

survey of world history. However, it leaves this reader wondering what else was going on in the Persian Gulf behind the glare of globalization.

All told, a properly historical world history—that is, a multi-centric one rooted in the innumerable distinct worlds of communities around the globe—poses a daunting task of learning local languages and lore and then conveying values and strategies unfamiliar to readers, not least among young secondary school students and undergraduates only on the cusp of recognizing the subtler aspects of their own worlds. It is often more effective, and always a lot easier, to fall back on the seemingly intuitive abstractions of the modern social sciences, some properly queried, others relied on improperly, that the authors of these three books evoke. Without eluding modernisms, world history is neither global nor epistemologically historical.

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*Hitler's Shadow Empire. Nazi Economics and the Spanish Civil War.* By PIERPAOLO BARBIERI. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017. 368 pp. \$22.50 (paper).

*Great Men in the Second World War: The Rise and Fall of the Big Three.* By PAUL DUKES. New York: Bloomsbury, 2017. 216 pp. \$88.00 (hardcover).

*The Third Reich in History and Memory.* By RICHARD J. EVANS. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. 496 pp. \$18.95 (paper).

*An Iron Wind. Europe Under Hitler.* By PETER FRITZSCHE. New York: Basic Books, 2016. 384 pp. \$29.99 (hardcover).

*Implacable Foes. War in the Pacific, 1944–1945.* By WALDO HEINRICHS and MARC GALLICCHIO. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. 728 pp. \$34.95 (hardcover).

*The Nazi-Fascist New Order for European Culture.* By BENJAMIN G. MARTIN. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016. 370 pp. \$39.95 (hardcover).

*World War II at Sea: A Global History.* By CRAIG L. SYMONDS. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. 792 pp. \$34.95 (hardcover).

## The Second World War, Again

All of these books are interesting, but this is the *Journal of World History*, and I shall review them accordingly, and not with the space or approach that would be relevant were I reviewing for a journal of national or European history. It is, for example, very much the case that the excellent work that continues to come out on German history, on Fascist history, and on aspects of alliance, collaboration and occupation in German-occupied Europe generally fails to draw on parallels elsewhere in the world during this period, and notably so as far as Japanese policy and practice are concerned. Archival issues preclude direct comparisons, but there is much material available in English-language secondary literature and the situation is therefore disappointing.

So also for the military aspect of the war and of the pre-war crises. There is some insightful comparative work, commonly on the part of multi-author collections. However, such work pales considerably in scale when compared to the mass of material that looks simply at one of the conflicts that composed the world war. That choice reflects the experience that many individuals had, but not the reality of the strategic dilemmas facing the major powers. Indeed, the war took on strategic weight in terms of a series of time-space equations, and there were very different levels of skill in the handling of these equations. The greatest success, with all the consequences in terms of the staging of operations and, therefore, taking advantage of the pressures and opportunities allowed by simultaneity and sequencing, was achieved by the United States. It and Britain had to confront the issues posed by war with a number of combatants across the world. Germany and Japan each had a number of combatants, but not across such a range. By not fighting Japan until August 1945, the Soviet Union was able to restrict its combatants, and that provided it with major opportunities.

These differences were important to the situation discussed by Craig Symonds in his *World War II at Sea*, although he does not bring out the broader, let alone theoretical, implications of his subject. Moreover, Symonds devotes most of his attention to a customary chronology and a conventional cast. The United States dominates his account. In contrast, insufficient attention is devoted to the Soviet Union and to France. That is a major problem with much of the literature on naval history, but a focus on the leading power is not necessarily helpful.

An awareness of the oceanic dimension is an aspect of the key element of geopolitics. This emerges in the background throughout and

is more explicitly to the fore in Paul Dukes' interesting, but overpriced, *Great Men*, his account of the relations between the Allies' leaders. Drawing explicitly on Fernand Braudel, Dukes argues that his subjects were heavily constrained by their circumstances. He tends to be unduly extenuating of Stalin.

Geopolitics provides a link to the discussion of German occupation and the civilian experience in several of these books because, as with Japan, this was important to the ability to make an effective use of people and space, in other words to turn the output of conquest and/or alliance into the outcome of co-operation. Neither Germany nor Japan turned out to do so well. Indeed, their rhetorics, whether anti-Communism and anti-Semitism in the first case, or anti-colonialism in the second, proved somewhat ineffective, and that despite an initial tide of military success and the popularity of some of what they had to offer.

The books under review valuably show that the eventual enhancement of the German war economy was not matched in the case of an improved call on the resources of German-run Europe. This reflected a range of factors including the complexities of the societies and economies that the Germans sought to direct. Peter Fritzsche, in his *An Iron Wind*, is interesting on this complexity, while Benjamin Martin's *The Nazi-Fascist New Order*, is richly suggestive. Fritzsche invites readers to consider the strong anti-fascist narratives about the Occupation that followed its end. For example, he points out that Paris concierges both passed on news about the anti-German uprising of August 1944 and also routinely reported foreigners and other unknown individuals to the police. So also with Poland, where he notes the indifference of most Poles (I feel his "the Poles" on p. 294 is inappropriate) to the fate of the Jews. The fate of the Jews is understandably a central concern for Fritzsche, and understandably so, but of course much else was involved in the Occupation, and the interplay of co-operation, resistance, and the in between was a sphere that the Germans could seek to direct but that was also impervious to the degree of control they required if they were to get use from their allies and conquests.

Benjamin Martin draws attention to the attempt to create a Nazi-Fascist cultural and intellectual project that would work in reordering Europe. The dictators were helped by the uncertainties of the age, not only the challenges of social change and new ideas, but also the strong reality and sense of instability that followed the First World War and that was reconfigured in the Depression. This provided opportunities across the political spectrum, mostly those of corporatism and populism.

The Fascist gloss was far more nationalistic than that of Communism. Thus, as Martin shows, Goebbels was happy to inaugurate the Week of the German Book, while, by means of using the European Writers Union, the Union of National Journalists Organisations, and other vehicles, the Germans aimed to supplant France in European cultural life and to confront Anglo-American modernity. In a model of transnational study, Martin is good on how the idea of Europe was employed to Nazi and Fascist ends, but, at the same time, had to confront first the tension between these ends and individual national perspectives and, finally, the failure of German warmaking. Martin's core conclusion, that there is nothing necessarily positive or progressive about the idea of European culture, is important. That this conclusion so much flies in the face of current received wisdom means that it will be unwelcome to many.

Another aspect of the drive to create a complicit European empire is provided by Pierpaolo Barbieri's *Hitler's Shadow Empire*, which is possibly the most original of the book under review and, alongside that by Martin, the most significant. Rather than focusing on German intervention in the Spanish Civil War in ideological terms, Barbieri emphasises the role of long-term economic strategies. The significance of Spanish resources emerge as a key element of German geopolitics, but also as an instance of a new European economic order in which Germany would become the leader of a European space free of Anglo-American influence and with centrally-planned rationalisation and specialisation set in Berlin. By early 1939, Germany was taking three quarters of Spain's exports. As Barbieri shows, German intervention was very different from that of Italy in its intentions and results. Indeed, a neocolonial dimension is detected. The sectors targeted were iron ore, pyrites, copper, wolfram and foodstuffs, the last leading to tension over priorities in Germany. Spain as a result was brought into an informal *Reichsmark* sphere. Hjalmar Schacht emerges as a key economic policymaker.

Aside from the problems of eliciting co-operation, the Germans lacked an efficiency comparable to American capitalism. Allied attack, notably bombing and blockade, increased such pressures, but did not inherently create them. The same was the case for Japan. The background to the closing stages of its war was a multiple political and economic failure. This was more important than territorial loss, for in the summer of 1945, Japan was still in control of much territory it had not controlled at the start of December 1941, let alone the beginning of 1937, including most of what is now Indonesia and much of China.

However, the resignation of the Tojo ministry, a resignation not matched in Germany in what was an instructive contrast, indicated a collapse of confidence in the ability to win through. This suggested a degree of realism not seen in Germany, even though the new ministry was unable to exploit this in order to move forward. Instead, as in Germany, a powerful fear of shame encouraged a determination to fight on. That provides a key component for Heinrichs and Gallicchio's *Implacable Foes*. The last year of the war in the Pacific saw a narrowing of Japanese options, with the fleet progressively destroyed while more of the homeland was brought under potent air attack.

At the same time, as the invasion of the Home Islands neared, so the intensity of the task facing the Americans became more apparent, a point noted by Douglas MacArthur. The use of the atomic bombs was to provide a way out, but the dilemma, otherwise, was of how best to win in a conflict that was becoming increasingly asymmetrical without in any way ensuring American success. This point can be more profitably discussed, than in the books under review, in terms of the conceptual dimension of military history, a sphere that is underplayed in the coverage of the war.

So also with the issue of collaboration, which is an important aspect of military history, both in terms of the homeland so ably handled in many of the reprinted pieces collected by Richard Evans in *The Third Reich in History and Memory*, and with reference to elsewhere in Europe. Evans points out that while recent historiography has been rightly critical of older studies that reduce public opinion in the Third Reich to no more than the production of coercion and propaganda, that, nevertheless, these elements were indeed significant. In contrast, neither the Soviet Union nor, even more, the Western Allies had to devote comparable forces to holding down areas they had fought over. Moreover, despite the "Quit India" Campaign of the Congress movement, Britain was able to call on Indian support with a minimum of effort if compared to that which Japan devoted to conquered areas of China (including where client regimes were established), or Germany to Yugoslavia. That is not a point or comparison that may be popular with anyone today, but these items profit from consideration in such a context and in terms of both history and memory. Moreover, that is the challenge facing work on the war. It has to escape the determination to provide politicised accounts of the struggle, a determination that is particularly apparent in China, India and Russia.

So also with the broader issues posed by the ageing of the population so that the war moves from the history offered within individual memory to the history provided by collective memory. Important in

itself, that shift is accentuated by the psychological challenges posed by movement into the twenty-first century. The war appears very close, not least thanks to its place in popular culture, but also as a result of its visual character, notably in plentiful photography, including colour photography. This is a general shift, but also plays out very differently in particular national cultures and in terms of their specific political divisions.

Much of our historical literature can be readily placed in these terms. Scholarly detachment is to the fore, but the inflections of national perspectives are clear, as are the often more subtle consequences of political commitment. The latter may well be pushed to the fore thanks to the historical revisionism linked to a more assertive and politicised nationalism in China, Germany, Japan and Russia. Of course, these elements are scarcely absent elsewhere; while, in addition, there is a politicised historicism related to cosmopolitanism and transnationalism, an approach that can lead to an underplaying of the particular horrors of Axis warmaking. Thus, the war is played through important and interesting perspectives that help keep its multifaceted character inherently fragmented.

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