

a case study into the logistics of a *chevauchée*, and offers an admirably thorough analysis of how a single campaign was planned, organized, launched, and supplied. Consequently, her work will be of interest not merely to scholars of the Hundred Years War, but also to historians of medieval military history more widely.

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Military Strategy: A Global History. By Jeremy Black. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020. ISBN 978-0-3002-1718-6. Notes. Selected Bibliography. Index. Pp. xvii, 480. \$35.00 (hardback).

Jeremy Black's *Military Strategy: A Global History* is in some ways a historian's response to Lawrence Freedman's massive *Strategy: A History*. While theorist Freedman exhaustively examines strategic theorists of all kinds in the context of history, historian Black concisely explores the history of modern military strategy from the perspective of decision-makers. Interestingly both conclude that uncertainty and complexity ultimately limit the quest for rationality in strategy. In the end Freedman offers hope, while Black provides no such reassurance and observes that incoherence is "an appropriate response both to complexity and to present and likely future contingencies" (p. 274).

Black observes that despite its ancient Greek etymology, the term *strategy* originates in the eighteenth century. Given its evolution and profligate modern usage, he is not too concerned with a single, precise definition. Nevertheless, his subject is strategy as it relates to war or the prospects of war. Although he recognizes a hierarchy that makes it different from tactics and operational art, he generally eschews the term grand strategy as implying too much coherence. Instead, he often refers to strategic culture that links geostrategic, historical, and institutional practices and preferences in approaching strategy.

The book is both a global history of strategy in the past 600 years and a history of global strategy. He begins by outlining the strategies of continental empires from 1400 to 1850, and their interconnected interests and actions across Eurasia. The strategies of these empires always involved multiple threats or opportunities for expansion. He then turns to the British Empire to demonstrate another perspective, that of the history of global strategy. In what he terms the long eighteenth century, Britain established itself as a global power that developed strategies in a global context. Black describes the shift from dynastic to public politics. Parliamentary debates and other public venues become the vehicles for arguing and explaining strategy. He then expands on this theme and its continuing influence, sometimes unhelpful, in the contemporary world. While technology is important, Black does not give it central place in the formulation of strategy. He remains generally skeptical of "revolutions in military affairs." Nuclear and precision munitions have not been decisive. Strategic asymmetries persist in an anarchical international environment.

Black reminds us how endemic war and the prospect of war are in human history. One of his themes is the centrality of alliances in strategy. Yet he also recognizes that alliances can prove to be frustrating or dangerous entanglements. Another theme is the difference between conquest and control. Military victory does not automatically translate into political success, and his account is filled with examples of continued resistance, rebellions, civil wars, and ethnic strife after victory in the traditional sense. Strategy is often about exploiting asymmetries in strength or will. The failure of Western powers to appreciate the assumptions, values, and goals of non-Western opponents is yet another reason for a global perspective.

This book is not an easy read. Black often makes only passing reference to his many, sometimes obscure, examples. His generalizations are often qualified by other examples. Black throws complications on top of complexity amid uncertainty. His purpose is not so much about what to think, but how to think about strategy. While strategies change, strategic thinking—"a process of defining and achieving goals" (p. 258)—does not. For Black, strategy is not about theories or plans, but about decisions made in complex and shifting contexts. Prioritization or continuous reprioritization is key in this process of relating ends, ways, and means. Do our goals and resources fit our priorities? Do our methods fit our purposes?

The career of Jeremy Black, the author of well over 100 books, is a testament to the adage that history must be studied in depth, breadth, and context. He has published many in-depth studies, particularly of the eighteenth century, and has tackled subjects broadly across many centuries and around the globe. Throughout he has maintained that a historian must always recognize the unique conditions and contexts. To attempt a global history in a succinct book is a challenge. Thus, while making many intriguing comparisons, his study is also full of facts, qualifications, contrasts, contradictions, and occasionally some rather vague generalizations. As Isaiah Berlin might say, Professor Black, like Aristotle, Shakespeare, or Montaigne, is a fox who knows many things.

Because strategy is inherently political and "refers to the full range of human activity" (p. 270), *Military Strategy* is not intended to be the definitive history of strategy. One should instead view this book as a compact introduction to strategy and the elusive "lessons" of history. A student of strategy should read the book for its sweeping breadth and complexity and mine its extensive bibliography for its depth of detail and ambiguities, and yet remain mindful of unique and ever-changing conditions and contexts.

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