
The Great War and American Foreign Policy, 1914–24

BY ROBERT E. HANNIGAN.
University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016,
368 pp.

Hannigan's latest book builds on his previous one, *The New World Power: American Foreign Policy, 1898–1917*. Like the earlier work, the new one is an essential read for anyone who seeks to understand the development of U.S. national strategy. After the Napoleonic Wars, the United Kingdom relied on its sea power, its manufacturing strength, and the gold standard to build a world system that, by 1900, had become extremely comfortable for the United States. Hannigan argues that President Woodrow Wilson's policymaking was more conservative than is widely believed and that both Wilson and his successors sought to preserve and develop the existing world order rather than build a new one. Looking at Wilson's policies in Asia, Europe, and Latin America, Hannigan contends that a quest for stability rather than a drive for revolutionary change lay at the heart of Wilson's agenda and that this approach continued to shape U.S. strategy under the Harding and Coolidge administrations that followed. Readers will come away from this thoughtful book with a richer understanding of problems that continue to challenge the United States today.

Western Europe

Andrew Moravcsik

A History of the Iraq Crisis: France, the United States, and Iraq, 1991–2003

BY FRÉDÉRIC BOZO. TRANSLATED
BY SUSAN EMANUEL. Woodrow
Wilson Center Press and Columbia
University Press, 2016, 408 pp.

Commentators still do not agree on what exactly motivated the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, senior members of the George W. Bush administration sold the war as vital to counterterrorism, counterproliferation, democracy promotion, and Middle East peace. It is unclear whether they believed any of that. French President Jacques Chirac, along with some other European leaders, strongly opposed the war. In this book, Bozo relies on official documents and interviews with insiders to reconstruct how Paris viewed these developments. At the time, pundits on both sides of the Atlantic spilled much ink on France's purported anti-Americanism and principled stance against U.S. "hyperpower." Yet behind the scenes, Chirac's opposition was almost entirely pragmatic. He tried hard to avoid a direct confrontation with Washington and warned Bush that "war will have catastrophic consequences, including on terrorism throughout the entire world." Bush rejected his advice with disdain. Yet ironically, the invasion eventually brought the Americans and the French closer—if only to cope with its disastrous consequences. Today, Paris may be Washington's most constant ally

in the fight against terrorism, spearheading pressure for decisive military action in Libya, Mali, and elsewhere.

The Novel of the Century: The Extraordinary Adventure of "Les Misérables"
BY DAVID BELLOS. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017, 336 pp.

Although ostensibly a work of historical fiction, Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* is in fact a panoramic exposé of mid-nineteenth-century France—a society defined by its contradictions. The splendid memory of Napoleon Bonaparte remained omnipresent, yet his mediocre nephew Napoleon III headed the state. Extraordinary new wealth was everywhere, yet so, too, was abject poverty. Rich men profited handsomely by criminal and immoral means, including the promotion of dangerous industrial labor, corruption, prostitution, imperialism, and even slavery. As Bellos shows, such contradictions found expression in Hugo's own life and career. Although the novel's hero, Jean Valjean, rails against injustice from atop Parisian barricades, Hugo himself led a company of soldiers against the revolutionaries of his own time. Similarly, having written nearly 2,000 pages that movingly described the plight of the poor, Hugo sold temporary publication rights to *Les Misérables* for an advance of \$5 million in current dollars—arguably the highest amount ever paid for a work of fiction. This unique and readable book conveys the chaotic fabric of French life two centuries ago more powerfully than most conventional histories.

Four Princes: Henry VIII, Francis I, Charles V, Suleiman the Magnificent, and the Obsessions That Forged Modern Europe
BY JOHN JULIUS NORWICH. Atlantic Monthly Press, 2017, 304 pp.

There must always be an England, if for no other reason than to produce characters such as Norwich. Descended from King William IV and one of his mistresses, Dorothea Jordan, Norwich has served as a successful diplomat, appeared as a popular radio show host, helped lead the World Monuments Fund and many other charitable causes, and authored more than 20 books. The most recent of these is a popular history of four great kings born between 1491 and 1500. The Spanish Habsburg Charles V was named Holy Roman emperor before coming closer than any pre-Napoleonic leader to conquering all of Europe. He tangled with Francis I of France, a true Renaissance prince who patronized the arts and launched an overseas empire. In an unprecedented act for a Christian king, Francis sided with Suleiman the Magnificent, who ruled over the Ottoman Empire at its political and cultural height and fought his way to Hungary before dying at the gates of Szeged. As the English are wont to do, King Henry VIII stood apart from European squabbles. In order to resolve marital disputes, he famously renounced Catholicism and founded the Church of England. The fates of these four intertwined as they befriended and opposed one another in efforts to dominate Europe. In the end, however, none succeeded in imposing dynastic control and religious conformity, and ever since, European states have been united only in their diversity.

Why the UK Voted for Brexit: David Cameron's Great Miscalculation
BY ANDREW GLENCROSS. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, 82 pp.

Glencross has been a prolific commentator on the Brexit issue, and this slim volume compiles some of his best writing. Although it might have benefited from more quantitative analysis, this is an insightful account of the referendum and its paradoxical consequences. A British government committed to leaving the EU is now trying to preserve almost all the policies the United Kingdom enjoys under the union, except in a somewhat less advantageous form. A vote largely against globalization has empowered the government to propose extreme deregulation and trade liberalization. Labour voters have helped ensure a seemingly permanent Conservative majority. Even deeper contradictions result from a new style of politics characterized by disillusion with established parties and the naive popular belief that referendums are the most directly “democratic” of political institutions. In fact, direct voting promotes British nationalism in a way entirely at odds with the United Kingdom’s distinctive tradition of parliamentary representative democracy. Government by referendum undermines genuine popular control wherever the public proves itself both ignorant and manipulable. And now, politicians will be able to duck responsibility for the negative effects of the choice to leave the EU and blame the public instead.

The Pursuit of Power: Europe 1815–1914
BY RICHARD J. EVANS. Viking, 2016, 848 pp.

Everything about *The Pursuit of Power* affirms a traditional approach to history. Written by one of the most eminent historians of Germany, it imposes a coherent schema on the story of Europe during a period of 100 years bookended by two massive wars. In this period, Evans argues, every country encountered similar political, economic, social, and cultural challenges, even if the timing and details of their specific responses varied. In his lively, fact-laden, and nuanced prose, Evans focuses on the relentless quest for power by nations, classes, political leaders, scientists, economic actors, artists, and everyday individuals. The search for power transformed everything, from the most intimate acts in the bedroom to the creation of empires.

The End of Europe: Dictators, Demagogues, and the Coming Dark Age
BY JAMES KIRCHICK. Yale University Press, 2017, 288 pp.

Through engaging anecdotes, Kirchick paints a dark picture of contemporary Europe: rising anti-Semitism and Islamic radicalization, a looming Russian threat, the spread of Brexit-like referendums, the coming dominance of the far right, rampant nationalism, economic dysfunction, and the danger posed by hoards of immigrants—all of which, he warns, could trigger the dissolution of the EU, the collapse of democratic government, and the outbreak of a war on the

continent. Similar forecasts have been issued like clockwork almost since the birth of the EU. Yet over the decades, European democracy has not collapsed, war has not broken out, the frequency of terrorist acts has declined, and Europeans have increasingly come to see Christianity as no longer essential to their national identities. Even the great wave of refugees that swept into Europe in 2015 has already crested, with the number plummeting over the past year and a half, in large part due to EU policies. With the exception of the United Kingdom, no member state has really contemplated exiting the EU, and even the British are now negotiating to retain as many EU policies as possible. So perhaps readers should not be surprised that, in his brief conclusion, Kirchick reverses course, tells some optimistic stories, and suggests that perhaps “the end” is not quite here yet. Europe, it seems, might still be saved.

Western Hemisphere

Richard Feinberg

China's Strategic Partnerships in Latin America: Case Studies of China's Oil Diplomacy in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and Venezuela, 1991–2015

BY YANRAN XU. Lexington Books, 2016, 168 pp.

For those in Washington who worry that an aggressive China will exploit any missteps the Trump administration might make in Latin America, Xu's deep dive into Beijing's oil diplomacy in the region

offers some reassurance. China faces a long road ahead as it searches for ways to forge mutually advantageous strategic partnerships with the major Latin American countries. China's status as a relative newcomer to the region makes its commercial relationships with the four countries studied here very much a work in progress. Chinese business executives and diplomats are struggling to adjust to fast-paced local political currents, and they have already been forced to learn from painful mistakes. Xu cogently argues that to up its game, China will have to devise more sophisticated political risk assessments. Sometimes, callous Chinese state-owned enterprises must figure out how to honor local codes of social responsibility if they want to maintain their access to lucrative business opportunities. If China is to forge genuine strategic partnerships, it will have to match its hunger for the region's natural resources with a greater willingness to import value-added products and invest in infrastructure and industry in the region.

Rebel Mother: My Childhood Chasing the Revolution

BY PETER ANDREAS. Simon & Schuster, 2017, 336 pp.

Now a professor of international relations at Brown University, Andreas recalls his extraordinary childhood travels in Chile and Peru with his mother, Carol, a radical activist. In the early 1970s, Carol abandoned a comfortable suburban life and migrated with young Peter to a communal cooperative in Berkeley, California (where her path briefly crossed my own). Later, she brought Peter along as she