

# MR Classics Revisited



**THE PROFESSION OF ARMS**, General Sir John Hackett, Macmillan, New York, 1983, 239 pages.

General Sir John Hackett's treatise on the profession of arms combines concise historical analysis with a vast array of images

to paint a vivid portrait of the professional soldier that spans the recorded history of mankind. *The Profession of Arms* seems to be a simple coffee table book: an oversize volume richly illustrated with art. Yet, Hackett constructs a provocative tale that moves from ancient Greece to the rice paddies of Vietnam, weaving together nearly three millennia of the profession of arms.

He frames his study with a few basic but timeless questions. What defines the military profession? What is the profession of arms? How did the profession evolve? Is the professional a warrior first and a guardian of the peace second? What role does the professional soldier assume in society?

Some focus on the function of the profession, "the ordered application of force in the resolution of a social problem." Others simply define the profession as "the management of violence." Hackett himself acknowledges that the profession is timeless and often of religious import. It is a distinguishable occupation with a unique identity and doctrine and has a distinct career structure and place of honor within society. The profession of arms is as exclusive and demanding a calling as medicine or the law, and as respected and honored as holy orders.

The author's study of the profession begins, logically, in Sparta, where the survival of the city-state wholly depended on the subordination of society to military efficacy. Hackett focuses on the rise of the

Spartan military state to explore two distinct extremes of the profession of arms: one, the apex of the profession through unrelenting commitment to its principles, and the other, the failure of the profession when not balanced across the whole of society. The author's lesson was offered more than a quarter century ago, but the implications to our forces today are irrefutable: as we focus on the foundations of our own profession, is our connection to American society becoming increasingly distant?

The study of the evolution of the profession continues with an examination of the Roman legions under the reforms of Marius, which suggest the earliest foundations of a professional standing army. Under Marius, men enlisted for 20 years of paid service and the legion reorganized into battalion-size cohorts under a single standard. By Caesar's time, unique numbers identified the legions. In the ensuing years, Augustus added names to further distinguish legions, endowing them with an identity that had never previously existed.

In the eyes of the author, the emergence of the profession of arms as an institution unto itself occurred in the legions. The institutional quality of the Roman legion spurred a special brand of loyalty. Legionnaires swore allegiance to the Republic, and dedication to the profession came naturally. They were men-at-arms who endured tough, realistic training. Appointment as an officer offered a path to political advancement rivaled by no other profession in Roman society. But the eventual decline of the Roman system carried the legions down with it, and another 1,000 years would pass before anything resembling a legion would rise again.

The author credits Maurice of Nassau for reviving the spirit of the legions with the introduction of reforms at the beginning of the

17th century. Those reforms combined the contemporary firepower with infantry shock tactics in linear formations, "articulated into units of about battalion size." In a departure from the practice of the time, Gustavus Adolphus introduced new weapons into his strategy and successfully applied it in battle with a conscript national army. More reforms followed: junior leaders had more importance, stature, and initiative; the cavalry evolved into an arm of true shock action; drill and exercise became more common; and discipline and coherence became more important to these formations.

In the wake of Maurice's reforms, large standing armies became the norm across Europe, and in some ways gave rise to the modern nation state. At the beginning of the 17th century, Henry VI commanded an army of 15,000—3,000 of whom were Swiss mercenaries. By 1678, the French army numbered in excess of 280,000. Between those dates came the Thirty Years War (which spanned from 1618 to 1648), the Treaty of Westphalia (signed in 1648), and the evolution of the nation-state and the ascent of the professional army as the symbol of power for emerging nations.

Although Hackett's study on the profession of arms professes a uniquely Western perspective, it remains an essential resource for all scholars of the military art. As we emerge from a decade of war, leadership is at a premium, and we must regain the fundamentals of our profession. In *The Profession of Arms*, Hackett opens a window into our past, and offers a path to our future at a critical juncture in time.

He offers the wisdom of a highly decorated and knighted officer whose career spanned four decades in service to the British Army. Combat experience in the Levant, North Africa, and Western Europe during the Second World War shaped his perspective on the profession. His

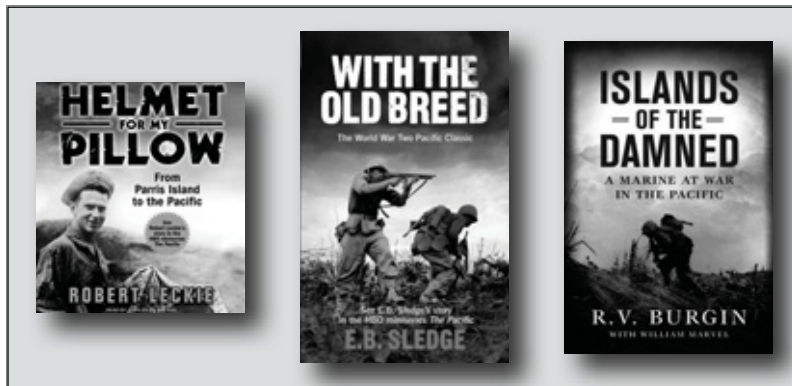
eight books include *Warfare in the Ancient World* and *The Third World War*. His book, *I Was a Stranger*, recounts his experiences while commanding the British 4th Parachute Brigade in the assault on Arnhem during Operation Market Garden,

where he was gravely wounded and nursed back to health by the Dutch underground. Following the war, Hackett continued his military service, eventually commanding the British Army of the Rhine and NATO's Northern Army Group.

A Commander of the Order of the British Empire and a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath, Hackett died in 1997 at the age of 86.  
**LTC Steve Leonard, USA,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

## MR Book Reviews

Featured Review



**HELMET FOR MY PILLOW: From Parris Island to the Pacific**, Robert Leckie, Bantam Books, New York, 2010, 305 pages, \$16.00.

**WITH THE OLD BREED: At Peleliu and Okinawa**, E.B. Sledge, Presidio Press, New York, 2007, 352 pages, \$16.00.

**ISLANDS OF THE DAMNED: A Marine at War in the Pacific**, R.V. Burgin, NAL, New York, 2010, 304 pages, \$24.95.

War may be, as Oliver Wendell Holmes asserts, an “incommunicable experience,” but this has not precluded soldiers from trying to communicate their experiences. War memoirs and stories date back to Thucydides, with Caesar’s memoir being perhaps the most famous. Some generals write their memoirs for the simple reason that they need the money (as Grant did) or for political and nationalist purposes (as De Gaulle did). In contrast, soldiers’ memoirs provide real insights into what fascinates readers most—“the incommunicable experience.” This review compares and contrasts three important contributions to communicating the incommunicable. All

three will enrich the lives of those who read them.

The three books reviewed here, Robert Leckie’s *Helmet for My Pillow*, E.B. Sledge’s *With the Old Breed*, and R.V. Burgin’s *Islands of the Damned* are powerful examples of soldiers’ memoirs. The authors each served with the 1st Marine Division in World War II. Leckie tried to enlist in the Marine Corps the day after Pearl Harbor but was turned down because he was not circumcised (apparently a qualification back then). He duly had the procedure performed and enlisted on 5 January 1942. After his training, Leckie joined the 1st Marine Regiment as a machine gunner. He fought at Guadalcanal, New Britain, and Peleliu, where he was wounded. Leckie spent the rest of the war in an Army hospital in West Virginia.

Sledge and Burgin served together in the 60-mm mortar section assigned to K Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines. Burgin enlisted in November 1942 when the draft caught up with him. Burgin preceded Sledge in the 5th Marines and fought on New Britain, Peleliu,

and Okinawa. Sledge enlisted in a Marine officers commissioning program in December 1942. He wanted to go into the military immediately, but his parents preferred he serve as an officer, so in the summer of 1943 Sledge reported to Georgia Tech where he attended college and trained to become a Marine officer. He became increasingly concerned that he would miss the war, so he and 90 others intentionally flunked out of Georgia Tech so they could “get on with becoming a Marine.” When asked about his academic performance, Sledge told his academic review officer that he “hadn’t joined the Marine Corps to sit out the war in college.”

Sledge caught up with Burgin and K Company in time to fight at Peleliu and Okinawa. After the war, Leckie went home wounded, and Burgin, who had accumulated sufficient service points to rate a discharge, returned home. Sledge did not have enough points for a discharge and served several months in China before returning home to Alabama in 1946.

The three authors share Oliver Wendell Holmes’s “incommunicable experience of war.” Each communicated to those who have not shared the experience of war a glimpse of what he had felt and witnessed. Together the memoirs express honor and dishonor, compassion and savagery, beauty and ugliness, and, most of all, service and dedication.

The three authors took different paths after the war: Leckie worked as a journalist and published *Helmet for My Pillow* in 1957, the first of

more than 30 works mostly about military history. Sledge earned a doctoral degree in microbiology and taught at the university level in Alabama. Burgin returned to Texas where he made a career with the U.S. Postal Service.

The three books are as different as the authors are, yet they relate many of the same experiences. Not surprisingly, Leckie's book is the most literary. Occasionally, he strives too hard to turn just the right phrase, but in *Helmet for My Pillow*, he succeeds. What results is a visceral account of everything from his boot camp haircut to his sense of shame that the wound he suffered on Okinawa was somehow inadequate compared to others' wounds. Leckie's descriptions reverberate with clarity but none more than when he describes his reaction to the atomic bomb. Young Leckie noted, "Suddenly, secretly, covertly—I rejoiced. For as I lay in that hospital, I had faced the bleak prospect of returning to the Pacific and the war and the law of averages." Leckie understood that the destruction on Hiroshima and Nagasaki guaranteed he would not die in an assault on Japan. Leckie is not the only veteran who celebrated the immolation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well they might. It is only as the recollection of what preceded August 1945 that the Japanese have managed to become victims of the war.

Sledge published *With the Old Breed* in 1981, some 35 years after the war. Unlike Leckie, Sledge did not see himself as a writer. He originally intended his memoir as a personal recollection for his family. Although he started drafting his notes after Pelelieu, he had trouble finishing them. He says, "My Pacific war experiences have haunted me, and it has been a burden to retain this story. But time heals, and the nightmares no longer wake me in a cold sweat with pounding heart and racing pulse." The story that resulted from time and healing is compelling. What differentiates him from Leckie is that he is not concerned with artful telling. His descriptions of events are methodical and almost clinical but with his own compelling insight to how these things made

him feel. At the end of the fighting on Okinawa, Sledge and his mates faced one more revolting task. As he put it, "If this were a novel about war, or if I were a dramatic storyteller, I would find a romantic way to end this account while looking at that fine sunset off the cliffs of the southern end of Okinawa." Instead, the last section of *With the Old Breed* describes burying dead Japanese soldiers and picking up any brass larger than .50 caliber.

Burgin, according to Sledge, was a skilled sergeant and a good man with mortars. Of Burgin, Sledge says, "He was as fine a sergeant as I ever saw." After the war, Burgin bought his first and only set of "blues" to wear when he received his Bronze Star, which a Marine recruiter in Dallas pinned on him with little ceremony. He set out to put the war behind him and raised a family with an Australian girl he had met in Melbourne in 1943. About the same time, Sledge came to grips with his memories and finished *With the Old Breed*. Burgin and a few others of the "Old Breed" got together at the 1st Marine Division reunion in Indianapolis in 1980. For Burgin, this and other reunions opened a flood of memories. He wanted to educate people about the war in the Pacific and its islands of the damned. His writing style is that of an old man, recalling long ago events brightly lit in his mind, but he does so with leavening of the years. He is less critical of his officers than either Sledge or Leckie and remained friends with one for life. Mostly, Burgin recalls what had happened in a matter of fact way, with the truly ugly parts given short shrift. In this vein, he concludes his story by noting that he has not forgotten the "pain and terror and sorrow of the wary." Instead, he chose to focus on the men with whom he served, who were "good Marines, the finest, every one of them. You can't say anything better about a man." Leckie and Sledge are more dependable for relating the dark side of the war. Each author has his place in aiding those who seek to understand what happened in the war in the Pacific.

**COL Gregory Fontenot, USA,  
Retired, Lansing, Kansas**

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**BEYOND GUNS AND STEEL:  
A War Termination Strategy,**  
Dominic J. Caraccilo, Praeger  
Security International, Santa  
Barbara, CA, 219 pages, \$49.95.

America's warriors have always tended to see war as something that is won or lost in battle, a perspective that General Douglas MacArthur famously summarized when declaring, "In war, there is no substitute for victory." In recent decades, even the U.S. failure to achieve the desired political ends of conflicts in countries like Vietnam, Lebanon, Somalia, and Bosnia has not substantially altered this viewpoint. It is only belatedly, amidst the long wars that followed our initial, sweeping defeats of the organized armies of Saddam Hussein and the Taliban, that today's generation of warriors is awakening to realize the sometimes-limited utility of purely "kinetic" victories. Indeed, as we are starting to understand, such victories can prove entirely hollow.

What matters more than vanquishing our enemies' armies is our setting the conditions for an enduring political solution that is compatible with our nation's objectives—in short, "winning the peace." As our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan drag on, understanding how we achieve this peace has increasingly become the subject of books, articles, and scholarly treatises.

Colonel Dominic Caraccilo's *Beyond Guns and Steel* is unquestionably the strongest recent entry in this field. That a book by Caraccilo should make a mark will surprise no one. A soldier can count on one hand the number of U.S. Army officers who possess his credentials as both a leader and a writer. In the 1990s, Caraccilo wrote a well-regarded memoir of his experiences as an 82nd Airborne Division company commander during the Persian Gulf War. More recently, he commanded a 101st Airborne Division brigade in Iraq and coauthored the much-lauded book, *Achieving Victory in*

*Iraq*. Caracillo is a leader who not only knows what right looks like but also can convincingly articulate it.

The book begins with a superb survey of existing literature on the subject. As Caracillo rightly concludes, no single work covers all aspects of how to successfully terminate a war and achieve an enduring, favorable conflict resolution. *Beyond Guns and Steel* is Caracillo's attempt to correct this shortfall.

Caracillo's core idea is that, to win the peace, the United States must ensure its war plans are oriented from the start toward achieving the conditions necessary for a lasting peace and must sufficiently resource a whole-of-government approach toward achieving these conditions. He supports this idea with a plethora of historical examples. When doing so, he often points out that the U.S. agencies responsible for projecting the nation's "soft power" (most notably the Department of State and Agency for International Development) have a decisive role to play in successful conflict resolution, but they seldom receive the resources to perform this function well. Ultimately, Caracillo lays out a logical, feasible plan for using our nation's existing ways and means to achieve better outcomes from war.

There are, however, major problems with Caracillo's argument. Most deeply, he seldom strays from a mechanistic understanding of war and how to successfully conclude it. Barely touching upon the psychological and moral dimensions of war, he misses the impact that such nonphysical considerations as the just war tradition, cultural differences, and political and moral "legitimacy" have on any effort to achieve lasting conflict resolution. Instead, he seems to argue that a favorable outcome can come from any war if only the war is planned well, resourced adequately, and executed coherently across the whole of government. Closer to the truth may be that, while such considerations are indeed important conditions of a successful war termination strategy, they are not the only conditions this strategy must meet.

Despite this shortcoming, the

strengths of *Beyond Guns and Steel* outweigh its weaknesses. Seldom contradicting current military doctrine, it is perhaps the first real attempt to flesh out current doctrine's scanty ideas on the subject and provide a rational, practical solution to how our government can successfully conclude wars. This book is one of the very best starting points for any serious student of the art of conflict resolution, and it deserves—and will no doubt receive—a place in the curricula of the U.S. military's senior service schools for years to come.

**MAJ Douglas Pryer, USA,  
United Kingdom**

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**SHADOWS OF WAR: A Social History of Silence in the Twentieth Century**, Efrat Ben-Ze'ev, Ruth Ginio, and Jay Winter, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2010, 234 pages, \$85.00.

In today's society, we are inundated with noise. We hear the music that assaults us on the streets, the commentaries from the TV, and the diatribes from Internet blogs. The thoughts of others constantly assault our ears and minds. This book seeks to pull away from the clamor that accompanies our day-to-day lives and focuses instead on quiet, the silence between words. Refreshingly, the book is all about silence.

The book is a collection of essays, and at first glance, the book appears to be a philosophical tome that meanders about a nebulous topic. However, as the reader delves into the book, it is clear the essays have a common goal—to explore the silence often associated with war. Silence here is defined not as soundlessness, but as *what we do not say* when we recount our experiences. What we leave out of our recollections, as well as the silence we use when we pay homage to those who have died, speaks volumes about how we feel and how we are affected by the world around us. The authors examine the cultural pressures that influence what we talk about, what we do not, and what happens when we are forced to break our silence.

*Shadows of War* has a special relevance to today's events. As service members return from Iraq and Afghanistan with the mental scars brought about by the horrors they have witnessed, we see more cases of post traumatic stress disorder. Veterans silently hide their pain. *Shadows of War* talks directly to how culture pressures veterans to bury emotions and suffer in solitude instead of vocalizing their pain.

That is not to say the book is without shortcomings and challenges. First, \$85 is quite a high price to pay for a relatively thin book. In addition, the authors tend to drift in and out of heavy philosophical discussions that cause the average reader to rub his eyes and sigh in frustration and confusion. Overall, *Shadows of War* is worth reading, even if at the local library.

**MAJ Matthew B. Holmes,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**BETWEEN WAR AND PEACE: How America Ends Its Wars**, Ed. Matthew Moten, Free Press, 2011, New York, 384 pages, \$27.99.

Colonel Matthew Moten has assembled a dream team of military historians to examine war termination during key U.S. conflicts. Historian Roger Spiller begins the book with six propositions about the American way of ending war. The most interesting resembles plate tectonics and highlights how stress revises the original aims of presidents. Brian Linn's chapter on the McKinley era describes how a naïve plan to "fix" the Philippines morphed into a dirty fight against guerrillas, a too often ignored textbook example in counterinsurgency. Peter Maslowski and John Hall focus on U.S. military campaigns against Native Americans. Maslowski offers a comment made by a Chinese People's Liberation Army historian about the "300-year war against the Indians." Although the assembled American military historians did not accept this Chinese assertion, it may tellingly reflect the Chinese perspective on their on-going conflicts with the native inhabitants of their own country's western provinces. Hall

perceptively noted that American officers were profoundly dissatisfied with “a thankless, inglorious brand of war” and longed to return to restoring conventional capabilities. In Mexico, General Scott and others found the glory that had eluded them as they performed “unwanted constabulary work.”

Prominent war critics such as Colonel Gian Gentile and Andrew Bacevich wrote some of the more modern studies. Gentile observes that Vietnam, as part of the containment doctrine, was “hubris run amok.” Bacevich levels similar criticism at the Bush administration’s attempt at hegemony in the Middle East. The Obama administration does not escape Bacevich’s wrath either: it “clings stubbornly” to a strategy that makes termination of the long war difficult.

Moten acknowledges Brigadier General H.R. McMaster and the Army’s TRADOC staff for doing yeoman work in this heavyweight project. This historical military exercise needs more analysis of the diplomatic, informational, and economic aspects of war termination, but it is an extremely well written work that we should use in our professional studies along with Gideon Rose’s recent politically focused *How Wars End* and Brian Bond’s *The Pursuit of Victory*.

**James Cricks,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**AFGHANISTAN: A Cultural and Political History**, Thomas Barfield, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2010, 389 pages, \$29.95.

At certain times, certain readers may consider certain books important; they may deem a select few as essential. Thomas Barfield’s *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History* fits the latter category. Barfield has written an important and topical work of cultural interpretation. A professor of anthropology at Boston University, he is uniquely equipped to write such a book. He published significant scholarly studies based on

extensive ethnographic fieldwork in Afghanistan and Central Asia long before these areas were headlines in our newspapers. He also serves as director of the Institute for the Study of Muslim Societies and Civilization and as president of the American Institute for Afghanistan Studies.

Barfield interprets the complex ethnic and social mosaic that is Afghanistan for interested nonspecialist readers in a way that does not talk down or oversimplify the complexity of the issues. An anthropologist who is no historical structuralist, Barfield provides a concise but informative history of Afghanistan. He explains how it has shaped and continues to influence the ethos, culture, and mores of the various ethnic groups, and suggests that a common history may be a unifying force that can supersede sectarian divisions. Thus, while recognizing Afghanistan’s complex ethnic and linguistic diversity, the author makes a good case for treating it as a coherent large-scale cultural unit.

Particularly revealing is the discussion of the British experience in both Afghanistan and in the Pashtun belt—the old Northwest Frontier of the British Raj, which now straddles Afghanistan and Pakistan. Despite Britain’s failure to conquer Afghanistan, the author contrasts the relative effectiveness of British colonial administrators and the genuine concern many of them had for their charges to the wheeling and dealing of present-day officials, most of whom do not have a stake in their activities, are not held accountable for them, and do not understand the environment where they work.

Barfield offers a critique of U.S. and Western strategy in Afghanistan that will likely generate controversy, but strategists, planners, and those on missions in Afghanistan ignore them at their peril. Highly recommended.  
**LTC Prisco R. Hernández, Ph.D.,  
USAR, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**Understanding PTSD Among Veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan**, Erin P. Finley, ILR Press, 2011, Ithaca, NY, 240 pages, \$24.94.

Erin P. Finley creates a compelling account of how to understand post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and how to help treat those who suffer from it. As a medical anthropologist and investigator at the Veterans Evidence-Based Research Dissemination and Implementation Center, Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, San Antonio, Texas, and adjunct assistant professor in the Division of Clinical Epidemiology, Department of Medicine, at the University of Texas Health Science Center, San Antonio, Finley relates experiences and expectations of seven hypothetical individuals to help in understanding “veterans’ personal experiences of PTSD and the cultural politics that surround and shape those experiences.” She mixes historical accounts of PTSD as a medical illness with the current understandings of its causes, signs, and evidence-based treatment.

One concern of the book is that the hypothetical veterans interviewed come primarily from those who joined the military after 9/11. We get the impression these veterans did not expect to experience combat. It might be interesting to know how much combat expectations factor into PTSD. Would experiences with PTSD differ for those who enlisted knowing and expecting a life of combat in an era of persistent conflict?

Finley relates how a veteran and his wife perceive different realities as the veteran experiences symptoms of PTSD: “Where he saw symptoms, she saw meanness.” Likewise, the tension of differing perceptions of PTSD is found in military culture, e.g., in the U.S. Army, “Military training is intended to rebuild individuals into a ‘group-based culture’ . . . Loyalty. Duty. Respect. Selfless Service. Honesty. Integrity. Personal Courage . . . make up an ethical code, and one that is not taken lightly.” Finley indicates that this translates into a “warrior culture” which creates barriers and confusion preventing some soldiers from obtaining the mental and emotional help they need for combat trauma.

Finley also includes brief discussions of gender issues and PTSD and anthropological questions regarding PTSD. Some of the author's findings contradict various accounts showing systematic problems in health care for veterans. However, Finley gives us hope and several well thought-out recommendations for preventing and minimizing combat PTSD.

**Kevin M. Bond, Ph.D.,**  
Los Angeles, California

**RADICAL ISLAM IN AMERICA: Salafism's Journey from Arabia to the West**, Christopher Heffelfinger, Potomac Books Inc., Dulles, VA, 2011, 135 pages, \$29.95.

Sounding less like a scholar than an FBI agent on his third cup of coffee, Chris Heffelfinger in *Radical Islam in America* compiles too many names and numbers while barely scratching the surface of the sociopsychological complexities of Salafi Islam, the initially apolitical Salafi movement started by Muhammad Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab in Saudi Arabia.

Salafism calls for traditionalism as set forth by 13th-century Islamic scholars, and it calls for Muslims to return to Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a. However, unrest ranging from anti-Colonialism sentiments in the 1800s to anti-Western hegemony sentiments in the 1990s divided Salafism into various sects. Dogmatic, albeit initially benign, scholarly discussions gave way to violent social activism meant to establish Sharia laws.

The author repeats one point nearly verbatim in almost every chapter: Salafism transcended international boundaries, fueled by a vast ever-growing pool of mismanaged petrodollars and a new common Muslim identity. The author presents such information articulately, but this book repeats itself so much that it quickly reaches a point of diminishing returns.

In one example, the author states: "Among the hundreds of terrorism-related arrests since 9/11, a large number were young, socially alienated Muslims who were moved by the jihadist message but not directed

by jihadist networks overseas. That phenomenon—and the ideology behind it—is what Western society and governments must fully understand in order to construct a viable policy to confront it . . . ." This acknowledgement of our shortcomings does not offer insights into possible solutions or the way forward.

*Radical Islam in America* deserves praise for its language and presentation of thoughts. Each chapter averages 10 to 15 pages but contains approximately 15 to 20 references to other scholarly works, a testament to the author's impressive research. The book is a must read if you are beginning on your journey to learn about Salafi jihadism, but I would not recommend it for other readers.

**ILT Keith Nguyen,**  
Afghanistan

**AFGHANISTAN: How the West Lost Its Way**, Tim Bird and Alex Marshall, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 2011, 298 pages, \$30.00.

Despite an encouraging start, operations in Afghanistan have been restrained by under-resourcing, over-optimistic reporting, unachievable goals, and oscillating strategic incoherence. *Afghanistan: How the West Lost Its Way* provides a timely, plainspoken and much needed exploration of why the international community has found it so difficult in Afghanistan. The book takes a broad regional view and discusses the realities of the precarious "AfPak theater" from the outset. It also addresses the realities and shortcomings of NATO's political-military approach, which, according to the authors, seems more focused on engineering a timely quasi-imperial withdrawal with the reputation of the Alliance at its heart than on a peace that captures the progress of the last decade. Likewise, the book posits that U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine may be floundering (and could well be flawed), highlights strategy shortcomings and vacillation, and uncovers the unique challenges of the Afghan political landscape.

The authors are correct to note that their findings are not an original contribution to the understanding of the country and its people. However, that is not their aim. Instead, *Afghanistan: How The West Lost Its Way* sheds much needed light on why the West's efforts have been so ineffective and fruitless. The authors uncover an incoherent, simplistic, and ideological strategy, ill suited to defeating the Taliban or harnessing the complexities of the Afghan landscape. Agreeably, they tackle such issues as the U.S. government's initial lack of interest in nation building, the shortcomings of the "light footprint" approach, and the realities of the heroin trade. Corrupt national and local power brokers also come in for scrutiny, and many disagreements among the Western powers involved in the current intervention come to light. The authors reveal that, without strategic clarity and coherence, the West has been unable to turn military dominance into strategic success. They note that, although others are also culpable, Washington must bear the lion's share of the blame for the current situation in Afghanistan.

I recommend this book for students studying the region. It pulls no punches. Challenging, thought provoking, and extremely well written, few will be disappointed. This is just the sort of text that military planners and policy makers must read and reread during their tenure of responsibility. It is also an ideal staff college book. Indeed, it is one of the best books I have read on Afghanistan in a long time, and it is almost impossible to put down.

**Lt. Col. Andrew M. Roe, Ph.D.,**  
British Army, Weeton Barracks,  
United Kingdom

**AFTER EMPIRE: The Birth of a Multipolar World**, Dilip Hiro, Nation Books, New York, 2010, 297 pages, \$27.50.

In *After Empire: The Birth of a Multipolar World*, Dilip Hiro examines the world from the perspective of America losing its status as the sole super power. Hiro examines

the world from a historical, economic, and political perspective as he attempts to postulate on what the world will look like in the 21st century with America's role greatly diminished. He lists flash-points where China, Russia, and the United States may collide as they compete for resources, perceive threats to their national interests, seek control of disputed territories, and pursue their economic interests. American readers may be critical of the author's assumptions and facts, but still find themselves riveted to his point of view and perspective.

The author is very critical of the Bush administration and considers the invasion of Iraq a strategic overreach that cost the United States credibility within the international community. He says, given its economic crisis and the fiscal meltdown, America will become so weak that it will no longer be able to function as the world's sole super power. Hiro is also critical of the Clinton administration's role in Bosnia and Russia and its circumvention of the UN in its actions against Serbia.

Hiro believes the United States will no longer exert the same economic and military control over the world that it has exercised since the fall of the Soviet Union and the end to the Cold War. From this perspective he then postulates on how the different governing and economic models of Iran, Russia, China, India, the EU, and Venezuela will exert themselves within their regions to both limit the power and influence of the United States and extend their power and influence in the their region. Hiro believes that international order will come about because of multiple poles of power cooperating and competing with one another, with no one power acting as a hegemonic power.

**Ken Miller, Platte City, Missouri**

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**ARSENAL OF DEMOCRACY: The Politics of National Security—From World War II to the War on Terrorism**, Julian E. Zelizer, Basic Books, New York, 2010, 583 pages, \$35.00.

As I write this review, Dennis Blair, the director of National Intelligence, is on a TV talk show lamenting the politicization of the war on terror. Are he and other proponents of a bipartisan foreign policy oblivious to the most famous of all Karl von Clausewitz aphorisms: "War is a mere continuation of politics by other means?" Apparently so.

The above phraseology is a misleading translation of "*Der Krieg ist eine bloße Fortsetzung der Politik mit anderen Mitteln* [War is just politics by other means.]" "Politik" here could mean politics or it could mean state policy because Clausewitz wrote in the heyday of 19th-century Imperial Germany, when the state was a dynastic overlord sharing no substantial power with a legislature. Clausewitz meant that war is a way by which government enacts and enforces its policy. He did not say that war is a means by which aspirants for office compete for the favor of the body politic.

Julian Zelizer, professor of history and public affairs at Princeton University, does not quote the frequently quoted but rarely read Clausewitz, but his survey of U.S. national security policy from Pearl Harbor to the present clearly comes down on the side of war as "politics,"—that is, war is an issue in partisan (electoral) politics, the same as taxes, unemployment statistics, and Supreme Court appointments.

Many people think foreign threats, at least in the past, unified our nation. Then they add that today cable news, the Internet, political action committee, and primaries are politicizing defense policy. Zelizer, however, shows that while the present period is particularly partisan, partisanship had been prevalent during the entire century.

*Arsenal of Democracy* is not about military tactics or operations. So, what can military service members gain from reading such a book? They can gain perspective and consolation that a republic, which survived the Civil War and the Great Depression, can survive the politicization of national defense policy,

because the politicization of national defense policy is as American as apple pie.

**Michael D. Pearlman, Ph.D.,  
Lawrence, Kansas**

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**FORGOTTEN WARRIORS: The 1st Marine Provisional Brigade, the Corps Ethos, and the Korean War**, T.X. Hammes, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 2010, 286 pages, \$36.95.

This brief, well-written monograph separates legend from fact while explaining the 1st Marine Provisional Brigade's success in the Korean War. Hammes explores the provisional brigade in the context of larger events. He views unit conduct in battle as the result of doctrine, focused training, and professional military education. The bulk of his monograph concentrates on the Marine Corps' fight for existence and its efforts to demonstrate its relevance between 1945 and 1950.

The Marine Provisional Brigade existed from July to September 1950. The book provides a case study of how the Marine Corps weathered the early part of the Cold War. The book is divided into several parts: an outline of the Marine Corps' role in the struggle over armed forces unification, its culture, and postwar professional education efforts aimed at creating a combined arms team. The second part details its doctrine, organization, training, and leadership; and the third section covers the brigade's mobilization, embarkation, and its role in the Pusan Perimeter battles. Hammes concludes with an analysis of the brigade's success.

The brigade is enshrined in legend as a unit that was formed over the winter of 1949 to 1950 and led by battle-hardened veterans of the Pacific War. In fact, none of the histories of Marine Corps participation in the war deal with the problems of rapid demobilization, armed forces unification, nuclear weapons, rapidly decreasing budgets, and postwar personnel policies. Most credit the brigade's success to the intensive combat experience of its leaders,

its intensive training, unit cohesion, and the overall physical fitness of individual Marines. While myth is an important part of heritage, it obstructs an objective view of the brigade's conduct and obscures the ability of the Marine Corps as an institution to take advantage of a challenge.

Hammes agrees with the immediate afteraction analysis that attributed the brigade's success to the Corps' common education, doctrine, and training. This was part of Marine Corps culture, the ability to remember and learn from the past, learn from mistakes, and begin again when necessary. The Korean War reinforced other Marine ideas: the necessity of ground-air support controlled by ground commanders, remaining a force in readiness, and the idea that every Marine is a rifleman. Finally, the war reinforced the Marine Corps' institutional paranoia because despite stellar performances after the two world wars and Korea, there were still moves to abolish it. Institutionally the Marine Corps believes that its combat performance is no guarantee of protection in Washington's budget battles, and Hammes cites this institutional paranoia as a critical component of its organizational culture and identity.

This study emphasizes the role of culture as well as technology in preparing for unimagined challenges. He shows how values, doctrine, and training count more than combat experience and unit cohesion for a unit's success in battle. He has written an important case study of institutional adaptation, which should be examined and considered by the readers of this journal.

**Lewis Bernstein, Ph.D.,**  
Seoul, Korea

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**ROI OTTLEY'S WORLD WAR II: The Lost Diary of an African-American Journalist**, Ed. Mark A. Huddle, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 2011, 199 pages, \$29.95.

This book is neither a biography of Roi Ottley nor a compilation of his World War II dispatches as

one of the few African-American correspondents to glide seamlessly between the white Allied military power structure and black American troops.

No, this book presents a previously unpublished manuscript—a diary lost for years in the archives—of Ottley's 1944 journey with the Army through war-torn Europe while he was sending dispatches to the U.S. labor newspaper *PM* and other publications such as *Liberty Magazine* and the *Pittsburgh Courier*, whose readership was largely African-American.

The book's editor, Mark A. Huddle, of the history faculty at Georgia College and State University, faithfully transcribed the diary as it was originally typed. Huddle's introduction serves to frame an almost-forgotten career; annotations provide additional context.

Included also are 13 of Ottley's published dispatches (which occasionally demonstrate differences between his private musings and his professional output). Although Ottley never achieved even a fraction of the fame of Ernie Pyle, he may have provided the closest approximation of Pyle for the Negro soldier of World War II. "If you think you know the American experience of World War II, just try looking at the European Theater through the eyes of . . . Roi Ottley," observed James Tobin, the author of *Ernie Pyle's War*.

Ottley does not bemoan the lot of the so-called U.S. Negro troops in World War II—in many ways just the facts prove shocking enough to present-day readers—but he explains the role into which they were relegated, and how they excelled in the face of such treatment.

Raised and schooled among the affluent upper class of prewar Harlem, Ottley had an unusual knack of getting people of all races and stations in life to speak frankly. The memoirs of his boyhood friend Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., are replete with descriptions of their amorous adventures with the various chorus girls of Harlem, where laughter was easy and loud.

Fourteen days after the Allied invasion of Normandy, Ottley left England on a ship filled to twice its normal capacity with combat-bound soldiers. "First come, first served," he reported in noting the fact that there were no "Jim Crow" rules aboard. Stepping ashore in Normandy, he saw a beachhead on which "nearly two out of every three American soldiers is a Negro." He was later to discover that "Negro battalions moved onto the beachheads alongside the assault troops [because] the task of keeping an avalanche of food, ammunition, and troops moving steadily toward the front is mainly the job of Negro troops."

One of the underlying myths of World War II was that the U.S. Army pigeonholed African Americans into quartermaster duties and supply truck drivers with the "Red Ball Express." Ottley discussed this frankly with a black lieutenant assigned to the Red Ball Express who had received a commendation from General Dwight Eisenhower. The lieutenant told Ottley that blacks were not combat troops, "because the average white man still believes that the Negro is incapable of being made into a first-class soldier."

Ottley made it his particular mission to expose military off-duty clubs that followed Jim Crow rules. "The lash of prejudice was felt high and low," he wrote. "Brig. Gen. Benjamin O. Davis, highest ranking Negro in the U.S. Army, was refused service by a white private in the Officers Mess. Even Sgt. Joe Louis (the heavyweight boxing champion) was refused admission to a Shrewsbury Theater."

Nevertheless, Ottley confessed surprise "with the ease with which I've been able to move about, especially in Army circles. Negro reporters, by and large, have received the same treatment as white reporters . . . The principal resentments I have met have come, curiously enough, from the newsmen. Most of them regard a war correspondent's occupation as something approaching an exclusive fraternity."



Later he wrote from Paris, "What actually is taking place in Paris is of great bewilderment to the American troops. They do not know what to make of the complete freedom Negroes have in Paris—for that matter the complete lack of racial inhibitions by the French." (Almost universally, Ottley used the term "Negro" to describe himself and the subjects of his reporting.)

Following an interview with the Belgian colonial minister, in an almost-eerie peek into the future, Ottley alone among all the American correspondents foretold the chaos that would sweep through the Belgian Congo only a decade and a half later. Nor did he spare his own country. Much of Ottley's diary mixed hopefulness with words of warning about the mind-set for change of returning African-American service members.

The diary is, of course, filled with less earth-shaking, but no less interesting, footnotes to history. For example, Ernest Hemingway informed Ottley that the movie version of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* was "a lousy picture."

**George Ridge, J.D.,  
Tucson, Arizona**

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**CRY HAVOC: How the Arms Race Drove the World to War, 1931-1941**, Joseph Maiolo, Basic Books/Perseus Books Group, New York, 2010, 473 pages, \$38.00.

The enormous demand for munitions during World War I caused production problems for all nations involved in the conflict. After the war, many professional soldiers and some politicians advocated a centrally directed economy, like that developed in the Soviet Union, as the only way to wage industrial warfare. The apparent failure of capitalism during the Great Depression only reinforced this argument.

Joseph Maiolo, a professor at Kings College, London, has chosen to examine this issue as a unifying theme for his book, *Cry Havoc*, whose lurid title and the early chapters, describing manipulative financiers such as Hjalmar Schacht

of Germany, bring to mind Upton Sinclair novels warning of manufacturers selling unwanted weapons. However, Maiolo's real concern is not the weapons themselves but *how* they were produced. The author argues that manufacturers and democratic politicians were on the political defensive because totalitarian command economies appeared to outperform pluralistic capitalist states. Certainly, the French and British waited until war was upon them to increase governmental control of their economies.

In fact, the totalitarian states, especially Germany, had competing bureaucratic groups that prevented effective economic organization. Moreover, with the exception of the United States, no state had both the raw materials and machine tools it needed for maximum production, forcing government compromises about production priorities and allocation of foreign currencies. As a result, the author contends, Mussolini was never able to fight an industrial war, while Hitler took increasing risks for fear that his opponents would catch up with him in production. Ultimately, only Franklin Roosevelt achieved the mass production of armaments on a sustained basis without destroying his economy. However, Maiolo reminds us, the same problem of balancing the civilian economy, defense needs, and private property recurred in the Cold War, when President Eisenhower feared the effects of excessive armaments, and similar expenditures hastened the demise of the Soviet Union.

This sophisticated discussion neglects other factors such as training, organization, and field logistics, but the author notes that Germany's weapons were neither quantitatively nor qualitatively superior to those of its opponents in 1940, and he argues that France hoped to win a prolonged war of attrition. However, Germany's primary advantage was that, in contrast to its 1939-1941 opponents, its Panzer divisions had existed long enough to learn how to operate together, but not so long that their vehicles were worn out.

*Cry Havoc* would benefit greatly from a conclusion that summarizes the author's arguments more clearly. Nonetheless, this is a notable contribution to our understanding of the economic problems of national strategy, and it deserves wide readership for that reason.

**COL Jonathan M. House,  
USA, Retired,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**THE BATTLE FOR WESTERN EUROPE, FALL 1944: An Operational Assessment**, John A. Adams, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2010, 369 pages, \$34.95.

John A. Adams' *The Battle for Western Europe, Fall 1944: An Operational Assessment* is a book about World War II's Western Front during the final year of the war that fuses a number of different topics into a logical narrative and provides a broad assessment of combat operations without being either redundant or simplistic. It does an excellent job evaluating the performance of the Allied operational leaders during the second half of 1944. Adams avoids the dangerous pitfalls of focusing exclusively on minute points of strategy or tactics or of over-emphasizing certain leaders and armies at the expense of others. What emerges is a superior work that is a useful contribution to contemporary scholarship on World War II.

The author's argument revolves around Eisenhower's often misinterpreted "broad front" strategy. Adams asserts that Eisenhower's strategy was sound but derailed by faulty execution, and addresses how key Allied subordinates supported or, in too many cases, failed to support their commander's intent in the autumn of 1944. Occasionally, Adams argues, Eisenhower himself even made decisions that contradicted his own strategic objectives. Adams assesses a significantly dysfunctional command group, emphasizing that individual agendas led to tangential operational efforts, faulty unit deployment, and poorly conceived attacks. In his final analysis, this disjointed unity of

command was the underlying cause of the Allies' failure to decisively crack German defenses before the end of the year.

Adams uses the first three chapters to delineate the parameters of his argument, focusing on the logistical concerns of combat at the Army level in Western Europe after the Normandy landings and the operational goals that Eisenhower established for his force. Here, the author establishes a foundation for the remainder of the book.

Adams' great achievement is including the necessary level of detail to support analysis of a broad spectrum of historical events without boring the reader. Scholars have already examined many of the topics Adams addresses, but they have seldom drawn them together in a coherent evaluation of operational challenges as Adams has. One minor critique of the book is the author's tendency to conflate analysis and hindsight, but this does not detract from the valuable contribution that Adams has provided.

**LTC Michael A. Boden,  
Hempstead, New York**

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**A COMPANY OF HEROES: Personal Memories About the Real Band of Brothers and the Legacy They Left Us**, Marcus Brotherton, Berkley Caliber, New York, 2010, 346 pages, \$25.95.

As chronicled by Stephen Ambrose in his book, *Band of Brothers*, the men of Easy Company, 506 Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, experienced both drama and trauma during World War II. HBO immortalized them in the famous television miniseries of the same name, but what became of those men? How did they live their lives after their experiences in the crucible? What were they like before joining the parachute infantry, and how did their combat experiences change them?

Author Marcus Brotherton answers these questions and gives the reader insight into the personal histories of 26 members of Easy Company in his book, *A Company*

*of Heroes*. Brotherton interviewed the sons and daughters, nephews and nieces, brothers and sisters, and, in a few cases, the widows of selected veterans. The surviving relatives shared personal recollections and stories about growing up with their veteran relatives, providing insight into how those vets tried to live unaffected lives after being combat infantryman. The stories vary from marriage, career, and family stories to dark accounts of alcoholism, divorce, and disease, with death as the only release from suffering.

The book recounts the lives of five enlisted men, 12 noncommissioned officers, and three officers who either were original members of Easy Company during its formation at Camp Toccoa, Georgia, or were replacements that joined the unit later in Europe. Included in the book are accounts of six members who were killed during combat.

*A Company of Heroes* tells of the nightmares that disturbed the sleep of the Easy Company men, of their attempts at self-medication with alcohol to suppress the memories and the guilt of surviving, of the scars left on the bodies and in the minds of the soldiers and the constant pain of combat injuries through the remainder of their lives. While the book does not provide the action impetus for a violent video game or the drama for an HBO miniseries, it does serve as a useful guide to how ordinary men dealt with extraordinary circumstances. By examining the candid examples recounted in the book, we can identify and seek to heal what we now recognize as post-traumatic stress disorder in today's soldiers and survivors of extraordinary situations.

**LTC Kevin Lindsay, USA,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**VETERANS OF FUTURE WARS: A Study in Student Activism**, Donald W. Whisenhunt, Lexington Books, Lanham, MD, 2011, 155 pages, \$60.00.

The Veterans of Future Wars was one of the most successful collegiate

jokes in American history. In March 1936 a handful of Princeton students organized the Veterans of Future Wars, a student club that demanded bonuses paid for possible combat service in the future. They argued that receiving bonuses was useless after a war, particularly to the dead. Most of the students, led by Lewis Gorin and Robert Barnes, were fiscal conservatives and were actually protesting bonuses given to men who enlisted in World War I but did not serve in combat.

After the Bonus March of 1932, veteran's bonuses were a contentious issue in American politics. In 1936, Congress began to issue an early bonus to World War I veterans. The Veterans of Future Wars sought to parody the Veterans of Foreign Wars and militarism in general. Though originally just a joke, the organization hit a nerve among the generally pacifist national student population. Within a few months, the Veterans of Future Wars was a national organization with over 500 chapters and 60,000 members.

The journey from a college joke to a national movement was a surprising and rapid one. Robert Barnes published an article in the *New York Times* in March and the Associated Press picked it up. The students received a flood of letters, phone calls, and even donations. *The March of Time*, a radio and newsreel program, featured the Veterans of Future Wars. In response to the publicity, the Veterans of Future Wars opened an office, wrote a manifesto, created buttons, and granted charters for virtually every applicant. The movement also inspired other organizations, like the Future Gold Star Mothers, the Future Profiteers, the Chaplains of Future Wars, and the Future War Propagandists. Chapters even organized mock burials of the Unknown Soldier of Future Wars. They were all intended to parody the excesses of World War I and are a reflection of antiwar feeling of the time.

As can be expected, this student activity highly offended the Veterans of Foreign Wars and other veterans' organizations, and they succeeded

in stopping it on some campuses. Ultimately, the “Future War craze” died out in the summer of 1936 at the end of the semester due to a lack of a comprehensive plan.

Whisenhunt writes an interesting and enjoyable book. It places college agitation and pranks into their proper settings of antiwar agitation and a dismal national economy. Today, we face a similar situation with the economy, unpopular wars, and a large veteran population, but today’s soldiers have the support of the public, even if their overseas operations do not.

The book has 155 pages, but it seems that the author could have covered the subject adequately in an article or as a section of a broader book on student protests in the 1930s. Exploring this bizarre but illustrative moment in American history is clearly a labor of love for Whisenhunt.

**John E. Fahey, Lafayette, Indiana**

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**HERMAN GÖRING: Fighter Ace, The World War I Career of Germany’s Most Infamous Airman**, Peter Kilduff, Grubb Street Publishing, London, 2010, 170 pages, \$30.00.

Thoroughly researched and well written, this work provides an in-depth look at Göring’s contributions to the German aerial war effort from 1914 to 1918. Aerial combat attracted Göring because it offered him thrills, independence, and the opportunity for military prestige and personal advancement. His quest for personal fame had deep roots in a childhood filled with fantasies of chivalry and knighthood. When his family moved into several castles owned by his Jewish godfather, Göring was able to live out those fantasies to the fullest. Propelled by this combination of fantasy and ambition, Göring excelled in the Prussian cadet corps, graduating with honors. Soon after, he joined an infantry regiment, but by late 1914, had manipulated his way into the flying corps.

Göring quickly distinguished himself in his initial service as an

observer. Not content with observer status, Göring completed pilot training and was soon involved in the aerial combat his ego-driven personality craved. By late 1915, Göring was a pilot known for his bravery, recklessness, and overarching ambition. In addition to claiming 22 aerial victories, Göring eventually commanded the fighter wing formerly led by Manfred von Richthofen, “the Red Baron.” At the war’s end, Göring led his fighter group in defiant surrender and then headed into Germany’s bleak future, supported only by his own ambition and sense of self-importance.

While a psychological study of Göring is not the main purpose of the work, Kilduff does an excellent job introducing the issues behind Göring’s legendary megalomania. Relying on psychological interviews conducted post-World War II, Kilduff posits that Göring demonstrates a classic case of narcissistic personality disorder. Recognizing this penchant for self-glorification, Kilduff thoroughly analyzes records of Göring’s aerial exploits and demonstrates that many were either exaggerations or outright lies. He questions Göring’s claim of scoring 22 victories, yet admits that record keeping was so inconsistent that few certain conclusions can be reached. Kilduff, however, presents a thoroughly documented case to the readers, allowing them to reach their own conclusions.

Kilduff includes several masterful appendices that detail the victories and casualties in the units associated with Göring. Each appendix gives information on locations, aircraft type, and the results of combat. He also illustrates every key point in the book with appropriate photos or drawings, making liberal use of Göring’s extensive personal photograph collection.

Cutting away Nazi propaganda and Allied ridicule, Kilduff shows Göring as a complex and deeply flawed man whose ambition drove him to achieve military honor but whose hubris brought him only disgrace and shame. The book contributes to our understanding

of World War I aviation and of the man who lived and, by committing suicide, ultimately even died, on his own terms.

**1LT Jonathan E. Newell, USAR, Nashua, New Hampshire**

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**SUN TZU AT GETTYSBURG: Ancient Military Wisdom in the Modern World**, Bevin Alexander, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 2011, 304 pages, \$26.95.

The wisdom of Sun Tzu and *The Art of War* is frequently quoted in military readings throughout the Western world. In recent years, the maxims of the “Great Master” have made their way into the civilian sector, spawning numerous Sun Tzu books and blogs, some extremely well-done and of great utility, others poorly planned and prepared and with little to offer.

One recent addition to the genre in the well-done category is acclaimed military historian Bevin Alexander’s *Sun Tzu at Gettysburg: Ancient Military Wisdom in the Modern World* in which the author dissects ten significant battles and campaigns in history and focuses on the principles of Sun Tzu. As he states in his introduction, “This current volume is designed to show that commanders who unwittingly used Sun Tzu’s axioms in important campaigns over the past two centuries were successful, while commanders who did not . . . suffered defeat, sometimes disastrous, war-losing calamities.”

Alexander makes outstanding use of his previous body of work where he previously discussed many of the battles and campaigns (1862 Civil War campaigns, Stalingrad, Liberation of France during World War II, and Inchon). This enables him to provide readers with a concise, yet thorough understanding of each battle and campaign and sets the conditions for him to analyze each as they relate to the maxims of Sun Tzu.

Many authors place Sun Tzu on an intellectual pedestal. They believe they are the only ones who can comprehend *The Art of War* and consequently overanalyze the work.

Alexander lauds the great utility of the maxims, but clearly puts them in the proper perspective. He states, "None of the Sun Tzu principles is difficult. Every one when carried out appears in retrospect to have been the most obvious thing to do. Success came by using intelligent, careful thought to solve a specific problem."

Alexander both criticizes and praises senior leaders for their decisions during the planning and execution of combat operations. Those who do not fare well include Napoleon in Waterloo, Lee at Gettysburg, Moltke in the Marne, and Eisenhower in the closing days of World War II. Alexander does bestow praise where he believes it is warranted. Much of this is for Stonewall Jackson and his Civil War decisions.

*Sun Tzu at Gettysburg* will unquestionably add to Alexander's sterling reputation. He has developed a take on Sun Tzu that other authors have not. It is a book readers will find readable, informative, and insightful. As Sun Tzu himself has said, "Opportunities multiply as they are seized." Bevin Alexander has certainly seized this opportunity.  
**Rick Baillergeon,**  
**Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**THE MAYAGUEZ INCIDENT: Testing America's Resolve in the Post-Vietnam Era,** Robert J. Mahoney, Texas Tech University Press, Lubbock, 2011, 336 pages, \$39.95.

From 12 to 15 May 1975, the United States was involved in a hostage situation and rescue operation with a government with which it had no diplomatic relations. The *Mayaguez* crisis nearly resulted in the annihilation of part of the rescue force and tested the presidency of Gerald Ford in the wake of U.S. failures in Southeast Asia. The Ford administration believed it had to demonstrate U.S. resolve and strength to both allies and adversaries. Although some have forgotten the seizure of the SS *Mayaguez*, author Robert Mahoney demonstrates in *The Mayaguez Incident*

that the lessons learned from this crisis are as pertinent today as they were decades ago.

Mahoney convincingly argues that the historical record on the *Mayaguez* is incomplete and that the crisis was a landmark event in that it tested the 1973 War Powers Act, exposed weaknesses in the U.S. ability to plan and conduct Joint operations, and was one of the first occasions where a strategic leader could speak directly to commanders on the battlefield. The author states his work is a "small step toward expanding scholarly understanding of the *Mayaguez* crisis in the broader context of the Cold War and correcting its treatment as a footnote for those who fought and died for their country in the rescue operation." He succeeds brilliantly on both accounts.

The book adds much to our understanding of the events. It ties together, for the first time, the strategic, operational, and tactical events and puts them into the larger context. It clearly portrays the complexity of decision making and why problems in crisis planning and execution can easily occur. The author's research also provides new insight into the crisis. Although often assessed as an intelligence failure, Mahoney's analysis reveals that the intelligence community was not solely at fault. The author concludes the chain of command contributed to the operational difficulties. Mahoney proves there were sufficient intelligence estimates of the enemy strength on Koh Tang Island available prior to the operation, but the estimates were never passed along to the Marines.

Mahoney, dean of academics and deputy director at the Marine Corps War College, uses many primary sources, some recently declassified, to explore the decisions involving the *Mayaguez*. He states, "This work is the first that ties policy, strategy, and execution together while keeping the reader aware of the time pressures involved." The book is easy to read and the author provides clarity to simultaneous and confusing events. Mahoney does an excellent job explaining the events,

putting them into context, and analyzing why a certain decision was made. His analysis is clear, logical, and easy to understand. The book's chapters are well organized and easily tie together the different levels of the story. Mahoney's research and analysis will add much to the history of this crisis.

Overall, the book is an excellent study in decision making during a complex crisis. It portrays the challenges associated with the types of operations U.S. forces could execute in the future and the difficulties involved. I highly recommend *The Mayaguez Incident* to readers interested in national security, decision making, the Vietnam War, or counter-piracy operations.

**LTC Robert Rielly, USA, Retired,**  
**Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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**HOMER LEA: American Soldier of Fortune,** Lawrence M. Kaplan, The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 2010, 314 pages, \$40.00.

*Homer Lea: American Soldier of Fortune* introduces General Homer Lea as "a five-foot three-inch hunchback" who became a world-renowned military leader, general officer, and geopolitical strategist during the great transition period in China from 1899-1912. The book's title promises a soldier of fortune biography potentially at the level of a Charles "Chinese" Gordon and the Ever Victorious Army (1863-1864) or Claire Chennault and the Flying Tigers (1941).

Unfortunately, the biography does not live up to expectations. Homer Lea turns out to be a manipulator and unabashed schemer, who through subterfuge, half-truths, and raw ambition, sells himself as a military genius and strategist to various groups of Chinese reformers and revolutionaries at the turn of the century. Lea's deformity barred him from serving in the U.S. military, but his love for military history and science, his gift for self-promotion, and the inaccuracies of the media allowed Lea to gain a Chinese general's commission, the ear of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen, and the command of a

small cadet army of Chinese émigrés in California. Even so, his impact on the history of China is marginal, and the Chinese revolutionary movement would have had the same outcome with or without his involvement. Lea published a geopolitically influential book, *Valor of Ignorance* (1909), that presciently warned of a U.S.-Japanese War, and in this way, he contributed to the geopolitical debate of his time.

Lawrence M. Kaplan, a U.S. Department of Defense historian, uses primary and secondary sources. His documentation is thorough, and he supplements the text with unique and supporting color plates from both family and personal collections. Yet, I could not help but wonder why Kaplan focused on this marginal American soldier of fortune when a number of others beg for a full-length biography.

Considering the book's price of \$40 and the limited relevance and impact of Homer Lea to history, readers interested in American soldiers of fortune might do better by purchasing Caleb Carr's *Devil Soldier*, a portrait of Fredrick Townsend Ward, an obscure American mercenary who rose to prominence during China's bloody Taiping rebellion. For those who really enjoy learning about obscure "niche" players in history, *Homer Lea* could be an interesting read.

**MAJ Kevin D. Stringer, Ph.D.,  
USAR, Zurich, Switzerland**

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**MARITIME DOMINION AND THE TRIUMPH OF THE FREE WORLD: Naval Campaigns that Shaped the Modern World 1852-2001**, Peter Padfield, The Overlook Press, New York, 2009, 369 pages, \$30.00.

Readers who normally avoid naval histories should not do so because of this book's title. There is much more going on here than maritime nations gaining dominion over the modern world using their fleets.

Padfield's thesis is simple but

sobering—maritime trading empires governed by consent of the governed triumph every time; however, their ability to provide peace, prosperity, and a way ahead for other nations is perhaps coming to an end. He states the matter most eloquently in the book's opening sentences: "We spoiled children of the Enlightenment are heading for a shock of scarcely imaginable proportions . . . the squeeze between an inexorably increasing world population and the demand for economic growth to support stable societies in the West and to lift the poorest from poverty in the developing giants, India and China particularly."

Padfield reviews the tension between "maritime" and "territorial" powers, showing how governance and trade conferred to the maritime powers significant advantages that enabled them to prevail. This is pure Mahan, whereas the opening lines quoted earlier recall Niall Ferguson's darker musings on globalism in books like *The War of the World* (2006). Padfield's tension between civilizations (Toynbee), between land and sea, is explicitly referenced in an H.A.L. Fisher quotation at the book's end, after the ultimate triumph of the United States following the end of the Cold War: "We are distinguished from the other great civilizations of the human family, from the Chinese, the Hindus, the Persians, and the Semites." He concludes on a somber note, saying that if there is any hope to solve the world's intractable problems, then it will only come from "a free people which can think itself out of this perilous paradox, not the demos [people], but the few geniuses nourished in freedom and empowered by free institutions." His final assessment is not optimistic, despite this hopeful language.

In between, there is much fascinating history based on some of the latest maritime and naval scholarship. This third volume picks up in the mid-19th century in the midst

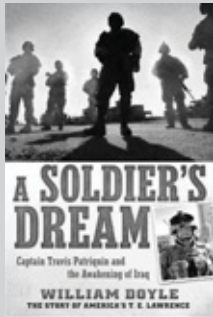
of *Pax Britannica* and then follows the course of history as Great Britain begins to deal with emerging rival continental powers until displaced, gradually at first, after World War I by her ideological offspring in the United States, a self-sustaining continental island with a huge industrial economy. He does occasionally veer off course into what some esoteric topics (dreadnought fire control for example). However, he always returns to the master narrative. Given the broad scope of the book, mistakes, both in the facts as well as in interpretation, are to be expected. These are surprisingly few—Padfield's volume here keeps pace with most of the extant and recent scholarship (some of it his own).

On the other hand, his treatment of the Japanese after the Russo-Japanese War seems unaware of substantial recent scholarship by Sadao Asada and Ed Drea. He gives the reader the impression of a diabolical Hirohito on par with Hitler, driving the nation to world conquest. However, since the themes here are rather minor compared to the actual behavior (motivation versus actual actions), they do not detract from the larger analysis that points an accusing finger more at Japan than her adversaries in the war that began in 1937 against China and finally included most of East Asia by 1942. The book occasionally lapses into environmental sermonizing, but the fundamental point that there are only limited global resources is spot on.

I highly recommend these volumes. Readers do not need the context of the two earlier volumes, though, since Padfield provides all the context and information a reader needs to both enjoy and reflect on these important themes. This third volume, because of its relevance to the real and pressing problems of today, is highly recommended for as broad and as educated a reading audience as possible.

**John T. Kuehn, Ph.D.,  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

# MR We Recommend



**A SOLDIER'S DREAM: Captain Travis Patriquin and the Awakening of Iraq**, William Doyle, NAL Caliber, New York, 2011, 336 pages, \$25.95.

Travis Patriquin, a young Special Forces officer, had already won a Bronze Star in Afghanistan before being transferred to Iraq. An Arabic linguist, Patriquin set out to establish a crucial network with tribal leaders built on mutual trust and respect.

In 2006, Patriquin unleashed a diplomatic and cultural charm offensive upon the Sunni Arab sheiks of Anbar province, the heart of darkness of the Iraqi insurgency. He galvanized American support for the Sunni Awakening, the tribal revolt against Al Qaeda that spread through Anbar and eventually across the country—a turning point which led to dramatically lower levels of violence starting in mid-2007.

Before his tragic death from an IED explosion, Travis Patriquin was so beloved by Iraqis that they adopted him into their tribes and loved him as a brother. *A Soldier's Dream* is a tribute to a man who loved Iraq—and a devoted soldier who made a crucial impact on the Iraq War.

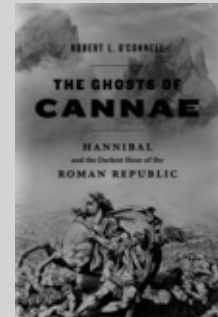
*From the Publisher.*



**PEARL HARBOR CHRISTMAS: A World at War, December 1941**, Stanley Weintraub, Da Capo Press, Cambridge, MA, 2011, 224 pages, \$24.00.

Christmas 1941 came little more than two weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor. The shock—in some cases overseas, elation—was worldwide. While Americans attempted to go about celebrating as usual, the reality of the just-declared war was on everybody's mind. United States troops on Wake Island were battling a Japanese landing force and, in the Philippines, losing the fight to save Luzon. In Japan, the Pearl Harbor strike force returned to Hiroshima Bay and toasted its sweeping success. Across the Atlantic, much of Europe was frozen in grim Nazi occupation. Just three days before Christmas, Churchill surprised Roosevelt with an unprecedented trip to Washington, where they jointly lit the White House Christmas tree. As the two Allied leaders met to map out a winning wartime strategy, the most remarkable Christmas of the century played out across the globe. *Pearl Harbor Christmas* is a deeply moving and inspiring story about what it was like to live through a holiday season few would ever forget.

*From the Publisher.*



**THE GHOSTS OF CANNAE: Hannibal and the Darkest Hour of the Roman Republic**, Robert L. O'Connell, Random House Trade Paperbacks, New York, 336 pages, \$17.00.

For millennia, Carthage's triumph over Rome at Cannae in 216 B.C. has inspired reverence and awe. No general since has matched Hannibal's most unexpected, innovative, and brutal military victory. Now Robert L. O'Connell, one of the most admired names in military history, tells the whole story of Cannae for the first time, giving us a stirring account of this apocalyptic battle, its causes and consequences. O'Connell brilliantly conveys how Rome amassed a giant army to punish Carthage's masterful commander, how Hannibal outwitted enemies that outnumbered him, and how this disastrous pivot point in Rome's history ultimately led to the republic's resurgence and the creation of its empire. Piecing together decayed shreds of ancient reportage, the author paints powerful portraits of the leading players, from Hannibal—resolutely sane and uncannily strategic—to Scipio Africanus, the self-promoting Roman military tribune. Finally, O'Connell reveals how Cannae's legend has inspired and haunted military leaders ever since, and the lessons it teaches for our own wars.

*From the Publisher.*