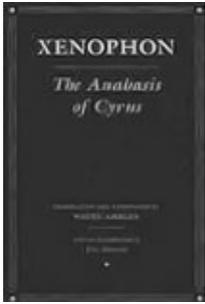


MR Classics Revisited



XENOPHON: The Anabasis of Cyrus, trans. by Wayne Ambler with an Introduction by Eric Buzzetti, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 2008, 304 pages, \$49.95.

Not long ago Xenophon's *Anabasis of Cyrus* needed no intro-

Featured Review duction for the student of classics (ancient Greek and Roman civilization) or military history. Today this is not necessarily true, as the traditional pillars of a well-grounded liberal education have fallen by the wayside, victims of academic revisionism against histories written by “dead white males.” That said, readers unfamiliar with Xenophon’s famous account of the “March of the Ten Thousand” will recognize the power and appreciate the human lessons of his narrative. Books generally do not become “classics” merely because of their age; they do so because of their enduring value to succeeding generations. The *Anabasis* is no exception. An eyewitness account by the protagonist of the events, it continues to be of seminal importance to students of ancient Greek and Persian history.

The ancient Greek verb *anabasis* may be literally translated as the “ascent,” the march “upland” from the low-lying coastal area near the eastern Mediterranean to the dry plateaus of central Mesopotamia, the journey embarked upon by a Greek mercenary army recruited by Prince Cyrus of Persia who planned to wrest the imperial throne from his elder brother, Artaxerxes. However, this “march upland” is only the prelude to an epic return journey. After a hard-fought battle where Cyrus is defeated and killed by his brother, the Greeks remain in good order but are at a loss as to what to do next. After listening to

Xenophon’s wise words, they elect him their leader. Xenophon accepts the responsibilities of command and, after encountering many difficulties, he is able to lead most of the Greeks back to their homeland.

On their return journey, the Greeks fight the pursuing Persian army and hostile tribes in the mountains of Anatolia and endure extremes of hot and cold weather and difficult terrain. Moreover, Xenophon has to survive attempts to dismember the army by leaders of the Greek cities bordering the Black Sea, Spartan envoys, and the Thracians. Finally, Xenophon and a portion of his men return to their homeland against all odds.

Xenophon’s narrative is especially valuable for the insights it offers on ancient tactics and military leadership. Contemporary military officers will recognize that many of these insights are valid even today. Indeed, the importance of clear thinking in difficult situations, leadership by example, unit cohesion, and geographical factors such as high ground and rivers are as significant today as they were in Xenophon’s time. Historians will appreciate the discussion of the relative value of competing leadership systems and the subtle negotiations that characterized politics in the ancient world. Even more interesting are the insights Xenophon provides into human nature and a contextual richness that allows for more than one reading or interpretation of his text. Despite a natural bias to highlight and justify his own actions, Xenophon admits the reader as confidante into his inner world of motivations and personal perceptions, thus offering a unique window into the mind of a thoughtful ancient Greek philosopher-Soldier.

Xenophon’s world had witnessed a “clash of civilizations” between the Persian Empire and the fiercely

independent Greek city-states, the first epic struggle in the “rise of Western Civilization.” The triumphant Greeks later turned against each other in the destructive inter-ecine struggles of the Peloponnesian Wars. These struggles led to a world in which Soldiers could make their fortune in the pay of powerful employers, be they Greek or “barbarian”—the term used by Greeks to designate all non-Greek peoples. It was also a world in which the power of reason (as in the teachings of Xenophon’s revered teacher, Socrates) was establishing itself independently of any religious or moral system.

Xenophon’s Socratic connection is significant, and it permeates his thought. As a young man from a prominent Athenian family, Xenophon became attracted to the circle of youths surrounding Socrates. Indeed, other than Plato’s famous dialogues, the only other sources on Socratic discussions were penned by Xenophon. But, unlike his master Socrates, Xenophon was a restless man with a thirst for adventure. When his friend Proxenus invited him to join an expedition to Persia in support of Cyrus, Xenophon consulted with Socrates as to the wisdom of this course of action. The philosopher advised Xenophon to consult the famous oracle at Delphi as to whether he should embark on this journey. But young Xenophon had already decided. He asked the oracle not whether the adventure was advisable, but rather to which gods he should offer sacrifices to ensure a propitious journey. Socrates chastised his pupil for the cynical and dishonest interpretation of his advice but accepted his decision as a *fait accompli* and counseled him to follow the advice of the oracle.

An emphasis on “just” and “noble” behavior defined as loyalty to one’s peers and companions in

arms, bravery in battle, and conventional piety before the gods, is a constant theme of Xenophon's narrative. Xenophon's appeals to reason, his concern for justice, his use of rhetorical questions, and his willingness to submit to the judgment of the majority show how Socrates influenced him.

Wayne Ambler's new translation of Xenophon's classic narrative makes the text much more accessible and comprehensible for the contemporary reader. Even though it is written in clear language and supported by extensive notes, readers not accustomed to long oratorical passages should read these with care

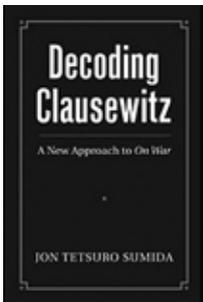
to enhance their understanding of the text. From a strictly military point of view, one minor glitch, the translation of the hoplite's cutting weapon as "saber" may be confusing to the reader who associates this term with the classic curved 19th-century cavalry sword. The simple word "sword" would have been better.

In conclusion, Ambler has provided a great service by dusting the cobwebs from this enduring classic and making it available in an excellent English translation for the contemporary reader. Eric Buzzetti's introductory essay puts the events and the book itself in their historical and cultural context. This edition of

Xenophon's *Anabasis* belongs on the bookshelf of every serious historian, political scientist, and military professional, as well as anyone interested in a compelling human story of triumph and survival in difficult circumstances. Reading Xenophon's *Anabasis* as the tale of how a tactically superior, but numerically small, western force withdraws with their lives and honor intact from a dubious entanglement in the internal affairs of an ancient Middle Eastern civilization is a profitable modern use of Xenophon's text.

**LTC Prisco R. Hernández,
USA, Ph.D.,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

MR Book Reviews



D E C O D I N G
CLAUSEWITZ, Jon Tetsuro Sumida, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 2008, 234 pages, \$29.95.

FM 3-0, *Operations* cites only three sources for the manual: Arthur Bryant's biography on the Duke of Wellington;

a 2007 speech by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates; and the 1976 edition of Carl Clausewitz's *On War*. The first two sources appear in the manual only once, while Clausewitz is quoted repeatedly in topics ranging from chaos, chance, and friction to centers of gravity and operational reach. Few would dispute the fact that Clausewitz has influenced American military doctrine for the last 30 years, but do those who read his book really understand the messages the Prussian theorist intended to convey? In *Decoding Clausewitz*, Jon Tetsuro Sumida suggests that they often do not.

Sumida dedicates an entire chapter to military theorists and their relationships with Clausewitz; his research is revealing and insightful. He provides an informative analysis

of Antoine Jomini's "dismissal" of Clausewitz as well as Basil Liddell Hart's "repudiation" of the Prussian thinker. The section dedicated to Jomini, a contemporary of Clausewitz, is of particular interest because Sumida provides a clear account of each theorist's critique of the other. Clausewitz's well-known attacks on his predecessors and contemporaries for "arbitrary notions" and "bogus theorizing" are found in chapter six of *On War*. Sumida provides a helpful survey of previous scholarship by detailing Jomini's assessment of *On War*, which he said contained "defective reasoning" and "pretentious and pedantic" style. Sumida's discussion of each theorist's position on guerrilla war is particularly enlightening and timely today.

Liddell Hart was quite critical of Clausewitz as well. An advocate of victory by using maneuver to "dislocate and demoralize" the enemy, he claimed Clausewitz's endorsement of Napoleonic tactics and his fascination with "maximizing violence to fight and destroy the enemy's main army" greatly influenced many World War I leaders (Foch, Ludendorff, Schlieffen), thus contributing to the war's extreme brutality.

Sumida is even-handed and analytical in his discussion, challenging both Jomini's and Hart's misreading of Clausewitz when necessary.

Sumida follows his chapter on theorists with one focused primarily on the vast amount of scholarly research dedicated to Clausewitz since 1976. Throughout the chapter, Sumida acknowledges the work of several scholars, but in the end, he determines that "none of these thinkers [Aron, Paret, Gallie] achieved complete command of *On War*." He develops his argument by providing biographical information on each scholar and a brief summary of his main points, and then compelling analysis why each man's conclusions were unreasonable. Some may find the focus on philosophy disconcerting. For example, Sumida's references and discussion of Clausewitz in terms of Hegel's dialectical reasoning reinforce the book's ongoing philosophical bent. Is this book for philosophers, military men, or that very small group who are both?

Developing competent generals was important to Clausewitz because success in that pursuit could ensure the existence of Prussia. He criticized "using principles

derived from history as the basis of officer education,” which he saw as role-playing. Instead, he proposed historical reenactment, which would presumably reproduce both the emotional and intellectual “difficulties of supreme command.” Sumida’s discussion of the differences between reenacting and role-playing in the development of military leaders is tough reading; it comes across as pure philosophy, in many ways as dense and ponderous as Plato’s Allegory of the Cave. Some military professionals might find themselves wondering whether such musing interferes with the production of an operations order.

Sumida’s title, *Decoding Clausewitz*, implies that Clausewitz is not well understood by those who read his work. In his introduction, Sumida admits that there is no consensus as to what *On War* means, which is in itself cause for concern. To further add to the confusion, Sumida concludes that Clausewitz, “like Ludwig Wittgenstein a century later, believes that words can convey little more than a crude approximation of any complex and difficult reality, especially when a large part of experiencing that reality involves the play of emotion.” Sumida hints that the imprecision of language prevents us from ever fully communicating because none of us defines words in the same way, and thus we can never capture truly complex concepts.

Questions arise. If Clausewitz’s writing is accessible to a general audience, why does it need to be decoded? On the other hand, if *On War* is really so cryptic that it requires special insight from a small coterie of the cognoscenti to be accessible, how is it of any use to military professionals? What does the military community know to be true, and is such information agreed upon? Worse, what are the implications if we really do not know what Clausewitz meant?

Sumida sees *On War* as the philosophy of a practice rather than a philosophy about the essence of a thing, a distinction that requires some work to grasp, perhaps more

effort than many are willing to expend. This book is philosophy about philosophy, often a challenging read.

**LTC James E. Varner,
USA, Retired,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

THE WAR WITHIN: A Secret White House History 2006-2008, Bob Woodward, Simon & Schuster, New York, 2008, 512 pages, \$32.00.

The War Within, the fourth and final installment of Bob Woodward’s chronicle of the Bush administration at war, seems superfluous. Much of this isn’t Woodward’s fault: the war that caused the war within the administration has been shoved aside by a financial crash, a historic presidential campaign, and, ironically, the surge’s success. There’s emotional fatigue to blame too. After five years of the kind of lethal fumbling described by Michael Gordon, Tom Ricks, and Rajiv Chandrasekaran, many of us are glad just to take the current good news, fragile though it may be, and relegate Iraq to the back burner. Who wants to read, yet again, about impotent national leadership and earnest but often fruitless warfighting?

But, of course, there’s still some curiosity to be sated, a record to be finalized. Could Bush, whose sum knowledge of warfare often seemed to be that “it’s hard work,” really be so vacuous? According to Woodward, who had unparalleled access to the president, the answer is yes. Bush fixated on body counts—on “killin’ ‘em.” In lieu of a strategy, he concocted such nonsense as, “The word that captures what we want to achieve is victory.” Far from being “The Decider,” he was decidedly a spectator, even about the surge, which his national security advisor formulated without any guidance from him. The catalogue of presidential dysfunction is lengthy: Bush cowed advisors, had no sense of urgency, couldn’t focus on key briefings, spurned analysis in favor of instinct, and failed to see neon signs of catastrophe. The president,

whom Woodward praised fulsomely in his first volume, now resembles Doonesbury’s empty-helmeted caricature. As the latter might suggest, most of Woodward’s assessments don’t qualify as insights, but to hear them frequently corroborated by Bush’s own words is worth the reading time.

MR’s readers might be more interested in Woodward’s take on the generals and other military players prominent between 2005 and 2008. Petraeus aside, the four-star cadre doesn’t come off particularly well. Casey is earnest but befuddled, Pace a water boy, Schoomaker and the other chiefs disregarded and bitter. There are the usual accolades for H.R. McMaster and genuine admiration for the estimable Petraeus. (The Times’s reviewer opined that Woodward has a “man-crush” on the general.) But again, there’s not a lot of insight here: Woodward reprises McMaster’s superb work at Tal Afar, and for the umpteenth time we hear about Petraeus’s physical fitness, Princeton degree, saving by Frist, etc. What readers outside the Beltway might find new is the crucial role played by a retired general, Jack Keane, in turning the war around. Suffice it to say that Americans should be very grateful that all old Soldiers don’t just fade away—especially those who can see through the smoke and report back that there’s fire.

Unless your reading budget is large or your name appears in the book, I’m not sure I’d recommend buying *The War Within*. In addition to its born-old mien, the book is slow reading. Woodward piles up a mountain of detail, but not all of it is relevant; his style is clunky when not strictly prosaic (“Iraqi society... was stretched to the breaking point and on the precipice of coming apart”), and what are featured as significant events—e.g., convening of the “Council of Colonels,” a collection of the military’s brightest un-starred minds—don’t go anywhere. Still, as a compendium of who-thought-and-did-what in the last three years of the war, this book has real value. It will be in every

library in the land, and in multiple copies. I'd read it there.

**LTC Arthur Bilodeau,
USA, Retired, Ph.D.,
Louisville, Kentucky**

WHY NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT MATTERS, Hans Blix, MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2008, 95 pages, \$14.95.

Hans Blix, former United Nations chief weapons inspector in Iraq, former director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (1981-1997), and the current chair of Sweden's Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, has authored a concise book outlining the need for renewed international efforts to counter nuclear weapons proliferation. Blix remains the preeminent expert on nuclear weapons and nonproliferation; thus, this book and his commission's findings will help to frame the international debate on nuclear disarmament. The crux of the book is the need for the current nuclear powers, primarily the United States and Russia, to set the international course for reduction, disarmament, and ultimately, the elimination of nuclear weapons. Blix asserts it is disingenuous for nuclear-weapon states to declare that nuclear weapons are vital for their national security, while simultaneously claiming other states do not have a need to possess them for their own national defense. Blix stresses that for nuclear disarmament to become a reality, "States must be ensured security without nuclear weapons."

Blix claims nuclear-weapon states are not taking seriously their commitment to disarmament under the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Thus, non-nuclear-weapon states have become increasingly dissatisfied with the failure of those nations who have nuclear weapons to move seriously towards disarmament. Blix argues that the nuclear-weapon states, including the United States, continue to develop new nuclear weapon systems and improve the methods for their delivery and are thus fueling the desire among nations to build and

maintain nuclear weapon inventories. Blix proposes the United States should take the lead on disarmament by bringing the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into force to "significantly impede the development of new nuclear weapons." If the U.S. does not take the lead, Blix foresees a future with more nuclear weapon tests and a new nuclear arms race: "A key challenge is to dispel the perception that outlawing nuclear weapons is a utopian goal. A nuclear disarmament treaty is achievable and can be reached through careful, sensible and practical measures." However, Blix fails to support this statement with a substantive argument or to show how his recommendations would lead to international disarmament. Additionally, Blix's dislike for the current U.S. administration, its nuclear policies, and its foreign relations is obvious to the reader and at times detracts from his arguments.

The final pages of the book contain the Recommendations of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission (which Blix chairs), and address the prevention of nuclear proliferation, prevention of nuclear terrorism, reducing the threat of nuclear weapons, and the eventual outlawing of nuclear weapons. The ideas and recommendations of this book merit considerable thought and discussion by political leaders and military strategists; however, the nuclear disarmament debate would have been better served by providing a more detailed discussion of potential courses of action leading to nuclear disarmament.

**LTC Randy G. Masten, USA,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS: Success and Failure in Military Occupation, David Edelstein, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 2008, 248 pages, \$35.00.

Military occupations are inherently risky affairs. According to political scientist David Edelstein, only seven of the 26 international military occupations conducted since 1815 have succeeded. Edelstein's

new book, *Occupational Hazards*, attempts to explain not only this high failure rate for military occupations, but also what distinguishes a successful occupation from an unsuccessful one. Given the challenges the United States faces in its recent occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, this broad analysis is a welcome addition to the literature.

The primary controlling variable in military occupations, Edelstein theorizes, is the "threat environment," or the geopolitical situation of the occupied country. The threat from the Soviet Union made possible the successful occupations of Japan and Germany following World War II, for example. As much as the Japanese and Germans disliked the Allied occupations, their fear of the Soviets was greater—an example of what Edelstein terms a "favorable threat environment." During the U.S. occupation of Korea, on the other hand, many Koreans saw the American occupiers as the greatest threat to Korean sovereignty—an example of an "unfavorable threat environment." According to Edelstein, an occupying power facing a favorable threat environment encounters less resistance from the occupied population, and thus enjoys a greater chance of success. An unfavorable threat environment, on the other hand, requires the occupiers to rely heavily on coercive strategies, leading to a much lower chance of success. This threat environment model stands in contrast to previous theories of occupation, particularly those that consider an occupation's success to be a function of time and resources allocated.

Occupational Hazards is not a compendium of best practices for military occupations. As the author points out, the book's purpose is not to explain how better to conduct occupations, but to ask from the outset whether an occupation is likely to succeed, and thus whether it is a wise policy option. As such, Edelstein's work is well suited for policy makers and military professionals who wish to understand the theoretical context in which occupations take place. Those interested in

learning how to better conduct military occupations should look elsewhere, although the book's robust data provide an excellent starting point for studying the detailed aspects of military occupations.

**MAJ Jason Ridgeway, USA,
West Point, New York**

THE END OF THE WEST? Crisis and Change in the Atlantic Order,

ed. by Jeffrey Anderson, G. John Ikenberry, and Thomas Risse, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, 2008, 312 pages, \$59.95.

The provocative title of this compendium of works belies the uncontroversial nature of most of the arguments advanced in it by 13 respected political scientists, economists, and theorists. Still, this is a valuable book for anyone with a professional or personal interest in the past, present, or future of the Atlantic order.

The book seeks to determine the seriousness of the present discord between the United States and Europe, the sources of that discord, and whether the Atlantic alliance is breaking apart or simply evolving. The authors do an admirable job of addressing each of these objectives. Positions taken in the book range from Charles Kupchan's relatively pessimistic view that transatlantic tensions are systemic and a direct result of the elimination of the Cold War as a source of cohesion, to Henry Nau's position that the current crisis is a passing one that has been largely the result of differing approaches taken by policy-making coalitions on each side of the Atlantic. Also of note are blows to received economic wisdom dealt by Jens van Scherpenberg and Kathleen McNamara, who challenge the notion that economic interdependence correlates to political cooperation; and on the values side, by Dieter Fuchs and Hans-Dieter Klingemann, who conclude that many values-based differences separating the United States from Europe are not unique to the post-9/11 era.

The bad news is that most of the authors agree that the West is in a

crisis. The good news is that none of them, including Kupchan, assert that this crisis is likely to lead to the permanent breakdown in the Atlantic order. As transatlantic relations transform, particularly in the wake of recent events in the Caucasus, this collection is of value to scholars and practitioners seeking to understand the current crisis and ensure successful evolution of the U.S.-European relationship.

**CPT Jordan Becker, USA,
Colorado Springs, Colorado**

THE KNIGHTS OF ISLAM:

The Wars of the Mamluks, James Waterson, Greenhill Books, London, 2007, 288 pages, \$39.95.

The War on Terrorism has renewed interest in the scholarly history of Islamic militaries. James Waterson's history of the Mamluks contributes a concise examination of this little-known and unique military organization. Waterson concludes that not only were the Mamluks one of history's most elite fighting forces, but also that they became the standard by which the skills of mounted warriors were judged. *The Knights of Islam: The Wars of the Mamluks* chronicles the evolution of Islam's slave-soldiers into a social caste, military culture, and political powerhouse.

The Mamluks were not Arabs—most were from Inner Asian cultures that had come into contact with conquering Muslim armies. Mostly Turkic and Circassian boys, they were imported as slaves into the Muslim world from the steppes and mountains on the margins of Islam. They were purchased in Constantinople or culled from incessant conflict with Christians in the Caucasus region and with confederations of Uralic and Altaic nomads.

Ultimately, the Mamluks became Islam's savior by checking the expansion of the Mongols and defeating them at the Battle of Ain Jalut (or Goliath's Spring) in the Jezreel Valley of Palestine in September of 1260. It was the first time an army decisively defeated the advancing Mongols. Subsequent attempts by

the Mongol Khans to invade Egypt were thwarted by Mamluk power. It is not a far stretch to say that if not for the Mamluks' victory in 1260, the Mongols might have extinguished Islam and advanced even farther west.

The Mamluks' golden era of power was from 1250 to 1330 when they provided the critical synergy that unhinged and then destroyed the Crusader Kingdoms in Outremer (in Palestine). Earlier, in the 12th century, Mamluk slaves had been key to Saladin's destruction of the Crusaders at Hattin, which allowed Jerusalem to fall back under the sway of Islam.

Waterson's history weaves an evolutionary tale of the Mamluk's military society. The Mamluks trained rigorously to deliver accurate volleys of missile fire against their opponents, causing enemy formations to disintegrate. Having come mostly from the steppes, they were familiar with horsemanship and Inner Asian tactics. It is interesting to note that the Mamluks' declining power was finally broken on the Ottoman Empire's own slave-soldiers. The Janissaries, mostly Circassian slaves employed and paid by the Ottoman Sultan as a professional guard force, were the first regular army in Europe since Roman times. They eventually ended the Mamluk's mystique and power.

Waterson's book delivers a well-organized narrative, a superb timeline, useful maps, period plates, and a first-rate bibliography. I highly recommend *The Knights of Islam* for anyone interested in the history of the region and Islamic military history.

**LTC Robert G. Smith, USA,
Germantown, Maryland**

TERRORISM FINANCING AND STATE RESPONSES: A

Comparative Perspective, Jeanne K. Giraldo and Harold A. Trinkunas, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, 2007, 365 pages, \$24.95.

Terrorism Financing and State Responses: A Comparative Perspective causes us to ask the following: Where do terrorists get their money?

Have we done all that we can to deny financial solvency to our enemies and degrade their ability to maneuver? What role does the U.S. military play in counterterrorism financing?

Terrorism Financing and State Responses, a collection of essays that were presented as conference papers at a 2004 conference at the Naval Postgraduate School, attempts to make a “comprehensive assessment of the state of our knowledge about the nature of terrorism financing, the evolution of terrorist strategies and government responses, and the effectiveness of both.” Unfortunately, none of the essays directly addresses the large-scale sectarian insurgencies that today confront the military in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, the book plumbs the murky financial infrastructures and processes of terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Therein lies the book’s value, as well as tactical and strategic possibilities.

While not a manual that will teach Soldiers in the field how to target enemy financial lines of support, the book does provide terms, concepts, and historical examples for those interested in this potentially quite useful activity. Editors Jeanne K. Giraldo and Harold A. Trinkunas are both associated with the National Securities Affairs Department at the Naval Postgraduate School. Contributors include terrorism, criminal finance, and foreign policy experts affiliated with think tanks located in academia and government.

The first five essays constitute an overview labeled “The Nature of the Problem and the Response.” The last 11 essays are case studies of specific efforts to attack regional and ideologically based terrorist finance networks. Together, Giraldo and Trinkunas contribute introductory and concluding essays that define broad themes and offer recommendations for improving counterterrorism financing efforts.

Chapters that address Islamic terrorist finances downplay the role of crime or state-sponsorship as sources of operational funds. Conversely, they also resist the idea

that ideologically driven terrorists operate financially unconstrained, or that personal vices and limitations do not sometimes degrade religious idealism. Instead, several authors describe the flow of money into terrorist hands through the channels of *haalwa* (informal money transfer networks) and *zakat* (charitable-giving practices prescribed by the Koran).

Because practices of *haalwa* and *zakat* operate virtually unmonitored by state and international agencies while stitching together native and emigrant communities, the movement of money from law-abiding citizens to violent extremists is relatively easy. Though suppressing these unregulated money-movement flows is difficult, several of the book’s authors recommend that allowing them to survive closely watched may in fact be the better alternative. To gain information about key players, processes, and planned attacks, observation and analysis of *haalwa* and *zakat* networks can, one contributor writes, “illuminate and crystallize what had hitherto been uncertain.” The implication is that terrorists’ financial operations are untapped sources of intelligence and areas of vulnerability that organizations at many levels might act on.

**LTC Peter Molin, USA,
West Point, New York**

CHINA RISING: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia, David C. Kang, Columbia University Press, New York, 2007, 296 pages, \$24.95.

Whether China’s emergence as a global power can peacefully find a place in East Asia and the world is a major issue in today’s international political environment. Given the European historical experience and the balance-of-power model, many believe China cannot rise peacefully. Kang writes a refreshing, persuasive, and provocative book stating otherwise. He emphasizes that from a realist perspective, China’s rise should already be provoking balancing behavior by its neighbors;

however, its rise has generated little of that response. East Asian states are not balancing China; they are accommodating it, because China has not sought to translate its dominant position into conquest of its neighbors. They do not see China’s relationship with Taiwan as an indicator of how it would behave toward the rest of the region. More often than not, to promote stability and harmony, China has repeatedly resolved territorial disputes with its neighbors on less than advantageous terms and even signed declarations prohibiting the use of force to settle rival claims.

East Asia states view China’s reemergence as the gravitational center of East Asia more as an opportunity than a threat—the rightful natural state of regional equilibrium—and they are rapidly increasing cultural, economic, and diplomatic ties with China to take full advantage of this quickly emerging situation. Kang highlights the huge market China’s rise has created for its neighbors, facilitating their economic development. In fact, based on the notion that China poses no military threat and that it seeks to prosper economically along with its neighbors, East Asian governmental regionalism has grown dramatically in the past few decades (e.g., forming the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and the Association of South East Asian Nations).

Accompanying these emerging relationships are regional foreign policies more aligned with China than the United States. U.S. diplomatic and military presence in East Asia has significantly diminished with the regional rise of China. The author does not see a strong China as a threat to U.S. regional interests, pointing to a relatively aligned China-U.S. economic and foreign policy toward East Asia. However, he cautions that as the U.S. and Japan shape their views on China and translate them into foreign policy, military balancing between China, the U.S., and Japan will adversely affect the region as a whole and cause it to become increasingly unstable.

Kang soundly supports and articulates his thoughts in a logical and convincing manner. The book is well laid out and easy to read, and its concepts are easy to grasp. Whether you agree with the author's reasoning and conclusions or not, the book is well worth the read for the superb analysis of individual countries within East Asia and their perspectives and pursuits with China.

**LTC David A. Anderson,
USMC, Retired, Ph.D.,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

**DEATH OF THE WEHRMACHT:
The German Campaigns of 1942,**
Robert M. Citino, University Press
of Kansas, Lawrence, 2007, 431
pages, \$34.95.

In *Death of the Wehrmacht*, Robert Citino returns to a thesis he introduced two years ago in his book, *The German Way of War: From the Thirty Years' War to the Third Reich*. The earlier book argued that, from the 17th century to the blitzkrieg campaigns of World War II, German military leaders have conducted their battles and campaigns in a manner that showed a striking continuity across the centuries. From the Great Elector to Field Marshal Erich von Manstein, the German "way of war" featured recklessly aggressive commanders leading rapid and decisive maneuvers against more numerous but less agile enemies. Thus, Frederick's oblique order against the right wing of an Austrian force, double the size of his own at the Battle of Leuthen in 1757, was revisited by Rommel in his panzer sweep around the British flank at Gazala in the western desert two centuries later. Similarly, Moltke's encirclement of the French army at Sedan was reprised 70 years later in the massive *Kesselschlacht* around Kiev during Operation Barbarossa.

In his new book, Citino condenses his centuries-wide perspective down to seven months—May to November 1942. During that period, he argues, the German-style of warfare reached its culmination and demise. The spring and early summer of 1942 saw German

mechanized formations winning spectacular victories in the Crimea, the Ukraine, and the western desert of North Africa. However, by the fall, the unique German approach to campaigning ran up against insuperable obstacles—overtaxed and overextended logistics, massive Allied superiority in materiel, and finally, micromanagement by Hitler when the long string of victories could not be sustained. Empty gas tanks and "stand fast" orders from Hitler stripped German field commanders of both their independence and their ability to maneuver. Under such circumstances, debacles like Stalingrad and El Alamein were inevitable.

Given his thesis, the title of the book is somewhat misleading. We know that, despite the defeats of 1942, the *Wehrmacht* defended the Third Reich for two more bloody years. Citino's point is that, in their tenacious defensive battles against the overwhelming resources of the Allies, the German military was no longer conducting the unique style of command and maneuver that had led to so many battlefield triumphs since the founding of the Prussian state.

Citino writes well and makes a persuasive case. Those new to the campaigns of 1942 will find an education in this book. Those familiar with Irwin Rommel's exploits in Libya and Egypt or Fedor von Bock's drive to the Volga will find a challenging new interpretation of these famous operations.

**LTC Scott Stephenson,
USA, Retired, Ph.D.,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

**THE CIVIL WAR AND THE
LIMITS OF DESTRUCTION,**
Mark E. Neely Jr., Harvard University
Press, Cambridge, MA, 2007,
288 pages, \$27.95.

Dr. Mark E. Neely focuses on a unique aspect of the Civil War to challenge a basic premise of many historians: that the war's destructiveness was unprecedented and unmatched until the 20th century. Neely compares the American Civil War to the U.S.-Mexican War,

the Mexican Civil War of 1862 to 1867, and the Plains Indian wars. His central thesis is that the Civil War's "white vs. white" racial environment was a moderating influence, operating against a tendency toward increasing levels of violence prompted by frustration over the war's progress. The events of these comparison conflicts provide fertile ground for developing a theory that racial factors materially influenced the treatment of "enemies"—whether they were combatants or not.

If there is a weakness in his argument, it is that Neely appears to choose his examples carefully in order to support his thesis. While he examines the actions of Sheridan's Shenandoah Valley forces in some detail, Sherman's "march from Atlanta to the sea" is barely acknowledged, except as a notable exception. Thus, one is justified in approaching Neely's conclusions with some skepticism. Contradictory evidence is not entirely lacking, but it is scattered and relatively weak.

A less prominent theme is the role of leadership and discipline in restraining brutality. This (barely articulated) conclusion appears as a largely undeveloped adjunct to the central thesis of racism. Neely notes that key leaders such as Generals Winfield Scott and Zachary Taylor were appalled by atrocious acts committed by their Soldiers in Mexico, especially those acts of the volunteers. He attributes the relative restraint of Soldiers in the Civil War largely to improved discipline, yet declines to develop an in-depth analytical consideration of the role and the example of leadership in this transformation, focusing on racial implications instead.

A factor that also appears to be at least as influential as race is the type of "enemy" and the enemy's method of warfare. Neely only briefly examines the destructiveness and brutality that appears to emerge when regular forces combat guerrillas over an extended period. Neely's own research points in this direction, yet he touches it only lightly, missing an opportunity to

link positive leadership to restraint of destructiveness when armed forces become frustrated and begin to see everyone other than their own comrades as “the enemy”—a consideration that has relevance in contemporary conflicts.

Nevertheless, for a student of the Civil War, this is fascinating reading. The documented personal accounts of participants are especially enlightening—even compelling. The perspective of the conflict through the lens of the racial component of the combatants provides a novel approach to the study of the Civil War. Whether the reader is convinced by Neely’s arguments is another issue.

**Thomas E. Ward, II, Ph.D.,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

BUFFALO SOLDIERS IN THE WEST: A Black Soldiers Anthology, ed. by Bruce A. Glasrud and Michael N. Searles, Texas A&M University Press, College Station, 2007, 276 pages, \$19.95.

Professors Bruce A. Glasrud and Michael N. Searles, nationally recognized experts on blacks in the west, have compiled an anthology that chronicles the complete gambit of experiences encountered by the black Soldier in the west. The anthology presents the Buffalo Soldier’s story as told by 16 black Soldier scholars in as many essays. The authors set out to compile a history of the “African Americans in the latter years of the nineteenth and early 20th century who were primarily engaged in Soldiering in the western United States.” The book lays out the story of the Buffalo Soldiers and the honorable record they compiled despite the often-difficult circumstances and racial struggles they encountered in military service on the western frontier.

The essays provide the reader with a good understanding of the military and social history of black Soldiers in the west. Their struggles with white officers and the citizens of the towns they had sworn to defend are all chronicled. This is not, however, merely an attempt to

garner support or sympathy for the Buffalo Soldier. The editors present essays that detail a variety of social struggles, but they also highlight the successful undertakings of black Soldiers, emphasizing their dedication and skill. Notable among the essays in the volume are the stories of the “Black Seminoles”; black Soldiers as improbable ambassadors; black Soldiers as military pioneers in the case of the 25th Infantry, also known as The Black Bicycle Corps; the story of Cathey Williams, the first black female buffalo Soldier; the dubious court-martial and conviction of Henry O. Flipper, the first black West Point graduate; the antagonistic relationship between black Soldiers involved in the Houston Riot and between the Soldiers of Fort Hays and the town of Hays City, Kansas.

The book is valuable to the military reader not only for its research into an all too infrequently examined chapter of our military development, but also because it examines black troops in general and the experiences of several memorable individuals in particular.

**LTC Gerald F. Sewell,
USA, Retired,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

NAPOLEON: The Path to Power, Philip Dwyer, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, and London, 2008, 672 pages, \$35.00.

Many see Napoleon as the culmination of the French Revolution’s energy and the prototype of the new man that emerged from its turmoil. Philip Dwyer concurs and describes the ways Napoleon used the novel methods to present himself as a new leader untainted by petty partisan politics. Dwyer shows Napoleon as a serious, talented, energetic young man in his 20’s who experienced a series of reverses that destroyed his idealism but not his ambition. Napoleon’s disillusionment with his youthful goals fired his determination to rise as a Soldier, and his experiences during the Revolution schooled him in a politics that was devoid of idealism. Dwyer also demonstrates the influence of family

ties and the role Napoleon’s family played in his rise to prominence. Napoleon emerges as the most skillful personal promoter of his time and the most capable general in the French army.

Dwyer builds his narrative around four significant events in Napoleon’s early life. The first was the split with Corsican nationalist leader Pascale Paoli and the Bonaparte family’s exile to France, long the object of their scorn and hatred. Napoleon’s deep attachment to Corsica was an important part of his identity. Initially the Bonaparte family wanted to join Paoli, but when he rejected them as French collaborators, they refocused their energies on France, and Napoleon remodeled himself into a French patriot, which led to his deeper involvement in revolutionary politics.

The second event was Napoleon’s rapid courting and honeymoon with Josephine. Dwyer suggests that nothing motivated Napoleon more during his first command in Italy than his desire to impress Josephine, for whom he had a fervent passion. His letters to her are legendary for their ardor, and Dwyer quotes from some of the most passionate.

The third event was Napoleon’s discovery of his military talent during the Italian campaign. Dwyer infers that Napoleon was as surprised as anyone was by his martial achievements and leadership abilities and used his gift for self-promotion to manipulate the presentation of these victories to the public to bolster his own part and minimize the role of others.

Finally, there was the Egyptian campaign, his first experience with defeat. The strategic military consequences of the campaign were calamitous—an entire French army was lost. At the siege of Acre, Dwyer shows Napoleon was a ruthless gambler willing to spend the lives of his Soldiers in a hopeless cause. The Egyptian campaign marked the public beginning of his cynicism, which began in Corsica and marked his later years.

This campaign also showed his ability to portray a humiliating

defeat positively in France. The romantic notion of the Egyptian campaign propelled him to the forefront of political leadership when he returned to France despite abandoning the army in Africa. He called the expedition a success and himself a returning hero uncontaminated by the lengthy political squabbling that occurred in his absence. In narrating Napoleon's role in the 18th Brumaire coup, Dwyer restores indeterminacy to the event. He shows how it almost failed, thereby reminding us that nothing is inevitable and showing how much Napoleon had learned since his first political experiences in Corsica.

In this, the first volume of a two-volume biography, Dwyer writes about Napoleon's life and times

and explains the changing ways in which the French idealized their heroes. This emphasis comes at the expense of campaign history but works to explain how Napoleon began to dominate contemporary politics. Those looking to explore the details of Napoleon's military career should consult David G. Chandler's encyclopedic work on Napoleon's campaigns. Dwyer argues that Napoleon's genius lay in presentation, politics, and publicity as well as in war and generalship. Whether his victories were sweeping like Rivoli, or non-existent like Acre, he was able to convey an image of dramatic and unmitigated success that served him well throughout most of his career.

In lectures to British Army staff

college students in the 1930s A.P. Wavell noted, "To learn that Napoleon in 1796 with 20,000 men beat combined forces of 30,000 by something called economy of force or operating on interior lines is a mere waste of time. If you can understand how a young unknown man inspired a half-starved, ragged, rather Bolshie crowd; how he filled their bellies; how he out-marched, out-witted, out-bluffed and defeated men who had studied war all their lives and waged it according to the text-books of their time, you will have learnt something worth knowing." Dwyer helps us move toward this understanding.

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

MR Letters

Regarding "Relooking Unit Cohesion"

MG (Ret) Michael W. Syman-ski, AUS—I greatly enjoyed MAJ Geoff Van Epps' well-written, valuable prize-winning essay "Relooking Unit Cohesion: A Sensemaking Approach" (*Military Review*, November-December 2008). He justly deserves the recognition of his fine work.

Van Epps' article interested me because the Army staff hotly discussed unit cohesion vis-a-vis the wide use of "filler" personnel in National Guard and Reserve units shortly before they deployed to Iraq. It was a case in which the leadership of people collided with the management of quantifiable subjects. Soldiers know of its importance, but when we cite unit cohesion to

allocate resources, responsible managers demand empirical evidence of its value that we cannot satisfactorily provide. Even when we successfully make the distinction between unit cohesion and unit integrity, we cannot offer a certifying metric for unit cohesion.

An interesting element of the discussion was: What exactly builds cohesion? The immediate response was that time spent together is the key factor, but some studies claim that a group's members are bonded through shared successes. If so, a training program of challenges conquered in rapid succession can produce cohesion in a relatively short time.

I see a link between group cohesion and appointed versus acquired leadership authority. Military offi-

cers are first appointed to be the legal leader and then acquire actual leadership authority during the process of building unit cohesion. Early American militia units usually elected their small unit officers or volunteered to enlist under a particular leader, a practice that professionally trained officers, as an article of faith, deride. However, those early militia captains were the men the community already trusted as the most successful leaders and fighters with whom the recruits probably lived for years in familiarity and kinship. It was almost a tribal environment, in which pre-existing cohesion produced the military structure. A small unit leader should ask the mirror, "Would my Soldiers vote to retain me in command?"



**The smells of burning rubber,
wafting with the essence,
of the unspoken.
Such fires burning forever,
in the memories I have come to fear.
And thus, days come and nights go.
Never waking to the burning sun,
as I lay each night, delaying sleep,
each minute, laying, praying,
through the endless nights,
yearning, anxious for one more day.
Fearing anything more
would be far too greedy.
Each day, a movement to contact.
Each night, I lay trembling,
avoiding the dreams I so fear.
Thus, to be at war,
is to live in the present,
nothing more.
Forsake the future
as impossible
revel in the past
wake,
each day knowing,
believing,
this could be my last.**

Smells

—Major Edward L. Bryan, U.S. Army

U.S. Army War College

STRATEGIC LANDPOWER

Essay Contest 2009

The United States Army War College and the United States Army War College Foundation are pleased to announce the annual **STRATEGIC LANDPOWER** Essay Contest.



The topic of the essay must relate to "Perspectives on Stability Operations and Their Role in U.S. Landpower."

Anyone is eligible to enter and win except those involved in the judging. The Army War College Foundation will award a prize of \$3000 to the author of the best essay, a prize of \$1500 to the second place winner, and \$500 to the third place winner.

For more information or for a copy of the essay contest rules, contact:

Dr. Michael R. Matheny, U.S. Army War College, Department of Military Strategy, Planning and Operations, 122 Forbes Avenue, Carlisle, PA 17013-5242 (717) 245-3459, DSN 242-3459, michael.matheny@us.army.mil

STRATEGIC LANDPOWER Essay Contest Rules:

1. Essays must be original, not to exceed 5000 words, and must not have been previously published. An exact word count must appear on the title page.
2. All entries should be directed to: Dr. Michael R. Matheny, USAWC Strategic Landpower Essay Contest, U.S. Army War College, Department of Military Strategy, Planning and Operations, 122 Forbes Avenue, Carlisle, PA 17013-5242.
3. Essays must be postmarked on or before 17 February 2009.
4. The name of the author shall not appear on the essay. Each author will assign a codename in addition to a title to the essay. This codename shall appear: (a) on the title page of the essay, with the title in lieu of the author's name, and (b) by itself on the outside of an accompanying sealed envelope. This sealed envelope should contain a typed sheet giving the name, rank/title, branch of service (if applicable), biographical sketch, social security number, address, and office and home phone numbers (if available) of the essayist, along with the title of the essay and the codename. This envelope will not be opened until after the final selections are made and the identity of the essayist will not be known by the selection committee.
5. All essays must be typewritten, double-spaced, on paper approximately 8 1/2" x 11". Submit two complete copies. If prepared on a computer, please also submit the entry on an IBM compatible disk, indicating specific word-processing software used.
6. The award winners will be notified in early Spring 2009. Letters notifying all other entrants will be mailed by 1 April 2009.
7. The author of the best essay will receive \$3000 from the U.S. Army War College Foundation. A separate prize of \$1500 will be awarded to the author of the second best essay and a prize of \$500 will be awarded to the author of the third place winner.