens understood the history of U.S. wars in this symbolic manner, inheriting a legacy of victorious wars via mythic war films, be they those depicting the founding wars of continental westward expansion or later World War II battles fought in the European and Pacific theaters that established the pre-eminence of the U.S. as the leader of the world. The mythical illusion of Manifest Destiny and U.S. exceptionalism, Prats claims, was passed from generation to generation via triumphant Hollywood war films, consolidating the naïve belief that the nation was invincible, somehow willed into existence by divine destiny. Heroic conduct in war was likewise linked to its victorious outcome. The entire metaphysical edifice, however, collapses when the U.S. is facing a war in Vietnam it is destined to lose. Prats refers to this rupture in historical continuity as the "Loss," a moment when not only a war is lost but the established template of cinematic representation of war comes under attack.

Prats's study divides into two parts, namely the pre- and post-lapsarian eras of Hollywood war films. While reviewing for the reader the tradition of Hollywood war films in the first part, discussing such films as *Fort Apache* (the 1948 movie, considered as a war film) or *Sands of Iwo Jima* (1949), the book's major emphasis lies with Vietnam war films: *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), *The Deer Hunter* (1978), *Coming Home* (1978), *Apocalypse Now* (1979), *Platoon* (1986) and Clint Eastwood's late

(2014) example, *American Sniper*—an attempt the revive the heroic myth in another failed war enterprise in Iraq. Eastwood is discussed as the heir to John Wayne's legacy, which runs like a thematic thread throughout the study. Wayne's last public appearance in 1979, as Prats notes, ironically has him award the Oscar for Best Picture to *The Deer Hunter*, a film that subverts his legacy.

The main contribution of Prats's study is not so much the discussion of well-known war films that have been widely analyzed but rather the reframing of their mass media impact as an articulation of a myth of heroic continuity. The ending of John Ford's *Fort Apache*, for example, stresses "self-delusory remembrance that satisfies the nation's appetite for a heroic history" (p. 36). Even though the film reveals Captain York's (John Wayne) predecessor, Lieutenant Colonel Thursday (Henry Ford), as a bigoted and incompetent military commander leading his men to certain death, Prats argues, the film performs a transfer of heroic legacy from one generation to the next when York exalts his former commander in front of assembled journalists. Commander Thursday's less-than-heroic conduct literally is revised in front of the audience's eyes into a myth of heroic legacy based on victory and conquest, ending in a "tableau of American domestic values" (p. 37) and national unity.

Some readers may interpret *Fort Apache* as an admission of its own mythic construction of heroism and, therefore, view it as a first dent in the armor of U.S. military invincibility and its cinematic representation. Prats locates this aporia more profoundly in subsequent Vietnam War films that are no longer capable of producing narrations of intergenerational legacies of heroism and national unity with their isolated and frequently psychotic characters. These films, argues Prats, are preceded by John Wayne's branding of himself as a national icon of invincibility, "the unquestioned protagonist of his own metanarrative" (p. 96). When Wayne's Stryker dies in *Sands of Iwo Jima*, for example, he transforms into the mythic John Wayne that haunted younger generations into confusing heroic conduct in war with Wayne's on-screen performances. Wayne's heroic actions, ironically, are delivered by an actor who never served in the military or saw any combat action but nevertheless fought in all the cinematic wars of Hollywood, beginning with the wars of Western expansion through World War II's Pacific wars and, finally, the Vietnam War in *The Green Berets* (1968).

The foundational crisis of U.S. nationhood, war, imperialism, and mythic heroism is eventually triggered by the Vietnam War that produces an asymmetrical experience to that of Hollywood's cinematic representations of war. In the wake of this war and its experience of defeat, Hollywood's production of psychotic characters in Vietnam war films begins to subvert and question the John Wayne screen mythology, one the industry knew would no longer resonate with their disenchanted audiences. Prats's excellent and well-researched study is enhanced by numerous historical, military, and literary accounts and should be of interest to both the historian and student of military history and film.

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Britain and the Dhofar War in Oman, 1963–1976: A Covert War in Arabia. By Geraint Hughes. Security, Conflict, and Cooperation in the Contemporary World. Palgrave Macmillan, 2024. ISBN 978-3-0314-9498-7. Maps. Appendices. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 325. $159.99 (hardback).

The Dhofar War is a major milestone in the modern history of Arabia and especially that of Oman. Although the Dhofar War is relatively obscure outside the field of Gulf Studies—Hughes calls it "a forgotten conflict" (p. 2)—it has much to teach us about military history, alliance behavior, and more broadly, about Cold War conflicts. Several fine political and historical works, as well as personal reminiscences, have been published on this topic relatively recently, among them Ian Gardiner's *In the Service of the Sultan: A First-Hand Account of the Dhofar Insurgency* (Pen and Sword Military, 2006), J. E. Peterson's magisterial *Oman's Insurgencies: The Sultanate's Struggle for Supremacy* (Saqi Books, 2007), and Abdel Razzaq Takriti's excellent *Monsoon Revolution: Republicans, Sultans, and Empires in Oman, 1965–1976* (Oxford University Press, 2013). More surprisingly, in the same year Hughes's volume came out, another British historian with a doctorate from King's College's Department of War Studies, Stephen Quick, published a book on the same exact topic (*The Dhofar War: British Covert Campaigning in Arabia, 1965–1975* [University of Exeter Press, 2024]).

Hughes is currently a reader in diplomatic and military history at his alma mater and the author of two earlier, well-regarded books on Cold War history and conflict. Like those, his new book is meticulously researched not just in various archives and libraries around Britain but also "on the ground" in Dhofar and Oman. He interviewed several British and Omani participants of the campaign. Hughes's objective is to fill the lacunae in the literature on the Dhofar War, particularly the role of Britain—although he makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of the participation of Iran, the support of Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates to Oman, and, on the other side, South Yemen's backing of the insurgency. He succeeds in placing the conflict in a sensitively drawn international context.

Hughes's book is well-constructed and logically structured. Following a fine introduction that is an excellent primer for the subject, he outlines his research process and points out the gaps in the extant scholarship. Five chapters follow that are well-written, tightly argued, and supported by an impressive range of research. In the first, Hughes sets the stage: the evolution of Britain's involvement in the Middle East and, more specifically, the gulf, and the development of London's relationship with Oman, arguably its favorite gulf country. The portrayal of Oman's forces is straightforward and balanced. The second chapter takes us through the course of the war from the first years of the insurgency (1964–1968) to the eventual victory of the sultanate (1973–1976).

The following chapter is a masterful exposition of the international environment as Hughes analyzes the at times fraught relationship between the U.K. and Oman, the position of Gulf Arab states and Iran's intervention. Chapter 4 is devoted to the counter-insurgency campaign, complete with a theoretical introduc-

tion of the subject and a thorough consideration of the "hearts and minds" campaign as well as of propaganda and information warfare. Chapter 5 is a similarly comprehensive but concise examination of intelligence and covert operations.

The main takeaways are that even after the U.K.'s withdrawal of its military from "East of Suez" in 1968–1971, it maintained a keen interest in the region; that throughout the conflict "Oman represented a commitment that was too important for the UK to abandon;" that Dhofar was not just a counter-insurgency but also an "internationalist struggle and a proxy war affected by Cold War-related East-West rivalries;" and that Britain's objective of defeating the insurgency "was achieved largely through chance, rather than the application of 'hearts and minds' techniques and economic incentives" (pp. 5–6).

Hughes readily admits that this is a history of the conflict rather than the history (p. 7); nonetheless, it is a significant contribution to our understanding of this important chapter of the Cold War. His writing is always clear and jargon free, his points are logically presented and well-substantiated. The two appendices, on personalities and Omani and British military forces, respectively, as well as the glossary, the exhaustive bibliography, and the carefully compiled and helpful index make this volume even more comprehensive and reader-friendly.

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The Vietnam War: A Military History. By Geoffrey Wawro. Basic Books, 2024. ISBN 978-1-5416-0608-1. Maps. Photographs. Bibliography. Notes. Index. Pp. ix, 652. $40.00 (hardback).

Full disclosure: this reviewer is a Saigon-born Vietnamese historian whose family was affected by the war. Half a century has passed since formal hostilities of the war in Vietnam ended in April 1975, but the struggle to understand this seminal conflict has never stopped. Geoffrey Wawro offers another attempt in the quest for understanding. The big volume carries dedication, but also provokes desire for a more balanced account affording historical agency of all sides, weighing strengths with weaknesses. Readers may have a hard time finding such nuances of wartime human experiences in this monograph. Instead, there seems to be three categories assigned to the major belligerents: the "good" (North Vietnam), the "bad"(the United States), and the "ugly" (South Vietnam). This implied categorization is problematic because amidst the fog and friction of war, the ugly one is warfare, and good and bad coexist in each human.

We are grateful to Wawro, who has published many books on warfare in Europe, for nourishing an interest in studying the Vietnam War. Across twenty-six chapters of an impressive 540 pages, Wawro recounts the war in chronological fashion, bouncing between diplomatic and military events. From the onset, Wawro rebuts a traditional argument that situates the Vietnam War in the Cold

War context, boldly arguing that "none of the Cold War justifications of containment or the 'domino theory' required the US military to intervene," and that the motivation for America's engagement was instead "a fear of appearing weak" (p. 1). His narrative often demonstrates that U.S. leaders did not want to risk giving China or the Soviet Union an excuse to intervene directly, though, a fear stemming from that Cold War context.

No one can leave this book convinced that U.S. military prowess alone was the answer. There were irretractable blunders across strategic, operational, and tactical levels that continually pushed America into this political-military quagmire in Southeast Asia. Wawro demonstrates, for instance, how leaders like Westmoreland put career over lives, and presidents put politics over peace.

Compared to his analysis of the Americans, though, Wawro's treatment of the Vietnamese remains generalized and uses loaded language. North Vietnam is cast in the most positive light as "hard-core, admired nationalists" who inherited the "heroic Viet Minh legacy" and had "all of the legitimacy" (pp. 25, 538). In contrast, South Vietnam never had a chance to win because the nation was "hopelessly corrupt and divided," and their soldiers were only fighting "half-heartedly" (pp. 4, 539). Wawro's reductionist binary that "North Vietnam had a history" and "South Vietnam had no history" is both shocking and heartbreaking to any conscientious scholar of Vietnam, both the war and the country (p. 12). This ignores recent scholarship that illuminates many contours of the centuries-long historical process in Vietnam and reveals how South Vietnam had a nuanced history as a pluralistic society with a robust republican tradition and contested ideologies that included both communism and nationalism.

Methodologically, the book has an American-centric perspective, with the majority of chapters constructed from secondary sources. There are exceptions where Wawro utilized more substantial primary documents to offer vivid descriptions of military operational histories and illustrate the intertwined diplomatic-military decisions as the American leaders tried in vain to relate the two core puzzles of developing an effective military strategy and building a sustainable Saigon regime. These insights are not new and are made without engaging existing Vietnamese-language materials. Readers may feel disoriented by the scope and scale, as Wawro often structures each chapter with a swift move from top-level political conversations to almost squad-level military experiences before jumping back up with after-action report data.

Wawro has a firm grasp of secondary sources, but the way he employs them often creates gaps. In recounting the Hamburger Hill battle, for instance, Wawro gives ample attention to American valor and acknowledges the North Vietnamese soldiers' tenacity; however, he dismisses South Vietnamese historical agency, questioning why ARVN battalions were "not doing anything" (p. 360). Andrew Wiest, whom Wawro cites elsewhere, already proved that ARVN men were the first to summit Hill 937 at Dong Ap Bia mountain and suffered friendly fire in assisting American allies. The book's uneven treatment of the Vietnamese also shows in Operation Lam Son 719. While demonstrating ARVN's weaknesses

in senior leadership, unreadiness for combined-arms operations, and reliance on U.S. air and firepower support, Wawro conveys little respect or empathy for the South Vietnamese losses.

While this book contributes to the voluminous literature on the American experience in Vietnam, it does not significantly expand the historiography, as Wawro offers few new insights. The book's length and broad-stroke interpretations make it difficult to recommend to students or a general audience. In the end, bitter frustration does not foster deeper understanding of a complex war. Wawro thanks the local South Vietnamese who helped his research trip. It is this reviewer's hope that such genuine interaction encourages the author to rethink his assertions about South Vietnam having "no history" and being an "entirely artificial state" (p. 538) that bookend the monograph. A country might have a complicated history, a controversial history, an understudied history, or even a forgotten history, but that is different than having "no history."

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Why Vietnam? Reflections on the Effect of War. By Margaret Colbert Brown. Pen & Sword Military, 2025. ISBN 978-1-0361-1155-7. Maps. Photographs. Figures. Appendices. Notes. Bibliography. Pp. vii, 293. $34.95 (hardback).

In *Why Vietnam?* Margaret Colbert Brown reconstructs the experience of the Vietnam War from a "grunt's" point of view. In keeping with its subtitle, *Reflections*, she does not attempt definitive answers to why the war was fought or whether America won or lost. In fact, she ends the book by claiming that fifty years after the fall of South Vietnam, these questions have not been answered and: "Maybe they never will" (p. 223). Instead, Brown strives to provide the "soldiers' shared language, a code of sorts" that she hopes "unlocks the door" separating veterans from their loved ones that wish to understand their sometimes-painful experiences better (p. ix).

The book is organized into four sections. The first is forty-eight pages long and covers the United States from the 1950s through the 1970s. This was an ambitious goal that includes five short chapters on foreign policy (primarily the Domino Theory), the draft, basic training, domestic dissent, and music. The second section covers facts about Vietnam before, during, and after the war. These chapters are interspersed with Americans' perceptions of the nation they had been sent to via poetry, photography, and anecdotes from veterans within the text. The third section aimed to cover the grunts' warfighting experience in-country. This is the longest section, with over one hundred pages, and it covers a dizzying amount of content organized loosely by topic. The final chapter of section three periodized American involvement in the Vietnam War into eight phases. I would have preferred this chapter first to assist her narrative of the remaining discussion. The final section is titled "Coming Home" and quickly covers what it meant to be a "short-timer,"

along with the experience of rotating home individually vs. as a unit, experience of or participating in domestic dissent at home, and reflections on what it all meant.

Brown is Professor of English at Radford University, where she has taught courses on the Vietnam War. The prose and style of the book is meant to convey the milieu of the 1960s and 1970s. The book is replete with poems in block quotes and pictures, many drawn from open-access sources. She also bolded words that covered concepts, phrases, controversies, or other events deemed important by the author at its first mention to draw the reader's attention. She primarily draws upon secondary sources and the experiences of veterans from a variety of sources, including observations from veterans that attended her classes. The book clearly reflects her work engaging with veterans in the classroom and at Vietnam veteran organizations. The resulting book provides a literary exploration of their experience that may be accessible to family or friends who have not experienced war themselves.

As a work of history, *Why Vietnam?* has some shortcomings. The book attempts to cover more material than can be reasonably covered in 220 pages, especially when analysis is competing with poetry and photos from the period. Material within the volume can also be difficult to locate given its lack of chronological narrative or an index. Readers looking for additional context to engage with Brown's work would do well to consult George Herring's *America's Longest War,* while those looking to read more about the veteran experience should consider Charles Anderson's *Grunts* (1976) and Michael Herr's *Dispatches* (1991), both of which Brown cites frequently.

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A Debt of Gratitude: How Jimmy Carter Put Vietnam Veterans' Issues on the National Agenda. By Glenn Robins. Modern War Studies. University of Kansas Press, 2024. ISBN 978-0-7006-3783-6. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 190. $49.99 (hardback).

With President Jimmy Carter's death in 2024 and the 50th anniversary in 2023 of the signing of the Paris Peace Accords and subsequent withdrawal of U.S. combat troops from Vietnam in 1973, Glenn Robins' *A Debt of Gratitude* is a timely analysis of a little-noted aspect of President Carter's political history. Robins details the history of challenges to securing rights for Vietnam veterans and the politically fraught path Carter took to reframe their needs and secure policies to support them. As a historian, Robins's analysis is rich and walks readers through Carter's record of political actions affecting Vietnam veterans from his time as governor in Georgia through the 1976 presidential campaign, his one term as president of the United States, and his loss of the narrative of support for Vietnam veterans and the 1980 presidential election. Readers interested in the rights and political power of veterans, the Vietnam War, and the postwar effects on U.S. domestic policy, President Carter and his administration, the role of political rhetoric in policymaking,

and the influence of political networks and challenges for politicians to effectively manage them, will find Robins's work interesting and thought-provoking.

Robins anchors *A Debt of Gratitude* around Carter's prominent role in putting the issues faced by Vietnam veterans (mental and physical health, employment, etc.) on the national agenda. Robins demonstrates the substantial political investment Carter made across his political life to raise public awareness of these issues, to reframe the veteran experience in Vietnam as one deserving of gratitude, and to engage political networks of Vietnam veterans in the policy process and as a source for political support.

Two things stand out. First, Robins weaves Carter's "rhetoric of gratitude" throughout his analysis, demonstrating how Carter reframed the Vietnam veteran experience as a positive one of patriotism, heroism, and nobility, which contrasted the prevalent characterization of their experience as one of victimhood via working class and minority conscription to fight (unsuccessfully) an unjust war.

Second, Robins chronicles Carter's engagement with Vietnam veterans, the challenges of harnessing support from constituencies and political networks, and then successfully meeting their expectations. As a presidential candidate in 1976, Carter contrasted with President Ford and the Republican Party by committing himself to address the full range of issues facing Vietnam veterans. This promise, contemporaneous to the political mobilization of networks of Vietnam veterans, raised expectations and demands that President Carter could never meet, in spite of several key policymaking accomplishments such as having Max Cleland, a disabled Vietnam veteran, lead the Veterans Administration, creating employment programs specifically for Vietnam veterans, increasing GI Bill benefits and access to mental health services through the Veterans Administration, creating the Vietnam Veterans Week, and signing the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund that created the Vietnam War Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., into law.

At the same time, Robins demonstrates the struggles Carter had with key political networks such as the Vietnam Veterans in Congress, the Council of Vietnam Veterans, the VFW, and the American Legion—in part due to his own missteps, such as immediately pardoning Americans who had evaded the military draft upon taking office and before any legislative actions aimed at Vietnam veterans, a rogue and independent Democratic party who advanced legislation beyond the fiscal boundaries Carter was willing to go, and the evolving nature of issues Vietnam veterans faced, such as the negative health effects from Agent Orange. Put together, Carter's perceived inability to meet the full range of needs and demands of Vietnam veterans allowed this rhetoric and position to be overtaken by Ronald Reagan in the 1980 presidential election. To Robins and most observers, this is not why Carter lost the 1980 election, as other economic and international crises overcame his presidency; however, it is a primary reason why he is not recognized for his contributions to Vietnam veterans.

Taken together, Robins offers a detailed accounting of the events, legislation, political triumphs, and miscues of the Carter administration related to Vietnam veterans issues, but he could better ground his analysis in existing academic litera-

ture on agenda setting, the power dynamics between the executive and legislative branches, and the challenges elected officials have in fulfilling the expectations of the policy networks who support them. Nevertheless, *A Debt of Gratitude* offers a strong foundation for further exploration of these topics and is a valuable read for scholars across a multitude of academic domains.

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Beautiful New Sky: Fabricating Bodies for Outer Space in East Germany's Military Laboratories. By Ines Geipel. Translated by Nick Somers. Polity, 2024. ISBN 978-1-5095-5999-2. Notes. Bibliography. Pp. vi, 216. $20.00 (hardback).

Ines Geipel was a track and field athlete in the German Democratic Republic (GDR, East Germany) who has become a central figure in the movement to win justice for athletes who were abused during their time competing for the GDR. Her newly translated book, *Beautiful New Sky,* is a fascinating, though not entirely scholarly, or coherent, semi-autobiographical account of both the mistreatment she and other athletes experienced, and of similar, related programs of altering or augmenting human bodies for space exploration and travel. The value of this monograph is not so much in its primary source research, though Geipel has done plenty of archival research (and recounts her experiences in various archives in Germany); it is in the combination of her visceral retelling of the troubling, at times horrifying, things done to her body and other East German athletes' bodies, the long afterlife of the forces that were responsible for such dark science, and the fascinating connection between athlete doping programs and similar programs for cosmonauts. The thread that connects these three themes is the hubris of a dictatorship that believed in perfecting nature, including the human body, to engineer super-athletes, super-soldiers, and super-cosmonauts.

Geipel begins by detailing her personal experiences as an activist who encounters harassment, threats, and character assassination from shadowy people who in only some cases she is able to identify. The implication is that these are people who were linked in some way to the regime, to the doping program in particular, and who resent Geipel's crusade to receive legal compensation for herself and other former athletes, who, in most cases suffer from PTSD, and in some tragic cases suffer terrible physical ailments from the procedures performed on them against their will, such as the osteochondrosis program, in which powerful anabolic steroids were administered to pre-pubescent girls (to see if they would become powerful athletes) and which left the girls permanently disfigured and disabled (p. 127). Her prose often resembles that of a diary or a stream-of-consciousness essay, which might deter readers looking for a more scholarly treatment, but it brings to the fore the intense personal anguish she and other former doping victims suffer.

Within her informal prose, however, she also leads the reader into her trips to several archives as she tries to research not only the athlete doping program, but also the

cosmonaut program, which did not really take off until the space flight of cosmonaut Sigmund Jähn, the first German in space, whose 1978 flight on Soyuz made him a, perhaps the, national hero of East Germany. The sudden entry of East Germany into space research meant that many of the experiments and procedures performed on athletes could be expanded to an even more important arena, as the files that Geipel finds in the archives show. In particular, Soviet and East German scientists were concerned with how to prevent muscle degeneration and other physical ailments associated with long periods of low gravity. This culminated in the "Interkosmos" program.

Anabolic steroids, the core of the doping program, were an obvious choice to create human bodies that would be able to retain muscle tone and otherwise adapt to weightlessness better. Other substances were tested on humans as well, including endorphins, catecholamine, and other enzymes, but in particular scientists with the Interkosmos program were interested in a mysterious-sounding concoction called "Substance P"(p. 135). This was a neuropeptide developed at the Humboldt University in Berlin, as well as the Aerospace Medicine Institute near Dresden in the 1960s and '70s, to be used on gymnasts, skaters, the Dynamo Dresden soccer club, and other athletes (p. 104). Neuropeptides like Substance P promised "to combat anxiety, pain, fatigue, desynchronization in space, to handle extreme stress, to improve concentration, to facilitate learning" (p. 106). In other words, neuropeptides, anabolic steroids, and similar substances held the promise of perfecting super athletes and, therefore, super cosmonauts.

Beautiful New Sky is an odd but interesting blend of scholarly, archive-based research and personal experience. It lacks any truly coherent argument or thesis, aside from the *a priori* belief that experimenting on nature, including natural human bodies, in order to perfect or improve it, is wrong and an inevitable outgrowth of dictatorship, especially communist dictatorships. It largely lacks engagement with other scholarship and mostly lacks any real historical context. Nonetheless, because of Geipel's personal history, and because she weaves this history and experience into the book, it becomes a fascinating and eye-opening piece of literature, with a number of research leads waiting to be explored. Any historian working on space medicine and space research in the Eastern Bloc should read it.

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The Struggle for Liberation: A History of the Rwandan Civil War, 1990–1994. By John Burton Kegel. War and Militarism in African History. Ohio University Press, 2025. ISBN 978-0-8214-2627-2. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xi, 407. $36.95 (paperback).

John Burton Kegel has written a curious book. It tells the story of the Rwandan Patriotic Front's (RPF) struggle for liberation, focusing on the period immediately preceding the 1994 genocide, from October 1990 to April 1994. Kegel notes

that the 100 days of the Rwandan genocide are the final phase of the civil war, and that any serious understanding of the genocide cannot be complete without a better understanding of the period from 1990 to 1994. Kegel foregrounds diplomatic and military tactics, focusing on the goals and practices of both sides of the war: Habyarimana's Forces Armées Rwandaises (FAR); and the then-rebel army of the now-ruling RPF. The role of foreign diplomats (notably Belgian, French, and American) is also part of the story.

While Kegel draws on a range of new diplomatic and military sources from recently available archives, not much new emerges about the plan for the genocide, how the decision to implement genocide came to be, and how individual Rwandans took up the order to kill their Tutsi kith and kin. As such, *The Struggle for Liberation* is a tale that focuses largely on the actions of the ruling elite, both Hutu and Tutsi, and the overall inaction of the international community.

Despite this elite focus, readers are treated to a new interpretation of the RPF's "bush war" and its liberation struggle from the perspective of those who participated, namely current members of Rwanda's military and political elite. Kegel does not reveal how he secured interviews with senior officials in Kigali, nor does Kegel provide any insight into how he interpreted his interview material. The absence of a section discussing his method and methodology leaves Kegel naive to the politics of history in Rwanda and the extent to which the RPF leadership has practiced astute image management in crafting a particular version of history to suit its political goals, as Johan Pottier studied in *Re-imagining Rwanda: Conflict, Survival and Disinformation in the Late Twentieth Century* (Oxford University Press, 2002). It is on these shoals that the text flounders, as Kegel claims to provide the definitive text on military and political strategy in the pre-genocide period.

Kegel fails to appreciate the extent to which the RPF has worked through scholars like him to impose a simple yet compelling account of the causes of the 1994 genocide: ethnic chauvinist Hutu leaders implemented their plan for genocide to hold on to political power, while the RPF emerge as the heroes in stopping the killing and restoring peace. Kegel's admiration for his interlocutors shines through each of the book's thirteen chapters; yet, the analysis includes no examination of the underpinnings of the official narrative of Hutu bad guys and Tutsi good guys, the content of which is found in a range of sources Kegel does not engage (such as Scott Straus's *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda* and *Making and Unmaking Nations: War, Leadership, and Genocide in Modern Africa* [Cornell University Press 2006 and 2015], to name just one author). Instead, Kegel excoriates scholars and journalists who challenge the official narrative for their biased, simplistic, or simply poor scholarship in the conclusion.

In the interest of transparency, I note that my work *Rwanda: From Genocide to Precarious Peace* (Yale University Press, 2018) is among those whose analysis is dismissed as distorting history due to its limited examination of the RPF's military tactics. The dismissal would be more meaningful if Kegel engaged the breadth of scholarship on Rwanda before and during the genocide, rather than focusing on takedowns of scholars with whom he, and by extension, the RPF, disagrees. Kegel

seems unaware of the "treacherous waters" of the politics of history in Rwanda that Villia Jefremovas discussed in "The Politics of History and the Politics of Genocide in Rwanda and Burundi" (*Africa* 70/2, May 2000) and how the military and political maintenance of these distortions has led to the loss of millions of civilian lives in Rwanda and the Great Lakes Region of Africa.

Kegel's text addresses key aspects of the RPF's rewriting of history in the conclusion, and it is in this part of the book that Kegel is most sincere. The authors with whom he disagrees are understood "to dismiss or diminish the accomplishments of the RPF," perhaps revealing Kegel's political project (p. 315). In writing what is framed as a corrective interpretation of the RPF's motivations and tactics before, during, and after the 1994 genocide, Kegel has engaged in hagiography, not history.

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Beyond Black Hawk Down: Intervention, Nation-Building, and Insurgency in Somalia, 1992–1995. By Jonathan Carroll. Modern War Studies. University Press of Kansas, 2025. ISBN 978-0-7006-3888-8. Maps. Illustrations. Appendices. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 483. $54.99 (hardback).

This military history of the U.S.-U.N. interventions in Somalia is a highly informational, well-structured, carefully annotated, and well-written book. Based on the author's Texas A&M University PhD dissertation in history, it draws on a number of unused primary source collections, including those of the United Nations (UNOSOM II) and the Somali Oral Interviews Collection of the U.S. Army's Center for Military History. Carroll also interviewed a number of U.S. military leaders who played important roles in the interventions. The book's military details (the who, what, where, and when of the different stages of the interventions) are invaluable. Its focus on the decisions, disagreements, and reflections of top men in the U.S. military and the U.N. is, one might argue, both a clear strength and somewhat of a limitation.

This study contains three major interpretative contributions, although not all are clearly presented. First, the Somali political factions, armed fronts, and people largely welcomed and (except in Mogadishu and Kismayo) did not resist the interventions, so do not blame them. Second, nation-building as a major policy goal was established well before the U.N. took over from the U.S. in 1993. Except in Mogadishu, moreover, the U.N. made great progress in Somali institution building even after the disastrous Black Hawk Down incident of 3 October 1993, in spite of increasingly debilitating financial constraints. So, again, do not blame the U.N.

Carroll puts the blame for the eventual failure of the interventions—and this is the third and central argument of the book—on the aggressive and mistaken policies adopted by General Jonathan Howe, his key political advisor April Glaspie, and President Bill Clinton against Somali general Mohamed Aidid in the period

from May to October 1993. These top policy makers in Mogadishu and Washington, D.C., excluded and provoked General Aidid, Carroll argues, because they "inaccurately" saw him "as the reason for Somalia's collapse" (p. 240). Here Carroll's inadequate understanding of the Somali civil war before 1992 (evident in chapter one) leads him to misread General Aidid seriously.

When, in 1991, the military dictator President Mohamed Siad Barre, by then ridiculed by the Somali people as nothing more than "the mayor of Mogadishu," was expelled from the capital, the whole nation and all armed fronts were unified against him and welcomed his overthrow. It was General Aidid who scrambled this unity by unleashing large-scale violence against ordinary civilians (and anyone else) not on the basis of their past or present support for the dictator, but on the basis of their clan background. Thus Aidid welcomed into his ranks some of Barre's top accomplices belonging to his own clan while hunting down men belonging to clans he marked for death and expulsion, even though they had opposed the dictator for decades and had often paid a high price for this. Together with the dictator's undeniably ruinous legacy, it was this campaign of clan cleansing, fomented by Aidid in an attempt to get to the top, that caused the collapse of the Somali state and prevented Somalis from coming together and establishing new national institutions. Carroll overlooks this and suggests that, had Aidid been treated better by General Howe's team, the nation-building policy, and thus the interventions, might have succeeded.

The author argues that "nations can only be built and rebuilt around existing centers of power *that are valued first and foremost by the population*, not defined solely by the intervener," and that "no groups or leaders emerge with clean hands" (p. 334, my emphasis). It is also true, however, that not all unclean hands are equally unclean. Given his role in unleashing a campaign of clan cleansing, why would the author imply that Aidid was "valued" by the Somali population, even while admitting that Aidid and his organization "represented a bare minority" of Somalis (p. 311) and documenting how Aidid, to claw his way to the top, continued to use military violence against his Somali rivals and the U.N. after October 1993 (e.g. in Merca and Beledweyn)? There is no doubt that the manhunt against Aidid was a bad policy decision and that the Black Hawk Down incident of 3 October 1993 was a disastrous turning point in the interventions, but the argument that this was because U.S. leaders should have indulged Aidid is flawed.

To sum up, and with this caveat, Carroll wrote a significant book, with new information, especially about the military details of the interventions and new insights into the thoughts and actions of some of the top U.S. and U.N. decision makers. It deserves to be read by both general readers and those with a special interest in military matters.

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Books Received

General

The Boundaries of War: Local and Global Perspectives in Military History. Edited by Lee L. Brice and Timothy M. Roberts. Marine Corps University Press, 2024. Free download. **Contributors:** Alexander Belovsky, Lisa M. Brady, Michael Burns, Hal M. Friedman, Ryan Hom, Walter E. Kretchik, Rosemary L. Moore, Stephen Morillo, Michael H. Taint, and James N. Tallon.

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Nineteenth Century

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Twentieth Century

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Second World War

The Cruel Sky: A Heavy Bomber Group in World War II. By Robert Thompson. Westholme, 2025. ISBN 978-1-5941-6441-5. Maps. Figures. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. ix, 206. $29.95 (hardback).

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Exterminating ISIS: Behind the Curtain of a Technological War. By Brennan S. Deveraux. Casemate, 2025. ISBN 978-1-6362-4522-5. Photographs. Pp. 188. $34.95 (hardback).

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Recent Journal Articles

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Anne Sharp Wells

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Section II: Military History of the United States

A. Armed Forces

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Covkin, Serena. "Fighting in Court: Women, War, and the Law in Twentieth-Century America," University of Chicago, 2023, DA 30689937.

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Hlyvynska, Karyna. "'Putting the Machine in Motion': How the U.S. Treasury Department Built a Fiscal-Military State," University of Georgia, 2024, DA 31633545.

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Beckstrand, Alex. "Wilsonian Control: American Civil-Military Relations and Command Relationships, 1913–21," University of Connecticut, 2024.

Chavkin, Eliana. "'The Monument Does Not Remember': America's World War I Memorials and the Struggle to Create History from Memory," University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, 2025.

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Rogers, Eric. "Sex and Motivation in the American Morale Campaigns of the First World War," University of Cambridge (United Kingdom), 2022.

Scheurer, Heather. "A Gruesome Business: Collecting, Repatriating, and Interpreting World War II Souvenirs," Middle Tennessee State University, 2024, DA 31639024.

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Geisinger, Thomas. "The Enablers: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the Quality of Military Advice Before the Iraq War, 2001–2003," University of Virginia, 2023.

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Section III: Studies of War and the Military

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Panico, Carolina. "Challenging War Traditions: Small and Middle Power States and the Emergence of the Nuclear Prohibition Treaty," University of Auckland [Politics and International Relations] (New Zealand), 2023.

Yuwono, Felicia. "Striving for the (im)possible?: Understanding the Constitutive Effect of Multilateral Diplomacy on Nuclear Disarmament (2015–2022)," University of London, King's College [War Studies] (United Kingdom), 2024.

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Teuscher, Carson. "Allied Force: Coalition Warfare in the Mediterranean and the Allied Template for Victory, 1942–1943," Ohio State University, 2024.

Ye, Zhenman. "Civil War / Global War: The US, China, and Britain in the Mid-19th Century," Louisiana State University, 2024.

C. Philosophy and Theory

Brandimarte, Italo. "Displacing War Experience: Military Technology and the More-than-Human Politics of Empire," University of Cambridge [Politics and International Studies] (United Kingdom), 2024.

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Liu, Wo. "Militia and Civilian Death in Civil Wars," University of Pittsburgh, 2024, DA 31507935.

Napal, Dinesh. "Unearthing Banality in Remote Warfare, Unsettling the Law of Armed Conflict and Unmooring From Colonial Humanity," American University, 2024, DA 31640900.

O'Connell, William. "Location, Location, Location: Geographic Qualities of Political Instability and Military Coups," University of Kentucky [Political Science], 2024, DA 31607791.

Robbins, Bryan Keith. "Thinking on a Higher Plane: The Evolution of a Strategic Mindset in the Navies of America and Great Britain at the Turn of the Twentieth Century," Liberty University, 2023, DA 30489051.

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Kautt, Bill. "Revolutionary Graveyard? The Conduct of Urban Guerrilla Campaigns in Belfast and Dublin, 1919–23," University of London, King's College [Defence Studies] (United Kingdom), 2024.

Lively, Anna. "Revolutionary Reverberations: Russia and Ireland in War and Revolution, 1905–1923," University of Edinburgh (United Kingdom), 2022.

E. Literature, Art, Music, and Miscellaneous

Hodali, Suleiman Ramzi. "'Romantic Crusades': Holy Wars in Philology, Translation, and Empire, 1755–1917," University of California, Los Angeles [Comparative Literature], 2025, DA 32047202.

Jones, Oliver Richard. "Literary Friction: Poetics at the Operational Level of War," York University (Canada), 2024.

McArthur, Jane. "Forgotten Images Still Resisting Time: Writing the London Bomb Damage Photograph Archive 1940–1945," University of Edinburgh [Cultural Studies] (United Kingdom), 2024.

Poltrack, Adam Henry. "A Bill of Goods: How Propagandists Sold the Great War and Gave Birth to the Lost Generation," State University of New York at Stony Brook [English], 2024, DA 30993473.

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F. Environment

Boutin, Cameron. "Enduring the Elements: Civil War Soldiers' Struggles Against the Weather," University of Kentucky, 2023.

Clark, Brandon Charles. "Nature's Tax: How Eastern North America's Environmental Conditions Degraded British Military Power, Increased Imperial Costs, and Frayed Metropolitan-Colonial Relations, 1762–1770," University of Utah, 2024, DA 30995596.

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Patton, Erik Mark. "Climate Change Impacts on the U.S. Army Basic Combat Training Program," Duke University [Environment], 2024, DA 31243901.

Tran, Ngoc Lan. "Un/forgetting Agent Orange: Towards a Reimagining of Vietnamese Forests," University of Adelaide [Social Sciences] (Australia), 2024.

Letters to the Editor

We are always pleased to have letters to the editor because this shows that people are reading our *Journal* seriously. Due to space limitations, however, we ask that letters be kept under 500 words.

To the Editor:

I would like to comment on a book review in *JMH* Vol. 89, No.2, April 2025, pp. 514–16.

The book review, by Fred L. Borch, covers Steven L. Ossad's *Casting the Shadow: Mickey Marcus's 200 Days of Destiny*. The book is a biography of David "Mickey" Marcus, a U.S. Army colonel who helped shape the IDF in its initial steps in 1948 and commanded some of its units in battle at the first stages of Israel's 1948 Independence War.

Mr. Borch writes that *Casting the Shadow* does not let myths about Marcus go uncorrected, and then goes on to revibrate the greatest myth: "Marcus's ideas about command structure, unit organization, training and doctrine were the chief reason for the battlefield successes of the Jewish forces in the 1940 war" (p. 515). Actually, this is more than a myth, it is a gross exaggeration that befits popular journalism, not a serious commentary in the *Journal of Military History*.

Without in the least detracting from David Marcus's historical contribution to the founding of the IDF and to its development in the first stages of the 1948 war, I have rarely encountered—in military history in general or in works on the IDF's development along the 1948 war in particular—such poor judgement and so little understanding of how military organizations develop and of what determines their course. There were so many other persons and causes who contributed to the IDF's achievements in the 1948 war. Neither Marcus, nor even David Ben Gurion, who founded the state of Israel and the IDF, nor any other single person, can be defined as "the chief reason for the battlefield successes." The mere notion of trying to do so is unserious.

Dr. Oded Megiddo — Nataf, Israel

Mr. Borch does not wish to respond.