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Author(s): David Reynolds

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# FROM WORLD WAR TO COLD WAR: THE WARTIME ALLIANCE AND POST-WAR TRANSITIONS, 1941–1947

DAVID REYNOLDS
*Christ's College, Cambridge*

ABSTRACT. *This review examines some of the recent British, American, and Russian scholarship on a series of important international transitions that occurred in the years around 1945. One is the shift of global leadership from Great Britain to the United States, in which, it is argued, the decisive moment was the fall of France in 1940. Another transition is the emergence of a wartime alliance between Britain and America, on the one hand, and the Soviet Union, on the other, followed by its disintegration into the Cold War. Here the opening of Soviet sources during the 1990s has provided new evidence, though not clear answers. To understand both of these transitions, however, it is necessary to move beyond diplomacy and strategy to look at the social, cultural, and economic dimensions of the Second World War. In particular, recent studies of American and Soviet soldiers during and after the conflict re-open the debate about Cold War ideology from the bottom up.*

## I

Some may lament the 'Hitlerization' of history. But, sixty years on, the Second World War is still a subject of absorbing interest for scholars, students, and the general public. At the level of general histories of the war in the English language, the fiftieth-anniversary volumes by Gerhard Weinberg, Martin Kitchen, and Alastair Parker are now well established. The first is impressively long, the other two impressively short. All three, particularly Weinberg, tried to do justice to the Eastern Front and the conflict in Asia, as well as the more familiar stories of Anglo-American warfare in Western Europe and the Pacific. For the sixtieth anniversary new volumes are appearing, written from the vantage point of an unequivocally post-Cold War world. Both Pierre Grosser and Bill Purdue sought to integrate this perspective into their 1999 overviews of, respectively, the war's causes and its course; as did Richard Bosworth in his idiosyncratic but stimulating essays on the national historiographies of the conflict. The New Zealand historians, Margaret Lamb and Nicholas Tarling, offer a long view of its origins with emphasis on Asia as well as Europe.[1]

[1] Gerhard L. Weinberg, *A world at arms: a global history of World War II* (Cambridge, 1994); Martin Kitchen, *A world in flames: a short history of the Second World War in Europe and Asia, 1939–1945* (London, 1990); R. A. C. Parker, *Struggle for survival: the history of the Second World War* (Oxford, 1989); Pierre Grosser, *Pourquoi la 2e guerre mondiale?* (Paris, 1999); A. W. Purdue, *The Second World War* (London, 1999); R. J. B. Bosworth, *Explaining Auschwitz and Hiroshima: history writing and the Second World War* (London, 1993); Margaret Lamb and Nicholas Tarling, *From Versailles to Pearl Harbor: the origins of the Second World War in Europe and Asia* (New York, 2001). Some of the larger methodological issues raised by postmodernism are discussed in Patrick Finney, 'International

For a generation, the World War was overshadowed by the Cold War. That is no longer the case. The collapse of the Soviet bloc and the transformation of communist China have opened up new windows on the war, while also unlocking hidden documentary resources. The proliferation of Holocaust studies in the last few years is the result of both of these developments.[2] But perhaps the most striking example is the surge of scholarship on the Soviet war effort, and this will be a major theme of my review. Made possible by the end of the Cold War, such work naturally highlights and probes the shift from wartime co-operation to post-war confrontation. But recent literature on the Second World War has also been influenced by the changing character of historical writing. Diplomatic historians have become conscious of their traditionalist image within a discipline in which culture, discourse, and gender seem to rule supreme. The result has been a new breaking down of the barriers between foreign and domestic history, between the battlefronts and the homefronts. Again that raises questions about the relationships between the conflict itself and the peacetime order that followed. The theme of this review is, therefore, transitions – from war to peace, from World War to Cold War. Its focus is the Big Three allies – the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Soviet Union in the years from Soviet and American entry into the war until the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan.

## II

The first transition is Anglo-American: how, when, and why the United States supplanted Britain as the leading global power. Some might argue that the torch was passed several decades before the Second World War, for instance in the diplomatic revolution around 1900 that saw America's emergence as a naval power and a series of British accommodations with imperial rivals.[3] In *Transition of power*, the Canadian historian Brian McKercher contests that claim. Like others,[4] he insists that Britain's twentieth-century decline should not be pre-dated and that the critical decade was the 1930s not the 1900s. In a phrase that implicitly reverses Henry Kissinger's dictum of 1973, he presents Britain as a great power with global interests and thirties America as one of the 'regional powers with regional interests'.[5] Nor was this decade a harmonious one for transatlantic relations. Despite a rapprochement in 1929–31, during the era of Ramsay MacDonald and Herbert Hoover, when the protracted and acrimonious arguments about naval limitation were settled (to America's benefit), relations deteriorated in 1931–2 with the financial crash and the Manchurian crisis. The 1932

history, theory, and the origins of the Second World War', *Rethinking History*, 1 (1997), pp. 357–79. For a round-table collection of articles on the current state of Second World War studies see *Diplomatic History*, 25/3 (summer 2001).

[2] And also of larger cultural changes. See, for example, the discussion in Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American life* (New York, 1999).

[3] 'From the moment Britain surrendered naval supremacy, its empire was living on borrowed time.' Aaron L. Friedberg, *The weary Titan: Britain and the experience of relative decline, 1895–1905* (Princeton, 1988), p. 300.

[4] See the essays by Gordon Martel, Keith Neilson, John Ferris, and McKercher on 'The decline of Britain' in *International History Review*, 13 (1991), pp. 662–783; and David Reynolds, *Britannia overruled: British policy and world power in the twentieth century* (London, 1991).

[5] B. J. C. McKercher, *Transition of power: Britain's loss of global pre-eminence to the United States, 1930–1945* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 340.

elections brought to power a more isolationist administration under Franklin Roosevelt. Co-operation unravelled in 1932–3 and British policy moved away from the United States in the next year or so, as British leaders tried to address a series of global challenges to their imperial position that, in McKercher's view, contrasted strikingly with Depression America's essentially regional interests and domestic preoccupations. The axiom in Whitehall – expressed by Stanley Baldwin, Neville Chamberlain, and many others – was that America could be relied on for words but not deeds.[6]

This overall argument is, of course, a familiar one. After the British official records were opened in the 1970s, a succession of revisionist studies set appeasement diplomacy in global context and highlighted the coolness and friction in Anglo-American relations.[7] But McKercher's is the first book to offer a global account of British policy over the whole decade, drawing on these monographs and his own intensive research in British and American archives. The result is an immensely valuable overview of the British side of the story. Whereas many of these revisionist accounts highlighted the role of the Treasury in shaping external policy, McKercher pushes attention back to the Foreign Office and in particular to Sir Robert Vansittart, the Permanent Under-Secretary from 1930 to 1937. Borrowing the term of Keith Neilson, he depicts Vansittart as an 'Edwardian' in the tradition of Sir Edward Grey, who sought to maintain Britain's global role through regional balances, backed by diplomatic alignments and military armaments. Vansittart's influence over foreign policy making was, McKercher argues, potent in the mid-1930s, but contested thereafter.[8] His critics combined to topple him at the end of 1937, only to expose their own differences with disastrous effect – Eden, as a 'League of Nations man', favouring a collective approach to security rather than Van's unilateralism, whereas Chamberlain advocated bilateral agreements to reduce the number of enemies. As Chamberlain's policies failed and Europe slid towards war, so America began to bulk larger in British policy. But the fundamentals did not change until the summer of 1940.

'German victory over France changed everything.'[9] It left Britain alone, facing the threat of invasion by Hitler, Italy's assault on its North African empire, and Japanese expansion into undefended Southeast Asia. Dependence on America was the price for fighting on and McKercher highlights this as 'the turning point' in the Anglo-American relationship.[10] In retrospect, that German victory seems inevitable – the flabby Third Republic transfixed by the lightning thrust of modern war. But recent work has underlined the contingency of events. For instance, the eminent Harvard historian Ernest R. May, in his book *Strange victory*, has argued that Hitler's triumph in the West was by no means inevitable. 'Overall, France and its allies turn out to have been better equipped for war than was Germany, with more trained men, more guns,

[6] For a recent study of anti-British feeling in the United States see John E. Moser, *Twisting the lion's tail: American anglophobia between the world wars* (New York, 1999).

[7] E.g. Lawrence Pratt, *East of Malta, west of Suez: Britiain's Mediterranean crisis, 1936–1939* (London, 1975); Ritchie Ovendale, *'Appeasement' and the English-speaking world: Britain, the United States, the Dominions, and the policy of 'appeasement', 1937–1939* (Cardiff, 1975); Peter Lowe, *Great Britain and the origins of the Pacific war: a study of British policy in East Asia, 1937–1941* (London, 1977); G. C. Peden, *British rearmament and the Treasury, 1932–1939* (Edinburgh, 1979); C. A. MacDonald, *The United States, Britain and appeasement, 1936–1939* (London, 1981); David Reynolds, *The creation of the Anglo-American alliance, 1937–1941: a study in competitive co-operation* (London, 1981).

[8] McKercher, *Transition of power*, pp. 188–9, 230–2.

[9] Ibid., p. 293.

[10] Ibid., p. 289.

more and better tanks, more bombers and fighters. On the whole, they did not lag behind even in thinking about the use of tanks and planes.'[11] German war planning was, however, far more imaginative than that of the Allies. The German high command shifted from a main drive into Belgium (where they would have met the bulk of the Allied armoured and mechanized forces) to a thrust through the weakly defended Ardennes. Even more important, May argues, it was confident that the French military would be unable to react quickly to that surprise – a confidence derived, May shows in a striking chapter, from prescient war gaming in December 1939. Spring 1940 was in many ways the fulcrum of the twentieth century. In September 1914, von Kluck's infantry just failed to reach Paris; in May 1940 von Rundstedt's tanks just made it to the Channel. The result of the first was a bloody, four-year struggle for mastery of Europe. The result of the second was instant continental hegemony. This in turn made possible Hitler's bid for global domination, involving first the Soviet Union and then the United States – in short, a truly world war.[12]

McKercher ends his detailed account of Anglo-American relations with the fall of France. He gallops down the rest of the road to Pearl Harbour (December 1941) in eight pages. An epilogue traces the 'new order' that emerged in 1941–5, with Britain, to quote one of her senior diplomats, 'as junior partner in an orbit of power predominantly under American aegis'.[13] The details of that wartime transition, as seen from the American side, is one theme of *Allies and adversaries* – Mark Stoler's major study of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the evolution of wartime strategy.[14]

His title in part evokes the rivalry between the US Army and the US Navy, each of which began 1939 with a very different strategic vision. The Army, typified by General Stanley Embick, head of the War Plans Division in the 1930s, was acutely suspicious of Britain and favoured an essentially continentalist strategy, centred on defence of the United States itself. The Navy, not surprisingly, had a broader conception of its role, and many (though by no means all) of its senior officers were inclined to co-operation with Britain. Balancing Army and Navy priorities was a headache throughout the war – the United States lacked the well-oiled Chiefs of Staff system of the British – and arguments about the relative priority to be given to the Pacific dogged policymaking in 1940–3. Stoler is particularly good on the de facto 'Pacific First' strategy that emerged in late 1942 (chapter 5) as manpower and resources were covertly siphoned away from the build-up in Europe, despite the president's wishes and the declared 'Germany First' strategy.[15]

But Stoler is also anxious to show a growing convergence of Army and Navy thinking about US relations with Great Britain and the Soviet Union – present allies and potential adversaries – and this is the main thrust of his book. In 1943 (chapter 6) the theme is 'Britain as adversary' as London continued to push a Mediterranean strategy that seemed mainly a vehicle for British imperial interests. At the same time Russia was viewed, more ambivalently, as 'Ally and enigma' (chapter 7) – a vital factor in the

[11] Ernest R. May, *Strange victory: Hitler's conquest of France* (New York, 2000), pp. 5–6. May's title is, of course, a reversal of Marc Bloch's 1946 classic about the fall of France, entitled *Strange defeat.*

[12] Cf. David Reynolds, '1940: fulcrum of the twentieth century', *International Affairs*, 66 (1990), pp. 325–50.

[13] McKercher, *Transition of power*, p. 343.

[14] Mark A. Stoler, *Allies and adversaries: the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Grand Alliance, and U.S. strategy in World War II* (Chapel Hill, 2000).

[15] A thesis powerfully developed in his earlier article 'The "Pacific-First" alternative in American World War II strategy', *International History Review*, 2 (1980), pp. 432–52.

defeat of Hitler whose future power evoked both hopes and fears. Subsequent chapters show how fears became predominant by the summer of 1945, within a military establishment that increasingly thought in terms of 'the Big Two'. By the end of Stoler's story, the Joint Chiefs were operating much more as a unity. In consequence, they were able to claim a major say in determining US foreign policy, as evidenced by their long-running argument with the State Department about the need for overseas bases. Moreover, as Embick's own conversion showed, they and their staffs had come round to a pro-British and anti-Soviet consensus. Stoler suggests that this reflected a generational divide: younger officers, less imbued with traditional isolationism and anglophobia, were quicker to perceive Britain's decline and, as a related issue, the importance of Western Europe for future US security.[16] Guided by academic exponents of geopolitics such as Edward Mead Earle of Princeton, they seized on the lessons of 1940 and laid the intellectual basis for the revolutionary peacetime commitments to European prosperity and security that followed in 1947–9, notably the Marshall Plan and the North Atlantic Treaty.

One side of the backdrop to his book is British decline; the other is the rise of Soviet power. But the closeness of the transatlantic alliance made Britain's predicament relatively transparent, whereas the closedness of Stalin's regime meant that the Soviet Union was persistently opaque. Stoler's reference to Russia as 'Ally and Enigma' recalls Churchill's aphorism of October 1939 that 'the action of Russia' was unpredictable – 'a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma'.[17] Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, however, the historical 'iron curtain' has lifted to some degree. Two major interpretations of Stalin's foreign policy, drawing to varying degrees on Soviet and East European archives, were published in 1996. For Vojtech Mastny the crux was Stalin's 'insatiable' quest for security. 'The victory in World War II promised his country more security than it had ever had, yet not enough for him.' His craving for more was 'the root cause of the growing East–West tension', despite the desire on both sides for 'manageable, if not necessarily cordial, relations'. Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov agreed that the 'concept of territorial security was the cornerstone of his regime', stressing Stalin's interest in regions that were controlled or influenced by the tsars. Yet, they argued, he believed in 'world revolution' as well as 'the great Russian empire', confident that his skilful playing of the old world game of diplomacy 'would someday allow him to sweep that world completely away – with its capitalist states and bourgeois civilization'.[18] Realist or paranoid, geopolitician or ideologue – Stalin remains enigmatic. Recent studies of his diplomacy embroider the enigma rather than unravelling it.

In *Grand delusion* Gabriel Gorodetsky looks at Moscow's relations with Berlin and London before Hitler's surprise attack of 22 June 1941, operation Barbarossa. Apart

[16] Stoler, *Allies and adversaries*, pp. 264–7.

[17] Speech of 1 Oct. 1939 in Winston S. Churchill, *Into battle* (London, 1941), p. 131.

[18] Vojtech Mastny, *The Cold War and Soviet insecurity: the Stalin years* (New York, 1996), p. 23; Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: from Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, MA, 1996), pp. 18–19. See also the useful overview essays on the wartime period by Jonathan Haslam, 'Soviet war-aims', and John Erickson, 'Stalin, Soviet strategy and the Grand Alliance', in Ann Lane and Howard Temperley, eds, *The rise and fall of the Grand Alliance, 1941–1945* (London, 1995). For discussion of the problems in using the new Soviet archival sources see the symposium in *Diplomatic History*, 21 (1997), pp. 217–305, and also Silvio Pons, 'The papers on foreign and international policy in the Russian archives', *Cahiers du monde russe*, 40 (1999), pp. 235–50.

from British and German sources, Gorodetsky has gained access to selected materials from Soviet presidential, military, and diplomatic archives, plus Bulgarian and Yugoslav documents. These latter sources enable Gorodetsky to highlight Stalin's persistent concern about the Balkans, particularly access to and from the Black Sea. The first half of the book shows how his hammering on this issue in late 1940, particularly during and after the Molotov–Ribbentrop talks in Berlin in November, prompted Hitler's green light for invasion planning. In April 1941 the Nazi conquests of Greece and Yugoslavia posed an even greater threat to Soviet regional interests. But Gorodetsky also demonstrates that the scramble for the Balkans decisively shaped Anglo-Soviet relations: it distracted the British (as Hitler intended) from his build-up against Russia, while Stalin viewed British predictions of German attack as ploys to lure him into the Anglo-German struggle in south-eastern Europe. Until the last moment London and Moscow each feared that the other was about to do a deal with Berlin. For Stalin the dramatic flight to Britain on 10 May by Rudolf Hess, Hitler's deputy (which Gorodetsky has no doubt was a maverick act), proved that negotiations for a compromise peace were well advanced. Gorodetsky ends his account with lurid Russian visions in the days after Barbarossa of the Royal Navy steaming up the Baltic for a joint Anglo-German assault on Leningrad![19]

Although this book deals with 1940–1, its conclusions cast a long shadow over the rest of the war. Stalin never shook off fears that Britain and Germany would sign a compromise peace, as is clear from his agitation in February 1945 at reports of a separate German surrender in the West. In October 1944 he probed Churchill on the real reasons why the British Secret Service (as he believed) had lured Hess to London four years earlier.[20] These rooted suspicions show that the wartime Anglo-Russian alliance always rested on shaky foundations. Churchill's Moscow visit was, of course, the occasion for his notorious 'percentages' deal over spheres of influence in the Balkans. In the light of Gorodetsky's account one can see a pronounced continuity between Stalin's obsession with Roumania and Bulgaria in 1940 and the priorities he attached to those countries (respectively 90 per cent and 80 per cent) in October 1944. Here then is hard evidence for one part of Stalin's territorial agenda. Indeed Gorodetsky presents him very much as a realist – proponent of 'an unscrupulous *Realpolitik* serving well-defined geopolitical interests' rooted in the tsarist past – and argues against attributing Soviet policy in 1939–41 'either to the whims of a tyrant or to relentless ideological expansionism'. Yet to claim as Gorodetsky does that 'Stalin's foreign policy appears to have been rational and level-headed' flies against the evidence set out in the book. A leader who discounted not only British warnings of imminent German attack but dozens more from his own military and intelligence staff is not easily described in the language of rationality. Here surely is another sign of the paranoia lurking behind the purges, and of his obsession about imperialist encirclement – in short of the 'sentiment' and 'ideology' that Gorodetsky claims had little place in Stalin's policy.[21]

For Stalin the Baltic mattered as much as the Balkans. The first Molotov–Ribbentrop negotiations, in August 1939, had revolved around Poland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania – territories formerly within the tsarist empire. Stalin's concern with these – which figures little in Gorodetsky's book – is, by contrast, central to the important

[19] Gabriel Gorodetsky, *Grand delusion: Stalin and the German invasion of Russia* (New Haven, 1999).

[20] Winston S. Churchill, *The Second World War* (6 vols., London, 1948–54), III, p. 49; cf. Jonathan Haslam, 'Stalin's fears of a separate peace, 1942', *Intelligence and National Security*, 8 (1993), pp. 97–9.

[21] Quotations all from Gorodetsky, *Grand delusion*, p. 316.

collection of Soviet diplomatic documents for the period December 1941 to June 1942, edited by the veteran Russian military historian Oleg Rzheshevsky.[22]

This volume, entitled *War and diplomacy*, covers two major episodes in the making of the wartime alliance – the negotiations in Moscow conducted by Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary, in mid-December 1941, and the shuttle diplomacy of his Soviet counterpart, Vyacheslav Molotov, to London, Washington, and London again in May and June 1942 to discuss an Anglo-Soviet treaty and plans for a 'second front'. The documents come from Stalin's personal files now held in the archives of the president of the Russian Federation, and thus offer a rare insight into the making of Soviet policy at the very top. They confirm evidence already available from the British side about the importance that Stalin attached to an early agreement on post-war Soviet borders, with Poland and the Baltic states at the top of the list.[23] In a sense he and Molotov were carrying on where they left off in 1939–40, this time with the British not the Germans as interlocutors. In May 1942 Molotov's obduracy about the USSR's 1941 borders brought the treaty negotiations with Britain to the point of collapse. Then, suddenly, he abandoned this position and signed a twenty-year treaty of friendship without any territorial strings attached. Historians have speculated about the reasons for Molotov's U-turn. In his war memoirs, Churchill suggested it was a tribute to the solidarity of the British and US governments. More recently, Steven Miner argued that Molotov had become aware through the US ambassador, John G. Winant, of American objections to a deal on frontiers and that Stalin, faced with renewed military disasters in May 1942, had become more concerned to win Anglo-American commitments for a second front.[24]

Rzheshevsky cannot shed any new light on the reasons behind the U-turn: like Miner, he thinks that the situation at the fronts was probably responsible.[25] But he provides dramatic detail on how the policy reversal took place. On 23 May Eden handed Molotov a new draft treaty, shorn of any territorial commitments. Molotov cabled the full text to Stalin, commenting: 'We consider this treaty unacceptable, as it is an empty declaration which the USSR does not need.' Stalin's response was quick and abrupt, cabling on 24 May that this was not 'an empty declaration' but 'an important document'. Although not providing any guarantee of frontiers, 'this is not bad perhaps, for it gives us a free hand'. According to Stalin, the 'question of guarantees for the security of our frontiers' would be 'decided by force'.[26] His go-it-alone show of confidence is remarkable, given the dire predicament of the Red Army in the spring of 1942 as the *Wehrmacht* surged on towards the Caucasus. A few days later, however, when Molotov was talking to Roosevelt in Washington, the line from the Kremlin was again one of international co-operation. 'There is no doubt that it would be impossible to

[22] Oleg A. Rzheshevsky, ed., *War and diplomacy: the making of the Grand Alliance. Documents from Stalin's archives* (Amsterdam, 1996).

[23] See Graham Ross, ed., *The Foreign Office and the Kremlin: British documents on Anglo-Soviet relations, 1941–1945* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 18–25, 82–94. On this period see also Arnold A. Offner, 'Uncommon ground: Anglo-American-Soviet diplomacy, 1941–1942', *Soviet Union/Union Soviétique*, 18 (1991), pp. 237–57, and Lloyd C. Gardner, 'A tale of three cities: tripartite diplomacy and the second front, 1941–1942', in *Soviet-American relations*, 1933–1942 (Moscow, 1989), pp. 104–20.

[24] Churchill, *Second World War*, IV, p. 300; Steven Merritt Miner, *Between Churchill and Stalin: the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the origins of the Grand Alliance* (Chapel Hill, 1988), esp. pp. 248–9, 257–9, 267.

[25] Rzheshevsky, ed., *War and diplomacy*, pp. 159–60.

[26] Ibid., pp. 121–2.

maintain peace in the future without creating a united military force by Britain, the USA and the USSR, capable of preventing aggression. It would be good to include China here.'[27] Was Soviet territorial security to be achieved by international consent or by national power? Stalin oscillated between the two positions, though gravitating to the latter with increasing frequency as the war progressed.

Equally interesting is Molotov's grovelling reaction to Stalin's peremptory cable of 24 May: 'I shall act in accordance with the directive ... I believe that the new draft treaty can also have positive value. I failed to appreciate it at once.' He added that he would present Soviet acquiescence as 'a big concession to Churchill, and especially to Roosevelt',[28] whose views had just been made known to him by ambassador Winant. Molotov was thereby able to change tack gracefully, but he anguished over Stalin's about-face and tried hard to elucidate it when back in Moscow. His role as a glorified message boy is indicated by another instruction from the Kremlin, dressed up, as usual, as a telegram from the Central Committee (*Instanzia*, or 'the top'). Sent on 3 June, this expressed dissatisfaction with 'the terseness and reticence of your communications. You convey to us from your talks with Roosevelt and Churchill only what you yourself consider important and omit all the rest. Meanwhile, the Instance would like to know everything, what you consider important and what you think unimportant.'[29] In this need to know everything there is more than a hint of Stalin's underlying paranoia. To call Molotov 'his master's voice' – almost 'Stalin's yes-man' – may be going too far,[30] but the documents in Rzheshevsky's illuminating collection make very clear who was the boss.

Yet the Western allies developed a very different image of Kremlin policymaking. Although there have been important studies of British wartime diplomacy towards Moscow, Martin Folly is the first scholar to offer a book-length analysis of the underlying assumptions in Whitehall about the wartime Soviet Union, based on a wide array of British primary sources.[31] Folly argues that successful Red Army resistance (rather than Hitler's onslaught itself) forced British leaders to take the Soviet Union seriously and to formulate a clear policy, predicated on cautious confidence that the Soviets now wanted to co-operate with the Western allies. This axiom is familiar, but Folly is at pains to argue that it rested on clear and plausible assumptions, which took hold in Whitehall in 1942–3. First, that Soviet foreign policy aims were limited and largely defensive. The basic goal was security (not revolution); the prime fear was a resurgent Germany. Secondly, that the costs and challenge of rebuilding the war-torn country would be immense. Stalin might need Western aid; even if he did not, the burden of reconstruction was likely to dictate a cheap foreign policy – in other words, co-operation not confrontation. Thirdly, there was faith in Stalin himself, viewed increasingly, in Folly's preferred phrase, as 'a wise statesman, a sagacious realist',[32] who judged that his country's best interests were served by co-operation with his allies.

[27] Ibid., p. 204. [28] Ibid., pp. 138–9. [29] Ibid., p. 210.

[30] See Steven Merritt Miner, 'His master's voice: Vyacheslav Mikhaliovich Molotov as Stalin's foreign commissar', in Gordon A. Craig and Francis L. Loewenheim, eds., *The diplomats, 1939–1979* (Princeton, 1994), pp. 65, 92.

[31] Martin H. Folly, *Churchill, Whitehall, and the Soviet Union, 1941–1945* (London, 2000). Cf. Martin Kitchen, *British policy towards the Soviet Union during the Second World War* (London, 1986); Victor Rothwell, *Britain and the Cold War, 1941–1947* (London, 1982); P. M. H. Bell, *John Bull and the Bear: British public opinion, foreign policy and the Soviet Union, 1941–1945* (London, 1990).

[32] Folly, *Churchill, Whitehall, and the Soviet Union*, p. 168.

Complementing this was a widespread conviction that, lurking in the shadows, was a rival camp – perhaps led by Molotov – which was still instinctively anti-British and even pro-German. Much ink was spilled in speculative Kremlinology, but the general hunch was that Stalin was firmly in the co-operationist camp. One of the many problems with the axiom that the Soviets wanted co-operation was the truculence and hostility often evinced by Stalin and, even more, by Soviet officials. But this was widely put down to ingrained suspicions of Britain, fear of an Anglo-American axis, and Soviet hypersensitivity about equal treatment as a great power. Given such prickly interlocutors, it was hard to calibrate the right tactics. Was it better to be open-handed and full of praise (the line taken by Cripps and Beaverbrook)? Or were firmness, frankness, and an insistence on reciprocity the way to command respect and co-operation? No sure conclusions were reached, but the second view tended to prevail as the war progressed.

It is an essential part of Folly's case that co-operation remained the premise of British policy toward the Soviet Union right to the end of the Churchill wartime government. Although the 'doctrine of hypersensitivity' was replaced by growing irritation at Soviet arrogance, he argues that most of the other assumptions remained in place or, at least, were not fully discredited by Soviet behaviour in Eastern Europe. Even in the summer of 1945, he claims, 'British attitudes were by no means yet in Cold War mode': the calls for 'firmness' and 'frankness' should be understood 'in terms of their relation to the past rather than with our knowledge of the events and attitudes that were to come'.[33] Folly has no doubt that Churchill fits this pattern. Allowed unique access to Stalin, he was persuaded that the Soviet leader was a co-operative realist. Yet the Prime Minister was still prone to fears that the Kremlin was full of incorrigible Bolsheviks. The result was wild oscillations, but around a trajectory of co-operation (pp. 137–8). His calls in the spring of 1945 for greater toughness and for pressing on to Berlin and Prague, were, in Folly's view, belated attempts to put co-operation on a firm footing based on Western interests – negotiation from a position of strength. This seems to me a more accurate depiction than those presenting Churchill as a full-blown Cold Warrior by this date or even as a dyed-in-the wool anti-Bolshevik who had been forced to don the sheep's clothing of appeasement because of wartime exigencies. There is little doubt that Churchill was fascinated by Stalin, and greatly taken by him. It seems implausible of David Carlton to suggest that his professions of trust after Yalta (in public and private) were mere pretence, and that Churchillian assertions such as 'their word is their bond' were deliberate exaggerations so that he could later blast Soviet perfidy.[34]

Folly may have overdone the impression of consensus and confidence. At times, one feels, British wartime policy towards the Soviet Union was little more than (necessary) wishful thinking. Nevertheless, this is a thoughtful and perceptive book. It moves beyond the rather narrational accounts we have to date of Anglo-Soviet relations, often with great detail on the Polish question, to explore the assumptions behind the policies. It reminds us, on the one hand, how limited was the information available about the Soviet Union and its leaders, and yet, on the other, how remarkable was the window opened up by the wartime alliance. Faute de mieux, Western observers made much of very little. Personal contacts with Stalin, boozy wartime banquets, domestic reforms such as greater religious freedom – all were grist to the mill. Even the changing of the guard on the walls of Stalin's study were noted – the replacement of portraits of Lenin

[33] Ibid., p. 166.

[34] David Carlton, *Churchill and the Soviet Union* (Manchester, 2000), pp. 105–6, 130–1.

and other ideologues with paintings of Russian war heroes such as Suvorov.[35] Across the Atlantic, U.S. policymakers were engaged in similar essays in interpretation.[36] Security and reconstruction, not revolution, were also their keywords. None of this precluded the possibility of Soviet expansion, but even Americans who discerned imperialist ambitions in Moscow tended to conceptualize them in terms of 'normal' power politics. Here was the crux: in both London and Washington the wartime alliance encouraged the idea that 'Russia' (preferred to 'the Soviet Union') was entering its post-revolutionary phase.

This, of course, raises the question of what went wrong. Sadly Folly does not push his analysis on into the deepening Cold War of 1945–6. Many scholars judge the early months of 1946 critical – with the Soviet-American face-off over Iran in the United Nations, Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech at Fulton, the impact on Washington of George Kennan's 'Long Telegram' from Moscow, and the Foreign Office's parallel rethink in the face of the intense anti-British propaganda campaign and messages from Kennan's British counterpart, Frank Roberts.[37] It would therefore have been interesting to see Folly's analysis of when and why the co-operationist axioms broke and what perceptions of the Soviet Union replaced them. But what his account does make clear is that foreign policy is based on far more than diplomatic interchanges: we need to probe beneath these to the underlying perceptions of the other country and its society. Good international history must embrace cultural and social history as well.

## III

This is particularly true during total war, when whole populations were mobilized in support of diplomatic goals or in defence of the national homeland. Despite the efflorescence of social and cultural history, however, relatively little of it has addressed the experience of war. The main exception is, of course, the study of memorialization – in literature, art, and especially monuments. But the survivors matter as much as the dead. As Omer Bartov has observed of Hitler's *Wehrmacht*:

> while social historians have probed into civilian society, military historians have concerned themselves with tactics, strategy, and generals ... Consequently, once conscripted, the social historians' protagonists were passed over to the military historians who ... treated them as part of a vast, faceless mass of field-grey uniforms devoid of any civilian past. Conversely, once the war was over, those soldiers who survived it were, so to speak, delivered back into the hands of the social historians, only to continue their civilian existence with very little reference to the fact that for years they had served as soldiers.[38]

The same is true for other nations. 16 million Americans (some 12 per cent of the

[35] See David Reynolds, 'Legacies of the "Grand Alliance": geopolitics, perceptions, and the Stalin enigma, 1941–1945', in Christian Ostermann, ed., *Stalin and the Cold War, 1945–1953* (New Haven, forthcoming).

[36] An important essay in similar vein, though not cited by Folly, is Eduard Mark, 'October or Thermidor?: interpretations of Stalinism and the perception of Soviet foreign policy in the United States, 1927–1947', *American Historical Review*, 94 (1989), pp. 937–62.

[37] For instance, John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947* (New York, 1972), esp. ch. 9; Fraser J. Harbutt, *The Iron Curtain: Churchill, America, and the origins of the Cold War* (New York, 1986); Sean Greenwood, *Britain and the Cold War, 1945–1991* (London, 2000), esp. pp. 17–19.

[38] Omer Bartov, 'The missing years: German workers, German soldiers', *German History*, 8 (1990), p. 52.

population) were inducted into the US armed forces during the Second World War. Some 4·3 million of these served abroad in the European theatre, of whom nearly 3 million passed through Britain. What effect did such experiences have on their lives and outlook? The so-called 'new military history', which seeks to integrate war and society in the experience of soldiering, is turning to these questions. A conference in Edinburgh in 1995 produced an outstanding collection of international essays. In the United States, Gerald Linderman has explored 'the world within war' of American combat soldiers in 1941–5, drawing mostly on published materials.[39] Going further, the young Belgian historian Peter Schrijvers has published an important study of the experience of US combat soldiers in Europe, using some of the rich primary sources now available.[40]

*The crash of ruin* explores the GIs' encounters with European soldiers and civilians, both Allied and enemy. Schrijvers argues that the Americans drew vivid and profound lessons from their wartime experiences. One was the productive superiority of the United States, exemplified in the mechanization of the US Army and the reliance of the fabled *Wehrmacht* on horse-drawn transport. Another was American wealth, demonstrated by pay, rations, and the PXs and, even more, by the almost humiliating desire of European civilians to get their hands on this largesse. Schrijvers stresses the 'limits of communication': language barriers prevented rounded contacts with the locals. In any case most of the latter were women, children, and the aged – dependants who strengthened the impression of European dependence. Another obstacle to imagining a 'normal' Europe was the totality of total war, in which cities and countryside alike had been pulverized by bombs and shells. But all this is precursor to Schrijvers's principal theme, that the degradation of Europe and Europeans was taken by GIs as evidence of the fundamental degeneration and decline of 'the Old World' – his repeated phrase. The continent was cramped (even France would fit into Nevada and Utah), it was shackled by a tyrannical past, backward in living standards, hygiene and morals, and capable of appalling barbarism (as shown in the last weeks of the war by Buchenwald and other concentration camps). According to Schrijvers, the GIs left Europe convinced of the moral and material superiority of the New World and of its mission to make the globe a better place.

There are, I think, some methodological problems with Schrijvers's approach. Repeatedly we are told that 'the GIs felt' this or 'the GIs were convinced' of that. There is little effort at disaggregation. One would like to know, for instance, whether Americans of Italian descent adopted the same contemptuous, racially superior view of Sicilians and Italians as apparently did the rest of their compatriots.[41] Since Schrijvers's thesis depends largely on the assumption that GIs took the temporary as signifier of the permanent (wartime ruination as evidence of cultural bankruptcy), one would like to know whether levels of education made any difference. Presumably not every GI had sufficient background in classical philosophy to echo the comment of one lieutenant in 1945, on America's obligations as a superpower: 'I think of Plato saying the best public

[39] Paul Addison and Angus Calder, eds., *Time to kill: the soldiers' experience of war in the West, 1939–1945* (London, 1997); Gerald F. Linderman, *The world within war: America's combat experience in World War II* (New York, 1997); cf. David Reynolds, *Rich relations: the American occupation of Britain, 1942–1945* (London, 1995). See also the overview article by Ken Coates and W. R. Morrison, 'The American rampant: reflections on the impact of United States troops in Allied countries during World War II', *Journal of World History*, 2 (1991), pp. 201–21.

[40] Peter Schrijvers, *The crash of ruin: American combat soldiers in Europe during World War II* (London, 1998).

[41] Ibid., pp. 120–4.

officials are those who serve against their will, from a sense of duty.'[42] And were they really so ready to blur national differences into a composite image as he suggests when writing of their anger at the concentration camps: 'they realized that similar horrors had been lurking beneath most of the Old World's surface and could have erupted in any of its countries'.[43] Schrijvers seems, in fact, to take American stereotypes of the Old World as a given. There is no attempt to analyse what soldiers might have picked up by way of prior cultural baggage from textbooks, literature, and movies.

For all these reasons, therefore, *The crash of ruin* must be used with caution. At times it is more inferential than inductive. That said, however, it is a richly suggestive piece of work, which lends weight to similar interpretations. Gerald Linderman, for instance, argued that the combat veteran's first reaction to the war's end was simply, 'I survived.' Reactions such as 'we won' and 'it mattered' came later – often after returning home. 'To soldiers' families', wrote Linderman, 'the conflict had been one of utmost moral clarity; victory had turned on the almost perfect congruence of American power and American morality.'[44] Schrijvers's vivid and plausible account of the GIs' experience of war offers a different glimpse of how America's Cold War consensus came into place. After the demoralization of the Depression and the ambivalence of isolationism, there was a new assurance about American power and values, confirmed in abundance by such foreign encounters. As he hypothesizes, this may well have provided a solid foundation for post-war internationalism. Here, certainly, is an area deserving of further research.

Peter Schrijvers's monograph explores the transition from war to peace in the minds of ordinary soldiers, just as Mark Stoler has done for the military planners. At both levels one finds by 1945 a new conviction of American might *and* right. This is important. Several leading scholars have recently urged historians to bring back ideology into their study of the Cold War, to recognize that values genuinely mattered rather than simply being a tool of power politics. Thus, from different angles, John Lewis Gaddis, Odd Arne Westad, Anders Stephanson, and Douglas J. Macdonald have emphasized 'ideals' as much as 'interests' in the shaping of US Cold War policy.[45] This is also the approach of *Freedom's war*, in which Scott Lucas insists that American policymakers genuinely believed that they were engaged in a 'crusade' against the Soviet Union. The Cold War, in his view, was understood and presented, 'first and foremost, as a clash of cultures and ideologies' – such language was not simply a 'screen' for geopolitical and economic objectives. Moreover, argues Lucas, these values were not the monopoly of policymakers but were shared by much of the public. And since the struggle was viewed as one of 'freedom' versus 'tyranny', this imposed certain limits on how Cold War propaganda could be conducted. To talk of 'freedom', says Lucas, 'meant that the U.S. Government, unlike its evil Soviet counterpart, did not direct labor activity or academic research or journalistic endeavors'. Thus, 'it was the nature of American ideology that demanded a private façade' for Cold War propaganda, 'a State-private network' ranging from Radio Free Europe to the Ford Foundation.[46]

[42] Ibid., p. 260. [43] Ibid., p. 257. [44] Linderman, *The world within war*, p. 360.

[45] See John Lewis Gaddis, *We now know: rethinking Cold War history* (Oxford, 1997), pp. 282–3; Odd Arne Westad, 'The new international history of the Cold War', *Diplomatic History*, 24 (2000), esp. pp. 552–6; Odd Arne Westad, ed., *Reviewing the Cold War: approaches, interpretations, theory* (London, 2000), chs. 4 (Stephanson) and 8 (Macdonald).

[46] Scott Lucas, *Freedom's war: the US crusade against the Soviet Union, 1945–1956* (Manchester, 1999), quoting from pp. 2–3.

But the 'new' values of Cold War clashed with older traditions. By the end of the war the Joint Chiefs of Staff and their planners, as Stoler shows, had developed a vastly enlarged conception of American national security interests, under the stimuli of global war and Soviet confrontation. Translating those ideas into institutions, according to Michael Hogan, challenged cherished American values, notably the republican traditions of limited government and virtuous national exceptionalism. His book, *The cross of iron* (presumably a play on William Jennings Bryan's denunciation of the gold standard in the 1896 election: 'you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold'), examines how the country's 'national security state' emerged as compromise between this older political culture and the new security ideology. Hogan's analysis is detailed, at times dense; and there is considerable repetition of his theme from chapter to chapter. But his overriding point is important: 'how the country could safeguard its security without losing its soul'.[47] The underlying fear was of creating what Harold Lasswell had called 'the garrison state', in other words allowing a policy of military preparedness to militarize America and subvert its values. This concern, in Hogan's view, was shared by both Truman and Eisenhower – as evidenced in their approach to defence budgets. Similar compromises emerged in the debates about a Department of Defense (continued civilian control) and universal military training (a renewal, instead, of selective service). In the end, Hogan does not seem to feel that these compromises were entirely balanced. By 1953 defence spending accounted for 18 per cent of GDP, with three-quarters of the federal budget devoted to national security programmes. Hogan suggests, rather sketchily, that security could have been achieved at lower cost.[48] But the point of his book is to show how new ideas had to battle with older values, to emphasize the importance of ideology and political culture in the shaping of Cold War America.

Neither Lucas nor Hogan probes the wartime legacy. The former begins his account with the Truman Doctrine of 1947, the latter devotes only a few pages to the period before 1945. Their work should be integrated with that of Stoler, Schrijvers, and others on wartime. Arguably the turning point in this story was the battle Franklin Roosevelt waged against the 'isolationists' *before* Pearl Harbour, when he redefined American security in global terms and promulgated a bipolar, manichean view of the struggle between democracy and totalitarianism. Cold War institutions such as a peacetime draft, the 'military-industrial complex', and even the 'imperial presidency' can be said to have their roots in 1940–1.[49] Be that as it may, the broad point is clear: Cold War America grew in various, sometimes contradictory, ways out of the experiences of the Second World War. These two eras should not be studied as separate compartments.

On the Soviet side, this is even more important. There, uniquely among the Big Three allies, the homefront was a battlefront. Britain was bombed but not invaded; the continental United States was untouched by war apart from a few balloon-bombs on the Pacific north-west and the odd submarine off the Californian coast. By contrast, the western USSR was a killing ground twice over – in 1941–2 as the German armies rolled east and in 1943–4 as the Red Army rolled west. Strategic cities such as Khar'kov or Rostov-on-Don changed hands several times. Total Soviet losses are unquantifiable. But if one accepts the post-glasnost consensus of around 27–28 million (and some have gone much higher) then this is equivalent to 14 per cent of the prewar population. For

[47] Michael J. Hogan, *A cross of iron: Harry S. Truman and the origins of the national security state* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 266.

[48] Ibid, pp. 469–82.

[49] Themes of David Reynolds, *From Munich to Pearl Harbor: Roosevelt's America and the origins of the Second World War* (Chicago, 2001).

the British the death toll was 350,000 (0·75 per cent); for the United States 300,000 (0·25 per cent). Put another way, casualties in the 1941–4 siege of Leningrad exceeded those of America, Britain, and the British empire put together.[50] It beggars belief that such a profound experience of total war did not have post-war repercussions. But very little attention had been paid to this theme. In 1971 the British journalist Alexander Werth, whose account of *Russia at war* remains a classic, dubbed the period 1945–53, between the end of the war and the post-Stalin 'thaw', as 'the most unexplored period in the whole history of the Soviet Union'.[51] After the Soviet collapse, however, there appeared excellent English-language studies of the total Soviet war experience, notably those by John Barber and Mark Harrison and by Richard Overy.[52] More recently scholars have begun to explore the transition from war to post-war.

Elena Zubkova's book, *Russia after the war*, is a pioneering study, based on archival sources such as public opinion surveys for the Central Committee and military censorship records, as well as memoirs, newpapers, and oral testimony. She reminds us of some of the social fallout from the war – 8·5 million men demobilized in 1945–8, the youngest of whom (born 1923–7) had never had any other employment but soldiering. Of these nearly half a million were invalids who had lost at least one limb. There were neither jobs nor homes for these heroes of wartime Soviet labour: thousands were reduced to living in dugouts. The food supply was also in crisis. Rationing had covered only half the population in wartime, and starvation was acute in besieged cities such as Leningrad and also in rural areas where crops had been ravaged by war. Worse still, in 1946 a sequence of summer drought and then harvest deluges decimated the grain crop, just as the ration-card system was being drastically cut back. The best estimates suggest 2 million died from famine between 1946 and 1948, especially in Russia, Moldavia, and the Ukraine. All this, Zubkova argues, strained the collective farm (*kolkhoz*) system to breaking point. One man from Stavropol (Mikhail Gorbachev's hometown) commented: 'We work on the collective farm as we used to work for the landlords in the days of serfdom.'[53] A further source of instability was the return, often against their will, of Soviet citizens from Germany, who had been prisoners of war or forced labourers. Over 5 million had been repatriated by the beginning of 1946. Zubkova judges that, immediately after victory, there was widespread faith in the government and its capacity for reform, particularly among intellectuals. But by 1947–8 she writes of 'the galloping alienation of the higher and lower orders'.[54] This social background lends plausibility to the claim that, for Stalin, the intensification of the Cold War was in part a form of social control. As with the war scare of 1928, a foreign threat was used to justify internal crackdowns such as post-war purges of party members, the 'kowtowing to the West' campaign in 1947–8, and the attack on 'cosmopolitanism' in 1948–9.

A rather different interpretation of the post-war transition emerges from *Making sense of war* – Amir Weiner's study of the Vinnytsia region of the west-central Ukraine. He too emphasizes the formative nature of the war, but stresses that it was interpreted through previous Soviet experience. Vinnytsia was a particularly turbulent zone. It experienced

[50] David Reynolds, Warren F. Kimball, and A. O. Chubarian, eds., *Allies at war: the Soviet, American, and British experience, 1939–1945* (New York, 1995), p. 429.

[51] Alexander Werth, *Russia: the postwar years* (New York, 1971), p. ix.

[52] John Barber and Mark Harrison, *The Soviet home front, 1941–1945: a social and economic history of the USSR in World War II* (London, 1991); Richard Overy, *Russia's war* (London, 1997).

[53] Elena Zubkova, *Russia after the war: hopes, illusions, and disappointments, 1945–1957* (Armonk, NY, 1998), p. 60.

[54] Ibid., p. 107.

bitter partisan warfare, the resurgence of Ukrainian nationalism, and a religious revival outside the control of the Russian Orthodox church. For the regime, the need for post-war stabilization was acute. Yet Weiner is interested in this process not as a top-down imposition but as bottom-up self-assertion, in which Red Army veterans, particularly those of Ukrainian ethnicity, helped shape a post-war order to their own benefit. He shows how the victors of the post-war purges, in an area where the party had almost been destroyed in wartime, were overwhelmingly from these groups, at the expense of partisans or of Jews (many of whom migrated to Palestine/Israel in 1946–7 as post-war anti-semitism intensified). Unlike Zubkova, he suggests that there was widespread acceptance of the collective farms, not least because the Germans had allowed the former kulaks (rich peasants, purged by Stalin in the early 1930s) to recover their old authority, and argues that Red Army veterans disproportionately took over as *kolkhoz* chairmen and village officials after 1945. If the post-war period saw the Sovietization of the peasant, Weiner claims that it also marked the emergence of 'Soviet Ukranianhood'. Autonomous nationalist groups were brutally suppressed, though this was not completed until 1949, but Ukrainian particularism was fostered within Soviet nationhood, with distinctive passports and an officially sanctioned linguistic revival. The war had seen the final unification of the Ukraine at the expense first of Poland (1939) and then Germany (1944). Ukrainian peasants, victims of the famine and the terror, were now depicted as Red Army victors in the Great Patriotic War, almost on a par with the Russian people themselves. Whereas Zubkova represents the consolidation of Cold War ideology as an instrumental response by a threatened regime, Weiner stresses the support the Soviet regime enjoyed among those who had fought and won the war. The post-war order, he implies, rested on conviction as well as coercion. His veterans, like Schrijvers's GIs, emerge from the war as ideological believers.[55]

Zubkova's and Weiner's are very different studies, based on very different kinds of sources. The first is macro and broad-brush, the second micro and based on a distinctive region. The divergences of interpretation between them only highlight the need for more work of this kind, for instance John Barber's nuanced study of the evolution of public opinion in wartime Leningrad.[56] Taken together, they underline the need to question the Cold War 'totalitarian' image of a Soviet monolith, to study the impact of wartime on the post-war era, to relate high diplomacy and social history.

They also underline the need to take account of the economics of war – another subject all too often consigned to its own sub-disciplinary box. Here the essays in Mark Harrison's collection *The economics of World War II* can be warmly recommended. Harrison is an economic historian who has specialized on the Soviet war effort, but he also wrote a valuable comparative article on some of the other belligerents.[57] This book goes a stage further, with commissioned essays on the six major wartime powers, each written by a national specialist, and drawn together in an excellent editorial introduction. The essays address two principal themes: the contribution of economics to

[55] Amir Weiner, *Making sense of war: the Second World War and the fate of the Bolshevik revolution* (Princeton, 2001).

[56] John Barber, 'War, public opinion and the struggle for survival, 1941: the case of Leningrad', in *'Annali' della fondazione Giangiacomo Feltrinelli* (1998), pp. 265–76.

[57] His works include *Soviet planning in peace and war, 1938–1945* (Cambridge, 1985); *Accounting for war: Soviet production, employment, and the defence burden, 1940–1945* (Cambridge, 1996); and 'Resource mobilisation for World War II: the U.S.A., U.K., U.S.S.R., and Germany, 1938–1945, *Economic History Review*, 41 (1988), pp. 171–92.

ultimate victory or defeat, and the impact of the war on long-term economic institutions and trends. On the first, Harrison's judgement is clear: until early 1942 economic factors mattered much less than military. Surprise, deception, and strategic opportunism by Germany and then Japan carried all before them. Thereafter, he argues, 'economic fundamentals reasserted themselves' and '[u]ltimately, economics determined the outcome'.[58] Among these economic fundamentals, the level of development is particularly important. The Second World War confirmed the evidence from 1914–18 that less developed countries collapsed first – as exemplified by China, Italy, and then Japan. As industry was diverted to war, so fewer goods were available to sell to peasants and foreigners alike in exchange for food and essential imports. Such countries also lacked the commercial and administrative infrastructure for effective and balanced mobilization. This point is underlined by the case of Britain – smaller than Japan in population and territory and, like Japan and Italy, dependent on international trade – which nevertheless mobilized without serious breakdowns in food and fuel thanks to its advanced infrastructure, efficient agricultural sector, and international trading nexus.

The big exception to Harrison's 'development' thesis is the Soviet Union, which, despite relative backwardness and the catastrophe of 1941–2, did not repeat its 1917 collapse. In part, this was because Stalin presided over a very different country from Nicholas II. In 1941 the Soviet Union had a well-developed defence industrial sector and a centralized system for allocating resources. Morale and national unity did not disintegrate despite defeat and appalling suffering. These were all marked contrasts with 1917. Moreover, the Allies were genuinely an alliance, in contrast to the Axis. As the essay by Stephen Broadberry and Peter Howlett reminds us, net grants from the United States (mostly Lend-Lease) covered over half of Britain's current account deficit for the whole war.[59] But foreign aid was also important for the USSR – a point not acknowledged by Soviet historians during the Cold War. Harrison reckons that net imports, mostly from America and Britain, were worth 10 per cent of Soviet GNP in both 1943 and 1944.[60] Other Soviet borrowings were also important. Harrison argues that 1945 represented a victory of mass production over craft industries. 'The quantitative superiority of the Allies in weaponry was based on standardized products in a limited assortment' produced in large, specialized factories and using interchangeable parts.[61] In and after the war, both Great Britain and the Soviet Union adopted this American model; Germany and Japan took it up belatedly in 1942–3 but without totally abandoning their craft traditions. This, Harrison argues, gave them advantages in the later era of 'flexible manufacturing'. The Soviets, by contrast, were 'the defeated victor' – to quote the title of his chapter. Not only did they suffer the heaviest Allied losses (a quarter of national wealth), but the war economy also 'entrenched a production system based on mass-production technology under centralized management for national goals, rather than on flexible production for consumer markets'.[62] Eventual Soviet collapse was, he implies, the result of an obdurate commitment to Fordism as much as to the command economy.

[58] Mark M. Harrison, ed., *The economics of World War II: six great powers in international comparison* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 2. Cf. the more nuanced judgement of Richard Overy, *Why the allies won* (London, 1995), p. 325, that the Allies won 'because they turned their economic strength into effective fighting power, and turned the moral energies of their people into an effective will to win.'

[59] Harrison, ed., *The economics of World War II*, p. 52.

[60] Ibid., pp. 286–7.

[61] Ibid., p. 39.

[62] Ibid., p. 297.

Harrison offers these reflections as asides rather than as firm conclusions. But they suggest further, intriguing ways to explore the post-war transition. By studying the Cold War in relation to the World War, by looking at both from the variety of perspectives that our rich, if richly fragmented, discipline now offers, there is much still to be learned about some of the most familiar years of the twentieth century.