



EUI Working Papers

MWP 2009/29
MAX WEBER PROGRAMME

TOWARD A MILITARY HISTORY FOR THE COLD WAR:
A BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY

Ingo Tauschweizer

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, FLORENCE
MAX WEBER PROGRAMME

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INGO TRAUSCHWEIZER

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ISSN 1830-7728

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Printed in Italy
European University Institute
Badia Fiesolana
I – 50014 San Domenico di Fiesole (FI)
Italy
www.eui.eu
cadmus.eui.eu

Abstract

This essay discusses the historiography of the Cold War from the perspective of American policy and strategy, civil-military relations, and politico-military culture. It presents the history and historical literature of the Cold War in two parts, focusing first on the superpower confrontation in the early decades of the conflict before turning to the Vietnam War era and the global Cold War. It is intended as a guide to secondary sources as of mid-2009. There is no particular argument, other than to support the notion that scholarship has to consider the Cold War as a global event and should not regard either 1945 or 1991 as zero hours. Also, this essay makes no claims at an overarching conclusion, but suggests that while Cold War military history remains fragmented, it represents a more comprehensive picture than many students of the era have thus far come to recognize.

Keywords

Cold War, military history, international and diplomatic history, United States policy and strategy, defense policy, strategy, origins of the Cold War, Vietnam War, civil military relations

The Cold War can be defined in most general terms as a state of hostilities between the United States and the Soviet Union.¹ Neither its beginning nor its end can be sharply defined, although 1945 to 1991 serves as a useful approximation.² Odd Arne Westad, a leading proponent of international history, suggests that we need to consider the Cold War as a global event and that it is counterproductive to treat it as an era distinct from what preceded it and what followed. It is crucial to read this essay on Cold War military historiography with a sense of that context. Indeed, viewing either the end of the Second World War or the collapse of the Soviet Union as ruptures may preclude historians from assessing broader trends of American military history. This essay presents the historiography of the Cold War in two parts: the first section considers military aspects of the superpower confrontation until the mid-1960s whereas the second section shifts emphasis on the Vietnam War and the relationship of the superpowers and the Third World in the later decades of the twentieth century. Moreover, it is far from clear what constitutes “military” history in the complex international environment of the recent past. This essay will be primarily concerned with scholarly debates and arguments about U.S. strategy, policy, and international security; civil-military relations; and the question of a peculiarly American culture of war. Primary emphasis is on the most thoroughly developed debates among Anglo-American historians: the question of the Cold War’s origins and the era of the Vietnam War. Other literature addresses a variety of subjects and often leaves the impression of a fragmented picture. Cold War military history remains a work in progress, but it is more comprehensive than many students of the era have yet recognized. This essay does not intend to advance a novel argument, but it is based on general agreement with the notion that events during the Cold War, particularly since the 1960s and specifically in the Third World, have shaped the world and the complex international security environment that we are confronted with today.

Military History for the Cold War, 1945-1965: the Superpower Confrontation

Much like American political leaders, diplomatic historians during the early decades of the Cold War blamed the Soviet Union and its leader Josef Stalin and contended that the United States merely reacted to hostility driven either by ideological desire to spread communism or by more traditional Russian expansionism.³ But at the end of the 1950s William Appleman Williams argued that US foreign policy was motivated by economic needs and by the desire to spread liberal capitalism.⁴ In the turbulent climate of the 1960s a revisionist school of thought emerged on the basis of Williams’s core argument and scholars including Joyce and Gabriel Kolko, Walter LaFeber, Thomas J. McCormick, Thomas G. Paterson, and Lloyd Gardner all suggested that the Cold War was the result of American policies.⁵ From the beginning of the 1970s, post-revisionist historians placed

¹ This essay presents an updated and expanded version of two lectures that were originally written for the Masters of Military History Program, Norwich University (Vermont). Norwich and MMH retain the copyright for the original lectures, but the program director and the Dean of Graduate Studies have graciously given permission to revise and publish them as an EUI working paper.

² The best recent surveys are John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History*. New York: Penguin Books, 2005 and Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Time*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

³ Arthur Schlesinger, jr., “Origins of the Cold War,” in: *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 46 (October 1967), pp. 22-52 remains the most concise reflection of the traditionalist school of thought. But see also William H. McNeill, *America, Britain & Russia: Their Co-operation and Conflict, 1941-1946*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1953 and Herbert Feis, *From Trust to Terror: The Onset of the Cold War, 1945-1950*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1970.

⁴ William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*. Cleveland, OH: World Publishing, 1959.

⁵ See, for instance, Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War*. New York: Wiley, 1967; Lloyd C. Gardner, *Architects of Illusion: Men and Ideas in American Foreign Policy*. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970; Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *The Origins of the Cold War*. Lexington, MA: Heath, 1970 and *On Every Front: The Making of the Cold War*. New York: Norton, 1979; Gabriel and Joyce Kolko, *The Limits of Power: The World and United States Foreign Policy, 1945–1954*. New York: Harper&Row, 1972; and Lloyd C. Gardner, Walter LaFeber, and Thomas J. McCormick, *Creation of the American Empire: U.S. Diplomatic History*. Chicago: Rand McNally, 1973.

greater emphasis on investigating the nature of “the long peace” and on assessing both domestic and international aspects of U.S. foreign policy than on apportioning blame for the outbreak of the Cold War.⁶ Since the end of the Cold War, however, the leading post-revisionists have revived and embraced traditionalist accusations made of Stalin.⁷ Recent scholarship has moved toward deeper analysis of the Eastern Bloc, based on newly available sources, and into the direction of international history.⁸

There are few outright military histories of the Cold War. The best is Lawrence Freedman’s narrative of how expectations of war changed toward various forms of limited war and how technology and arms control contributed to the nature and course of a conflict in which the main protagonists never fought one another.⁹ Freedman has investigated questions of nuclear strategy, limited war, and deterrence for over three decades.¹⁰ Next to Freedman, the pertinent chapters in Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War*, remain most useful, despite Brian Linn’s valid points of critique and his own recent study that could have superseded Weigley’s if not for its emphasis on land forces in an age that was at least equally defined by air and naval power.¹¹ Michael D. Pearlman, a history professor at the US Army Command and General Staff College, considers America’s wars against other nation-states and argues that military strategy has been shaped by the executive, legislature, political parties, bureaucrats, the states, the military, and even enlisted men. The result has been an incoherent development because in a democracy linearity is impossible to attain. His discussion does not focus on the Cold War per se, but includes critical chapters on the Korean and Vietnam Wars.¹² Moving beyond traditional military history and into the realms of diplomatic and international history as well as policy and institutional history, however, presents a more thoroughly developed body of literature.

At the end of the Second World War the United States had at its disposal a highly experienced military establishment of more than 12 million officers and men. By June 1947 that number had been

⁶ John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1972 and *The Long Peace: Inquiries into the History of the Cold War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987; Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977; Vojtech Mastny, *Russia’s Road to the Cold War: Diplomacy, Warfare, and the Politics of Communism, 1941-1945*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1978; and, albeit much later, Melvyn P. Leffler, *The Specter of Communism: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War*. New York: Hill & Wang, 1994.

⁷ John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking the History of the Cold War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997 and Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War*. New York: Hill & Wang, 2007.

⁸ Caroline Kennedy-Pipe presents the scholarly debates in *The Origins of the Cold War*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007. See also the publications of the Cold War International History Project at http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topic_id=1409&fuseaction=topics.publications&group_id=11901 (accessed 15 June 2009).

⁹ Lawrence Freedman, *The Cold War: A Military History*. London: Cassell Military, 2001. David Miller, *The Cold War: A Military History*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998 offers a journalistic account of the main events and Norman Friedman, *The Fifty-Year War: Conflict and Strategy in the Cold War*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2000 focuses on strategy and suffers from a polemical approach.

¹⁰ Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, third edition, 2003; first published in 1981, “The First Two Generations of Nuclear Strategists,” in: *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age*, ed. Peter Paret. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986, pp. 735-777, and *Deterrence*. Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2004.

¹¹ Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy*. New York: Macmillan, 1973, pp. 363-477 and Brian M. Linn, “The American Way of War Revisited,” with a response by Russell F. Weigley, *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 66, No. 2 (April 2002), pp. 501-533 and *The Echo of Battle: The Army’s Way of War*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.

¹² Michael D. Pearlman, *Warmaking and American Democracy: The Struggle over Military Strategy, 1700 to the Present*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1999.

reduced to less than 1.5 million. The rapid demobilization process was perfectly consistent with American tradition and with the predominant attitude that large military establishments were expensive, unnecessary in peacetime, and a serious threat to freedom. From 1947, however, the Truman administration developed policies that were characterized by economic and military assistance to allies and led to a change in the nature of the American state. In the mid-1970s, Daniel Yergin offered the first detailed scholarly account of the national security state, centering on America's Wilsonian instincts, Soviet intentions, and the rise of national security as an ideology. Melvyn Leffler argues that President Truman and his advisers created the national security state because it permitted both a vehicle to maintain the global reach and governmental power the United States had built up during the Second World War. Michael Hogan refines Leffler's thesis, arguing that the Truman administration maneuvered deftly between conservative adherents of an anti-statist tradition and radical voices that called for permanent mobilization of all resources for the Cold War.¹³ Hogan concludes that Truman and his successor, Dwight D. Eisenhower, codified the national security state, but also holds that its nature could have been even more extreme. The National Security Act of 1947, in which many crucial agencies were founded, including the Defense Department, the independent US Air Force, Central Intelligence Agency, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and National Security Council, emerges as the moment when US foreign policy became fundamentally militarized.¹⁴ Wilson Miscamble, on the other hand, concludes that the Truman administration exhausted all means of peaceful co-existence before turning to a reactive militarized strategy.¹⁵

But war has always been central to American identity and diplomacy and military force have been closely intertwined with an American mission toward global hegemony and thus the national security state that came into focus during and after the Second World War may not have been as novel as historians have claimed.¹⁶ The question of the pervasiveness of the national security state remains central to historical debate.¹⁷ Michael Sherry argues that a warfare state emerged out of the Second World War, but he concludes in the hopeful spirit of the 1990s that it may no longer be needed.¹⁸ If that were the case, Paul Kennedy's warning that debt accrued from military spending and power projection brought an end to most historical empires and would lead to the collapse of the Soviet

¹³ Yergin, *Shattered Peace*, Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992, and Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945-1954*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. See also Richard F. Haynes, *The Awesome Power: Harry S. Truman as Commander in Chief*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1973.

¹⁴ Douglas T. Stuart. *Creating the National Security State: A History of the Law that Transformed America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008. For particular agencies and departments see, for instance, Lawrence J. Korb, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976, Richard K. Betts, *Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977, Douglas Kinnard, *The Secretary of Defense*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1980, John Prados, *Keepers of the Keys: A History of the National Security Council from Truman to Bush*. New York: William Morrow, 1991, Amy Zegart, *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999, and David M. Barrett, *The CIA and Congress: The Untold Story from Truman to Kennedy*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005.

¹⁵ Wilson D. Miscamble, *From Roosevelt to Truman: Potsdam, Hiroshima, and the Cold War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

¹⁶ Fred Anderson and Andrew Cayton, *The Dominion of War: Empire and Liberty in North America, 1500-2000*. New York: Penguin Books, 2005 and Walter L. Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy: National Identity and U.S. Foreign Policy*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008.

¹⁷ The debate on the national security state and the militarization of American society has been summarized by Richard H. Kohn, "The Danger of Militarization in an Endless War on Terrorism," in *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 73, No. 1 (January 2009), pp. 177-208.

¹⁸ Michael S. Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States since the 1930s*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.

Union but also to the passing of American hegemony, would sound less ominous.¹⁹ But the seeds sown in the 1940s may have grown into an uncontrollable apparatus and those who hold that traditional American distrust of a powerful central government remains too strong to be overcome currently find themselves in the minority.²⁰ Two recent books have opened a new line of inquiry in considering the Cold War and the post-Cold War periods as an evolving historical continuum.²¹ Of particular note, James Kurth argues that the American way of war is best defined as a combination of superior numbers of men and material, superior transportation and communication, and high-tech weaponry. He concludes that World War II and the Cold War witnessed two marked additions to this tradition: the need to manipulate public support and the mobilization of allies.²² Adrian Lewis posits that culture has influenced military organization and philosophies of war and has shaped the American way of war. He argues that the shift from citizen-soldiers to professionals in the wake of the Vietnam War has weakened the ties of the nation to its military and has given presidents much greater power to go to war without direct public concern. Much of these developments hinged on how the Second War ended and the early stages of the Cold War evolved.

The end of the Second World War conditioned the age that followed. In Europe, questions of influence and expansion of the Soviet Union were unresolved and historians continue to debate the centrality of Germany to the outbreak and course of the Cold War.²³ In the Far East, the war ended with the American atomic bombardment of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, an event that has spurred great controversy among historians.²⁴ Representative of the scholarly mainstream, Samuel Walker presents a balanced argument for the use of the bombs and J. Robert Moskin offers a highly readable narrative of the crucial decisions at the end of the war.²⁵ Revisionists have claimed that use of the bombs was unnecessary to end the war with Japan and found the real motivation of the Truman administration in trying to impress the Soviet Union.²⁶ Ronald Takaki and John Dower have emphasized race as a

¹⁹ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*. New York: Random House, 1987.

²⁰ Aaron L. Friedberg, *In the Shadow of the Garrison State: America's Anti-Statism and Its Cold War Grand Strategy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000.

²¹ Andrew J. Bacevich, ed., *The Long War: A New History of U.S. National Security Policy Since World War II*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007 and Adrian R. Lewis, *The American Culture of War: The History of U.S. Military Forces from World War II to Operation Iraqi Freedom*. London: Routledge, 2007.

²² James Kurth, "Variations on the American Way of War," in: Bacevich, *The Long War*, pp. 53-98. This argument is also taken up in Thomas G. Mahnen, *Technology and the American Way of War*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.

²³ Geir Lundestad, *The American Non-Policy toward Eastern Europe, 1943-1947*. New York: Humanities Press, 1975 and John Lamberton Harper, *American Visions of Europe: Franklin D. Roosevelt, George F. Kennan, and Dean G. Acheson*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. For the central importance of the German question to American strategy see Carolyn Woods Eisenberg, *Drawing the Line: The American Decision to Divide Germany, 1944-1949*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998 and Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999.

²⁴ On the development of the atom bomb see Richard Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*. New York: Touchstone, 1986. For the dangers of the subsequent arms race see, for instance, McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices about the Bomb in the First Fifty Years*. New York: Random House, 1988 and John Lewis Gaddis, Philip Gordon, Ernest May, and Jonathan Rosenberg, eds., *Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy since 1945*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

²⁵ J. Samuel Walker, *Prompt and Utter Destruction: Truman and the Use of Atomic Bombs Against Japan*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997 and J. Robert Moskin, *Mr. Truman's War: The Final Victories of World War II and the Birth of the Postwar World*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002. For a detailed survey of the growing body of literature see also J. Samuel Walker, "Recent Literature on Truman's Atomic Bomb Decision: A Search for Middle Ground," in: *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (April 2005), pp. 311-334.

²⁶ The leading revisionist works are Gar Alperovitz, *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965 and *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb and the Architecture of an American Myth*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995. See also Martin Sherwin's more cautiously revisionist *A World Destroyed: Hiroshima and Its Legacies*.

critical component in explaining why American soldiers and policy-makers seemed driven by visceral hatred of the Japanese.²⁷ Much of the debate has centered on the question of the morality of targeting non-combatants, but where revisionists apply absolute moral standards other scholars have insisted on considering the exceptionally tense environment of the fourth year of America's war effort.²⁸ Contemporary scholarship has moved toward investigations of leading officials in the Manhattan Project and the Truman administration and especially toward considering the Japanese as actors as well as victims and trying to situate August 1945 in its global context.²⁹

The nuclear age offered serious challenges to military and civilian leaders. Traditional notions of strategy and conventional doctrines of the armed forces no longer applied. It can be debated whether August 1945 represents a "revolution in military affairs" but it is clear that the challenges of the post-war world were of a different intensity than they had been before the war.³⁰ The Truman administration responded gradually by installing a policy of containment that was bolstered by a strategy of deterrence and eventually militarized during the Berlin Air Lift of 1948-1949 and through the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949, and the intervention in the Korean War.³¹ Atomic weapons figured prominently as a means to counter the much greater reservoir of conventional forces of a Soviet Union that was viewed as increasingly hostile.³² Military plans

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Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003; originally New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975 and Joseph Gerson, *Hiroshima Eyes: Atomic War, Nuclear Extortion and Moral Imagination*. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1995.

²⁷ John Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1986 and Ronald Takaki, *Hiroshima: Why America Dropped the Atomic Bomb*. New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 1995.

²⁸ See, for instance, Barton J. Bernstein, "The Atomic Bombings Reconsidered," in: *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 74, No. 1 (January-February 1995), pp. 135-152. Michael D. Gordin concludes in *Five Days in August: How World War II Became a Nuclear War*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 2007 that military officers and political leaders viewed the atom bomb simply as a more destructive conventional weapon and that the Allies were surprised by Japan's sudden surrender. Alexander B. Downes, *Targeting Civilians in War*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008 provides historical context on the vanishing line between combatants and non-combatants in modern war.

²⁹ Tsuyoshi Hasegawa's multi-archival *Racing the Enemy: Stalin, Truman, and the Surrender of Japan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005 concludes that the Truman administration used the bombs in order to give the Japanese leadership an excuse to surrender before the Soviets could stake a significant claim in northeast Asia. See also Richard Frank, *Downfall: The End of the Imperial Japanese Empire*. New York: Penguin Books, 2001 on Japan and James G. Hershberg, *James B. Conant: Harvard to Hiroshima and the Making of the Nuclear Age*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993, Robert S. Norris, *Racing for the Bomb: General Leslie S. Groves, The Manhattan Project's Indispensable Man*. South Royalton, VT: Steerforth Press, 2002, and Sean Malloy, *Atomic Tragedy: Henry L. Stimson and the Decision to Use the Bombs Against Japan*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008 on American decision-makers.

³⁰ Williamson Murray and McGregor Knox, eds., *The Dynamics of Military Revolutions, 1300-2050*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005 suggest that even a dramatic change in weapons technology alone does not qualify as revolutionary.

³¹ The best synopsis of these issues, and of US strategy throughout the Cold War, remains John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War*. New York: Oxford University Press, revised edition, 2005; originally 1982, a survey with particular emphasis on American policies. For nuclear strategy and American strategists see Bernard Brodie, *Strategy in the Missile Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959, Freedman, *Evolution of Nuclear Strategy* and "Nuclear Strategists," and Marc Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991. The best study of Truman's national security policy and US strategy is Leffler, *Preponderance of Power*. For the militarization of US Cold War policy see also Lawrence S. Kaplan, *The United States and NATO: The Formative Years*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1984, Michael J. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947-1952*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, Chester Pach, *Arming the Free World: The Origins of the United States Military Assistance Program, 1945-1950*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991, and Thomas Parrish, *Berlin in the Balance: The Blockade, the Airlift, the First Major Battle of the Cold War*. Reading: Perseus Books, 1998.

³² For estimates of Soviet military strength in the late 1940s and early 1950s see Matthew A. Evangelista, "Stalin's Postwar Army Reappraised," in: *International Security*, vol. 7, no.3 (Winter 1982-83), pp. 110-138, John Prados, *The Soviet Estimate: U.S. Intelligence Analysis and Soviet Strategic Forces*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986, Raymond L. Garthoff, *Assessing the Adversary: Estimates by the Eisenhower Administration of Soviet Intentions and Capabilities*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1991, John S. Duffield, "The Soviet Military Threat to

consequently called for withdrawal from continental Europe, strategic bombardment of the Soviet Union, and liberation of Europe in much the same way as in the final years of the Second World War.³³ While the United States maintained its monopoly on atomic weapons until the summer of 1949, their deterrent value was more myth than reality. Problems ranging from weapons design and production, plutonium and uranium production, intelligence deficiencies, and a Strategic Air Command in a state of disarray and with questionable capabilities made it highly unlikely that the small stockpile of atom bombs would have stopped any Soviet invasion of Western Europe or the Middle East.³⁴ Entering into the NATO alliance rendered such plans politically impracticable as well.³⁵

NATO was founded as a political coalition more than a practical military alliance.³⁶ It was intended to complement economic recovery initiated by the Marshall Plan. It had a military committee structure, but no clear commitments of national forces and no military commands.³⁷ It was a symbolic response to the assumption that the Soviet Union and its allies could mobilize hundreds of army divisions, leaving Western Europe vulnerable and perhaps indefensible unless it was explicitly protected by American nuclear weapons.³⁸ The outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 altered NATO structures, as the member states moved rapidly toward a joint military command under Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, General Dwight D. Eisenhower.³⁹ By 1952, the United States and its partners had agreed on far-reaching rearmament objectives, both in terms of conventional and

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Western Europe: U.S. Estimates in the 1950s and 1960s,” in: *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 15, no. 2 (June 1992), pp. 208-227, and Philipp A. Karber and Jerald A. Combs, “The United States, NATO, and the Soviet Threat to Western Europe: Military Estimates and Policy Options, 1945-1963,” in: *Diplomatic History*, vol. 22, no. 3 (Summer 1998), pp. 299-329.

³³ For a review of war plans see Steven T. Ross, *American War Plans, 1945-1950: Strategies for Defeating the Soviet Union*. London: Frank Cass, 1996. For the defense of the Middle East see Michael J. Cohen, *Fighting World War Three from the Middle East: Allied Contingency Plans, 1945-1954*. London: Frank Cass, 1997 and *Strategy and Politics in the Middle East, 1954-1960: Defending the Northern Tier*. London: Frank Cass, 2005. More generally for war plans of both sides see Vojtech Mastny, Sven G. Holtsmark, and Andreas Wenger, eds., *War Plans and Alliances in the Cold War: Threat Perceptions in the East and West*. London: Routledge, 2006.

³⁴ For the weaknesses in the American atomic deterrent and in Strategic Air Command see Harry Borowski, *A Hollow Threat: Strategic Air Power and Containment Before Korea*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1982, Richard Rhodes, *Dark Sun: The Making of the Hydrogen Bomb*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996, and the articles by David Alan Rosenberg, “American Atomic Strategy and the Hydrogen Bomb Decision,” in: *Journal of American History*, Vol. 66 (June 1979), pp. 62-87 and “U.S. Nuclear Stockpile, 1945 to 1950,” in: *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol. 38 (May 1982), pp. 25-30.

³⁵ John S. Duffield, *Power Rules: The Evolution of NATO's Conventional Force Posture*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995 discusses NATO strategy and force structure. Sean M. Maloney, *War Without Battles: Canada's NATO Brigade in Germany, 1951-1993*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1997 specifically addresses plans for the defense of Germany informed by the author's access to NATO military records that remain closed to the public.

³⁶ The best discussions of NATO's foundation and formative years from political and military perspectives are James A. Huston, *One for All: NATO Strategy and Logistics through the Formative Period, 1949-1969*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1984, Lawrence S. Kaplan, *The United States and NATO: The Formative Years*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1984. For broader context of US-European relations see, for instance, Geir Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945: From "Empire" by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

³⁷ Douglas Bland, *The Military Committee of the North Atlantic Alliance: A Study of Structure and Strategy*. New York: Praeger, 1991.

³⁸ For the American military presence in Western Europe and resulting nuclear and conventional deterrence see David C. Elliot, “Project Vista and Nuclear Weapons in Europe,” in: *International Security*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Summer 1986), pp. 163-183, Daniel J. Nelson, *A History of U.S. Military Forces in Germany*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987, Simon Duke, *United States Military Forces and Installations in Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989, and Simon Duke and Wolfgang Krieger, eds., *U.S. Military Forces in Europe: The Early Years, 1945-1970*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993.

³⁹ For the development of Supreme Allied Command, Europe see Robert S. Jordan, ed., *Generals in International Politics: NATO's Supreme Commander Europe*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987.

nuclear forces. In the formative years of the alliance, nuclear deterrence was critical as conventional forces were being built up, but from 1950, plans for the defense of Western Europe began to consider conventional military defense and deterrence. The tension between emphasis on nuclear deterrence and conventional arms would remain throughout the Cold War, even as NATO adopted originally American strategies of nuclear deterrence in the mid-1950s and a more flexible approach in the mid-1960s.⁴⁰ Conventional defense was to be bolstered by the accession of West Germany into NATO in 1955, but in the event, despite immediate American military aid and advice, the buildup of the West German armed forces lasted into the 1960s.⁴¹ Nevertheless, as the 1950s progressed, NATO presented the image of determined defense and thus became a more effective deterrent.

Beyond questions of international politics and alliance, nuclear weapons posed a terrific challenge to the armed services, but they also opened paths into the future. The US Air Force benefited most immediately, first through its creation as an independent service in 1947 and then through vastly increasing budgets throughout the first decades of the Cold War.⁴² There is no comprehensive history of the US Air Force for the Cold War and the early decades are in particular need of further study.⁴³ Strategic air power was predominant in theory and practice and it offered the air force leverage in political and budgetary questions.⁴⁴ David Rosenberg has concluded that air force

⁴⁰ On NATO strategy debates throughout the Cold War see especially Jane E. Stromseth, *The Origins of Flexible Response: NATO's Debate over Strategy in the 1960s*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986, Robert E. Wampler, *NATO Strategic Planning and Nuclear Weapons, 1950-1957*. Nuclear History Program: Occasional Paper 6. University of Maryland: Center for International Security Studies, 1990, Ivo Daalder, *The Nature and Practice of Flexible Response: NATO Strategy and Theater Nuclear Forces since 1967*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991, Duffield, *Power Rules*, Beatrice Heuser, *NATO, Britain, France, and the FRG: Nuclear Strategies and Forces for Europe, 1949-2000*. Houndmills: Macmillan, 1997, and Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*. Andrew Johnston, *Hegemony and Culture in the Origins of NATO Nuclear First-Use, 1945-1955*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005 perceives strategy as equally political and cultural.

⁴¹ For West German rearmament and NATO membership see Robert McGeehan, *The German Rearmament Question: American Diplomacy and European Defense after World War II*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1971, Edward Fursdon, *The European Defence Community: A History*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980, Saki Dockrill, *Britain's Policy for West German Rearmament, 1950-1955*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, David Clay Large, *Germans to the Front: West German Rearmament in the Adenauer Era*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996, and Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, pp. 103-125. A.J. Birtle, *Rearming the Phoenix: U.S. Military Assistance to the Federal Republic of Germany, 1950-1960*. New York: Garland, 1991, James S. Corum, "Building A New Luftwaffe: The United States Air Force and Bundeswehr Planning for Rearmament, 1950-1960," in: *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (March 2004), pp. 89-113, and Ingo W. Trauschweizer, "Learning with an Ally: The U.S. Army and the Bundeswehr in the Cold War," in: *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 72, No. 2 (April 2008), pp. 477-508 present practical American aid and discuss the emergence of the *Bundeswehr*. Stanley Karnowski, *The German Army and NATO Strategy*. Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1982 evaluates the immediate strategic impact of German rearmament. For a contemporary scholarly assessment see Gordon A. Craig, *NATO and the New German Army*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1955. Donald Abenheim, *Reforging the Iron Cross: The Search for Tradition in the West German Armed Forces*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988 offers an excellent discussion of continuities and ruptures in the culture of twentieth century German armies.

⁴² Defense budgets of the Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson administrations are discussed in the five-volume *History of the Office of the Secretary of Defense*. Washington, DC: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1984-2006 that cover the years 1947-1965. For a contemporary analysis see Warner Schilling, Paul Y. Hammond, and Glenn H. Snyder, *Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1962.

⁴³ Michael S. Sherry, *The Rise of American Air Power: The Creation of Armageddon*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987 explains the origins and genesis of US air power through the Second World War. Gian P. Gentile explores the findings and politics of the Strategic Bombing Survey in *How Effective is Strategic Bombing? Lessons Learned From World War II and Kosovo*. New York: New York University Press, 2000.

⁴⁴ Mike Worden, *The Rise of the Fighter Generals: The Problem of Air Force Leadership 1945-1982*. Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1997 illustrates that Strategic Air Command was thoroughly in control of the Air Force until the 1970s. Tactical air support for the early stages of the Cold War is discussed in John Schlight, *Help From Above: Air Force Close Air Support of the Army, 1946-1973*. Washington, DC: Air Force History and Museum Program, 2003.

operational plans at times were elevated to national strategy.⁴⁵ Both army and navy have received more scholarly attention. Policy-makers and the general public questioned the utility of ground forces in the atomic age and the army was dramatically reduced in size, from a wartime high of eight million officers and men in eighty-nine divisions to a mere ten combat divisions and 591,000 officers and men on the eve of the Korean War.⁴⁶ Brian Linn discusses the army's difficult period of adjustment while Adrian Lewis offers a comprehensive discussion of the changing nature of the Cold War army from conscript force to professional military as it fought in Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf while preparing for war in Europe.⁴⁷ Considering strategy, doctrine, and technology, another argument has it that the army evolved gradually into a force capable of nuclear and conventional combat in response to budgetary constraints, evolving strategy, threat perceptions, and political needs of the U.S. and its allies.⁴⁸ The navy also found itself fighting for its share of the defense budget and its role in national strategy, but with its three arms (surface fleet, naval air power, and submarines) it presented a more modern image for the nuclear age.⁴⁹ The first military crisis, however, arose in an unexpected area, the Far East, and posed a more conventional challenge.

1949-50 was a critical turning point. The Truman administration introduced more confrontational policies in response to the Soviet atom bomb and the Chinese Revolution, i.e., the defeat of the ruling Nationalist regime of Jiang Jieshi by Mao Zedong's Communists.⁵⁰ In the United States, a climate of fear and accusations led suspected communist sympathizers to leave government offices, particularly in the State Department.⁵¹ The mere fact that Congressmen, journalists, and publishers who supported Jiang forced the resignation of Secretary of State George Marshall shows both the paranoia and partisan vitriol at this critical juncture of the Cold War.⁵² The State Department and the U.S. intelligence community lost their expertise in East Asian affairs just as that region

⁴⁵ David Alan Rosenberg, "The Origins of Overkill: Nuclear Weapons and American Strategy, 1945-1960," in: *International Security*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Spring 1983), pp. 3-71.

⁴⁶ Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History, Volume II: The United States Army in a Global Era, 1917-2003*. Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 2005, p. 211.

⁴⁷ Linn, *Echo of Battle*, pp. 151-192 and Lewis, *American Culture of War*. For policies regarding the draft see also James M. Gerhardt, *The Draft and Public Policy: Issues in Military Manpower Procurement, 1945-1970*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1971 and George Q. Flynn, *Conscription and Democracy: The Draft in France, Great Britain, and the United States*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002.

⁴⁸ Ingo Tauschweizer, *The Cold War U.S. Army: Building Deterrence for Limited War*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008 and "Learning with an Ally." See also Andrew J. Bacevich, *The Pentomic Era: The US Army between Korea and Vietnam*. Washington, DC: National Defense University, 1986.

⁴⁹ Lisle Abbott Rose, *Power at Sea: A Violent Peace, 1946-2006*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2006. General histories of the U.S. Navy that emphasize the Cold War era include Kenneth Hagan's excellent critical narrative *This People's Navy: The Making of American Sea Power*. New York: Free Press, 1991 and George W. Baer, *One Hundred Years of Sea Power: The U.S. Navy, 1890-1990*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990. Studies of the nuclear navy include Richard G. Hewlett and Francis Duncan, *Nuclear Navy, 1946-1962*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974, Francis Duncan, *Rickover and the Nuclear Navy: The Discipline of Technology*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1990, Jeffrey Barlow, *Revolt of the Admirals: The Fight for Naval Aviation, 1945-1950*. Washington, DC: Naval Historical Center, 1994, and William F. Trimble, *Attack from the Sea: A History of the U.S. Navy's Seaplane Striking Force*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2005.

⁵⁰ Gordon H. Chang, *Friends and Enemies: the United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1972*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1990 remains the best discussion of the complex relationship of the U.S. and China. David Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939-1956*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995 offers the most comprehensive discussion of the Soviet Union's entry into the nuclear age.

⁵¹ The climate of fear of the early Cold War is explored in Richard M. Freeland, *The Truman Doctrine and the Origins of McCarthyism: Foreign Policy, Domestic Politics, and International Security, 1946-1948*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1992, Richard M. Fried, *Nightmare in Red: The McCarthy Era in Perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991, and Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.

⁵² For Marshall's role in the Cold War see Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Statesman, 1945-1959*. New York: Viking, 1987.

became more important to American Cold War strategy.⁵³ In January 1950 the State Department's Policy Planning Staff recommended greater emphasis on conventional as well as atomic armament in its strategy paper NSC-68, which recommended defense budgets of up to \$50 billion per year until 1954.⁵⁴

Harry Truman was a fiscal conservative. It is unlikely that he would have adopted NSC-68 if North Korean forces had not invaded South Korea in June 1950.⁵⁵ The subsequent war, emerging from a civil war in Korea, drew in the United States and several allied nations under the nominal command of the United Nations, but also Communist China and Soviet advisers and pilots. William Stueck, a leading diplomatic historian of the conflict, argues that the Korean War served as substitute for a third world war.⁵⁶ It signified the globalization of containment and the militarization of the Cold War and persuaded American policy-makers to accelerate rearmament and expand their network of alliances into the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Of course, the most immediate problem was halting the North Korean offensive. The United States had four infantry divisions on occupation duty in Japan, but they were neither equipped nor trained for combat in a large-scale war and their emergency detachments were overrun along with the South Korean army.⁵⁷

Following the initial sweep of North Korean armored formations into the southernmost parts of the Korean Peninsula, UN forces, including the army of the Republic of Korea, recovered in the late summer and early fall of 1950.⁵⁸ After the successful amphibious landing at Inchon, commanded by General Douglas MacArthur, the Truman administration decided to attack across the 38th Parallel, the pre-war border between the artificially divided Korean states that had emerged from the Second World War, pursuing the goal of decisive victory and reunification of Korea. MacArthur expressed great

⁵³ See E. J. Kahn, *The China Hands: America's Foreign Service Officers and What Befell Them*. New York: Viking Press, 1975 for a scholarly account. For a contemporary accusation see John T. Flynn, *While You Slept: Our Tragedy in Asia and Who Made It*. New York: Devin-Adair, 1951.

⁵⁴ On the genesis of NSC-68 see Ernest May, *American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC-68*. Boston, MA: Bedford St. Martin's, 1993. On the proposed cost see the memoir of the document's primary author, Paul H. Nitze, *From Hiroshima to Glasnost: At the Center of Decision*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989, p. 96. For the effect of NSC-68 on the military see also David T. Fautua, "The 'Long Pull' Army: NSC 68, the Korean War, and the Creation of the Cold War Army," in: *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (Jan. 1997), pp. 93-120.

⁵⁵ For Truman's defense policy at that point and his earlier decision not to permit defense budgets above \$13 billion see Keith D. McFarland and David L. Roll, *Louis Johnson and the Arming of America: The Roosevelt and Truman Years*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005, pp. 205-302.

⁵⁶ William W. Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995 and *Rethinking the Korean War: A New Diplomatic and Strategic History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002. For the origins of the Korean War see also Bruce Cumings two-volume study *The Origins of the Korean War*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981 and 1990 and Allan R. Millett, *The War for Korea: A House Burning, 1945-1950*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005.

⁵⁷ Roy K. Flint, "Task Force Smith and the 24th Division: Delay and Withdrawal, 5-19 July 1950," in: *America's First Battles: 1776-1965*, eds. Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986, pp. 266-299. In the wake of the Korean War, it was argued that individual soldiers, rather than entire divisions had been unprepared for the war because occupation duty and life in Japan had softened them. See T. R. Fehrenbach, *This Kind of War: A Study in Unpreparedness*. New York: Macmillan, 1963. Thomas E. Hanson, "The Eighth Army's Combat Readiness Before Korea: A Reappraisal," in: *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 29, No.2 (Winter 2003), pp. 167-184 demonstrates that individual soldiers were quite capable but lacked necessary guns, tanks, and vehicles. For U.S. occupation of Japan more generally see Michael Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold War in Asia*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

⁵⁸ The Korean War remains under studied. Among the best military histories are Roy E. Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu: June-November 1950*. Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1961, David Rees, *Korea: The Limited War*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964, Clay Blair, *The Forgotten War: America in Korea, 1950-1953*. New York: Times Books, 1987, and Billy C. Mossman, *Ebb and Flow: November 1950 - July 1951*. Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1990. For air power see Robert Futrell, *The United States Air Force in Korea, 1950-1953*. Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1983 and Conrad C. Crane, *American Airpower Strategy in Korea, 1950-1953*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000.

confidence that China would not join the conflict. When it did, in late October and November, UN forces were caught flat-footed and soon pushed back far south of the 38th Parallel. MacArthur himself advocated the use of atomic weapons against targets in China, a notion that President Truman seemed to entertain briefly before rejecting it in part due to pressure from his European allies. His strained relationship with Truman and general dissatisfaction with being forced to pursue a limited war, led to MacArthur's dismissal.⁵⁹ His successor, General Matthew B. Ridgway, managed to halt the Chinese offensive, UN forces went on the attack again, and eventually stalemate settled in roughly along the 38th Parallel.⁶⁰

The Korean War had serious consequences for American Cold War policies. The North Korean invasion of June 1950 was widely seen as a move directed by Moscow and Western European governments feared that a more general offensive could be aimed at their nations. As already outlined, NATO developed military structures and General Dwight D. Eisenhower was appointed as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. The fear generated by the Korean War also facilitated the rearmament of West Germany, even though the practical steps of German integration into the western alliance were debated until 1954 and the original plan for a European Defense Community failed due to a negative vote in France.⁶¹ In the course of the 1950s, U.S. and Western European forces developed a credible conventional as well as nuclear deterrent and NATO's defenses were shifted from the Rhine River, where they had been fixed in 1950, to the intra-German border.⁶² The Korean War also showed that limited war in the nuclear age remained possible. This recognition led to the emergence of a body of theory on limited war that came to influence American policy towards Vietnam.⁶³ Posture for limited war, i.e., any war short of an intercontinental nuclear war, included the introduction of tactical nuclear weapons for use on the battlefield.⁶⁴

In November 1952, with the front-lines still hardened in Korea despite ongoing armistice negotiations, Dwight Eisenhower was elected president. During the campaign he had promised to go to Korea and had spoken of a more aggressive form of containment and of the liberation of Eastern

⁵⁹ The classic study of the Truman-MacArthur controversy, in which Truman had the support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, is John W. Spanier, *The Truman-MacArthur Controversy and the Korean War*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959. See also Michael Schaller, *Douglas MacArthur: The Far Eastern General*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989 for a critical assessment.

⁶⁰ Two recent studies portray the experience of soldiers and civilians in Korea: Allan R. Millett, *Their War for Korea: American, Asian, and European Combatants and Civilians, 1945-1953*. Washington, DC: Brassey's, 2002 and Peter S. Kindsvatter, *American Soldiers: Ground Combat in the World Wars, Korea, and Vietnam*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003.

⁶¹ The most comprehensive discussion of the failed EDC remains Edward Fursdon, *The European Defence Community: A History*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980, but see also James McAllister, *No Exit: America and the German Problem, 1943-1954*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002, pp. 171-244.

⁶² For NATO defense planning see the document collection *NATO Strategy Documents, 1949-1969*, ed. Gregory W. Pedlow. Brussels: Historical Office, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, 1998.

⁶³ For the scholarship on limited and conventional war in the nuclear age see, for instance, Robert Endicott Osgood, *Limited War: The Challenge to American Strategy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957, Henry A. Kissinger, *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1957, Morton H. Halperin, *Limited War in the Nuclear Age*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1963, Seymour J. Deitchman, *Limited War and American Defense Policy*. Cambridge, MA: The M.I.T. Press, 1964, Otto Heilbrunn, *Conventional Warfare in the Nuclear Age*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965, Michael Carver, "Conventional Warfare in the Nuclear Age," in: Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy*, pp. 779-814, and Christopher M. Gacek, *The Logic of Force: The Dilemma of Limited War in American Foreign Policy*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994. Lewis, *American Culture of War*, pp. 201-227 discusses the different visions of how to fight limited wars that were held during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations by senior political leaders and army commanders.

⁶⁴ Robert A. Doughty, *The Evolution of U.S. Army Tactical Doctrine, 1946-1976*. Leavenworth Paper No. 1. Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, 1976, John P. Rose, *The Evolution of U.S. Army Nuclear Doctrine, 1945-1980*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1980, and John R. Midgley, jr., *Deadly Illusions: Army Policy for the Nuclear Battlefield*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986.

Europe.⁶⁵ Stalin's death in March 1953 and perhaps also Eisenhower's threat to end the Korean War with atomic weapons led to a breakthrough in armistice negotiations and fighting stopped in June. In the meantime, President Eisenhower had come to the conclusion that the Cold War might continue for several decades and he feared that excessive emphasis on military mobilization would undermine the robust economy of the United States and its fundamental political freedoms. Following a thorough review of defense policy, his administration proposed nuclear deterrence as a cost-effective alternative to conventional military forces.⁶⁶ John Foster Dulles, Eisenhower's Secretary of State, provided the catchphrase "Massive Retaliation," i.e., the threat of striking with nuclear weapons at targets inside the Soviet Union in response to any aggressive act of the Soviets or their allies.⁶⁷ With the shift in emphasis on nuclear weapons and tougher talk in Washington, however, came few direct changes in the foreign policy of the nation and the Eisenhower administration quickly found itself reacting to crises just like its predecessor had done.⁶⁸

The first such crisis came in Berlin in June 1953, when East German workers confronted the regime of Walter Ulbricht. The uprising quickly collapsed when Soviet military forces appeared.⁶⁹ Three years later the Soviets negotiated a settlement with recalcitrant Polish national communists and emboldened reformers in Hungary. When Imre Nagy came to power and announced that Hungary would leave the Warsaw Pact, the defense organization of the Eastern Bloc that had been founded in 1955 in response to West German accession to NATO, Soviet tanks rolled into Budapest and obliterated the poorly armed rebels.⁷⁰ Radio Free Europe and other American outlets had fueled the flames of the uprising, but the US lacked practical means to intervene.⁷¹ Moreover, the West was

⁶⁵ The best works on Eisenhower's presidency are Charles C. Alexander, *Holding the Line: The Eisenhower Era, 1952-1961*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975, Fred I. Greenstein, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader*. New York: Basic Books, 1982, and Chester Pach and Elmo Richardson, *The Eisenhower Presidency*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991.

⁶⁶ This was based on the assumption that regional allies would provide ground forces and that tactical nuclear weapons would account for any shortfall in numbers. Peter J. Roman, "Ike's Hair Trigger: U.S. Nuclear Predelegation, 1953-60," in: *Security Studies*, 7 (Summer 1998), pp. 121-165 and Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, pp. 146-200 suggest that Eisenhower pre-authorized the use of nuclear weapons by NATO commands.

⁶⁷ For Eisenhower's understanding of deterrence and nuclear war see Andreas Wenger, *Living with Peril: Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Nuclear Weapons*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997. For rhetoric and foreign policy see Chris Tudda, *The Truth Is Our Weapon: The Rhetorical Diplomacy of Dwight D. Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006.

⁶⁸ For Eisenhower's "New Look" defense policy and the strategy of Massive Retaliation see E. Bruce Geelhoed, *Charles E. Wilson and Controversy at the Pentagon, 1953 to 1957*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1979, Saki Dockrill, *Eisenhower's New Look National Security Policy, 1953-1961*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1996, Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, and Richard M. Leighton, *History of the Office of the Secretary of Defense: Strategy, Money, and the New Look, 1953-1956*. Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, Historical Office, 2001.

⁶⁹ Christian F. Ostermann, *The United States, the East German Uprising of 1953, and the Limits of Rollback*. Washington, DC: Cold War International History Project, 1994 and Ostermann and Malcolm J. Byrne, *Uprising in East Germany 1953: the Cold War, the German Question, and the First Major Upheaval behind the Iron Curtain*. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2001.

⁷⁰ The Soviet perspective is discussed in Mark Kramer, "The Soviet Union and the 1956 Crises in Hungary and Poland: Reassessments and New Findings," in: *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (Spring 1998), pp. 163-215. For an engaging account from a Hungarian perspective see Victor Sebestyen, *Twelve Days: The Story of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2006.

⁷¹ American policy and propaganda are explored in Charles Gati, *Failed Illusions: Moscow, Washington, Budapest, and the 1956 Hungarian Revolt*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006. Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006 offers the best analysis of U.S. information policies and foreign broadcasts. See also Holly Cowan Shulman, *The Voice of America: Propaganda and Democracy, 1941-1945*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990, George R. Urban, *Radio Free Europe and the Pursuit of Democracy: My War within the Cold War*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997, and Arch Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000.

mired in its own crisis in the fall of 1956 when British and French forces, operating in alliance with Israel, appeared on the Sinai Peninsula in order to force Egypt to reopen the Suez Canal. But the allies had failed to inform Washington and Eisenhower responded with surprising toughness, forcing them to withdraw from Egypt and thus causing a significant political crisis within NATO.⁷² In the wake of the Suez Crisis, the United States became more active in the Middle East and soon found itself opposing attempts by Egypt's president Gamal Abdel Nasser to create a pan-Arab movement that was aligned neither with the U.S. nor the Soviet Union.⁷³ In the zero-sum game of the Cold War, neutrality was regarded as tacit support for the other camp.

In recent years, historians have discovered the significance of propaganda and psychological warfare for the Truman and Eisenhower administrations.⁷⁴ New agencies, first and foremost the CIA, became involved in influencing elections in allied or friendly countries, most famously in Italy in 1948. In 1953 the elected nationalist government of Iran was ousted in a coup d'état that elevated the political power of the Shah. The coup was at least partly driven by American interests and clandestine operatives.⁷⁵ This was followed by the CIA-engineered overthrow of Jacobo Arbenz Guzman, the left-leaning president of Guatemala, who had committed the cardinal sin of nationalizing economic entities.⁷⁶ Both events could be interpreted as successes of American Cold War policy, but they led to a brutal military dictatorship in Guatemala and latent anti-Americanism among Persian elites and the eventual Islamic Revolution of 1979.

While he was negotiating the obstacle course of international conflicts, Eisenhower attempted to improve relations with the new Soviet leadership. Initially, proposals for arms limitation and greater transparency were taken up at the summit meeting in Geneva in 1955 where the arrival of Nikita Khrushchev seemed to suggest a more peaceful co-existence.⁷⁷ Instead, the realities of the Cold War soon took over and crisis management trumped a spirit of cooperation in spite of Khrushchev's visit to the United States. The arms race was accelerating and the Soviet Union beat the U.S. into outer space by launching *Sputnik*, the first man-made satellite, in October 1957. This caused great consternation in Washington because it suggested that the Soviets would soon possess the capability to launch

⁷² Donald C. Neff, *Warriors at Suez: Eisenhower Takes America Into the Middle East*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981 and William Roger Louis and Roger Owen, *Suez 1956: The Crisis and Its Consequences*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

⁷³ Michael Oren, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007 offers a masterful introduction of the *longue durée* of American engagement with the Middle East. More specifically for the early stages of the Cold War, see Salim Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism: the Eisenhower Doctrine and the Middle East*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

⁷⁴ See especially the recent works of Gregory Mitrovich, *Undermining the Kremlin: America's Strategy to Subvert the Soviet Bloc, 1947-1956*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000, Sarah-Jane Corke, *U.S. Covert Operations and Cold War Strategy: Truman, Secret Warfare and the CIA, 1945-1973*. New York: Routledge, 2007, and Osgood, *Total Cold War*.

⁷⁵ For the origins of the Cold War in the Middle East and eastern Mediterranean in general see Bruce R. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East: Great Power Conflict and Diplomacy in Iran, Turkey, and Greece*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980.

⁷⁶ For US-Latin American relations in the 1950s see Stephen G. Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anti-Communism*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988. Specifically for Guatemala and the 1954 coup: Stephen C. Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, *Bitter Fruit: The Untold Story of the American Coup in Guatemala*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1982, Richard H. Immerman, *The CIA in Guatemala: The Foreign Policy of Intervention*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982, and Nick Cullather and Piero Gleijeses, *Secret History: the CIA's Classified Account of its Operations in Guatemala, 1952-1954*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999.

⁷⁷ For this hopeful phase of the Cold War see Saki Dockrill and Günter Bischof, eds., *Cold War Respite: The Geneva Summit of 1955*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000. See also Ira Chernus, *Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002 and Benjamin P. Greene, *Eisenhower, Science Advice, and the Nuclear Test Ban Debate*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007. For Khrushchev and the Cold War see William Taubman's excellent biography *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2003.

intercontinental ballistic missiles against targets in the United States.⁷⁸ Consequently, the Eisenhower administration and Congress accelerated scientific and military programs.⁷⁹ Mutual assured destruction, the strategic paradigm of the 1960s expressed beautifully in Stanley Kubrick's film *Dr. Strangelove*, appeared an immediate probability.⁸⁰ Eisenhower himself was uneasy about institutionalized collaboration of government, armed services, the academy, and manufacturers in the defense sector. In his Farewell Address he warned of the great danger that an emerging military-industrial complex posed to the democratic principles of the American republic.⁸¹ In a sense, he was back to where he started and while he had succeeded in balancing the budget in three out of his eight years in office – three more than any of his successors during the Cold War – he had done so at great cost.

The transition from Eisenhower to John F. Kennedy was marked by a sense of crisis. First, the personal relationship of Eisenhower and Khrushchev suffered greatly when Soviet air defenses shot down an American U-2 spy plane in May 1960.⁸² Second, the Cuban Revolution of 1956, led by the young lawyer Fidel Castro, placed a potentially pro-communist regime at the southern flank of the United States. American policies of the late 1950s did much to persuade Castro to seek support from the Soviets, but so did his brother Raul who had previously adopted communism.⁸³ By 1961, the US and Cuba had cut diplomatic ties and the CIA was preparing to overthrow Castro. The *Sputnik* shock had convinced many military officers, congressional leaders, and even John Foster Dulles, that dogmatic adherence to Massive Retaliation was no longer feasible. Practicing brinkmanship, another of Dulles's memorable terms, as in the Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1954-55 was no viable. The second crisis in the Taiwan Strait, in 1958, was resolved with less imminent danger of nuclear war.⁸⁴ But, as in Korea, the resolution included a militarized armistice between the United States and a local client – in this case Jiang Jieshi's remnant Nationalist China – and the Chinese. More ominously, the 1960 election brought charges that the Soviet Union had overtaken the United States in nuclear weapons technology and in the numbers of missiles, an assertion Eisenhower knew to be false but one that he could not refute without revealing top secret intelligence.⁸⁵

John F. Kennedy vowed at his inauguration to “pay any price and bear any burden” to assure American victory in the Cold War. His election represented a generational shift and with Kennedy

⁷⁸ See, for instance, Alan J. Levine, *The Missile and Space Race*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994.

⁷⁹ For the recommendations of leading scientists, engineers, economists, and military experts, and their ramifications is David L. Snead, *The Gaither Committee, Eisenhower, and the Cold War*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1999. See also Richard V. Damms, "James Killian, the Technological Capabilities Panel, and the Emergence of President Eisenhower's 'Scientific-Technological Elite,'" in: *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 24 (Winter 2000), pp. 57-78. The best studies of science advice on nuclear arms are Robert Gilpin, *American Scientists and Nuclear Weapons Policy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962, Fred Kaplan, *The Wizards of Armageddon*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983, and Gregg Herken, *Counsels of War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985.

⁸⁰ For contemporary thought on nuclear war and escalation models see Herman Kahn, *On Thermonuclear War*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960.

⁸¹ Eisenhower's fears were supported by C. Wright Mills's essay *The Power Elite*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1956. See also Paul A. C. Koistinen, *The Military-Industrial Complex: A Historical Perspective*. New York: Praeger, 1980, Stuart W. Leslie, *The Cold War and American Science: The Military-Industrial-Academic Complex at MIT and Stanford*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, Chalmers Johnson, *The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic*. New York: Henry Holt, 2004, James Carroll, *House of War: The Pentagon and the Disastrous Rise of American Power*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006, and Eugene Jarecki, *The American Way of War: Guided Missiles, Misguided Men, and a Republic in Peril*. New York: Free Press, 2008 for historical perspectives.

⁸² Michael R. Beschloss, *Mayday: The U-2 Affair*. New York: Harper & Row, 1986.

⁸³ For the Cuban Revolution and U.S. policy see, for instance, Jules R. Benjamin, *The United States and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992 and Samuel Farber, *The Origins of the Cuban Revolution Reconsidered*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

⁸⁴ Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Dangerous Strait: The U.S.-Taiwan-China Crisis*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

⁸⁵ Peter J. Roman, *Eisenhower and the Missile Gap*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995.

entered a group of young academics and business leaders who intended to move U.S. policy onto a more pragmatic footing.⁸⁶ Kennedy and his Secretary of Defense, the brash and self-assured Robert S. McNamara, announced that the U.S. would now pursue a strategy of “Flexible Response,” retaining the option of nuclear retaliation, but placing more emphasis on proportional response to enemy actions.⁸⁷ In doing so they opened dangerous paths: as the Cold War began to engulf the Third World, Flexible Response raised the likelihood of military intervention in so-called “low intensity” conflicts. The first crisis, however, occurred closer to home and CIA, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the White House were all equally embarrassed by the failure of American-equipped Cuban exiles to ignite a revolution against the Castro regime after they landed at the Bay of Pigs.⁸⁸ This episode convinced President Kennedy not to trust his military advisers, led to a personal feud between the Kennedy brothers and Castro that still reverberates in American politics, and pushed Kennedy into greater activism in other crises that developed in 1961 and 1962.⁸⁹

The United States had been involved in Southeast Asia since the French Indochina War, an issue that will be discussed below. In 1961, the Kennedy administration was faced with a civil war in Laos in which the anti-Communist side expected American intervention. After learning that the military required large forces and possibly even the use of nuclear weapons, Kennedy and the equally weary Soviet leadership negotiated a temporary settlement that diffused the international aspects of the conflict. Laos itself would soon be drawn into the Vietnam War. In Berlin and Cuba, the world came close to nuclear war.⁹⁰ The Berlin Crisis had begun in late 1958 and remained unresolved until Kennedy’s election.⁹¹ In 1961, it escalated, as East Germany was losing a steady stream of its most highly educated citizens to the West. In August 1961 the East German regime, ultimately backed by an initially cautious Kremlin, took the drastic step of building border fortifications to keep its own people contained.⁹² The Kennedy administration protested, but Americans were quietly relieved that the immediate crisis had passed and they understood that the Berlin Wall could become a powerful symbol for the oppressive nature of communist regimes. A war scare followed later that fall due to an

⁸⁶ David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest*. New York: Random House, 1972 remains the best discussion of the spirit of the Kennedy administration.

⁸⁷ Historical interpretations of Flexible response vary. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, pp.198-236, regards Flexible Response as the antithesis to Massive Retaliation. Francis J. Gavin, on the other hand, finds little practical difference in the strategies of the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations. Francis J. Gavin, “The Myth of Flexible Response: United States Strategy in Europe during the 1960s,” in: *The International History Review*, vol. 23, no. 4 (December 2001), pp. 847-875.

⁸⁸ The classic account of U.S. decision-making during the Bay of Pigs invasion is Trumbull Higgins, *The Perfect Failure: Kennedy, Eisenhower, and the CIA at the Bay of Pigs*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1987. For a recent study stressing the significance of the event for Kennedy’s foreign-policy approach see Howard Jones, *Bay of Pigs*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. For Kennedy and Latin America more generally see Stephen G. Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999.

⁸⁹ Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *Kennedy’s Quest for Victory: American Foreign Policy, 1961-1963*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989 and Michael R. Beschloss, *The Crisis Years: Kennedy and Khrushchev, 1960-1963*. New York: Edward Burlingame Books, 1991.

⁹⁰ Lawrence Freedman, *Kennedy’s Wars: Berlin, Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000 offers a comprehensive survey while Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy*, pp. 169-234 and *A Constructed Peace*, pp. 251-351 and John C. Ausland, *Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Berlin-Cuba Crisis, 1961-1964*. Oslo: Scandinavian University Press, 1996 show the linkage between the Berlin and Cuban crises.

⁹¹ Despite the prominence of the Berlin Wall in the Cold War, the crisis that led to its erection has drawn little scholarly attention although it features prominently in Beschloss, *Crisis Years* and Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*. The best focused accounts remain Jack M. Schick, *The Berlin Crisis, 1958-1962*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971 and Norman Gelb, *The Berlin Wall: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and a Showdown in the Heart of Europe*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986.

⁹² Hope M. Harrison, *Driving the Soviets Up the Wall: Soviet-East German Relations, 1953-1961*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003.

incident at a checkpoint between the American and Soviet sectors that led to a stand-off of American and Russian tanks.⁹³ The Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 represents the climax of the early Cold War. Following the Bay of Pigs invasion, Castro had turned to Moscow for military assistance and for strategic, political, and ideological reasons, Khrushchev decided to install a missile command in Cuba. Crisis erupted after American planes photographed a missile site. The Kennedy administration, based on the deliberations of an executive committee within the National Security Council, determined – falsely – that there were no nuclear warheads in Cuba and settled for a naval blockade and an embargo of the island. The crisis ended with a secret agreement negotiated by Robert F. Kennedy, the President's brother and Attorney General. The Soviets withdrew their missiles in return for an American public promise not to invade Cuba and a secret one that the U.S. would withdraw its own missiles from Turkey.⁹⁴

The intense fear of nuclear war in 1961 and 1962 contributed to greater desire for arms control and led to the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963.⁹⁵ But the assassination of President Kennedy in November and the downfall of Nikita Khrushchev and an emerging split between China and the Soviet Union added greater complexity to the Cold War.⁹⁶ The new president, Lyndon B. Johnson was faced with opposition from the allies, most notably France but also West Germany, uncertain leadership in the Soviet Union, a revolutionary China under Mao who now saw himself as the premier leader of the communist bloc, crises in Africa, the Middle East, and the Caribbean, and an escalating civil war in Vietnam.⁹⁷ He chose to continue the foreign policies of his predecessor and retained the strategy of Flexible Response. Within eighteen months, U.S. forces would find themselves embroiled in a land war in Vietnam.

Military History for the Cold War, 1965-1991: the Making of the Contemporary World

The previous section focused primarily on the superpower conflict and the early stages of the Cold War. But the Cold War was also a global competition for access to resources, markets, skilled labor, and military bases, as well as a conflict between opposed visions of modernity, and it featured rising regional powers and involved former colonies and developing countries of the Third World. The global dimensions of the Cold War took on greater prominence in the 1960s when both Soviet and American leaders regarded the Third World as political, ideological, and sometimes also military battleground. From the mid-1960s, crises and hot wars played out primarily in Asia, Africa, and Latin America and these events have been equally as important to the superpower confrontation over Europe in shaping world politics and international security in our time.⁹⁸ The latter decades of the Cold War

⁹³ Ingo Trauschweizer, "Tanks at Checkpoint Charlie: Lucius Clay and the Berlin Crisis, 1961-1962," in: *Cold War History*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (May 2006), pp. 205-228.

⁹⁴ For the crisis and its context see especially Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *One Hell of a Gamble - Khrushchev, Castro and Kennedy 1958-1964*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1998 and Alice L. George, *Awaiting Armageddon: How Americans Faced the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006. Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1971; revised edition by Allison and Philip Zelikow published by Longman in 1999 remains the best account of the decision-making process in Washington, but see also Sheldon M. Stern, *Averting the Final Failure: John F. Kennedy and the Secret Cuban Missile Crisis Meetings*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003.

⁹⁵ Wenger, *Living with Peril*, but also Philip Nash, "Bear Any Burden? John F. Kennedy and Nuclear Weapons," in: Gaddis et al., *Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb*, pp. 120-140.

⁹⁶ The best survey of Chinese policies and attitudes is Chen Jian, *Mao's China and the Cold War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.

⁹⁷ For LBJ and Europe see Thomas Alan Schwartz's excellent study *Lyndon Johnson and Europe: In the Shadow of Vietnam*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003. For the French challenge see also Frederic Bozo, *Two Strategies for Europe: deGaulle, the United States, and the Atlantic Alliance*, trans. Susan Emanuel. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001. For the emergence of Israel as a partner in the Middle East see Warren Bass *Support Any Friend: Kennedy's Middle East and the Making of the U.S.-Israel Alliance*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

⁹⁸ Westad, *Global Cold War*.

naturally will become more central to the historiography with the passage of time. As yet, the literature is more fragmented than that addressing the first decades of the superpower confrontation, but a picture emerges that is characterized by insurgencies, guerrilla warfare, civil wars, and a spectrum of threats that still included conventional and nuclear war. All but nuclear war could be observed in Vietnam.

Historians have exhibited great fascination with the Vietnam War, a watershed event in American culture.⁹⁹ Broad surveys of the Vietnam War have fallen into two categories: revisionist histories that stress Vietnam as the wrong war, at the wrong time, against the wrong enemy and consensus-oriented texts that attempt to bridge the deep divide between anti-war sentiments and a desire to honor the fallen and celebrate the heroism of individual soldiers without conceding that the war itself may have been necessary.¹⁰⁰ Recently, a third category has emerged with the appearance of scholarly studies concluding that the war was necessary and could have been won if the U.S. had applied its military and political resources differently.¹⁰¹ Most general histories of the Vietnam War focus on the American effort and pay little attention to Vietnam and the Vietnamese.¹⁰²

Studies of the origins of American involvement in Southeast Asia suggest a progression similar to the early Cold War in Europe.¹⁰³ U.S. policy evolved from financial, economic, and military support for allies to militarization and subsequent intervention. In 1945 France reclaimed Indo-China (modern-day Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia) from Japan.¹⁰⁴ But in Vietnam a coalition of nationalist and communist forces had emerged, led by the charismatic Ho Chi Minh.¹⁰⁵ In August 1945, Ho, hoping for American support, proclaimed independence.¹⁰⁶ Instead of receiving American recognition,

⁹⁹ For a comprehensive history of the historiography on the Vietnam War see Gary R. Hess, *Vietnam: Explaining America's Lost War*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2009.

¹⁰⁰ The best general introduction is Mark Atwood Lawrence, *The Vietnam War: A Concise International History*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. For syntheses of moderate revisionism see Marilyn B. Young, *The Vietnam Wars, 1945–1990*. New York: Harper Collins, 1991, Robert Mann, *A Grand Delusion: America's Descent into Vietnam*. New York: Basic Books, 2001, and John Prados, *Vietnam: The History of an Unwinnable War, 1945-1975*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2009. For a more consensus-oriented narrative see Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History*. New York: Viking, 1983, Robert D. Schulzinger, *A Time for War: The United States and Vietnam, 1941–1975*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997, and David L. Anderson, *The Vietnam War*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

¹⁰¹ Michael Lind, *Vietnam the Necessary War: A Reinterpretation of America's Most Disastrous Military Conflict*. New York: The Free Press, 1999, C. Dale Walton, *The Myth of Inevitable U.S. Defeat in Vietnam*. London: Frank Cass, 2002, and Mark Moyar, *Triumph Forsaken: The Vietnam War, 1954-1965*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, the first of two planned volumes on the war.

¹⁰² A good example is George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 4th edition, 2002, still the most commonly used textbook on the war.

¹⁰³ For a comprehensive introduction of the subject and its literature see Fredrik Logevall, *The Origins of the Vietnam War*. New York: Longman, 2001. For a particularly critical account of U.S. policies see George M. Kahin, *Intervention: How America Became Involved in Vietnam*. New York: Knopf, 1986.

¹⁰⁴ See especially David G. Marr, *Vietnam 1945: The Quest for Power*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995, but also Gary R. Hess, *The United States' Emergence as a Southeast Asian Power, 1940-1950*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987 and Stein Tonnesson, *The Vietnamese Revolution of 1945: Roosevelt, Ho Chi Minh, and de Gaulle in a World at War*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1991.

¹⁰⁵ William J. Duiker, *Ho Chi Minh: A Life*. New York: Hyperion, 2000 provides a good sense of the make-up of the Vietminh and his *The Communist Road to Power in Vietnam*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1981 explains how the communists came to dominate the movement. See also Greg Lockhart, *Nation in Arms: The Origins of the People's Army of Vietnam*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1989.

¹⁰⁶ For Ho Chi Minh and U.S. agents in World War II see Charles Fenn, *At the Dragon's Gate: With the OSS in the Far East*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2004 and Dixee Bartholomew-Feis, *The OSS and Ho Chi Minh: Unexpected Allies in the War against Japan*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006.

Ho's Vietminh soon found themselves at war with the French.¹⁰⁷ American involvement in the First Indochina War (1946-1954) evolved from tacit approval of French actions to financial support and the provision of arms and U.S. military advisers.¹⁰⁸ The Korean War and the perception of a coordinated communist offensive elevated a colonial war in Southeast Asia to a battle for containment.

The war progressed through the stages of guerrilla warfare outlined by Mao Zedong in the late 1930s: mobilization and establishment of local power bases, protracted struggle to erode the enemy's morale and resources, and set-piece battles and a general offensive to win the war.¹⁰⁹ It culminated with the defeat of French forces after a siege of the outpost Dien Bien Phu.¹¹⁰ During that siege France requested U.S. air support, perhaps extending to the use of atomic weapons. Until then, President Eisenhower had followed Harry Truman's policy of extending financial aid and deploying military advisers. Eisenhower denied the request, but there is some evidence that the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had previously assured French officials of a different outcome and newly released archival sources suggest that Eisenhower himself had instructed Admiral Arthur Radford and secretary of state John Foster Dulles to base policy initiatives on the assumption of American intervention. In this reading, skeptical Congressmen, European allies, and the outspoken opposition of army leaders forced Eisenhower to reconsider.¹¹¹ The crisis of 1954 complicated relations between France and the United States.¹¹²

Great-power negotiations at Geneva created two Vietnamese states. The settlement called for general elections to reunite the country in 1956, but by then the governments of Ho Chi Minh and Ngo Dinh Diem were entrenched in Hanoi and Saigon. Diem, a devout Catholic, found support in Washington and his regime came to be regarded as the keystone that kept Southeast Asia from falling to communism.¹¹³ Despite his alliance with the Eisenhower administration, there were relatively few

¹⁰⁷ The best introduction to the war and its context, albeit with focus on American involvement, are the essays in *The First Vietnam War: Colonial Conflict and Cold War Crisis*, eds. Mark Atwood Lawrence and Fredrik Logevall. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007. Bernard Fall, *Street Without Joy*. Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole, 1961 remains the classic narrative, but see also Lloyd C. Gardner, *Approaching Vietnam: From World War II through Dienbienphu*. New York: Norton, 1988 and Jacques Dalloz, *The War in Indochina, 1945-54*, trans. J. Bacon. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1990.

¹⁰⁸ Mark Atwood Lawrence, *Assuming the Burden: Europe and the American Commitment to War in Vietnam*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005 discusses how Vietnam came to be seen as crucial. For American involvement see Andrew J. Rotter, *The Path to Vietnam*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987 and Kathryn C. Statler, *Replacing France: The Origins of American Intervention in Vietnam*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2007. For military advisers see Ronald H. Spector, *Advice and Support: The Early Years, 1941-1960*. Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1985.

¹⁰⁹ Mao Tse-tung, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000. Mao's book was first published in 1937 and Griffith's translation originally appeared in 1961.

¹¹⁰ The most intriguing account may be the recollections of General Vo Nguyen Giap, *Dien Bien Phu*. Hanoi: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1964. For western accounts see Bernard Fall, *Hell in a Very Small Place: The Siege of Dien Bien Phu*. New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1967, Jules Roy, *The Battle of Dienbienphu*. New York: Carroll and Graf, 1984, Howard R. Simpson, *Dien Bien Phu: The Epic Battle America Forgot*. Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1994, and Martin Windrow, *The Last Valley: Dien Bien Phu and the French Defeat in Vietnam*. New York: DaCapo Press, 2004.

¹¹¹ For Eisenhower's intentions and decision see Prados, *Vietnam*, pp. 26-38. See also John Prados, *Operation Vulture: The U.S. Bombing Mission in Indochina, 1954*. New York: Dial Press, 1986 and Melanie Billings-Yun, *Decision Against War*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988. For the Vietnam policy of his administration more generally: David L. Anderson, *Trapped by Success: The Eisenhower Administration and Vietnam, 1953-1961*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991 and James R. Arnold, *The First Domino: Eisenhower, the Military, and America's Intervention in Vietnam*. New York: Morrow, 1991.

¹¹² Lawrence S. Kaplan et al., *Dien Bien Phu and the Crisis of Franco-American Relations*. Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1997.

¹¹³ Seth Jacobs, *America's Miracle Man in Vietnam: Ngo Dinh Diem, Religion, Race, and U.S. Intervention in Southeast Asia, 1950-1957*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004 and *Cold War Mandarin: Ngo Dinh Diem and the Origins of America's War in Vietnam, 1950-1963*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006.

American military advisers in Vietnam in the 1950s and Eisenhower had no intention of accelerating U.S. support even as Diem faced organized opposition and a military insurgency by 1960.¹¹⁴ The Kennedy administration increased aid for South Vietnam and raised the number of American military advisers. The assassinations of Diem and Kennedy in November 1963 represent a turning point.¹¹⁵ Historians continue to debate whether Kennedy had planned to withdraw American forces.¹¹⁶ Diem was replaced by a military junta, but leadership of South Vietnam remained highly unstable until Nguyen Van Thieu came to power in 1967.

American policy-makers and military officers were faced with the questions of what kind of war to expect and what kind of a South Vietnamese military to construct. They emphasized conventional over counterinsurgency warfare. Veterans and historians alike have been critical of the U.S. Army in particular for its unwillingness to develop a coherent doctrine and organization for counterinsurgency warfare despite political demands from 1961 onward.¹¹⁷ The question why the same politicians who tried to steer the army toward “small wars” continued to fund the build-up of the conventional Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) has received little scrutiny.¹¹⁸ The charge that the U.S. Army was wedded to a culture of big-unit wars instead of small wars neglects putting Vietnam in its global context and downplays the need to be prepared for war in Europe.¹¹⁹

The question how a “sub-limited” war should be fought was far from easy to answer.¹²⁰ The French had failed to defeat a poorly armed enemy and had never regained control of the countryside, even after they created a loyalist Vietnamese army. Despite its history of Indian wars and the Philippine-American War, American experience with insurgencies was limited.¹²¹ The recent example of British success in Malaya pointed at the need to isolate guerrillas from the population. But the argument that the U.S. Army failed in Vietnam because unlike the British army it was unwilling to learn and adjust seems too static.¹²² It also does not account for the success of Philippine forces and

¹¹⁴ The best survey of events in South Vietnam is Carlyle Thayer, *War by Other Means: National Liberation and Revolution in Viet-Nam, 1954–60*. Cambridge, MA: Unwin Hyman, 1989. Moyar, *Triumph Forsaken*, pp. 60-119 argues that American policy allowing Diem a free hand promised sufficient stability for the emergence of a South Vietnamese nation.

¹¹⁵ Frederick Nolting, *From Trust to Tragedy*. New York: Praeger, 1989, Howard Jones, *Death of a Generation: How the Assassinations of Diem and JFK Prolonged the Vietnam War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003, and Moyar, *Triumph Forsaken* present the clearest revisionist arguments.

¹¹⁶ William J. Rust, *Kennedy in Vietnam*. New York: Scribners, 1985, John M. Newman, *JFK and Vietnam: Deception, Intrigue, and the Struggle for Power*. New York: Warner, 1992, Edwin E. Moise, "JFK and the Myth of Withdrawal," in: *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, eds. Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002, pp. 162–173, and James G. Blight, Janet M. Lang, and David A. Welch, *Vietnam if Kennedy had Lived: Virtual JFK*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009.

¹¹⁷ The most comprehensive discussion is Andrew F. Krepinevich, jr., *The Army and Vietnam*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986.

¹¹⁸ There are two excellent studies of life in ARVN, but no comprehensive social and political history: Robert K. Brigham, *ARVN: Life and Death in the South Vietnamese Army*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006 and Andrew Wiest, *Vietnam's Forgotten Army: Heroism and Betrayal in the ARVN*. New York: New York University Press, 2008. For an early battle highlighting the difficulties of ARVN see David M. Toczek, *The Battle of Ap Bac, Vietnam: They Did Everything but Learn from It*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001.

¹¹⁹ See Tauschweizer, *Cold War U.S. Army*.

¹²⁰ For an introduction to insurgencies in the modern age see Ian F.W. Beckett, *Modern Insurgencies and Counter-Insurgencies: Guerrillas and Their Opponents since 1750*. London: Routledge, 2001.

¹²¹ But see A. J. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*. Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1998 and *Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1942-1976*. Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2006.

¹²² John Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

American advisers against communist insurgents in the decade after the Second World War.¹²³ Vietnam presented a difficult challenge: the Buddhist population majority was indifferent to the regime in Saigon and sympathetic to nationalist aspects of the communist cause; North Vietnam offered supplies and took over the brunt of the fighting after 1965; and neighboring Laos and Cambodia provided a refuge. Programs to isolate insurgents by placing the rural population in guarded villages, so-called strategic hamlets, failed in a country where ancestry worship deepened ties to the land.¹²⁴

Several parallel and overlapping wars were fought in Vietnam. The insurgency of the National Liberation Front (Vietcong)¹²⁵ gradually evolved into a civil war that involved North Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.¹²⁶ Americans had some success in counterinsurgency operations, but political and military leaders emphasized the conventional land and air war.¹²⁷ A growing body of works on counterinsurgency, guerrilla warfare, and special operations underscores the significance of irregular warfare since the Second World War.¹²⁸ It seems of particular value to consider the linkages of irregular operations and strategies of attrition.¹²⁹ In Vietnam, clandestine operations such as the Phoenix Program that targeted Vietcong cadre became part of the American war effort.¹³⁰ In 1966 pacification programs were consolidated in Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS), which emphasized the relationship of establishing security and destroying the insurgents' infrastructure to rural development initiatives.¹³¹ CORDS showed promising results, but it ultimately

¹²³ Lawrence M. Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection: a Case Study of a Successful Anti-Insurgency Operation in the Philippines*. Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1995. For a veteran of the Philippines campaign and adviser to Diem's counterinsurgency policies see Cecil B. Currey, *Edward Lansdale: The Unquiet American*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1988.

¹²⁴ For the war in rural areas see Gerald C. Hickey, *Village in Vietnam*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1964, James Trullinger, *Village at War*. New York: Longman, 1980, David W. Haines, *The Limits of Kinship: South Vietnamese Households, 1954-1975*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2006, and Philip E. Catton, "Counter-Insurgency and Nation Building: The Strategic Hamlet Programme in South Vietnam, 1961-1963," in: *International History Review*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (1999), pp. 918-940.

¹²⁵ For studies on the Vietcong see Douglas Pike, *Viet Cong: The Organization and Techniques of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam*. Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1966, Robert K. Brigham, *Guerrilla Diplomacy: The NLF's Foreign Relations and the Viet Nam War*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999, and Michael Lee Lanning and Dan Cragg, *Inside the VC and the NVA: The Real Story of North Vietnam's Armed Forces*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008.

¹²⁶ For the civil war from the late 1950s see, for instance, Ang Cheng Guan, *Vietnamese Communists' Relations with China and the Second Indochina Conflict, 1956-1962*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1997.

¹²⁷ The failure to exploit success in raising local indigenous forces is explored in Christopher K. Ives, *US Special Forces and Counterinsurgency in Vietnam: Military Innovation and Institutional Failure, 1961-1963*. London: Routledge, 2007. For a broader perspective see Douglas A. Blaufarb, *The Counter-Insurgency Era: U.S. Doctrine and Performance, 1950 to the Present*. New York: Free Press, 1977.

¹²⁸ See, for instance, David Hogan, jr., *Raiders of Elite Infantry? The Changing Role of the US Army Rangers from Dieppe to Grenada*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1992, Ed Evanhoe, *Darkmoon: Eighth Army Special Operations in the Korean War*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995, Michael Haas, *Apollo's Warriors: United States Air Force Special Operations During the Cold War*. Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1997, and J. Paul de B. Taillon, *The Evolution of Special Forces in Counter-Terrorism: The British and American Experiences*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001.

¹²⁹ For special operations as a means to wear down the enemy's morale see James D. Kiras, *Special Operations and Strategy: Form World War II to the War on Terrorism*. London: Routledge, 2006.

¹³⁰ Dale Andrade, *Ashes to Ashes: The Phoenix Program and the Vietnam War*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1990 and Mark Moyar, *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey: The CIA's Secret Campaign to Destroy the Viet Cong*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1997. For irregular warfare see also Shelby Stanton, *Green Berets at War: US Army Special Forces in Southeast Asia, 1956-1975*. Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1985 and Kenneth Conboy and Dale Andrade, *Spies and Commandos: How America Lost the Secret War in North Vietnam*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2000.

¹³¹ See the assessment of CORDS director Robert W. Komer, *Impact of Pacification on Insurgency in South Vietnam*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1970 and *Bureaucracy at War: U.S. Performance in the Vietnam Conflict*. Boulder, CO: Westview,

failed along with the American war effort because clandestine, psychological and economic programs were poorly coordinated with military operations and further illustrated the dependence of the government in Saigon on the United States.¹³²

North Vietnam and the Vietcong had a clear sense of purpose and from it derived a strategy of attrition. The U.S. failed to develop a winning strategy. Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy emphasized military and economic assistance, culminating in the concept of nation-building.¹³³ Lyndon B. Johnson chose escalation but also set clear limitations in part so as not to upset his far-reaching domestic reform agenda.¹³⁴ Richard Nixon pursued an ambiguous course of escalation, withdrawal, and negotiations. But strategy requires defining the relationship of means to ends in order to achieve a political objective. In Vietnam, and in Washington, the United States failed to establish that relationship or even to define the objective.

In 1965, the Johnson administration escalated the war.¹³⁵ The year before, Johnson had used vague reports about an attack on navy destroyers operating off the coast of North Vietnam to secure a blank check from Congress.¹³⁶ This gave him authority to order the armed forces into action at any time. In immediate response to the alleged attacks, Johnson ordered the air force to attack targets in North Vietnam. After Vietcong fighters attacked American bases in February 1965, the U.S. initiated a permanent bombing campaign against North Vietnam. Operation Rolling Thunder would last until November 1968, but it soon became apparent that conventional air power could not force Hanoi into submission.¹³⁷ Marine combat units entered South Vietnam in March 1965 and in June the first regular army units followed. Throughout the decision-making process, military leaders had recommended a tough course of action against North Vietnam but expressed ambivalence about entering into a land war.¹³⁸ Johnson and secretary of defense Robert S. McNamara distrusted military advice and chose a course between all-out war and a fundamental review of American assistance to South Vietnam.¹³⁹ The Joint Chiefs of Staff understood the risk: their war games had forecast the course of the war with

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1986 as well as the memoirs of his deputy and successor William Colby, *Lost Victory: A Firsthand Account of Americas Sixteen-Year Involvement in Vietnam*. Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1989 and the scholarly rebuttal by John Prados, *Lost Crusader: The Secret Wars of CIA Director William Colby*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

¹³² Richard A. Hunt, *Pacification: The American Struggle for Vietnam's Hearts and Minds*. Boulder, CO: Westview, 1995. See also the memoirs of Colonel Edward P. Metzner, *More than a Soldier's War: Pacification in Vietnam*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995 and Eric M. Bergerud, *The Dynamics of Defeat: The Vietnam War in Hau Nghia Province*. Boulder, CO: Westview, 1991.

¹³³ Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000 and James M. Carter, *Inventing Vietnam: The United States and State Building, 1954-1968*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

¹³⁴ Larry Berman, *Lyndon Johnson's War*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1989.

¹³⁵ The most thorough study of the decision to escalate is Fredrik Logevall, *Choosing War: The Lost Chance for Peace and the Escalation in Vietnam*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

¹³⁶ Edwin E. Moise, *Tonkin Gulf and the Escalation of the Vietnam War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. Moise maintains a comprehensive bibliography of the Vietnam War: <http://virtual.clemson.edu/caah/history/FacultyPages/EdMoise/bibliography.html> (accessed 16 June 2009).

¹³⁷ For the air war in Vietnam see Mark Clodfelter, *The Limits of Airpower: The American Bombing of Vietnam*. New York: Free Press, 1989, John B. Nichols, *On Yankee Station: The Naval Air War over Vietnam*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2001, and Chris Hobson, *Vietnam Air Losses: U.S. Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps Fixed-Wing Aircraft Losses in Southeast Asia, 1961-1973*. Hinkley: Midlands Press, 2001.

¹³⁸ Robert Buzzanco, *Masters of War: Military Dissent and Politics in the Vietnam Era*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. See also Douglas C. Kinnard, *The Certain Trumpet: Maxwell Taylor and the American Experience in Vietnam*. Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1991.

¹³⁹ For the pursuit of limited war in Vietnam see George C. Herring, *LBJ and Vietnam: A Different Kind of War*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994.

shocking accuracy. Their failure to oppose the president prior to escalation implicated the military in the escalation of the war in Vietnam.¹⁴⁰

The commander on the ground, army general William Westmoreland settled on the operational approach of “search and destroy.”¹⁴¹ The basic tenet of American strategy was to kill more enemy fighters than the Vietcong could recruit and the People’s Army of (North) Vietnam (PAVN) could infiltrate south of the Demilitarized Zone. Ultimately, Westmoreland’s operational plans and McNamara’s data-driven notion of the body count called for nearly 600,000 American soldiers in Vietnam and even they proved insufficient. The need to build and maintain infrastructure left few actual combat forces and the one-year rotation policy – in the case of the army – assured loss of expertise and lack of continuity.

American soldiers won the few major battles the enemy offered, but their collective experience in Vietnam was shaped more by insecurity and vulnerability to guerrilla attacks than by set-piece engagements.¹⁴² In the case of big-unit actions, helicopters provided vehicles to transport air cavalry into battle.¹⁴³ They added close air support and a much-needed means to extricate casualties. But army units operated under the assumption that once the enemy was fixed he was to be annihilated by air strikes or long-range artillery. This approach led to high civilian casualties and it persuaded the Vietcong and PAVN units to seek close combat with the Americans.¹⁴⁴ Classic guerrilla tactics frustrated American troops and their ability to blend in with the local population provided an advantage for the enemy. The uncertainty over who the enemy was in a war without front-lines led some soldiers to consider anyone an enemy and contributed to massacres of civilians, most infamously at My Lai in March 1968.¹⁴⁵ That war of long patrols, running engagements, and occasional battles or sieges of American fire bases put the communists on the defensive, but the Ho Chi Minh trail, a network of supply lines through Laos and Cambodia, allowed for supplies and fresh forces to arrive

¹⁴⁰ H. R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Lies That Led to Vietnam*. New York: Harper Collins, 1997.

¹⁴¹ General William Westmoreland, *A Soldier Reports*. New York: Doubleday, 1976. For the alternative approach of the Marine Corps see Lewis W. Walt, *Strange War, Strange Strategy: A General's Report on Vietnam*. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1970, Michael E. Peterson, *The Combined Action Platoons: The U.S. Marines' Other War in Vietnam*. New York: Praeger, 1989, and Michael A. Hennessy, *Strategy in Vietnam: The Marines and Revolutionary Warfare in I Corps, 1965-1972*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997.

¹⁴² For the experience of American soldiers in Vietnam see, for instance, Christian G. Appy, *Working Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam*. Chapel Hill: University North Carolina Press, 1993, Eric M. Bergerud, *Red Thunder, Tropic Lightning: The World of a Combat Division in Vietnam*. Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993, Kyle Longley, *Grunts: The American Combat Soldier in Vietnam*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2008, and Kindsvatter, *American Soldiers*.

¹⁴³ For airmobility and the use of helicopters see John R. Galvin, *Air Assault: The Development of Airmobile Warfare*. New York: Hawthorn Books, 1969, John T. Tolson, *Airmobility 1961-1971*. Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1973, Shelby L. Stanton, *Anatomy of a Division: The 1st Cav in Vietnam*. Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1987, Philip D. Chinnery, *Vietnam: The Helicopter War*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1991, Harold G. Moore and Joseph L. Galloway, *We Were Soldiers Once...and Young: Ia Drang—The Battle That Changed the War in Vietnam*. New York: Random House, 1992, and Christopher C. S. Cheng, *Air Mobility: the Development of a Doctrine*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994.

¹⁴⁴ For a North Vietnamese history of the war see The Military History Institute of Vietnam, *Victory in Vietnam: the Official History of the People's Army of Vietnam, 1954-1975*, trans. Merle L. Pribbenow. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002. On the concentration of artillery see, for instance, John Hay, jr., *Tactical and Material Innovations*. Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1974 and Randy E.M. Foster, *Vietnam Firebases, 1965-73: American and Australian Forces*. Oxford: Osprey, 2008.

¹⁴⁵ David L. Anderson, ed., *Facing My Lai: Moving Beyond the Massacre*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998, Trent Angers, *The Forgotten Hero of My Lai: The Hugh Thompson Story*. Lafayette, LA: Acadian House, 1999, and Michal R. Belknap, *The Vietnam War on Trial: The My Lai Massacre and the Court-Martial of Lieutenant Calley*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002.

steadily from North Vietnam.¹⁴⁶ North Vietnamese leaders understood that they could afford to be patient because the American public would eventually tire of a protracted limited war with growing numbers of casualties.¹⁴⁷

By January 1968, North Vietnamese leadership felt the time had come to go on the offensive, attack high profile American targets, capture the cities of South Vietnam, and break the morale of U.S. forces. The Tet Offensive met with early success but it turned into a rout of the Vietcong and bloodied PAVN units.¹⁴⁸ For the U.S. it nevertheless became a turning point: the mainstream media lost confidence in the war, the anti-war movement gained strength, and President Johnson announced that he would not seek reelection.¹⁴⁹ Ironically, as public opinion shifted against the war, the country elected Richard Nixon over the liberal Democrat Hubert Humphrey.¹⁵⁰ Accusations of conservatives, including Nixon, that the media lost the Vietnam War are unconvincing in light of the political, strategic, and military nature of the defeat.¹⁵¹

Nixon promised to end the Vietnam War but events from 1969 to 1972 suggested that he did not have a coherent plan. Instead, Nixon and national security adviser Henry Kissinger pursued a dual course of turning over the land war to South Vietnamese troops and negotiating with the communist leaders in Hanoi.¹⁵² Negotiations had started under Johnson, but Nixon and Kissinger linked their desire to achieve a settlement that permitted South Vietnam to survive as an independent nation-state to a general reorientation in the Cold War that became known as *détente*.¹⁵³ China and the Soviet Union had drifted apart since the death of Stalin and clashed over questions of Chinese modernization policies, nuclear energy, leadership in the communist bloc, and their contested border. By the end of

¹⁴⁶ Richard L. Stevens, *Mission on the Ho Chi Minh Trail: Nature, Myth, and War in Viet Nam*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995 and John Prados, *The Blood Road: The Ho Chi Minh Trail and the Vietnam War*. New York: Wiley, 1999.

¹⁴⁷ For aspect of public opinion see Thomas Powers, *The War at Home: Vietnam and the American People, 1964-1968*. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1973, J. Justin Gustainis, *American Rhetoric and the Vietnam War*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993, Robert R. Tomes, *Apocalypse Then: American Intellectuals and the Vietnam War, 1954-1975*. New York: New York University Press, 1998, Frank F. Koscielski, *Divided Loyalties: American Unions and the Vietnam War*. New York: Garland, 1999, and Rebecca E. Hlatch, *A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

¹⁴⁸ The most comprehensive introductions are James H. Willbanks, *The Tet Offensive: A Concise History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006 and William Thomas Allison, *The Tet Offensive: A Brief History with Documents*. New York: Routledge, 2008.

¹⁴⁹ David F. Schmitz, *The Tet Offensive: Politics, War, and Public Opinion*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005.

¹⁵⁰ For an introduction to political culture in the late 1960s, the antiwar movement, and the shift in public opinion see Charles DeBenedetti, with Charles Chatfield, *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990, Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *Peace Now! American Society and the Ending of the Vietnam War*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999, and Mark Hamilton Lytle, *America's Uncivil Wars: The Sixties Era from Elvis to the Fall of Richard Nixon*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

¹⁵¹ On the media and the Vietnam War see especially William M. Hammond, *Reporting Vietnam: Media and Military at War*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998, but also Daniel C. Hallin, *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986, Melvin Small, *Covering Dissent: The Media and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1994, and Peter Arnett, *Live from the Battlefield: From Vietnam to Baghdad, 35 Years in the World's War Zones*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994.

¹⁵² Jeffrey Kimball, *Nixon's Vietnam War*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998. Robert Dallek, *Nixon and Kissinger: Partners in Power*. New York: Harper Collins, 2007 offers the most recent analysis of the Nixon-Kissinger relationship.

¹⁵³ For the rise and decline of *détente* from political, social, and cultural perspectives see Raymond L. Garthoff, *Detente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1985 and Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003.

the 1960s, both were seeking allies against one another.¹⁵⁴ Western Europe and the United States remained allied, but NATO had suffered from a tense debate over strategy – the European allies finally accepted Flexible Response in 1967 – and France’s decision to leave the military committee and remain solely involved in political and diplomatic functions.¹⁵⁵ Nixon proclaimed the emergence of China, Japan, and Western Europe as great powers. In this environment, the U.S. opened relations with China and entered into arms-limitation agreements with the Soviet Union.¹⁵⁶ Détente raised hopes for the future, but it did not increase the chances for peace in Vietnam.¹⁵⁷

Ho Chi Minh had died in 1969, but his successors proved equally disinterested in a settlement short of unification of Vietnam under their leadership. For American forces the war brought further frustration. Westmoreland’s successor, General Creighton Abrams, placed greater emphasis on pacification and shifted operations to clearing and holding contested territory.¹⁵⁸ But while this new approach showed some promise, American forces were withdrawn in great numbers. Nixon decided to concentrate American air power against communist supply lines and ARVN and American forces attempted cross-border operations into Cambodia and Laos in 1970 and 1971.¹⁵⁹ The casualty count increased but the realities on the ground did not shift.¹⁶⁰ In 1972, North Vietnamese forces went on the offensive but were held off and the U.S. returned to bombing targets in North Vietnam, yet ultimately Nixon and Kissinger accepted a peace agreement that was little more than American withdrawal

¹⁵⁴ Lorenz M Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008.

¹⁵⁵ For an introduction to US-European relations in the middle third of the Cold War see Geir Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe Since 1945: From “Empire” by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. But see also Ivo H. Daalder, *The Nature and Practice of Flexible Response: NATO Strategy and Theater Nuclear Forces Since 1967*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991 and Frederic Bozo, *Two Strategies for Europe: deGaulle, the United States, and the Atlantic Alliance*, trans. Susan Emanuel. Lanham, MD; Rowman & Littlefield, 2001.

¹⁵⁶ William E. Burr, *The Kissinger Transcripts: Top Secret Talks with Moscow and Beijing*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1999 and Yafeng Xia, *Negotiating with the Enemy: U.S. and China Talks During the Cold War, 1949-1972*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006. For negotiations with Moscow and the resulting SALT-I and ABM treaties see also Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation*, pp. 146-223.

¹⁵⁷ For Chinese and Soviet policies on Vietnam see Ilya Gaiduk, *The Soviet Union and the Vietnam War*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996 and Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000. For the breakdown of relations between Vietnam and China see William Duiker, *China and Vietnam: The Roots of Conflict*. Berkeley, CA: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1986, Anne Gilks, *The Breakdown of the Sino-Vietnamese Alliance, 1970-1979*. Berkeley, CA: Institute of East Asian Studies, 1992, and Odd Arne Westad and Sophie Quinn-Judge, eds., *The Third Indochina War: Conflict between China, Vietnam and Cambodia, 1972-79*. New York: Routledge, 2006.

¹⁵⁸ For the argument that Abrams’s approach could have led to victory see especially Lewis Sorley, *A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and Final Tragedy of America’s Last Years in Vietnam*. New York: Harcourt, 1999, but also Guenther Lewy, *America in Vietnam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978, Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam*, and Larry E. Cable, *Conflict of Myths: The Development of American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and the Vietnam War*. New York: New York University Press, 1986. Andrew J. Birtle, “PROVN, Westmoreland, and the Historians: A Reappraisal,” in: *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 72, No. 4 (Oct. 2008), pp. 1213-1247 concludes that the difference between Westmoreland and Abrams has been vastly overstated.

¹⁵⁹ For the war in Cambodia and its aftermath see William Shawcross, *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon, and the Destruction of Cambodia*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1979, Wilfred P. Deac, *Road to the Killing Fields: The Cambodian War of 1970-75*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1997, Kenton J. Clymer, *The United States and Cambodia, 1969-2000: A Troubled Relationship*. New York: Routledge, 2004, and John M. Shaw, *The Cambodian Campaign: The 1970 Offensive and America’s Vietnam War*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005. For Laos see Victor B. Anthony and Richard R. Sexton, *The United States Air Force in Southeast Asia: The War in Northern Laos, 1954-1973*. Washington, DC: Center for Air Force History, 1993, Timothy Castle, *At War in the Shadow of Vietnam: United States Military Aid to the Royal Lao Government, 1955-75*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, and Kenneth Conboy, *Shadow War: The CIA’s Secret War in Laos*. Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1995.

¹⁶⁰ See, for instance, Ronald Spector, *After Tet: The Bloodiest Year in Vietnam*. New York: The Free Press, 1993.

dressed up as compromise for public consumption.¹⁶¹ Nixon had failed to achieve “peace with honor” and had instead settled for “a decent interval” between American withdrawal in 1973 and the fall of Saigon in 1975.¹⁶² South Vietnam had been abandoned by its patron.¹⁶³

The Vietnam War led to the termination of the draft in the United States.¹⁶⁴ Instead of a mixed force of volunteers and conscripts, the armed services became all-volunteer organizations. This presented opportunities, but it contributed to a growing isolation of soldiers from the public and made it easier for presidents to order troop deployments.¹⁶⁵ It also facilitated the emphasis on technology in the American way of war and the more recent phenomenon of presuming that small elite formations would replace conventional units.¹⁶⁶ Carl von Clausewitz suggested in *On War* less well-equipped states could resist superior power by waging absolute war. He concluded that any state engaged in warfare needed to seek a political objective.¹⁶⁷ After Vietnam, it remained unclear how the application of advanced military technology could solve political problems, but the U.S. military rediscovered Clausewitz.¹⁶⁸ Military officers took solace in a reading of *On War* that held war was the continuation of the political by other means. Army generals used that justification to re-emphasize the defense of Western Europe and the deterrence of nuclear war.¹⁶⁹ Abrams initiated reforms that integrated active and reserve units so that the U.S. Army could not be deployed without calling up the reserve.¹⁷⁰ In the 1980s Caspar Weinberger and Colin Powell elevated the emphasis on overwhelming force and extricating American soldiers once the fighting had stopped to defense doctrine.¹⁷¹ Some historians

¹⁶¹ For the Easter Offensive see Gerald H. Turley, *The Easter Offensive*. Novato, CA: Presidio, 1985, Dale Andrade, *Trial by Fire: The 1972 Easter Offensive, America's Last Vietnam Battle*. New York: Hippocrene, 1995, and James H. Willbanks, *The Battle of An Loc*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005. For the air war in 1972 see Karl J. Eschmann, *Linebacker: The Untold Story of the Air Raids Over North Vietnam*. New York: Ivy, 1989, John T. Smith, *The Linebacker Raids: The Bombing of North Vietnam, 1972*. London: Arms and Armour, 1998, and Carol Reardon, *Launch the Intruders! Attack Squadron 75 and the Linebacker Campaigns of 1972*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005.

¹⁶² Larry Berman, *No Peace, No Honor: Nixon, Kissinger, and Betrayal in Vietnam*. New York: Free Press, 2001 and Pierre Asselin, *A Bitter Peace: Washington, Hanoi, and the Making of the Peace Agreement*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.

¹⁶³ Arnold Isaacs, *Without Honor: Defeat in Vietnam and Cambodia*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983 and James H. Willbanks, *Abandoning Vietnam: How America Left and South Vietnam Lost Its War*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004.

¹⁶⁴ George Q. Flynn, *The Draft, 1940-1973*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993, Robert Griffith, *U.S. Army's Transition to the All-Volunteer Force, 1968-1974*. Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 1997, and Michael S. Foley, *Confronting the War Machine: Draft Resistance During the Vietnam War*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

¹⁶⁵ Most clearly expressed in Lewis, *American Culture of War*.

¹⁶⁶ Robert R. Tomes, *US Defense Strategy from Vietnam to Operation Iraqi Freedom: Military Innovation and the New American Way of War, 1973-2003*. London: Routledge, 2007 and Thomas G. Mahnken, *Technology and the American Way of War*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.

¹⁶⁷ The most thorough interpretation of Clausewitz is Jon Tetsuro Sumida, *Decoding Clausewitz: A New Approach to On War*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008. For a more conventional approach see Peter Paret, *Clausewitz and the State: The Man, His Theories, and His Times*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976 and Beatrice Heuser, *Reading Clausewitz*. London: Pimlico, 2002.

¹⁶⁸ Stuart Kinross, *Clausewitz and Vietnam: Strategic Thought and Practice from Vietnam to Iraq*. London: Routledge, 2008 cautions that at the end of the Cold War technology came to be seen as a panacea and concludes that the U.S. finds itself in a similar conundrum today than it did in Vietnam. For a full bibliography visit the website maintained by Christopher Bassford: <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/Readings.shtml> (accessed 16 June 2009).

¹⁶⁹ See especially Paul Herbert, *Deciding What Has to Be Done: General William E. DePuy and the 1976 Edition of FM 100-5, Operations*. Leavenworth Paper No. 16. Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, 1988 and Henry W. Gole, *General William E. DePuy: Preparing the Army for Modern War*. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2008.

¹⁷⁰ Lewis Sorley, *Thunderbolt: General Creighton Abrams and the Army of His Times*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992.

¹⁷¹ Richard Lock-Pullan, *US Intervention Policy and Army Innovation: From Vietnam to Iraq*. London: Routledge, 2006.

and analysts of the Vietnam War advanced the argument that the United States had lost because politicians had imposed undue limitations on the military.¹⁷² But instead of thoroughly investigating all aspects of its defeat, the army chose to ignore the lessons of Vietnam and returned to the business of the Cold War.¹⁷³

The result of the army's reorientation after Vietnam was integration of tactical and operational thought with new weapons and communications technology.¹⁷⁴ In emphasizing the close relationship of land and air operations, the army moved closer to the air force, which had undergone its own reorientation from strategic bombing to more specifically targeted tactical applications.¹⁷⁵ Despite the complimentary nature of their philosophies of war, the armed services had to be ordered by Congress in the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act to cooperate more fully and the position of the secretary of defense was elevated at the expense of the service chiefs.¹⁷⁶ The air force's transformation reflected the innovative thinking of pilots like John Boyd, who argued that operational planning should be based on observation, orientation, decision, and action.¹⁷⁷ Army and air force officers contributed to the recognition of operational art as a binding link between tactics and strategy. The rediscovery of Clausewitz was significant, but the adoption of operational art presented a more practical legacy of the period of reorientation that followed the defeat in Vietnam.

A similar development to the military's reorientation toward the superpower confrontation and Europe can be detected in contemporary scholarship. Where political scientists after the Korean War had developed a body of theory on limited war their successors in the 1970 and 1980s returned to questions of nuclear deterrence. One school of thought held that the uneasy peace in Europe was based on nuclear deterrence and mutual assured destruction.¹⁷⁸ This was not a novel argument, but it was now challenged by scholars who considered the extent of NATO's conventional armaments and concluded that these were not simply a tripwire that would set off nuclear retaliation, but rather a conventional deterrent force that helped prevent war. By the late 1980s theories of extended deterrence matched applications of U.S. and NATO strategy.¹⁷⁹ Following the arguments of John Mearsheimer,

¹⁷² Most influentially, Harry G. Summers, jr., *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*. Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1982, but also Douglas Kinnard, *The War Managers: American Generals Reflect on Vietnam*. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1977.

¹⁷³ Expressed most strongly by Conrad C. Crane, *Avoiding Vietnam: The US Army's Response to Defeat in Southeast Asia*. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2002.

¹⁷⁴ John Romjue, *From Active Defense to Air Land Battle Doctrine*. Ft. Monroe, VA: TRADOC Historical Office, 1984.

¹⁷⁵ Mike Worden, *The Rise of the Fighter Generals: The Problem of Air Force Leadership 1945-1982*. Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1997 traces the shift from strategic to tactical air power after Vietnam. Benjamin S. Lambeth, *The Transformation of American Air Power*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000 concludes that the air force can now decisively affect war from its outset.

¹⁷⁶ Gordon Nathaniel Lederman, *Reorganizing the Joint Chiefs of Staff: The Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1999 and James R. Locher, *Victory on the Potomac: The Goldwater-Nichols Act Unifies the Pentagon*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002. For a survey of civil-military relations since the Second World War see Dale R. Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency: Civil-Military Relations from FDR to George W. Bush*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005.

¹⁷⁷ Robert Coram, *Boyd: The Fighter Pilot Who Changed the Art of War*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 2002.

¹⁷⁸ Gaddis, *The Long Peace* is the historical study most clearly associated with this argument. See also Lynn Etheridge Davis, *Limited Nuclear Options: Deterrence and the New American Doctrine*. Adelphi Paper 121. London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1976; Raymond Burrell, *Strategic Nuclear Parity and NATO Defense Doctrine*. Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1978; and Ian Clark, *Limited Nuclear War: Political Theory and War Conventions*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982.

¹⁷⁹ See, for instance, Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1974, Kenneth J. Coffey, *Strategic Implications of the All-Volunteer Force: The Conventional Defense of Central Europe*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979, John R. Mearsheimer, *Conventional Deterrence*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983, Samuel P. Huntington, "Conventional Deterrence and Conventional Retaliation in Europe," in: *International Security*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Winter

Samuel Huntington, and others, students of military science came to recognize the significance of operational art to land warfare, particularly given the promulgation of new weapons and communication technologies.¹⁸⁰ For practitioners, operational art was hardly new; the Soviet and German armies had developed concepts in the interwar period and both applied them to some extent during the Second World War, but neither the U.S. army nor contemporary observers appear to have recognized the term or the concept until the late 1970s (in the case of army doctrine) or even 1980s (in the case of scholarship).¹⁸¹

Parallel to America's entanglement in Vietnam and despite superpower détente, the Cold War expanded in the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁸² The history of the later decades of the Cold War remains somewhat elusive, owing to the dearth of publicly accessible records as well as to the proximity of events. As a consequence, historiography from the 1970s on is still primarily a compendium of memoirs, journalistic accounts, government histories, and political-science literature. In the Middle East the Arab-Israeli conflict, which had begun as an issue apart from the Cold War, became a Cold War battleground. Following greater involvement in the region, expressed by the Eisenhower doctrine and intervention in Lebanon in the late 1950s and the construction of an alliance with Israel, the U.S. found itself party to diplomatic attempts to achieve a lasting settlement after the wars of 1967 and 1973.¹⁸³ The October War in 1973 presented a case study for the U.S. Army: the outnumbered Israeli Defense Force, armed primarily with American weapons and vehicles, conducted a successful mobile defense against Egyptian, Syrian, and Iraqi forces armed with Soviet equipment.¹⁸⁴ Despite a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt negotiated by the Carter administration, tensions in the region have erupted periodically and the Middle East today presents one of the fundamental challenges for American and international security. Its alliance with Israel made relations with Arab and other Muslim countries more difficult, but the U.S. succeeded in building strong ties to Egypt and, until 1979, could count on the support of Iran. The overthrow of the Shah, however, changed the strategic

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1983-84), pp. 32-56, James Reed Golden, Asa A. Clark, and Bruce E. Arlinghaus, *Conventional Deterrence: Alternatives for European Defense*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1984, Richard K. Betts, *Conventional Deterrence: Predictive Uncertainty and Policy Confidence: Compound Deterrence vs. No-First-Use – What's Wrong Is What's Right*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1985, Robert Killebrew, *Conventional Defense and Total Deterrence: Assessing NATO's Strategic Options*. Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1986, Paul K. Huth, *Extended Deterrence and the Prevention of War*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988, and Thomas Boyd-Carpenter, *Conventional Deterrence into the 1990s*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989. An exception is Glenn H. Snyder, *Deterrence and Defense: Toward a Theory of National Security*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961, who considered conventional alongside nuclear deterrence two decades earlier.

¹⁸⁰ On operational art see R. Clayton Newell, *The Framework of Operational Warfare*. London: Routledge, 1991, B.J.C. McKercher and Michael E. Hennesy, eds., *The Operational Art: Developments in the Theories of War*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996, and Shimon Naveh, *In Pursuit of Military Excellence: The Evolution of Operational Theory*. London: Frank Cass, 1997.

¹⁸¹ For more detailed discussion of the recognition of operational art in the United States see Trauschweizer, *Cold War U.S. Army*, pp. 195-229. For historical perspective on operational art see especially Richard W. Harrison, *The Russian Way of War: Operational Art, 1904-1940*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001; Mary R. Habeck, *Storm of Steel: The Development of Armor Doctrine in Germany and the Soviet Union, 1919-1939*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003; and Michael D. Krause and R. Cody Phillips, eds., *Historical Perspectives of the Operational Art*. Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2005.

¹⁸² For the superpowers and the military balance see John M. Collins, *U.S.-Soviet Military Balance, 1960-1980*. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 1980 and David Walsh, *The Military Balance in the Cold War: US Perceptions and Policies, 1976-1985*. London: Routledge, 2007.

¹⁸³ Nigel J. Ashton, ed., *The Cold War in the Middle East: Regional Conflict and the Superpowers 1967-1973*. London: Routledge, 2007. For U.S. Middle East policies see also Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002, Bass Support Any Friend, and Yaqub, *Containing Arab Nationalism*.

¹⁸⁴ Chaim Herzog, *The War of Atonement: October 1973*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1975 remains the best account of the war, combining discussion of strategy, operations, and tactics. For the impact of the war on the U.S. Army see Saul Bronfeld, "Fighting Outnumbered: The Impact of the Yom Kippur War on the U.S. Army," in: *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 71, No. 2 (April 2007), pp. 465-498.

balance and the emergence of an Islamic republic has led to a lasting crisis in US-Iranian relations, beginning with the hostage crisis of 1979-1981 and continuing to the complex issue of Iranian nuclear power today.¹⁸⁵

Elsewhere, local conflicts also were subsumed in the Cold War. India and Pakistan fought three wars over their ill-defined border and the status of Bangladesh. Today both are nuclear-armed powers and the instability of Pakistan presents another major challenge to international security. As Indian power grew, China and the U.S. established friendly relations with Pakistan.¹⁸⁶ Indonesia, a hotbed of colonial, religious, and ethnic conflict in the post-war decades, attained a degree of stability at the expense of a dictatorship.¹⁸⁷ The Philippines charted a similar course. Both became regional allies of the United States, as policy-makers in Washington dropped reservations against dictators as long as they were anti-communist. A similar pattern could be perceived in Latin America. Most prominently, the U.S. was involved in the military coup in Chile in 1973 that ousted socialist president Salvador Allende.¹⁸⁸ The image of the United States in the region was tainted and it hardly improved when President Reagan funneled military aid to the Nicaraguan Contra rebels, who fought against the leftist Sandinista regime in the 1980s.¹⁸⁹ In the first major military intervention since Vietnam, American forces overran Grenada in 1983 and in 1989 U.S. troops invaded Panama to depose president Manuel Noriega who had been linked to drug cartels and to re-establish democracy.¹⁹⁰ In Africa the U.S. supported anti-Soviet dictatorships from Ethiopia and Somalia to South Africa, although in the latter case close ties to the *Apartheid* regime were eventually loosened. Through aid and equipment, the U.S. was indirectly involved in civil wars in Angola, Mozambique, Southwest Africa (Namibia), Ethiopia, and Somalia from the 1970s on, often in an uneasy partnership with China.¹⁹¹

It is as yet difficult to assess comprehensively the defense policies of the Carter and Reagan administrations.¹⁹² Carter regarded human rights as a central issue and he put pressure on Moscow on

¹⁸⁵ James Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988, David Harris, *The Crisis: The President, the Prophet, and the Shah — 1979 and the Coming of Militant Islam*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 2004, and Robert Baer, *The Devil We Know: Dealing with the New Iranian Superpower*. New York: Crown, 2008.

¹⁸⁶ Robert J. McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery: The United States, India, and Pakistan*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1994 and Dennis Kux, *The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000: Disenchanted Allies*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

¹⁸⁷ Bradley Simpson, *Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and U.S.-Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008.

¹⁸⁸ There has been a lively debate of the culpability of Henry Kissinger. See, for instance, Walter Isaacson, *Kissinger: A Biography*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992, Christopher Hitchens, *The Trial of Henry Kissinger*. New York: Verso Books, 2001, Jussi M. Hanhimaki, *The Flawed Architect: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004, and Asaf Siniver, *Nixon, Kissinger, and U.S. Foreign Policy Making: The Machinery of Crisis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

¹⁸⁹ For U.S. Latin America policies in the 1970s and 1980s see Robert A. Pastor, *Whirlpool: U.S. Foreign Policy toward Latin America and the Caribbean*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992 and William M. LeoGrande, *Our Own Backyard: The United States and Central America, 1977-1992*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998. For U.S. support for the Contras see Sam Dillon, *The CIA and Nicaragua's Contra Rebels*. New York: Henry Holt, 1991 and Peter Kornbluh and Malcolm Byrne, *The Iran-Contra Scandal: The Declassified History*. New York: The New Press, 1993.

¹⁹⁰ Mark Adkin, *Urgent Fury: The Battle for Grenada*. New York: Free Press, 1989 and Thomas Donnelly, Margaret Roth, and Caleb Baker, *Operation Just Cause*. New York: Jossey-Bass, 1991.

¹⁹¹ Jeffrey Lefebvre, *Arms for the Horn: U.S. Security Policy in Ethiopia and Somalia, 1953-1991*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991, Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002, and Westad, *Global Cold War*, pp. 207-287.

¹⁹² For the Carter administration see the recollections of decision-makers: Harold Brown, *Thinking About National Security*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983 and Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security*

the basis of the 1975 Helsinki Accords.¹⁹³ In 1979 the Carter administration and Soviet leaders agreed on a second strategic arms limitation treaty, but the Senate rejected its ratification amidst rising tensions and détente finally broke down over the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the deployment of new intermediate range ballistic missiles in Europe by both sides.¹⁹⁴ A still developing debate among scholars holds that Carter's defense policy shifted toward confrontation prior to the seismic changes of 1979, but the arguments put forward tend to downplay that Carter had pursued a dual course – confronting the Soviets on nuclear weapons and human rights while placing greater emphasis on human rights in US foreign policy – from the beginning of his presidency.¹⁹⁵ Oil and energy came to be seen as vital issues of national security and the 1970s saw a shift of power toward oil producers with the emergence of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).¹⁹⁶ Carter left office amidst a national crisis of self-confidence. But the Helsinki Accords emboldened opposition groups behind the Iron Curtain and encouraged dissent. Ronald Reagan talked up American strengths, classified the Soviet Union as an “evil empire,” significantly raised the defense budget and extended aid to anti-communist forces from Afghanistan to Nicaragua, and launched a policy to install a missile shield in outer space.¹⁹⁷ His confrontational approach was balanced by summit meetings with the new Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev and by nuclear disarmament negotiations.¹⁹⁸ But the U.S. also became actively involved in conflicts with terrorist groups and their state sponsors, such as Libya. For most of the 1980s, this precursor of the war on terror was fought between Israeli forces and Palestinian fighters. Reagan ordered U.S. troops to Lebanon, following an Israeli invasion, in order to stabilize the pro-western government. In October 1983, 239 Americans, most of them Marines, died when a truck-bomb exploded at Marine Corps headquarters in Beirut. The U.S. withdrew its remaining troops less than half a year later.¹⁹⁹

The superpower confrontation ended peacefully with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Military issues contributed to the downfall. The Soviet war in Afghanistan bled the country's resources and led the Soviet Union into a guerrilla war with Afghan and foreign fighters supported primarily by Arab states and the U.S. through Pakistan.²⁰⁰ The war and subsequent civil war left

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Adviser, 1977-1981. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1985. But see also Burton I. Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, jr.* Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993. For the Reagan administration see Daniel Wirls, *Buildup: The Politics of Defense in the Reagan Era*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992 and Gil Troy, *Morning in America: How Ronald Reagan Invented the 1980s*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005.

¹⁹³ Oliver Bange and Gottfried Niedhart, eds., *Helsinki 1975 and the Transformation of Europe*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2008.

¹⁹⁴ Strobe Talbott, *Endgame: The Inside Story of SALT-II*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979. For Afghanistan see Westad, *Global Cold War*, pp. 299-330. For the international politics of the missile deployment see David N. Schwartz, *NATO's Nuclear Dilemmas*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1983 and Jeffrey Herf, *War by Other Means: Soviet Power, West German Resistance and the Battle of Euromissiles*. New York: Free Press, 1991.

¹⁹⁵ See especially Richard Thornton, *The Carter Years: Toward A New Global Order*. New York: Paragon House, 1991, John Dumbrell, *American Foreign Policy: Carter to Clinton*. Houndmills: Macmillan, 1997, pp. 11-52, and Brian J. Auten, *Carter's Conversion: The Hardening of American Defense Policy*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2008.

¹⁹⁶ For the rising significance of oil in twentieth century politics see Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991. See also Ian Rutledge, *Addicted To Oil: America's Relentless Drive For Energy Security*. New York: I.B. Tauris, 2005.

¹⁹⁷ Donald R. Baucom, *The Origins of SDI, 1944-1983*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993 and Mark P. Lagon, *The Reagan Doctrine: Sources of American Conduct in the Cold War's Last Chapter*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1994.

¹⁹⁸ Don Oberdorfer, *From the Cold War to a New Era: The United States and the Soviet Union, 1983-1991*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998 and James Mann, *The Rebellion of Ronald Reagan: A History of the End of the Cold War*. New York: Penguin, 2009.

¹⁹⁹ John K. Cooley, *Payback: America's Long War in the Middle East*. Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1991.

²⁰⁰ Peter Bergen, *Holy War Inc.* New York: Free Press, 2001, Larry P. Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001, Robert D. Kaplan, *Soldiers of God: With Islamic Warriors in Afghanistan and Pakistan*. New York, Vintage Departures, 2001, Lester W. Grau, *The Soviet Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002, and Steven Coll,

Afghanistan in a shambles and set up the failed state from which Al-Qaeda could attack the U.S. on September 11, 2001. In the event, the Soviet empire was brought down by a combination of local and global factors ranging from American policies to the determination of Pope John Paul II and the mostly peaceful revolutions by the people of Eastern Europe. Gorbachev's decision not to fight back and the intervention of Russian president Boris Yeltsin during a military coup in August 1991 diffused an explosive situation.²⁰¹ The extent to which American defense spending forced the Soviet Union to follow suit and whether it bankrupted the foe remains contested.²⁰²

By the end of the Cold War, U.S. military commitments were of a global scale and tremors of future crises and wars were already apparent. In 1991 the United States fought a war against Iraq and expelled the forces of Saddam Hussein from Kuwait.²⁰³ The U.S. had supported Saddam in his war against a common enemy, Iran, in the 1980s. Unfortunately, the outcome of the Gulf War was less decisive than it seemed. The U.S. military had distinguished itself against a formidable foe – at least when measured in numbers and equipment – and President George H.W. Bush could claim that the U.S. had overcome its Vietnam trauma, but Saddam Hussein remained in power and settled in for a decade of UN sanctions and a cat-and-mouse game with nuclear weapons inspectors. U.S. forces remained in the region and the Clinton administration struck against Iraqi targets after violations of the no-fly zones that the UN had implemented to protect the Shiites in the south and Kurds in the north. By 2001, the situation had deteriorated to a point where neo-conservative advisers could tell George W. Bush that Iraq should be included in the military response to the September 11 attacks. Soon the Bush administration asserted that American strategy should be based on preventive war.²⁰⁴ From the incomplete termination of the 1991 Gulf War thus arose a decade of tension that culminated in the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, setting off a war that was easily won on the conventional level but then led to an insurgency and quagmire outwardly resembling Vietnam.²⁰⁵

The war in Afghanistan offers another example for Odd Arne Westad's argument that the last decades of the Cold War shaped our time profoundly. But in the decade between the end of the Cold War and the war on terror, the U.S. military was called upon to end wars or help keep the peace in many places from the Balkans to Somalia. The latter deployment ended after a battle with the forces of a local warlord.²⁰⁶ Events in Mogadishu may have contributed to American inaction during the genocide in Rwanda and inattention to the war in eastern Congo, perhaps the bloodiest conflict since the end of the Second World War. Even in former Yugoslavia, the U.S. entered late, but then forced an

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Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001. New York: Penguin, 2004.

²⁰¹ For scholarly debates on the end of the Cold War in Europe see Frédéric Bozo, Marie-Pierre Rey, N. Piers Ludlow, and Leopoldo Nuti, eds., *Europe and the End of the Cold War: a Reappraisal*. London: Routledge, 2008.

²⁰² Norman A. Graebner, Richard Dean Burns, and Joseph M. Siracusa, *Regan, Bush, Gorbachev: Revisiting the End of the Cold War*. Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008.

²⁰³ Robert H. Scales, *Certain Victory: The U.S. Army in the Gulf War*. Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1993, Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor, *The Generals' War: The Inside Story of the Conflict in the Gulf*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1995), and David Halberstam, *War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton, and the Generals*. New York: Scribner, 2001.

²⁰⁴ Thomas M. Nichols, *Eve of Destruction: The Coming Age of Preventive War*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008 and Melvyn P. Leffler and Jeffrey W. Legro, eds., *To Lead the World: American Strategy after the Bush Doctrine*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

²⁰⁵ Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor, *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2006 and Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*. New York: Penguin, 2006 and *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008*. New York: Penguin, 2009. For a military perspective on the past two decades see Stephen A. Bourque, *Post-Cold War*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2008.

²⁰⁶ John L. Hirsch and Robert B. Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995 and Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War*. New York: Signet Books, 1999.

end to the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina. NATO forces commanded by U.S. Army general Wesley Clark attacked Serbia in a surprisingly ineffective air campaign to stop the violence in Kosovo, where Serbs attempted a policy of ethnic cleansing to rid a province central to their national mythology of its Albanian majority population.²⁰⁷ What may seem like a relatively quiet decade was in fact characterized by a host of military operations and intervention.

Did the United States win the Cold War? That remains a controversial question.²⁰⁸ It is safer to state that the Soviet Union – and communism as a practical political ideology – lost. Did the Cold War change the United States? That question may be more pertinent and it has led to serious investigation of the national security state and of American militarism.²⁰⁹ Perhaps most critically, historians and political commentators have been able to argue persuasively that U.S. strategy for international security did not change fundamentally after the Cold War and that it has come to resemble a drive for global hegemony.²¹⁰ The most pressing problems today are exhibited in the ominously entitled Long War, formerly known as the Global War on Terror, which in itself is a characterization that does not inspire great confidence in peace, security, or stability.²¹¹

Ingo Tauschweizer

Max Weber Fellow 2008-2009

²⁰⁷ For the US and the Yugoslav Wars see Steven L. Burg and Paul L. Shoup, *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina: Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996, Ivo H. Daalder, *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America's Bosnia Policy*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000, Tim Judah, *Kosovo: War and Revenge*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000, Michael Ignatieff, *Virtual War: Kosovo and Beyond*. London: Chatto & Windus, 2000, Benjamin Lambeth, *NATO's Air War for Kosovo: A Strategic and Operational Assessment*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001, Andrew J. Bacevich and Eliot A. Cohen, eds., *War over Kosovo: Politics and Strategy in a Global Age*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001, and Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Future of Combat*. New York: Public Affairs, 2002.

²⁰⁸ For the argument that western liberalism had triumphed see, for instance, Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: Free Press, 1992. For a counterargument see Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995.

²⁰⁹ In addition to Sherry, *In the Shadow of War*, Bacevich, *The Long War*, and Kohn, "Danger of Militarization," see especially Derek Leebaert, *The Fifty Year Wound: The True Price of America's Cold War Victory*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 2002 and Andrew J. Bacevich, *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

²¹⁰ For long-term perspectives of American foreign policy see Tony Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995, Walter McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World since 1776*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997, Robert Kagan, *Dangerous Nation: America's Place in the World from its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*. New York: Atlantic Books, 2006, and Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy*. For continuity from Cold War to the present see, for instance, Andrew J. Bacevich, *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002 and Johnson, *The Sorrows of Empire*.

²¹¹ For international security in an age of threats ranging from regional powers and rogue nations to non-state actors see Herfried Münkler, *The New Wars*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005. For the difficulties this poses for the U.S. see Andrew J. Bacevich, *The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2008. For American strategy and military structures see Steven Metz, *Iraq and the Evolution of American Strategy*. Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2008.