

Although five of the eight contributors teach in the United States, two at Virginia Military Institute (VMI), the editing by Jeremy Black reflects the fact that Palgrave is the new global academic imprint of London-based St. Martin's Press. Some of the writing exhibits a convoluted British style, awkward for United States readers.

The various authors successfully relate military history to political, economic, and social events. To illustrate, Warren Chin in "The Transformation of War in Europe: 1945-2000" has an outstanding section on the media in which he describes "the CNN effect." The media, he argues, lets the world know what is happening, although why the world then cares remains unexplored.

Five of the chapters are chronological: "1815-1864" by Dennis Showalter of Colorado College, "1864-1913" by Black of Exeter University, "1917-1939" by Francisco J. Romero Salvadó of London Guildhall University, "1939-1945" by S.P. Mackenzie of the University of South Carolina, and "1945-2000" by Chin at the British Joint Services Command and Staff College. Three are topical: "The First World War" by Spencer Tucker of VMI, "Colonial Wars" by Bruce Vandervort, also of VMI, and "Naval Power and Warfare" by Lawrence Sondhaus of the University of Indianapolis. In "The First World War" Tucker concludes, "The First World War was quite simply the most important single event of the twentieth century." Insofar as England is concerned, that might be true. This might not be true, however, for the rest of the globe. If World War I is a singular, transforming "event," so are the advent of radio and television, the automobile and the airplane, health-care, privacy, and computers. These too, it must be argued, are in contention for "the most important single event of the twentieth century."

The nine articles, including the introduction, contain many relevant but little known facts in support of various arguments about the unifying theme of expanding technical aspects of military history into the mainstream of other professional historical considerations. Documentation is reasonable. A four-page index is thin but helpful. This text is recommended for integrating the tactics and strategies of European warfare into general surveys by elevating the technical minutia of military history from a too-long isolated specialty into the mainstream of historical discourse.

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**John Springhall.** *Decolonization Since 1945: The Collapse of European Overseas Empires.* New York: Palgrave, 2001. Pp. xxiii, 240. Cloth, \$65.00; ISBN 0-333-74599-X.

John Springhall is Reader in History, University of Ulster at Coleraine, Northern Ireland. In this introductory survey, Springhall offers both a theoretical framework and concise description useful to understand the processes and dynamics of postwar decolonization. Though brief, the book satisfactorily recounts and analyzes the

devolution and dissolution of the European and United States empires while encouraging further study. Good chronology and contextual sensitivity plus appropriate, useful detail strengthen this survey.

I will use *Decolonization* to supplement lectures and discussions for classes in United States and global history as it notes themes linked primarily to the leading European empires, namely the British, French, and Dutch. For example, Britain coupled great financial investments with decolonization, with generally good results as compared with other imperial nations, while the Dutch and French, in their attempts at postwar recolonization, failed at great cost. Springhall's realistic assessment of the United States as a comparable global arbiter of its own interests will constitute a revelation for many American students. Early on he notes, within an "international explanation," the key roles of President Franklin Roosevelt and the U.S., the United Nations, and the superpowers that eclipsed the European states and empires. Also, "colonial issues remain current, despite the disappearance of empires." Witness the continuing Palestinian issue, Vietnam and South East Asia since 1945, the Kashmir problem and the formation of Muslim Pakistan during the drive to Indian independence, Britain's release of Hong Kong to China in 1997, the recurrent debate over Gibraltar, and the continuing roles of Britain and the U.S. in the Middle East and Southwest Asia. The rapidity of African decolonization provoked fragmentation, with enduring consequences, especially for France, which kept military and financial power, exacerbating long-term postwar destabilization in many African states. Nonetheless, France, like the other nations, eventually chose to abandon colonial rule.

This book can be a primer for decolonization for undergraduates and graduates and a prompt to further research. It incites further questions relevant to postcolonial globalization processes: for example, as counterexamples apart from Springhall's themes and treatment, China and the Soviet Union—the one holding a regional empire in its western provinces, and the other having suffered dissolution since 1990—whose self-interested actions in Asia and Africa increased Cold War concerns and complicated matters in the new national states. Another example more relevant to Springhall's themes: the debates over global economic imperialism in the post-Cold War era.

Springhall's conclusions reassess his beginning theoretical explanations, evaluating the "role of collaborative elites" and non-elites in decolonization, plus nationalist and internationalist explanations of colonial devolution and dissolution.

Students will find a good bibliography and thorough index. Though it includes chronologies and outline maps, the book might best be read with detailed historical atlas or wall map at hand. The paperback price allows reasonable use for college classes. As assigned reading, its subject matter and level would best suit upper-level undergraduates and graduates.