

CRISIS IN KOREA

A Review Essay by

DON OBERDORFER

Korea on the Brink: From the "12/12 Incident" to the Kwangju Uprising, 1979–1980

by John A. Wickham

Washington: National Defense University Press, 1999.

241 pp. \$20.00

[ISBN 1-57906-023-4]

Massive Entanglement, Marginal Influence: Carter and Korea in Crisis

by William H. Gleysteen, Jr.

Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1999.

242 pp. \$17.95

[ISBN 0-8157-3170-1]

The period between the assassination of President Park Chung Hee in October 1979 and full American acceptance of his strong arm successor in early 1981 was among the most violent in modern Korean history—and most dangerous in U.S.-Korean relations. In that short time, Park's 18-year regime ended at the hands of his intelligence chief; a coup in the night installed an obscure general, Chun Doo Hwan; brutal suppression of a revolt by Chun fueled fierce domestic emotions that have never entirely subsided; and a secret deal struck between Chun and the incoming administration of President Ronald Reagan provided tangible proof of American recognition of Chun in return for commuting a death sentence imposed on a prominent Korean dissenter, Kim Dae Jung.

General John Wickham, USA, commander of U.S. and U.N. forces in Korea, and Ambassador William Gleysteen, the senior American diplomat on the scene, were at the helm of U.S. military and political power in Seoul at the time. Working independently, they have produced accounts of their respective roles in these turbulent events. And fortuitously, *Korea on the Brink* by Wickham and *Massive Entanglement, Marginal Influence* by Gleysteen appeared within weeks of each other. Together these books constitute an extraordinary record of the situation in Seoul and the American response. Both men substantially enlarge our knowledge of this crucial period.

Don Oberdorfer is the author of *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History*.

Wickham, who concentrates on developments in Seoul, offers gripping details on the death of Park, including an insightful portrait of his assassin, Korean CIA Director Kim Jae Kyu, and substantial new material on maneuvering within the South Korean military which followed. His account is presumably based on official reports since the work lacks source notes.

Gleysteen emphasizes the political deliberations between Washington and Seoul but is less detailed on events in Korea. His narrative begins earlier than Wickham's, offering background on efforts by President Jimmy Carter to withdraw U.S. troops from Korea, which Gleysteen observed as an official in the State Department before becoming ambassador and which he thinks contributed to Park's assassination. Gleysteen also takes his account beyond Wickham's, including efforts to protect longtime opposition leader Kim Dae Jung in late 1980 and early 1981, in which Washington assumed a decisive role. Putting minor differences aside, the general and the ambassador observed the key actors and events through remarkably similar eyes.

It was probably inevitable given the circumstances that Wickham became deeply involved in political issues as Gleysteen assumed a major role in military affairs. Civil-military differences in overseas operations would have been disruptive in such a crisis. Fortunately for

the United States, both men were seasoned professionals and highly regarded at home. Each respected the other, as their accounts make clear, while at the same time recognizing the differences in their assignments.

The two books provide tangible evidence of the crucial roles of CINCs and ambassadors in policymaking. Wickham and Gleysteen received great leeway by their masters in Washington and, in Wickham's case, by the Commander in Chief, Pacific Command, in Honolulu. Moreover, what they suggested from the field was usually adopted as policy by their superiors. Part of the reason is that the seizure of the American embassy in Iran only days after the assassination of Park and the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviets in December 1979 distracted attention from Korea, making micromanagement less practical for Carter and his aides. Another factor was that U.S. officials on the scene have historically played significant roles in Korean policy (Carter's proposed withdrawal of U.S. troops, an initiative of uncertain origin, is one notable exception.) Even today, ambassadors and CINCs are living proof that—at least in Korea—such officials are not simply messengers.

Nonetheless, the conclusions that Wickham and Gleysteen reach are not how powerful they were in dealing with Korean affairs, but how powerless. The title of Gleysteen's book succinctly captures that view, which Wickham also shares. "The era of America's paternal influence over the [Republic of Korea]

Gleysteen and Wickham in Seoul, 1981



Courtesy of John A. Wickham

had passed," declares the general. "Anyone who believed that we were in any position to order a halt to this coup was badly out of date." Later, after Chun had suppressed the rioting in Kwangju and moved toward assuming the presidency, Wickham remembers thinking that "we were little more than helpless bystanders as Chun shrewdly maneuvered toward total power."

The fundamental limitation on their leverage, as both realized from the start, was the nature of American involvement on the bitterly divided peninsula. U.S. military presence, represented by 37,000 members of the Armed Forces half a century after the armistice, is intended to deter hostile action from the North and provide leadership and muscle if deterrence fails. Any open or extended discord in the ROK military, or between American and South Korean leaders, risks undermining deterrence and encouraging North Korea to intervene. Wickham recalls the reflexive message from Secretary of Defense Harold Brown in conveying the news of Park's demise. "Assassins have just killed Park Chung Hee," Brown announced by telephone to Wickham, who had just arrived home on a scheduled visit. "We're worried that the North Koreans might capitalize on the confusion by attacks with their agents in South Korea or, worse, by an attack along the demilitarized zone." There is little evidence that Pyongyang did anything to exploit the turmoil in Seoul other than spread propaganda and unsuccessfully infiltrate agents, but the possibility of intervention was a priority for U.S. policymakers. As Gleysteen indicates, "Our security commitment and military presence in South Korea inevitably became overriding concerns in times of upheaval, largely because of the threat we perceived from North Korea."

Both Wickham and Gleysteen were opposed to the coup organized by Chun but powerless to reverse its course without endangering South Korean security. At the moment of crisis, Wickham found that his command of ROK forces facing the North was merely theoretical, as units left assigned positions without permission. Neither he nor the ROK leadership whose units were being outflanked had any but the sketchiest ideas of what was happening. "Even after all these years, I still consider [Chun's] actions immoral and harmful . . . motivated almost completely by personal gain," Wickham writes. Yet both he and Gleysteen rejected a proposal at the time for a countercoup secretly presented by a senior ROK officer who claimed to speak

for a faction ready to restore constitutional authority by force. As the general and the ambassador saw it, the prospect of a shootout within the army was fraught with grave danger. Few other decisions caused Gleysteen such personal anguish: "I deeply regretted having to blight an effort designed to 'correct' [the coup] but felt that to encourage a struggle within the Korean army would have been madness."

The most controversial development confronting both men—one still politically charged in South Korea—was action by ROK special forces and other troops in viciously suppressing the insurrection in Kwangju at a high but undetermined cost in lives. It was the home area of Kim Dae Jung, whose arrest by Chun ignited public demonstrations that turned into organized revolt. Many Koreans hold the United States partly responsible for what is known as the Kwangju massacre because of a belief fostered by Chun that the U.S. command authorized the use of deadly force by releasing units which attacked civilians from other duties.

As both men have done in the past, Wickham and Gleysteen seek to set the record straight by indicating that ROK special forces units which did most of the killing had never been under American command and that the 20th ROK Infantry Division, which restored order with far less loss of life, had been withdrawn from U.S. control before the uprising. Wickham discloses that he was more involved in proposals to use the 20th Infantry Division troops than previously known, but he and Gleysteen disclaim prior knowledge of what ROK special forces planned to do. However, given the complex situation and persistence of strong emotions which persist to this day, it is unlikely these books will quell passions about Kwangju among South Koreans.

As both authors acknowledge, the efforts they recommended and implemented were ineffective in curbing Chun during the period covered in their books. They do considerable soul-searching in the final analysis over what more they could have done.

Wickham, who does not hide his anger at Chun and his associates, concludes that a coup was probable if not inevitable after the death of Park but that there was little he or his command could have done to stave it off. He recounts that the policy of keeping Chun at a distance after he seized power and pressuring Chun to abide by constitutional processes was "fundamentally sound" if marginally successful. He expresses doubt over symbolic penalties initially levied against Chun, such as postponing the security consultative meeting or withholding foreign military sales credits. He suggests instead that vigorous economic sanctions might have generated more public protests against Chun but does not deal with the instability that could have ensued.

Gleysteen remembers that he could think of "no measures that would have altered the basic character of a contest between domestic forces over which we had little if any real control." He is more philosophical than Wickham about Chun and his actions, noting that the regime turned out to be relatively competent though highly unpopular and that because of internal pressures it ultimately gave way to restoration of legitimate democratic rule. A large part of Gleysteen's anger is directed at Carter's "ill-conceived and ill-timed" initiative to withdraw American troops and the "abrasive, confrontational" implementation of human rights policies.

Based on these well-written and well-reasoned books, the lesson is that U.S. power, while of great importance to the military balance on the peninsula, was a minor factor in the calculations of those who sought and wielded power in South Korea. This is more true today than in 1979–81. But it is also true that the end of the Cold War altered the nature and dimensions of U.S. stakes in the region. A repeat of the unpalatable incidents contained in these two books would probably generate much stronger U.S. reactions, economic as well as political, than when their authors were assigned to Seoul. Militarily such events, which seem unlikely today, could tempt the body politic in this Nation to reconsider its firm commitment to the security of South Korea.

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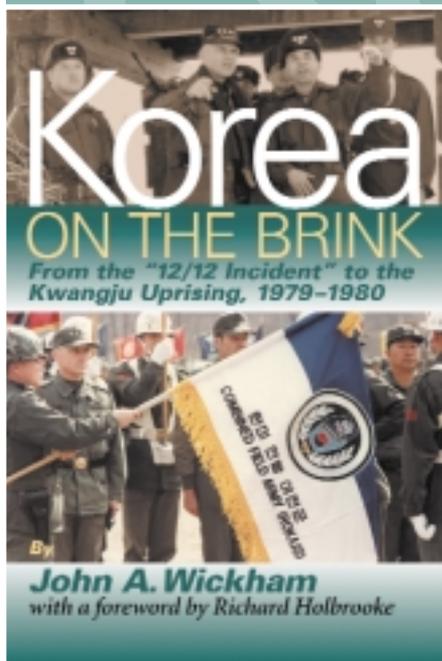
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Korea on the Brink: From the "12/12 Incident" to the Kwangju Uprising, 1979–1980

by John A. Wickham



"This book focuses on a period that begins with the death of President Park in October 1979 which led to the '12/12 Incident.' My account of these events sheds light on how political military policy is formulated within the U.S. Government and, more importantly, on how policy is shaped and executed in the field. For it is the high-level officials in the field who ultimately bear responsibility for the success or failure of American policy. *Korea on the Brink* is written from the perspective of the military commander entrusted to maintain the armistice and defend Korea, should war occur. My objective was not to present a definitive history of this period, a task that others will eventually achieve. Rather, it was to record and reflect on those significant people and events that I observed as commander of allied forces, who numbered almost half-a-million military personnel. Drawing on contemporaneous notes, messages, and memory, I have sought to faithfully relate the facts as I saw them at the time and have analyzed them in the intervening years."

—from the preface to *Korea on the Brink*

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REINVENTING MILITARY INSTITUTIONS

A Book Review by

IAN ROXBOROUGH

The Postmodern Military: Armed Forces after the Cold War

Edited by Charles C. Moskos,
John Allen Williams, and David R. Segal
New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
286 pp. \$45.00
[ISBN 0-19-513328-5]

There have been profound changes in the nature of military institutions in recent years. As wars have become less prevalent and threat perceptions have evolved, militaries have increasingly taken on peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. They are also being reduced to smaller professional forces of volunteers with the support of more civilian employees. There is more jointness. The role models for officers are gravitating from the warrior and manager to include the soldier-scholar and soldier-statesman. Postmodern militaries include more women, are more tolerant of homosexuals, and accept a greater separation of family from institutional life. Moreover, as militaries are civilianized, soldiers and their civilian counterparts look more alike. In moving away from the citizen-soldier armies of the modern period, and as nation-states loosen their grip on the imagination of citizens, public attitudes are growing more apathetic. As armed forces decline in prestige, there is more tolerance for conscientious objection. Finally, militaries are engaging the media actively and positively.

The cluster of sociological changes that define the emerging militaries of the 21st century are the dominant theme of *The Postmodern Military*. Edited and written by leading military sociologists, this book may be the most authoritative study of the sociological basis of contemporary militaries in print. A first-rate work, it brings serious research to bear on important policy issues.

The editors offer a far-ranging introduction by placing current changes in historical context. The chapter on the

United States by the dean of American military sociologists, Charles Moskos, summarizes the state of research and establishes the Armed Forces as the model against which to compare those of other nations. This is followed by chapters on Britain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Italy, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Israel, and South Africa which shift the evidence to determine whether the postmodern label applies. Not only does this approach provide an opportunity to evaluate the postmodern thesis, but it offers a vital comparative perspective. While they have many trends in common, marked differences exist among the countries. Moreover, there is ample disagreement among authors to provoke reflection.

If readers are tempted to quibble over the use of the term *postmodern*, it should be noted that the authors apply it largely as a synonym for post-Cold War and are not committed to the rhetorical and philosophical excesses normally associated with postmodernist social science theories. Since the term essentially means contemporary or present, readers are free to apply whichever label seems to be the most congenial.

A more critical issue is whether the cluster of identified trends is as coherent as suggested by a single model. Greater female participation in the labor market and growing divorce rates, both of which result in the separation of military family members from institutional military life, have been underway for decades independent of the end of the Cold War. Nor is it clear that issues of cultural diversity and lifestyle, increasing tolerance of homosexuality, or diminishing identification with the nation-state are bound up with other dimensions of the model. Indeed, some contributors point out this fact. It is also striking how issues such as race and ethnicity, or intense politicizing of gay rights, a factor so salient in the United States, are more muted elsewhere. This raises the question of whether the authors have really discerned a global

trend from modern, through late modern, to postmodern, or have focused on what is in fact a coincidence in time and place of largely unrelated trends. The various dimensions of the model may need to be disaggregated and examined in detail to determine their relationship.

The Postmodern Military has ramifications for the meaning of professionalism. Officers will have to be more broadly educated in political, cultural, and other affairs. This volume suggests that such a trend will produce new role models for officers. Less clear are the implications of postmodernity for the nature of warfighting. Here the emphasis by the contributors on embracing peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention has diverted attention from the impact of sociological change on how postmodern militaries fight. This book raises but does not answer these provocative questions. If there is less commitment to the nation-state, what will motivate warfighters? What conflicts of interest might ensue? Will more socially and culturally diverse militaries affect small-group cohesion in combat?

This volume poses further questions for a research agenda. The editors have done a great service by moving beyond the United States to other countries; but most are either European or of largely European settlement. A comparative volume that looks at militaries in what was formerly known as the Third World is needed. How has postmodernity affected militaries in those nations? What might such perspectives suggest about the nature of military institutions and the frequency of war in other regions of the world? It is outside the core countries of the West that America's future enemies are likely to be found. Perhaps there is a dark side of postmodernity in the Third World that must be understood as much as sociological changes in Western militaries, about which this volume is informative and rewardingly thought-provoking. **JFQ**

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STRUGGLES FOR NATIONAL SURVIVAL

A Book Review by

ANTULIO J. ECHEVARRIA II

**On the Road to Total War:
The American Civil War and
the German Wars of Unification,
1861–1871**

Edited by Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler
Cambridge: Cambridge University
Press, 2000.
705 pp. \$100.00
[ISBN 0-5215-6071-3]

The essays collected in *On the Road to Total War* make worthwhile reading for anyone interested in American or German history, or military history in general. It represents the first in a projected series of five volumes based on papers from conferences held in the United States and Germany on the contentious topic of total war. This volume addresses problems concerning national survival within the context of the American Civil War and the German Wars of Unification, which can be regarded as defining events of the 19th century. The other volumes in this series (which will be reviewed in future issues of this journal) focus on the periods leading up to World War I, the interwar years, and World War II. The editors of the book at hand, Stig Förster and Jörg Nagler, have done a superb job of arranging the essays, though some have little to do with total war per se beyond references in the introductory and concluding paragraphs. The value of this collection isn't the answers that it offers on total war, but rather in the fact that it enlarges the understanding of what soldiers and civilians, generals and statesmen, and their contemporaries thought was at stake in two major conflicts of the 19th century, how prepared they were to sacrifice blood or treasure to win, and whether in the end they believed that what was gained was worth the price.

The first set of problems considered in this book deals with basic questions of definition and correctness in comparison, concerns that have plagued historians for years. Indeed, a suitable definition of total war remains elusive. Part of

the problem is perspective. When compared to the so-called cabinet wars of the 18th century, the wars of the 19th century seem to have become more total in terms of ends, ways, and means. However, in comparison to the wars of the classical age, or those of the 16th, 17th, or even 20th centuries, this observation does not hold up. To complicate matters, one can find exceptions in the past to prove any rule. Not surprisingly then, the essays by Förster and Nagler only discuss a few possible definitions of total war, all of which have limitations, and leave readers to develop their own. A subsequent essay by Mark Neely reminds us that the notion of total war can be defined so totally that no conflict, let alone the Civil War, would qualify. Carl Degler concludes this section of *On the Road to Total War* by reconsidering conventional ideas on the similarities and differences between the emerging American and German nations and how they might affect an investigation of total war.

The second set of problems concerns nationalism and leadership. Essays in this section by Richard Beringer, Hans Trefousse, Stig Förster, and Edward Hagerman examine the relationship between national or regional identity and the will to fight, political and cultural mobilization, and the interplay between political and military leaders in developing strategy. The basis of a soldier's identity and its relation to his will to fight have been objects of study since the mid-19th century at least. Schools of thought differ over whether the dynamics are ideological or psychological. The essays by Beringer and Trefousse reveal that the soldier's identity, as well as that of the population at large, was not only complex but situational. Whether rebels saw themselves as Confederates, Virginians, or natives of Richmond depended largely on the context within which one or more of their loyalties came into play. Förster and Hagerman explore the relationship between the logic of policy and grammar of war from the standpoint of people's war and an increasingly industrialized democracy faced with being ripped apart by civil war.

The third section focuses on mobilization and warfare. Essays by Herman Hattaway, Arthur Marwick, Joseph Glatthaar, Stanley Engerman, Matthew Gallman, Ulrich Wengenroth, Manfred Messerschmidt, William Serman, James McPherson, and Wilhelm Deist address problems such as creating, mobilizing, and developing armies; the impact of

industry and economics on warfare; the significance of military reform; and the conscious or unconscious shift in conception from limited to total war (even if the latter term didn't come into common usage until much later). The extent of political, cultural, economic, and military mobilization required for modern combat has long served as a discriminating criterion for the question of total war. Total mobilization equaled total war, at least with regard to the question of means in the ends-ways-means equation. But as these essays indicate, this measure is no longer adequate. Though the resources used to wage the Civil War far exceeded those of previous American wars, not every available resource was engaged. Similarly, many resources were left untouched in France and Germany. It is unlikely that history will ever reveal a truly total war in the Hobbesian sense, where every soul is a combatant and every asset is a weapon, because achieving that condition would demand perfect bureaucratic efficiency in terms of mobilizing all dimensions of national power throughout a war. It would also make war an end in itself by depriving political and military leaders of the opportunity to select only those ways and means most likely to produce success. Perhaps more than any other, this part of the book focuses on the inadequacy of current definitions of total war.

In the fourth section, Jörg Nagler, Phillip Paludan, and Donna Krug explore the home front in the Civil War, while Alf Ludtke, Stephane Audoin-Rouzeau, and Jean H. Quataert do the same for the Franco-German War. Although some essays suffer from an excessive use of jargon, they shed light on the importance of public opinion, the role of women, and the idea that the homeland served as another front that had to be protected and cultivated (or propagandized) in support of actions on the battlefield. Such recognition has become prevalent with the advent of sociological and gender studies. It is practically a truism to say that generals win battles but popular commitment wins wars. Here the traditional notion of total war proves inadequate. Although the full mobilization of society is nearly impossible, women and minorities in 19th century America, Germany, and France, who were previously untouched by mobilization, found themselves engaged in complex ways. But the changes in traditional social and gender roles during the course of conflict might reveal more about the phenomenon of total war than the segment of the population mobilized.

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Lincoln visiting officers at Antietam.

U.S. Army

The next problems pertain to the reality of war. Earl Hess, Thomas Rohkramer, Michael Fellman, Robert Tombs, Reid Mitchell, and Manfred Botzenhart look at the experience of combat within the context of total war to determine whether it was in some way more total than previous wars. The subjects covered include new tactics and technologies, guerrilla fighting, siege warfare, and life as a prisoner of war. These historians have set themselves a tall task, for by most accounts war is always total for those on the sharp end of the bayonet. We simply can't determine whether the reality of combat was any more terrible (or total) for a Roman legionnaire at Cannae than for a Union infantryman at Gettysburg. Only in the eye of a historian, whose perspective is long term, do such differences exist. The best that an historian can do is identify the changes that occurred in warfare and attempt to interpret how those changes affected those who experienced them. These challenges notwithstanding, scholars, students, and especially soldiers will find this section useful for its many details on combat in the mid-19th century.

The sixth part of the book focuses on the legacies of the Civil War and the German Wars of Unification. Jay Luvaas addresses the influence of the Prussian

model of warfare on U.S. military institutions from 1871–1914, Richard Current examines the effect of the Civil War on the rise of America as a world power, Gerd Krumeich investigates the influence of people's war on German and French thinking up through World War I, and Annette Becker explores the ways in which war memorials defined the last war while creating expectations for the next. National and military legacies are often neglected in efforts to understand the phenomenon of total war. Perhaps the criteria for comprehending the character of war should extend beyond casualties and devastation to include how the course of history was changed.

In the concluding chapter, Roger Chickering provides some useful comments on the simultaneity and historiographical legacies of these wars, the organizational and institutional dissimilarities of participating armies, and whether the conflicts can be considered the precursors of total war. On the last count, he seems to surmise that the Franco-German War was the quintessential case of massive mobilization for limited aims, while the issue in the case of the Civil War remains divided into two camps (represented by McPherson and Hagerman on one hand, and Neeley on the other). Chickering also concludes that *Volkskrieg* (people's war), an important phenomenon in both wars, served

more as a specter than a model of future warfare. However, other research suggests that *Volkskrieg* evolved between 1871 to 1914 into the concept of national war, meaning a conflict that involved the full extent of national power. The work of Colmar von der Goltz, Fritz Hoenig, and the younger Moltke emphasized that this was the war of the future and show that German military thinking was headed in this direction and was not alone. American, British, French, and Russian theorists held similar views. The point is that some notion of total war existed before 1914, even if the term was coined somewhat later.

After reading the 32 essays in *On the Road to Total War*, one cannot help but conclude that Clausewitz's trinitarian structure for understanding war—as a function of the interplay of political forces, enmity, and chance—was correct after all. It is ultimately far more interesting and useful to consider the character of war in such a framework than to regard it as suggesting an ultimate *telos*, or compare it to an ideal construct such as total war, which none has yet or likely ever will attain. On this point at least the contributors to this volume, for whom consensus is a rarity, might agree. In any case, readers should draw their own conclusions from this volume. **JFQ**

A REVOLUTION IN NAVAL AFFAIRS?

A Book Review by

DAVID R. METS

American and British Aircraft Carrier Development, 1919–1941

by Thomas C. Hone, Norman Friedman, and Mark D. Mandeles

Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1999.

280 pp. \$39.95

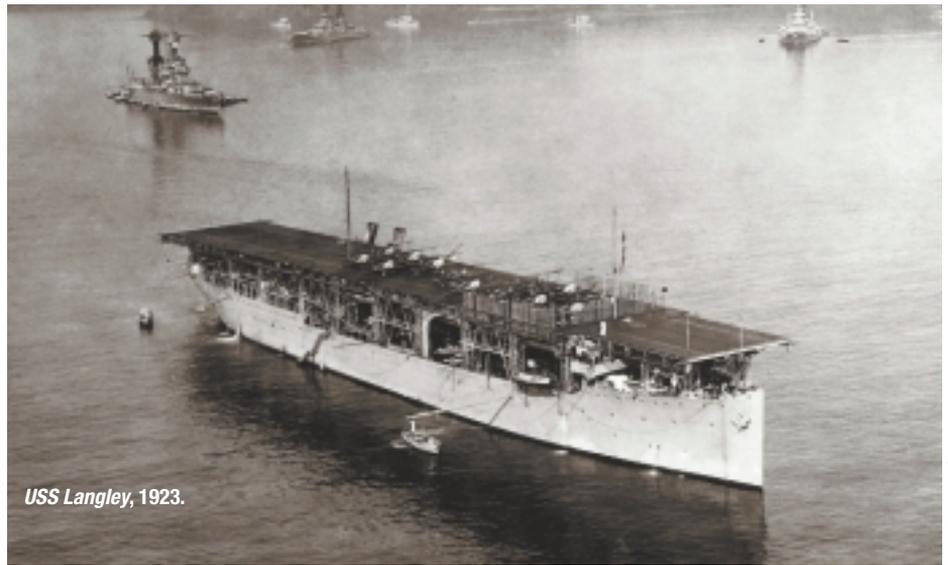
[ISBN 1-5575-0382-6]

The Royal Navy held a substantial lead in aircraft carrier development in 1919. But by 1941 it was largely out-classed in doctrine, organization, and technology by the United States. The conventional explanation is that the air prospects of the Royal Navy were ruined in 1918 when the Royal Air Force (RAF) was established and given responsibility for military aviation. *American and British Aircraft Carrier Development, 1919–1941*, reveals that there is more to the story. The book explains the more rapid naval advances in the United States than in Great Britain.

One can hardly imagine a better group of authors to build a synthesis. Norman Friedman is one of the leading specialists on naval studies in America, Thomas Hone has done much of his research on naval affairs in the interwar period, and Mark Mandeles has focused on command and control, organization, and innovation. Together they bring expertise on strategy, institutional culture, and technology to the subject at hand.

Britain had three carriers on the line during World War I while the United States had none. But many American officers who served in Europe went home impressed with aviation in the Royal Navy and were determined to do something about it. They had the additional stimulus of the campaigns of General Billy Mitchell, which threatened to bring the RAF model to America. From the outset, the concern was that the great advantages of aviation for naval warfare would not be realized if the Navy did not control every dimension of its growth.

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USS Langley, 1923.

Naval Historical Center

This book indicates that part of the British problem indeed resulted from creating a separate air force responsible for all military aviation. But that was one factor among many and the authors do not dwell on it. They acknowledge that RAF operations won the Battle of Britain. The pilots serving onboard carriers were RAF officers until 1937, and their advancement was linked to their parent service. Thus the commanders of British carriers at the onset of war were not aviators. But neither did the Royal Navy have an officer like Admiral William Moffett, a bureaucratic politician of the first order with impeccable battleship credentials (having sailed with Alfred Thayer Mahan). Nor did it have a powerful organization like the Bureau of Aeronautics to act as an advocate of aviation and provide a protected career track for young flyers. Still less did it have an imaginative officer like Admiral William Sims at the helm of a war college with a long gaming tradition.

Sims and others at Newport were testing naval aviation concepts well before *USS Langley* joined the fleet. Ideas that emerged from wargaming boards plus those drawn from experiences of the Royal Navy with early carriers contributed to concepts that helped win the war in the Pacific. Neither Sims nor other gun club admirals of the General Board of the Navy fit the stereotypes of battleship sailors or mossbacks that branded a generation of leaders. Far from being close-minded, they provided much of the thinking before it was possible to experiment with carriers at sea.

Nor did the Royal Navy have an equivalent of Admiral Joseph Reeves.

Although not a pilot himself, Reeves played an essential role by operationalizing concepts emanating from the General Board and Naval War College. He took them to sea aboard *USS Langley* and gave substance to the idea that airplanes had an offensive role, even hinting that they could serve as the main naval striking force. He began developing shipboard handling procedures that ultimately enabled the Navy to put many more planes aboard carriers and use them at a far higher sortie rate than was possible in Britain. Thus, the authors argue, American carriers were able to get airborne pulses of airpower sufficient to achieve results. Reeves was the imaginative operator who complemented the bureaucrat Moffett to the benefit of the Navy.

In sum, the reasons for American superiority included imaginative senior personalities, an institution that sought information and generated ideas, a cadre that experimented with those ideas in games, and an operator who developed procedures, tactics, and organizations at sea. Essential to their success was the Bureau of Aeronautics under Moffett, which provided a home for aviators, fought internal battles over budgets, guarded against perceived onslaught by the Army Air Service, and persuaded Congress to provide funding for seven *USS Essex* class carriers along with eight battleships that were under construction when the Japanese struck.

American and British Aircraft Carrier Development, 1919–1941, is a well written synthesis based on an extensive look at the literature of the period. It develops an impressive understanding of what military innovation is all about.

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