H-Diplo ROUNDTABLE XXII-39

Andrew J. Williams. ***France, Britain, and the United States in the Twentieth Century. A Reappraisal.*** London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020. ISBN: 978-0-230-28230-8 (hardcover, $107.99); 978-1-349-32825-3 (softcover, $79.99).

17 May 2021 | https://hdiplo.org/to/RT22-39
Editor: Diane Labrosse | Commissioning Editor and Chair: David Haglund | Production Editor: George Fujii

Contents

Introduction by David G. Haglund, Queen's University

A notable leitmotif of Andrew Williams's second and latest installment of his projected three-volume series on the trilateral relationship involving the United States, the United Kingdom, and France is the role of "culture" in helping, for better or worse, to set the tone of diplomatic interaction in this always complicated *ménage à trois*. In keeping with this motif, I begin my introduction with a cultural reference of my own – a reference that, prima facie, might not seem to have much to do with the Williams book, the critiques of its four reviewers, or the author's responses thereto. That cultural reference is to a blockbuster Hollywood extravaganza that hit the silver screen in the year following the temporal cut-off point of the volume under review here, which covers the period 1940 to 1961.

I refer to the 1962 Oscar-winning epic, *How the West Was Won*, with a cast comprising a veritable who's who of Hollywood stardom of that era, as befitting the grandiosity of its mission of recounting the multi-generational saga of the conquest of the American west. I introduce it here to make a point about the thrust of Williams's first two books in this series. Each of those volumes can be regarded as a tentative paean to the vision of that geostrategic institution we call the West, as being something that was, or *should* have been, 'won' thanks to the concerted efforts of all three of the states upon which Williams focuses, rather than just through the exertions of the two English-speaking powers, as is more customarily argued.[1] This West has shown itself time and again to have had a particularly difficult job of becoming 'one.' Disharmony rather than harmony has been its default option, never more so than when we seek, as does Williams in the book under review here, to take the measure of France's positioning within the group, which is more often that of exiled (or otherwise disgruntled) outlier than of charter member.

This leads us to that other prominent leitmotif that courses through his book: the interplay between exclusion and inclusion in the liberal-democratic western project. Put bluntly, France as portrayed by Williams turns out to be more than a bit like Rodney Dangerfield, the one member of the trio that "gets no respect." It has had, for whatever reasons, a consistently difficult time convincing its two English-speaking partners that it both wanted and was entitled to be fully involved in the collective project of building the transatlantic West. This binary tension was also on display in Williams' first book in the series, covering the first four decades of the twentieth century.[2] But it is really only with this second volume that it takes on its greatest salience, as a result of the traumatic events set in motion by France's defeat in 1940 and the subsequent litany of woes encountered during and following the war, as France tried to claw its way back into the ranks of the "great powers."

Emblematic of the inclusionary/exclusionary dichotomy was France's role in the construction of a new European and transatlantic security order during the early postwar years, above all through the formation of NATO. The latter is typically, and rightly, held to be the *ne plus ultra* in the network of Western multilateral institutions that were designed and put in place by the Anglo-American tandem. Yet one of its earliest champions had been the French political luminary of the period, Georges Bidault, founder of the *Mouvement Républicain Populaire* (MRP), and high-ranking official in a series of postwar cabinets, including at times serving as prime minister (technically, *président du Conseil* during the existence of the Third and Fourth Republics). Following the Czechoslovak coup that was orchestrated by the Communists in February 1948, Bidault, France's then foreign minister, contacted his American counterpart, Secretary of State George C. Marshall, to

[1] See, for instance, Walter Russell Mead, *God and Gold: Britain, America, and the Making of the Modern World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008); Michael J. Hogan, *The Marshall Plan: America, Britain, and the Reconstruction of Western Europe, 1947-1952* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987); James E. Cronin, *Global Rules: America, Britain and a Disordered World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014); and Or Rosenboim, *The Emergence of Globalism: Visions of World Order in Britain and The United States, 1939-1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).

[2] Andrew Williams, *France, Britain and the United States in the Twentieth Century 1900-1940* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), featured as *H-Diplo Roundtable Review* 17:3 (October 2015); http://www.tiny.cc/Roundtable-XVII-3

urge upon the Western democracies the creation of a strong alliance, in response to the darkening geopolitical horizon in the east.

Bidault's entreaty has been adjudged by one expert on those years to be deserving of "stature as a landmark of the cold war, as surely as [British Prime Minister Winston] Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech and the Truman Doctrine."[3] But who recalls it today? Even worse, when the military talks that Bidault was urging finally did take place in Washington (and in secret) on 22 March 1948, the French were not only excluded, but did not even know about them. Only Americans, Britons, and Canadians were party to these conversations, which would lead to the following year's formation of NATO. As this same scholar, Irwin Wall, notes, the French "were always made to feel that they were knocking at the door of a closed Anglo-Saxon club."[4]

The four panelists canvass these and other themes in their critiques of the book. It is of course not the business of the person who writes the introduction to pass judgement on the merits or otherwise of a book under review, a task properly left to the reviewers. They have risen to this challenge in a series of critiques I summarize briefly, in an order that proceeds from what I take to be the most to the least favourable of these critiques. I start with the review of Lindsay Aqui, and then continue through those of Frédéric Heurtebize, Martin Conway, and Michel Fortmann. The last word, as always in these roundtables, belongs to the author.

Lindsay Aqui praises Williams for supplying valuable guidance to scholars and others who are trying to figure out why it was that the building of western order on a tripartite basis proved consistently to be so frustrating. In her discussion, the themes of exclusion and "humiliation" (France's) are never too far from the analytical center of attention. She is in general agreement with Williams's position on these two themes, but she does part company from him when it comes to his trying to link the British decision to exit the European Union in 2016 with the inability of a postulated Anglo-American vision of "Europe" ever to have taken flight during the two postwar decades. As she notes, it is not obvious what that Anglo-American vision actually *was* (it shifted on so many occasions), and in any event she doubts that had this vision somehow soared more successfully it would have sufficed to keep Britain any more committed to the EU than it turned out to have been, five years ago. Still, she commends Williams for having provided new insight into the shaping of the postwar world.

Frédéric Heurtebize is similarly enthusiastic about the book, especially because of its "multidimensional" recounting of the trilateral relationship's ups and downs during the postwar period, and he praises the cultural orientation that leads to a greater focus on intellectual trends in France (and to a lesser degree, the two other countries) than is usually encountered in works of diplomatic history. He agrees with Williams that the philosopher Henri Bergson's importance in helping set the course of French thinking on foreign policy is usually dimly recognized, if indeed it is recognized at all, in scholarly studies. He does query whether the year (1961) that Williams chose to draw his book to a close was the best one, and wonders whether different years – for instance, 1958 (the founding of the Fifth Republic) or 1962 (the end of the Algerian war, and the French referendum strengthening President Charles de Gaulle's powers) – might have constituted better stopping points. Again, like Aqui, Heurtebize, concludes on a note of high praise for what he finds to be a "highly informative, thorough, and well-documented book."

Martin Conway shares with the two reviewers the sense that Williams has made a useful contribution to the scholarly debate, especially regarding the restoration of a French position of some prominence in the postwar world, continuing down to the present. He is less certain, however, that the injection of cultural and intellectual leading lights, which is often

[3] Irwin M. Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France, 1945-1954* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[4] Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France*, 134-35. On those secret discussions, see Cees Wiebes and Bert Zeeman, "The Pentagon Negotiations March 1948: The Launching of the North Atlantic Treaty," *International Affairs* 59 (Summer 1983): 351-363.

associated with the Montparnasse scene of the postwar years, contributes much to our understanding. For Conway, it is Williams's delving into the documentary diplomatic record that returns the greatest yield. Cases in point are the chapters upon which Conway bestows his greatest praise, the ones covering European integration and the French and British relinquishment of empire; these chapters, Conway finds to be "strong precisely because Williams allows the material he has found primarily in the French diplomatic papers to sprawl across the chapters, rather than disciplining them within a coherent argument."

It is on this last point of coherence in argumentation that Michel Fortmann begs most strongly to differ. He would much prefer it had Williams provided a clearer set of thematic guidelines – a *problématique* as it were – to assist the reader in wending his or her passage through the book's empirically rich diplomatic alleyways. Like Conway, Fortmann is also somewhat dubious regarding the injection of culture (a concept he argues should have been operationalized by the author), because trying to assess foreign policymaking through lenses of "intellectual trends or fashions" is always a risky business. In particular, Fortmann finds that the claim that de Gaulle was a "Bergsonian" is really a stretch. Instead of trying to imbue him with deep ideological consistency, we would be better off, writes Fortmann, thinking of de Gaulle as fundamentally a pragmatist. Fortmann begins his review where I end my introduction, upon a wistful note associated with the sheer breadth of the Williams research program, which he rightly calls a "model of its kind," one that reminds us all of the scholarly joys that once were ours, in a pre-pandemic "before time" when we could hop on a plane to travel off to far-flung diplomatic archives.

Participants:

Andrew Williams is Professor of International Relations at the University of St Andrews. His most recent books include *France, Britain and the United States in the 20th Century: 1900 – 1940*, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), and a second volume, *1940 – 1961*, (Palgrave Macmillan 2020). Other relevant works include: *Liberalism and War: The Victors and the Vanquished*, 2006, and; *Failed Imagination? The Anglo-American New World Orders from Wilson to Bush*, 2nd edition, 2007. He was editor of the *International History Review* from 2010 to 2016.

David G. Haglund is a Professor of Political Studies at Queen's University (Kingston, Ontario). His research focuses on transatlantic security, and on Canadian and American international security policy. Among his books are *Latin America and the Transformation of U.S. Strategic Thought, 1936-1940* (University of New Mexico Press, 1984); *Alliance within the Alliance? Franco-German Military Cooperation and the European Pillar of Defense* (Westview Press, 1991); *Will NATO Go East? The Debate Over Enlarging the Atlantic Alliance* (Queen's University Centre for International Relations, 1996); *The North Atlantic Triangle Revisited: Canadian Grand Strategy at Century's End* (CIIA/Irwin, 2000); *Ethnic Diasporas and the Canada-United States Security Community: From the Civil War to Today* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2015); and *The US "Culture Wars" and the Anglo-American Special Relationship* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019). His current research project focuses on strategic culture and the France-U.S. security and defense relationship.

Lindsay Aqui is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow at the University of Westminster. Her current research looks at British officials and politicians working in the institutions of the European Communities in the period 1973–86. Her latest book is *The First Referendum: Reassessing Britain's Entry to Europe* (Manchester University Press, 2020).

Martin Conway, MA, D.Phil., is Fellow and Tutor in History at Balliol College, and Professor of Contemporary European History at the University of Oxford. He is the author of a number of books on twentieth-century European history, including several works on Belgium, and most recently *Western Europe's Democratic Age 1945-68* (Princeton University Press, 2020). He is currently working on the theme of masculinity and politics in the twentieth century.

Michel Fortmann, (Ph.D., Montréal) is associate professor of political science at the Université de Montréal. He co-directed with T.V. Paul the McGill/U.de M. Centre for International Peace and Security Studies (CIPSS) since its foundation from 1996 until 2013. He is the author of *Les cycles de Mars. Révolutions militaires et édification étatique de la*

Renaissance à nos jours, (Economica, 2010). He has written extensively and edited several books on defense policies, arms control, European security and strategic studies. His latest publication is *Le retour du risque nucléaire,* collection « Le monde en poche », Presse de l'Université de Montréal, 2019.

Frédéric Heurtebize is associate professor of U.S. history and politics at the University of Paris Nanterre and associate researcher at the *Institut de recherche stratégique de l'Ecole militaire*. A former Fulbright visiting research associate at Georgetown University and at Johns Hopkins-SAIS, his research focuses on US foreign policy and transatlantic relations. He has published *Le péril rouge, Washington face à l'eurocommunisme* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2014) and was co-editor (with Maud Quessard and Frédérick Gagnon) of *Alliances and Power Politics in the Trump Era: America in Retreat?* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020). Other publications include "Eurocommunism and the Contradictions of Superpower Détente", *Diplomatic History* 41: (2017); « Le GOP et la politique étrangère: vers un nouvel isolationnisme ? », *Politique américaine* 29 (2017); "Washington's Cold War Diplomacy in Italy in the 1970s", *Society* 51:5 (2014); and "The Union of the Left in France: A Threat to NATO? The View from Washington," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 9:3 (2011).

Review by Lindsay Aqui, University of Westminster

In his second volume of *France, Britain and the United States in the Twentieth Century*, Andrew J Williams explores the period 1940-1961 with two aims. First, to examine the triangular relationship of France, the United Kingdom, and the United States after the fall of France. The search for a world order, the imperative shared by British and American policymakers to find states with which they could entrust "core Western values", and the complete transformation in the power relations between the three countries are the central stories that Williams tells (12). To this he adds complex debates in France about what those core values, specifically *liberté* and *démocratie*, meant. Furthermore, he analyses the ways those debates contributed to the emergence of a "new European federalism," disagreement with the British about the future of Europe, and the rise of a strong anti-American sentiment in France, especially under the leadership of President Charles de Gaulle (12-13).

Williams's second aim is to contribute to the "cultural turn" in international history by utilising "what we can call 'cultural' sources, and in particular the writings of key French writers of the period" (4-5). Williams emphasises that the 'narratives' told by American, British, and French society are central to his argument, and he considers the extent to which the ideas of a society can influence key decision makers. As such, Williams weaves together sources from state archives, think tanks, intellectuals, journalists, writers, and more, and adds to our knowledge of the extent to which ideas about the post-war global order circulated beyond actors within government circles. The story of the creation of new institutions in Europe, and Germany's integration with them, for example, is told not only from the viewpoint of the agreement reached in April 1949 between American Secretary of State Dean Acheson, British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, and French Foreign Minister Robert Schuman that there would be a future German Federal Republic (131), but also from the perspective of contemporary intellectuals like the French political scientist Raymond Aron. Despite his scepticism of "abstract and absolute political visions," Aron believed that a "European Union of some sort might be a stronger bulwark" against another war than that which could be provided by the nation-state (156).

Two narratives are especially prominent in Williams's analysis. The first is the sense of humiliation, which Williams identifies as the *leitmotif* of the book. It is palpable in the exploration of the painful debates in France about collaboration, resistance, and the *épuration* (cleansing), and in the sense in France and the UK, following the Suez Canal crisis, that the U.S. had "usurped their role as powers who could do more or less as they pleased" (213). Exclusion is the second prominent theme, especially the ways in which French concerns about the post-war order were bypassed. Both of these themes are central to the analysis offered by Williams of collaboration and resistance, the design of the new world order, European integration, and decolonisation.

Chapter Two establishes France's experience of resistance and also the ways in which the United States and the United Kingdom "added to the humiliation of defeat by bypassing French concerns and in so doing damaged the basis for a fraught post-war relationship" (29). Tensions over the post-war order, between the Americans and the British on the one hand, and the French on the other, emerged while the war still raged. As Williams explains, the Anglo-American view of a post-war order based on international norms and morality clashed with the French view of the "primacy of the state" (61). British and American views were not always in alignment, especially over questions of the empire, but "Britain was far more convinced of the necessity of meeting the Americans half-way in the name of a much greater need for survival and the defeat of Germany" (63).

The exclusion of France is the most prominent theme in Williams's analysis of the emergence of the new world order. Although Prime Minister Winston Churchill defended France's right to a United Nations Security Council seat and role in the occupation of Germany, France's exclusion from the Yalta Conference is a case in point (110). The French also found themselves left out of the Potsdam Conference, a particularly injurious slight given that the decisions taken there seemed to be a "prelude to the reconstruction of a central German authority" (111). Throughout these discussions it became clear that the so-called Anglo-American special relationship was the key to 'Anglo-Saxon' conceptions of the way the postwar world should be organised, whereas the French tended to emphasise the importance of economics for security, and of course for controlling Germany (89–90).

Although France, the UK, and the U.S. all agreed that Europe had to go beyond nationalism, governments in each country wanted that aim to be achieved in accordance with their own national interests. The institutions and frameworks that eventually emerged represented, in Williams's view, both successes and failures, depending on the perspective of the observer. With the support of American security guarantees, France was able to modify its policies on Germany and eventually move towards cooperation. Despite the political and economic instability of the Fourth Republic, by 1957 the Treaties of Rome had been signed, cementing France's place at the heart of new European institutions (127). Yet at the same time, the institutions that eventually emerged did so without the participation of the United Kingdom. The European Defence Community (EDC) was another failure for the Americans, according to Williams. Presidents Harry Truman and Dwight Eisenhower had hoped that the UK would play a full part, yet Churchill, who by this time had returned to No.10 Downing Street, saw the UK's security as provided by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and thus remained apart from the proposal for one of the same reasons that Clement Attlee's Labour government rejected participation in the European Coal and Steel Community: concerns about the necessary sacrifice of national sovereignty (164–168).

The ending of the British and French empires was, along with the question of European cooperation and integration, "a determinate element in the evolving relationship between the three polities" (184). Williams rejects the mythology of the UK's easy retreat from its empire, but also emphasises the differences between French and British decolonisation. The humiliation of the French was two-fold due to the trauma of the end of empire, but also because was the country still feeling "humiliation at the hands of the Germans" (225). For America, the dominant issues were encouraging decolonisation without at the same time destabilising the newly independent nations of the world in the context of the Cold War. "Ironically," as Williams points out, "it would be the United States that was being accused of being the imperialist nation" by the 1960s (220).

In my view one of Williams's strongest conclusions concerns the ways in which the period 1940-1961 provided the foundation for a later resurgence in French power within Europe. French exclusion from Anglo-American postwar planning and suspicion of American ambitions for a strong British role in the nascent European institutions provide crucial context for understanding de Gaulle's refusal to countenance the UK's first application for European Economic Community membership, which was submitted in 1961 and vetoed in 1963. Important questions are also raised about why the UK was never able to develop its own national success story in relation to its place in the European Communities, then European Union (192). Less convincing, however, is the notion that Brexit is a manifestation of the "failure" of American and British visions of 'Europe' to emerge (268). 'British' (and 'American') visions of 'Europe' shifted considerably over time and it is not clear whether, if those visions had emerged, they would have been accepted and supported by the British public in the 2016 referendum. This line of thinking also seems to underemphasise the ways that the UK has shaped the European integration project, through, for example, its influence on the Single Market or support for successive rounds of enlargement. This criticism aside, I found Williams's book to be an informative look at the unbalanced triangular relationship between the UK, the U.S., and France and the ways in which these three states attempted to shape the new world order at the end of the Second World War.

Review by Martin Conway, University of Oxford

This second volume of what the author intends to become a multi-volume history of the relationship of France, the United States, and Britain in the twentieth century takes us to the heart of the matter. In contrast to the previous volume on the decades prior to 1940,[5] and the subsequent one that Williams hopes to write on the 1960s and 1970s, the triangular nexus of London, Paris, and Washington was at the heart of many of the defining events in the era between 1940 and the early 1960s. From the liberation of southern and western Europe between 1943 and 1945, to the construction of economic, military, and political co-operation in Western Europe after 1945, and the manifold crises of the disaggregation of European imperial rule in Africa and Asia over the post-war years, the dynamics of how these three states acted, and more especially how they reacted to each other, were frequently of central importance.

More than that, they constituted a particular constellation of power. Especially when viewed from the much-diminished perspective of the early decades of the twenty-first century, this was the moment of state high modernity, when economic power, military force, and civil bureaucracy converged on the accomplishment of *grands projets* – military campaigns, economic reconstruction, and social reform, conceived on an unprecedented scale, and implemented in largely novel ways – and the projection of their power on a global scale. Of course, they were not alone: the Soviet Union and Germany had, at least for parts of this period, an equivalent importance. Nor was the continuity of their power assured. This volume does, after all, start with – and in many ways never leaves behind – the defeat and occupation of France by the forces of the Third Reich in June 1940. Moreover, it ends with France and the U.S. confronting unwinnable wars in Algeria and Vietnam, and Britain, which was stuck in a limbo between imperial decline and marginalisation from Europe, facing an exit door which Williams does not hesitate, in his concluding pages, to label Brexit.[6]

Power therefore is neither assured nor permanent, and the great strength of Williams's close-up chronological approach is how he guides his readers through the continuous evolution of the relationships of power between his three states. For France, this period was, by his account, one of repeated humiliation: most obviously in 1940, but also through the marginalisation of France from the big decisions of the immediate post-war era, the difficulties of its political and economic reconstruction, and its repeated colonial defeats from Dien Bien Phu to Algeria. And yet, as he rightly comments, the re-launch of French state power in the early years of the Fifth Republic, aided by disengagement from empire and the forging of a defining relationship with West Germany, did result in "the rehabilitation of France as a significant power" (242), enabling it to break from an American-led North American Treaty Organisation (NATO), and block British entry into the European Economic Community (EEC). Conversely, for Britain, 1945 proved to be a *victoire sans lendemain*. Financial crises, economic difficulties, and colonial revolts presented enormous challenges for the over-stretched British imperial state. In response, British decision-makers did not manage to chart a new course in the post-1945 world. Caught between receding imperial networks, marginalisation from the new European political and economic structures, and dependent on American favour, only the Foreign Secretary in the postwar Labour government, Ernest Bevin, and, more briefly, the Conservative Prime Minister in the later 1950s, Harold Macmillan, emerge from Williams's account as possessed of an understanding of how Britain might reconcile the expansive definition of its interests with the reality of its finite resources.[7]

Above all, the ascendancy of the U.S., which was superficially so imposing in its imperial pomp after 1945, proved to be a fragile phenomenon. Quite apart from the offstage challenge presented by the Soviet Union, and global Communism, American policy-makers struggled to impose their will on their British and French equivalents. Their frustration with

[5] Andrew J. Williams, *France, Britain and the United States in the twentieth century, 1900-1940: A Reappraisal* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[6] See also the special issue of *Contemporary European History* 28:1 (2019), Contemporary European Historians on Brexit.

[7] For a recent account, see David Edgerton, *The Rise and Fall of the British Nation: A Twentieth Century History* (London: Allen Lane, 2018), 253-280.

British imperial illusions, and with the arrogant mystique so artfully fostered by General Charles de Gaulle during the war and, even more so, after his return to power in May-June 1958, constitutes one of the *leitmotifs* of Williams's account. This disguises, however, the more structural weaknesses of American power in this era. The immobility of decision-making structures in Washington, the uneven quality of its bureaucratic and military personnel, and its repeated distraction by crises that were peripheral to the United States' core interests, made America an imperial power with what we might now diagnose as a bad case of ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). It had the resources, and to some extent the ideas, to act as an imperial power, but it often fell short in the execution. Too dependent on the intermittent attention-span of presidents – well demonstrated here by the State Department nervously trying to prevent John F. Kennedy from falling under the thrall of de Gaulle, when he made his first visit as President to Paris in June 1961 – or simply too preoccupied with its own priorities to recognise the ambitions of others, U.S. foreign policy towards France and Britain in these years was a matter of bits and pieces rather than the consistent pursuit of a strategy.[8]

It is therefore one of the great strengths of Williams's book that he does not seek to impose a strong shape on his subject matter. The two best chapters – those on European integration, and on hesitant European disengagement from empire – are strong precisely because Williams allows the material he has found primarily in the French diplomatic papers to sprawl across the chapters, rather than disciplining them within a coherent argument. Given the limitations on their power, and the urgency of many of the post-war crises, policy-makers rarely got ahead of the agenda of the day's newspaper headlines. Or, as Williams puts it more substantially, all three powers were "groping in the dark for an understanding of what had happened to them and what good (or bad) might come out of it" (124).

There were ministers, officials, and professional diplomats, such as Charles E. Bohlen for the U.S., or Maurice Couve de Murville for France, who intermittently managed to put their hand on the tiller.[9] Sometimes, their efforts paid off, such as in the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), while at other times – most notably the slow-motion car-crash of the European Defence Community (EDC) – they ended in failure. There was no defining logic to these outcomes. There were no dominant leaders, and often the policies adopted – as in the case of the Franco-British attack on Egypt in 1956 – reflected mind-sets which defied rational explanation. Williams's book is therefore rightly not one about individuals, but about the problems which arose, and the policies which were devised "at pace" (as British Prime Minister Boris Johnson would term it) and often in the full glare of publicity, to address them. If nothing else, this is a useful reminder that the ever more chaotic processes of European and Atlantic policy-making in recent years should not be too facilely contrasted against an assumed golden age of measured governance that prevailed half a century ago.

As such, this is a book which conveys more effectively than most the flavour of the diplomacy and policy-making of the era. We have probably passed the time when we want to read about the visions of the statesmen who met at Yalta in 1945, and many other places over the subsequent years. Summitry was part of the new theatre of the age. Yet, most of the time the political leaders and diplomats were struggling to catch up with the unexpected, and endeavouring to devise an agreed policy within their own complex decision-making structures, while failing to understand the preoccupations of their interlocutors. If this means that the individuals who flit across these pages seem more often to be following than leading, as in the rather pathetic description by Williams of the French prime minister (*Président du Conseil*) Guy Mollet being sent off to Washington in early 1957 to repair the damage done by the Suez Crisis to Franco-American relations, that serves as a healthy corrective to the attempts of grandstanding political figures, de Gaulle above all, to claim that they possessed a

[8] Charles Bohlen recalled that the Kennedy-de Gaulle conversations contained "nothing of particular interest", except for the opportunity they provided for de Gaulle to expand on his "stubborn view of the world": Charles E. Bohlen, *Witness to History, 1929-1969* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), 479.

[9] Bohlen; Maurice Couve de Murville, *Une politique étrangère, 1958-1969* (Paris: Plon, 1969).

consistent strategy. As Williams rightly observes, de Gaulle wanted to be an enigma "and has succeeded in that aim" (244). But that is probably because he did not in fact know where he was going.[10]

And yet, for all of the virtues of this disabused and complex reading of the post-war years, this volume is also a frustrating read. Partly this is a product of the flaws in its execution. Rarely, if ever, have I read an academic volume that contains so many typos (duel for dual, principle for principal), and so many errors of names, of places, and of dates. Some of these are presumably the product of slips of the mind or of the fingers on the keyboard: 9 May 1940 for the German invasion of France (44), Francis rather than François Mauriac (62), Atlee for Attlee (37). Others, however, are mistakes of the kind that, when repeated, undermine trust in a broader way. Admiral François Darlan would have been an unlikely prime minister of France in February 1940 (46); the Casablanca conference was held in 1943 not 1942 (98); the Berlin Wall was built in 1961 not in 1958-59 (251); Pierre Mendès France was not a Gaullist, but quite the opposite (p. 207); Bao Dai was very much a person, and not the institutional name for the monarch of Vietnam (202); and the *Alabama* was built (by my great-great grandfather, among many others) on the Mersey, not the Clyde (83). To which must be added the repeated mis-spelling of French-language source material. It is excellent to have, for once, the French original of texts that it would be all too easy to cite only in translation, but this pleasure is mitigated by the misplaced deployment of accents, and mis-spellings of frequently encountered terms, such as *européenne*, which begin to eat away at confidence in the archival transcriptions that underpin the project.

Of course, such carping can appear mean-spirited. We all know the time pressures on scholars, as well as the complete abandonment of any pretence at editorial processes by many publishers, but it seems to me that these flaws are indicative of a book that hurries forward across a wide range of fields and subjects, rather than pausing to develop a more complex reflection on its subject-matter. The book displays some excellent primary material – especially that derived from the French diplomatic archives – but this is mixed in with repeated recourse to citations and arguments drawn from a wide range of other historians, which at times risk turning it into a digest of the secondary literature. This is reinforced too by its digressions into cultural history. Williams is refreshingly determined to go beyond what his politicians and diplomats did, and to explore the mindsets and mentalities that underpinned their actions. That has evident benefits; but, especially in the sections on France, it leads to the rather haphazard deployment of arguments derived from a range of writers and intellectuals. Some of these come off quite well: it is always excellent to read about the unduly neglected novelist Romain Gary, even if the title of his most famous book is repeatedly misspelt (e.g., 31).[11] But, all too often, these references end up becoming name-checks – such as those to Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Simone de Beauvoir (who would not have been best pleased to find her first name rendered as Simon on page 30) – that are invested with a rather dubious explanatory power. Thus, a good point about the incoherences of French policy-making is explained with reference to Michel Foucault's writings about the efforts to turn human beings into subjects (124).[12] However sympathetic one might be to the ambition, there is just too much of a leap here from the specifics of policy-making to the broader contours of cultural trends.

The book is most effective when it sticks instead to French policy-making, tracing the dogged efforts of a generation of French political leaders, diplomats, and state officials, to rebuild the presence and power of France after the Liberation of 1944. This was often a thankless task, prompting an unkind (and sexist) American journalist to refer to France as late as 1954 as "an overripe *prima donna*" (198) who did not realise that she had lost her former charms. In some domains, most notably empire, this was undoubtedly true; but in other fields the dominant American perception of France as a spent force was highly misleading. The political system of the Fourth Republic, with its basis in parliamentary democracy, was not conducive to governmental stability. There was nevertheless an underlying consistency to French foreign policy throughout

[10] For an analysis of de Gaulle's foreign policy that emphasises its rather empty grandiloquence, see Julian Jackson, *A Certain Idea of France. The Life of Charles de Gaulle* (London: Allen Lane, 2018), 564-569.

[11] Romain Gary, *Education européenne* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1945).

[12] E.g. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1970).

the post-war years, which focused on three goals: the recovery of economic prosperity and political authority, the prevention of any renewed threat from Germany, and the consolidation of its colonial and North African domains. The third of these was the source of repeated reverses until the Gaullist Fifth Republic summoned up the resolve to abandon Algeria and grant a rather supervised independence to the states of French West Africa. But the other two goals were achieved. Most strikingly, French decision-makers managed to extricate themselves from fruitless attempts to subordinate Germany, and instead opted to integrate the West German state in structures of political and economic co-operation, which by the 1960s had led to a durable Franco-German alliance.

Unsurprisingly, therefore, Williams concludes his book by leaving "the final word" to West Germany (271). De Gaulle may have returned to power in 1958 talking a grand rhetoric of European independence, from the Atlantic to the Urals, but those who surrounded him had the much more specific ambition of using the structures of West European co-operation to win France a freedom of manoeuvre which its initial pursuit of an alliance with Britain through the Treaty of Dunkerque (March 1947), and subsequently its attempts to win American backing for its great-power ambitions, had singularly failed to deliver. How that change in France's orientation came about is not really explained by Williams, who focuses on the psycho-drama of French policy towards Washington during the 1950s, rather than what was happening at the same time in relations between Paris and other European capitals. In this respect, the triangular conception of the book ultimately becomes something of a handicap. As Princess Diana observed, relationships involving three parties are rather crowded, and by the 1950s many of the more perceptive French officials had decided to separate themselves from Britain and the U.S. in favour of an alliance with West Germany and the other West European states. Of course, as the debacle of the EDC demonstrated, this was not easy, but the French turn to Europe had political and economic logics which proved deeper than the more public theatre of Franco-American friendship and rivalry.

Above all, France discovered that it had willing partners in the other West European states. This is the other story of the post-war years: the multiple ways in which pragmatism, shared interests, and a discovered common identity led diplomats, economic experts, and state officials across Western Europe to discover ways of working with each other, making deals, and creating ever closer networks of co-operation.[13] The French – notably the symbolic figure of Jean Monnet – were often to the fore in this process, but the West Europeans had also turned to France. The Belgians and the Italians effectively abandoned their long-standing differences with France. Above all, the new leadership of West Germany, which was rooted in the Catholic territories of the western borderlands, set about re-establishing their sovereignty through collaboration rather than confrontation. In doing so, they addressed French concerns about security and economic issues, but they also drew on prior histories of Franco-German collaboration, including those during the war years.[14]

There is little space in Williams's Atlantic narrative for this European story. The Treaty of Rome (March 1957) is referred to only briefly, and then as something of an offstage event (261-262); and yet, by the end of the 1950s, as the urgency of the Cold War receded within Europe, this new constellation was rapidly superseding that of 1945. Of the six founding states of the EEC, two were wartime Axis powers; three were neutral states in 1940 (the most important of which, Belgium, had only a few years previously unilaterally disavowed its alliance with France); and the other one was France. To describe this as a reversal of alliances would clearly be an exaggeration. However, it is striking how easily French policy-makers buried the hatchet with their former opponents and rivals. The Cold War and economic pressures facilitated this process, but it was a policy that was rooted in calculations about the future.

As such, Williams's book ends up feeling as though it is more about what did not happen than what did. Much as after 1918-19, the euphoria of a grand alliance led to the pursuit of what turned out to be a series of dead ends. As Williams

[13] See notably William I. Hitchcock, *France Restored: Cold War Diplomacy and the Quest for Leadership in Europe, 1944-1954* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

[14] An interesting perspective on this is provided by a recent biography of Vollrath von Maltzan, who became the post-war West German ambassador to Paris: Jean-Marc Dreyfus, *Vollrath. De Hitler à Adenauer, un ambassadeur entre deux mondes* (Paris: Editions Vendémiaire, 2020).

rightly argues, relations between the three powers turned out to be "a dialogue of the deaf" (21), as each state pursued trajectories that proved to be divergent. Could it have been different? There is little in Williams's account to suggest so. All three powers shared some immediate priorities in the 1940s, most notably the prevention of a Soviet hegemony in Europe. But, once that threat receded, divergences of interest and of world-view ensured that, at least in Western Europe, the Second World War ended remarkably quickly.

Review by Michel Fortmann, Université de Montréal

It is difficult, just looking at this book, to avoid a pang of nostalgia, remembering that there was a time, before the pandemic, when IR research involved crossing the ocean, travelling to attractive and interesting destinations, visiting archives and libraries while "beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies."[15] In that regard, Professor Williams's research program is a model of its kind, considering its scope and timeframe. What a seductive academic playground! Analysing the relationships of three great powers like France, Britain and the U.S., during the whole length of the twentieth century is an ambitious goal indeed. The present volume is only the second in a series of three or four, which implies a lot of transatlantic flights, if the current pandemic allows, of course.

A peculiarity of this book is that it does not approach its subject matter in a conventional way, namely diplomatic history or foreign policy analysis. The author does not offer a specific theoretical or conceptual framework, but he states that one of the "main aims of this volume is to enlarge the source base to encompass what we can call 'cultural' sources, and in particular the writings of key French writers of the period" (5). In other words, Williams proposes to complement the usual sources of diplomatic history, namely archives, official documents, and memoirs, with other sources like novels or essays that expressed the prevailing ideas and emotions of a society. Of course, this raises the problem of tying the cultural *Zeitgeist* symbolized by key thinkers or philosophers to specific foreign policies. I won't take issue with the fact that, in the words of J.M. Keynes: "Practical men who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influence, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist,"[16] but one must be extremely prudent in linking a politician's choices or policies to a school of thought or an author.

Interpreting foreign policy through the lens of intellectual trends or fashions is also fraught with dangers. Is there a connection between Romain Gary, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, three among a host of major French intellectual figures of the post-war period whom professor Williams mentions several times in the book, and prevailing foreign policies of the Fourth Republic? One may doubt it. Was Charles De Gaulle a 'bergsonian,' and to what extent can we measure the influence of Henri-Louis Bergson's philosophy on the leader of the Free French? Again, I am skeptical. De Gaulle was the opposite of an ideologue. He was a pragmatist, and most historians agree about that.[17] At issue here is also the concept of 'culture,' which is never defined or operationalised in this book. Neither is the connection between culture and policies. Specifically, the author could have chosen to dig into the rich literature on the notion of 'strategic' or 'foreign policy culture' that attempts to explain the distinctive foreign behaviour of states through reference to their unique worldviews.[18] In the absence of a theoretical chapter, there is a missing element in the book's architecture.

A daunting challenge when weaving an historical tapestry of the size presented by this book is anchoring the narrative on a series of guideposts that the reader may follow in the maze of facts, ideas, and events that are presented. The first of these guideposts consists in having a clear argument. In this case, I was expecting to read a statement by Williams on precisely what he was going to demonstrate while analysing the interactions of the three countries. At the very least, I would have expected a series of questions to be answered in the course of the narrative. Unfortunately, I did not find either in the

[15] John Milton, *The Reason of Church Government* (London, 1642) bk. 2, introduction.

[16] J.M. Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (London: Macmillan, 1936), 383.

[17] See the proceedings of the conference "La philosophie politique du général De Gaulle", 25-26 April 1980, https://www.lemonde.fr/archives/article/1980/04/30/la-philosophie-politique-du-general-de-gaulle_2801945_1819218.html.

[18] See for example Frode Liland, *Culture and Foreign Policy. An Introduction* (Oslo: Institutt for forsvarsstudier, 1993), Colin S. Gray (1999) 'Strategic Culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back', *International Affairs* 25:1 (1999): 49–69, Yosef Lapid and Friedrich Kratochwil, eds., *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1996), Peter Katzenstein, ed., *The Culture of National Security Norms and Identity in World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

introduction. Lacking a core argument or '*problématique,*' the question arises: What are we analysing? Ideas? Personalities? Policies? One is, in fact, left with a bare 'scaffolding', i.e. the list of chapters and their contents. This list at least reveals the core of the book's narrative, namely the themes around which the analysis of the three countries' interactions will proceed: the construction of the 'New World Order' after the war (chap. 3); the development of the European project (chap. 4) and the end of the old French and British empires (chap. 5).

What I expected in each of these chapters, even without a central argument or 'problématique,' is another guidepost, namely a clear and succinct presentation of each country's policies regarding the theme under study, accompanied by an analysis of their diplomatic interactions. As an example, what were the broad elements of the proposed American Post-War Order? What were the British or French views regarding that Order? How did the three countries' discussions evolve? None of these questions is clearly answered, the author preferring to offer a lengthy presentation of the U.S. Post-War Planning organization, followed by a dissertation on liberal and Keynesian economic policies. Nowhere does the author raise the question of the United Nations and its organisation or the issue of the growing tensions between East and West. NATO is barely mentioned in the following chapter. The reader is thus left with a feeling of confusion and disorientation. The same can be said about chapters 5 and 6. As for the conclusion or conclusions – the word is confusingly used in the title of chapter 6 (239) and at the end of it (259) – it would be difficult to summarize the *smorgasbord* of sections, some of them historical, some of them thematic, that do not seem to reflect any logical thread.

Finally, I noted that two reviewers of the preceding volume mentioned several factual errors and numerous typos that marred the text.[19] Both hoped that the second volume would be more closely policed. This has not been the case. I counted 36 typos in the French quotations themselves. I also noted a couple of not insignificant errors. President Macron was not the first to recognise the responsibility of the French state in the roundup of Jews in the summer of 1942 (29); it was President Jacques Chirac in 1995. Stefan Zweig committed suicide in 1942, not 1941 (154). Additionally, the quotation by Zweig is incorrectly translated: Zweig never said: "It was the age of gold and security" (154). He wrote: "It was the golden age of security" ("C'était l'âge d'or de la sécurité").[20] Also, when saying that De Gaulle "had the 'bitterness' born out 'of excessive attachment to a past in which Hastings, Agincourt, Waterloo and Fashoda loomed large'" (261), it seems to me that Hastings, which was a victory of the Normans against the Anglo-Saxons, has nothing to do with a list of French defeats at the hand of the hated English (Agincourt, Waterloo, Fashoda).

[19] *H-Diplo Roundtable Review*, Volume XVII, No. 3 (2015) 5 October 2015, http://www.tiny.cc/Roundtable-XVII-3, 8, 11-12.

[20] Stefan Zweig, *Le monde d'hier: Souvenirs d'un européen* (Paris*:* Belfond, 1993), 15.

Review by Frédéric Heurtebize, Université Paris Nanterre

Andrew J. Williams's book is a welcome addition to the historiography of the relationship between France, Britain, and the United States.[21] It is the second of a three-volume enterprise examining that oft-complicated triangular rapport in the twentieth century. While the first book spanned the period between 1900 and the outbreak of World War II, the second starts with the Fall of France in 1940 and ends in 1961 with John F. Kennedy's first year as president.[22]

One of the book's great merits is to provide a multidimensional narrative of the relationship. The objective, the author writes, is to "use the insights of intellectual debate, cultural difference, national (and personal) psychology and other factors into account as much as the diplomatic record" (15). And indeed, one is impressed by the amount and variety of archival and secondary sources used to serve that endeavor. The result undoubtedly lives up to the ambition.

The dominating theme of the book, Williams writes, is "an 'emotional' one—that of 'humiliation'" (15). Of the six chapters that make up the book, only the Introduction and the Conclusion – on De Gaulle's first three years as president – do not focus on frustrations and setbacks of some sort. There is, of course, the stunning debacle of 1940 and Washington's hostility towards General Charles de Gaulle and misgivings about the *Résistance*, which are all well documented. But the author skillfully examines French reactions to the New World Order being engineered in London and, even more so, in Washington to which the French were mere "bystanders" (77). The post-1945 order was largely designed within the U.S. State Department's section known as 'Post-War Planning' (PWP). Bitterness and antagonism towards Washington's predominant role in that order was not confined to De Gaulle and the Communists; it was widespread (144). This is where Williams' focus on the intellectual milieus proves especially relevant.

The emphasis on the role of intellectuals during the interwar period, philosopher Henri Bergson's foremost amongst them, does help comprehend the French elites' shared hostility towards that 'Anglo-Saxon' post-war blueprint. Bergson's alleged "mysticism" – mathematician and philosopher Bertrand Russel and other thinkers dismissed his theories as unscientific – discarded the notion that the intellect can fully comprehend the most essential features of human existence. To Bergson's French followers, the post-war order and its modernizing agenda appeared overly rational and soulless. And it did not fit well with de Gaulle's "certain idea of France" (61-63). Similarly, the book aptly analyzes one complicating element of the relationship: while Britain and the U.S. insisted on liberal values and "universal norms of international behaviour" as the

[21] On the period at hand, see *inter alia*, Simon Berthon, *Allies at War: The Bitter Rivalry among Churchill, Roosevelt, and de Gaulle* (New York: Basic Books, 2001); Frank Costigliola, *France and the United States: The Cold Alliance since World War II* (New York: Twayne, 1992); Charles Cogan, *Oldest Allies, Guarded Friends: The United States and France Since 1940* (Westport: Praeger, 1994); Michael Creswell, *A Question of Balance: How France and the United States Created Cold War Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); William Hitchcock, *France Restored: Cold War Diplomacy and the Quest for Leadership in Europe* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Constantine Pagedas, *Anglo-American Strategic Relations and the French Problem, 1960-1963: A Troubled Partnership* (London: Frank Cass, 2000); Sebastian Reyn, *Atlantis Lost: The American Experience with De Gaulle, 1958–1969* (Amsterdam: AUP, 2011); Irwin Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France, 1945-1954* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Alessandro Brogi, *A Question of Self-Esteem: The United States and the Cold War Choices in France and Italy, 1944-1958* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002) and *Confronting America: The Cold War between the United States and the Communists in France and Italy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Richard Kuisel, *Seducing the French: The Dilemma of Americanization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Renéo Lukic, *Conflit et coopération dans les relations franco-américaines : Du Général de Gaulle à Nicolas Sarkozy* (Laval: Presses universitaires de Laval, 2009); Jean Guisnel, *Les pires amis du monde: les relations franco-américaines à la fin du XXe siècle* (Paris: Stock, 1999); Gérard, Bossuat, *La France, l'aide américaine et la reconstruction européenne, 1944-1954*, 2 vols. (Paris: Comité pour l'histoire économique et financière, 1997).

[22] Andrew J. Williams, *France, Britain and the United States in the Twentieth Century, 1900-1940. A Reappraisal* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

foundation of the New World Order, the French focused on the primacy of the state and were therefore suspicious of what was in the offing (61).

Likewise, if the aversion of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's and his advisers' towards de Gaulle is well established, Williams's archival research[23] reveals how dismissive the U.S. foreign policy establishment at large was towards France:

> "In a preliminary meeting that was to lead to the process known as 'Post-War Planning'… between… the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) and the State Department in early 1940, the State Department had written off France entirely; should it be defeated (and it shortly was) it would be 'left [by Germany as] a primarily agricultural economy, producing of course luxury goods'. That blanket dismissive attitude never entirely disappeared…" (55).

Where France's political system is concerned, it is of course right to insist that the Fourth Republic (1946-58) failed at providing stability, and Washington's "exasperation" about its weaknesses is well analyzed in the book. In the years 1947-48, the author writes, "both Truman and Eisenhower received regular and alarming news about French politics from American intelligence services, notably the Central Intelligence Agency." (128). France's defeat in Indochina, its wrecking of the European Defense Community project, its attitude during the 1956 Suez Crisis, and its clinging to *l'Algérie française* seriously undermined its credibility. From Washington's standpoint, it seemed France was "increasingly collapsing," the French ambassador reported to Paris. "[I]t was the Fourth Republic as a whole that worried Washington," Williams writes (205).

For all its flaws, however, the score card of the Fourth Republic is not one of unmitigated disasters. It was faced with daunting challenges: economic recovery, modernization, decolonization, and the founding of a stable Europe and a peaceful relationship with Germany. Under the Fourth Republic, France struggled but eventually did decently well, as recent historiography shows.[24] As far as French Parliament's refusal to approve the European Defence Community (EDC) is concerned, it should be noted that it was eventually beneficial to France, and therefore not a failure from Paris's vantage point. European defense, and Germany's place in it, was supervised by the Western European Union, an intergovernmental organization – not a supranational one as the EDC would have been – that preserved France's sovereignty on defense issues and soon allowed the country to develop its nuclear *force de frappe*.

Despite the book's merits, some aspects raise questions, beginning with the periodization adopted by the author. 1940-1958 would appear to me to have been more judicious. Since France – in its relationship with the U.S. and the UK – is the book's focal point, choosing a meaningful date in French history and politics would have made sense. The volume at hand, the author claims, covers years of humiliation for France. In that regard, stopping the narrative in 1958 would have seemed logical. De Gaulle came to power that year as France's last Fourth Republic prime minister (*or président du Conseil* to be precise) and swiftly acted to have a new constitution drafted and ratified. His accession to the presidency changed the country's relation to both Britain and the U.S. and promised to restore France's standing on the international stage. The author could also have chosen 1962, which marks both the end the Algerian War and the referendum than amended the constitution to make the president's election by direct suffrage, thus reinforcing presidential – and therefore De Gaulle's – authority and legitimacy.

I am also somewhat doubtful of the claim that "forcing France to be a bystander to the forging of its own destiny… deeply damaged the relationships… in ways that are still visible today" (29). As Philippe Roger has shown in his outstanding *The*

[23] Especially Hamilton Fish Armstrong Papers (Seeley Mudd Library, Princeton University), Commissariat de l'intérieur (Archives nationales, Pierrefite), Fonds Louis Lévy and Fonds Guy Mollet (Office universitaire de recherche socialiste, Paris).

[24] See especially Jenny Raflik, *La République moderne. La IVe République, 1946-1958* (Paris: Seuil, 2018).

American Enemy: The History of French Anti–Americanism,[25] French anti-Americanism has long and deep roots dating back to the nineteenth century and especially to the Spanish-American war of 1898 (chap. 4). How much that deep-seated sentiment or the humiliations of the 1940s and 1950s – not to mention later frictions – begot the difficult relationship that Paris and Washington have entertained is difficult to assess.

Finally, I would mitigate Williams's claim that the "idea of historical destiny was not one to which the average British or American of the period would have willingly subscribed, and to some extent the assumption of that by French players in the drama of a 'short' (1914–1989) twentieth century is one reason for the dialogue of the deaf that has often characterized French intellectual relationships with the Anglosphere" (18-19). Although I agree that the sense of historical destiny complicated relations with the U.S. and the UK, I doubt that this was or is particular to France. What about American exceptionalism? De Gaulle provided a *mystique* to be sure, but so did many an American president before and after World War II. "Call it mysticism if you will," Ronald Reagan said as he ran for the 1976 Republican nomination, "but I believe God had a divine purpose in placing this land between the two great oceans to be found by those who had a special love of freedom and the courage to leave the countries of their birth."[26] In 2004, as he accepted the GOP's nomination, George W. Bush asserted that Americans has "a calling from beyond the stars to stand for freedom"[27] – words that a French presidential candidate and that the French public would deem utterly absurd, especially in their metaphysical dimension.

In the end, however, those few remarks should not dissuade scholars or the interested public from reading this highly informative, thorough, and well-documented book.

[25] Philippe Roger, *The American Enemy: The History of French Anti–Americanism*, trans. Sharon Bowman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), originally published as *L'ennemi américain: Généalogie de l'antiaméricanisme* (Paris: Seuil, 2002).

[26] Ronald Reagan, speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference, January 25, 1974.

[27] George W. Bush, speech to the Republican National Convention, September 2, 2004.

Response by Andrew Williams, University of St Andrews

I would like to thank all of those who have been kind enough to both read and comment on the second volume of my account of France's epic relationship with the 'Anglo-Saxon' powers in the twentieth century. The critiques that are contained in these replies to my book are welcome, even when they hurt slightly. As a 'Professor of International Relations' who writes 'History' books I am aware that I should be more careful about details, even where I am happy about the general direction of my travel. I am a firm believer that IR needs History as much as History needs IR to help them both make more sense. Forcing my students and other readers in IR to confront the rich depths of French culture and politics has led quite a few of them to light-bulb moments about the yawning gaps that exist in IR 'theory' (hence I tell them that it is 'history of international thought' which really matters) or current praxis (the analysis of foreign policy, and U.S. and British responsibility for problems in many areas of the globe are good places to start them thinking). A reviewer of Volume 1 (also reviewed by H-Diplo)[28] suggested that I should make more explicit the relationship of current IR theory to those (in that case) of the 1920s and 1930s. To do so is an interesting thought experiment (and one that I am working on in view of another book) but we first need to say what happened when it happened, with no frills and the contortions so beloved of many IR theorists.

Lindsay Aqui sums up the chapters and arguments of my book a lot better than I could. In particular she entirely 'gets' my major points about the essential importance of 'humiliation' in the wartime and indeed post-wartime experiences of France. As a scholar of 'IR' (and a fan of Bertrand Badie's work on the topic)[29] I think we can go much further than that in understanding the way that one humiliation can, and does, feed into others, sometimes with very negative and sometimes ultimately positive effects. The European experience since the 1950s is, in my view, built on this basic dilemma of the causes and effects of national humiliation(s), and does much to explain the complex reactions of Britain and the U.S. to both France and the European project more broadly. It is certainly a nexus that I want to further explore in Volume 3, on the 1960s. President Charles de Gaulle is of course a central part of that story, but not all of it. France was certainly humiliated in 1940, but we cannot ignore the humiliation that Britain, France, and the United States heaped on their former colonies and through attempted conquests. The resulting complex of reactions is an intrinsic part of the framework of the international system, and society, of which we are all part. This is more and more clear in the debate on 'reparations' and the like. Humility and reflection has now to follow on from those previous humiliations; otherwise we are condemned to deepen their consequences. Perhaps Brexit and its inevitably disappointing aftermath is one way the process will play out for Britain.

I agree with Aqui that I was a bit fast and loose with my treatment of Britain and the 1950s European Community (EC), no doubt the result of post-2016 emotionality when I was writing the last chapter (so in the Spring of 2019). My IR and history instincts had a bad car crash moment. I am now reading a lot more about the 1960s and can see the bemused arrogance of Britain in the 1950s slowly transforming itself into a controlled but increasingly evident state of panic, or what we might now call FOMO (fear of missing out), about needing to be involved in the evolving EEC. And of course, once we did, the British contribution was significant. The Single Market was to a large extent a British idea, and the irony of politicians now condemning it as a breach of the United Kingdom's 'sovereignty' is, to put it mildly, a bit rich.

I was very pleased by the majority of Martin Conway's remarks, with which I wholeheartedly agree, and gratified by his agreement with my overall approach. There is a tendency of historians and, especially, scholars of IR, to cleave to an almost Whig version of post-war global order making. Nothing could be further from the truth. Policy is made in a fog of unknowing and consequent indecision, like driving forward while looking in the rear-view mirror. So I am pleased that my

[28] *H-Diplo Roundtable Review*, Volume XVII, No. 3 (2015) 5 October 2015, http://www.tiny.cc/Roundtable-XVII-3, 8, 11-12.

[29] Bertrand Badie, *Le temps des humiliés: Pathologie des relations internationales* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2014); [trans.] *Humiliation in international relations: A Pathology of Contemporary International Systems* (London: Hart, 2017).

approach of letting the documentary record tell the story (especially in the chapters on Europe and Empire) found favour, rather than imposing an artificial unity and logic. I am afraid that diplomatic history can occasionally read that way. We can only see these processes as 'inevitable' with a considerable amount of hindsight. Equally, the opprobrium routinely heaped on the Fourth Republic misses the considerable progress achieved until its ignominious end, but one upon which the Fifth Republic was able to build. And Conway is absolutely right to deny there was any such thing as "an assumed golden age of measured governance" against which we now measure our own. Perhaps there my IR background of reading articles about 'disjointed incrementalism' has helped inform my historical scholarship. Personalities are needed nonetheless and I hope I have given credit where credit is due.

The failings of the book that Conway identifies are mostly ones that I can accept as such. One I disagree with is that of my "repeated recourse to citations and arguments drawn from a wide range of other historians." I think I have to accept that I tread ground well-trodden, and I think those I have quoted would be rightly annoyed if I had not given them due acknowledgement. The book may in places appear to be a bit over-deferential, but this is preferable to being cavalier in its use of others' hard work. On the use of 'culture' I am glad we are agreed that it is a good thing to try, and acutely aware of the methodological minefield into which I have stepped. My thesis advisor was a Hungarian who made me read (his own mentor) Georg Lukacs, and I have tried to read way beyond that as well as the ideas of thinkers like Denis de Rougemont about 'myth'.[30] But the intent was to try and show how we should and can try to incorporate non-traditional sources, even to show how the humanities can be used to give IR the verisimilitude it often lacks. In Volume 3 I am tempted to bring in the Romain Gary/ Jean Seberg /Jean-Paul Belmondo story to explain how de Gaulle's generation were as baffled by *la nouvelle vague* as my parents were by *le punk rock*. This is one of the only ways we can show what many French historians call *le climat de l'époque*.[31] Reading the SFIO's bafflement (in their *Comité directeur*) at what was happening in May 1968 was as much a question of cultural as political disarray, for example.

Obviously, I accept chastisement for spelling 'Simone' wrong, even if my lame excuse might be that I think quite a few errors of that kind are the fault of the copy-editors, who are not at all used to dealing with French. Some of the others (for example not enough 'n's in *Education européenne* by my current favourite author Romain Gary) are my fault. So are the infelicities about Admiral François Darlan, etc. I accept that I finished off the manuscript far too fast and should have read it with more care. I will do better next time, and won't let myself be rushed by any Research Excellence Framework pressures.

I enjoyed Michel Fortmann's approach, and I thank him for its elegant exposition. However I disagree on one major element of it. I don't think we always need to have a 'theoretical' chapter, though I will agree I toyed with one as I was aware my IR colleagues would be twitchy if I left one out. In similar vein, to impose a *problématique* would go against my aim (see above) of letting the sources tell the story. But I do hear Fortmann's point. There was originally a chapter on IR theory of the period, complete with a detailed analysis of classical realist thinkers, the Council of Foreign Relations conference of the mid-1950s, and so on. I even started an exposition of the early debates about behaviouralism, and the counter attacks by Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, even if this would have strayed too far into the 1960s. Some of this debate will emerge in my discussion on Vietnam, for example. But I decided that space did not allow for it in this volume, that others had done it already and well (such as Lucian Ashworth) and that it would damage the flow too much. In short that might have been another book on the same period that I might one day write. In a sense I have written a book that Martin Conway can appreciate, notwithstanding my typos; I could not simultaneously write the one envisaged by Fortmann. It is a question of sensibility. I apologise for the mistranslation of Zweig. But on my list of battles, any Englishman will tell you that 1066 was

[30] Andrew Williams, "Denis de Rougemont: The Myths of International Order," as yet unpublished paper available on my Academia.edu page; Gyorgy (Georg) Lukacs, *The Theory of the Novel* (London: Merlin, 1971 [1916]), *History and Class Consciousness* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971 [1920]) and *The Historical Novel* (London: Merlin, 1962 [1955]).

[31] An idea used by, among others, Fernand Braudel: For Braudel's thinking about history, see, especially Fernand Braudel, *Ecrits sur l'histoire* (Paris: Flammarion, 1969).

a French invasion, even if the invaders was in reality a bunch of Vikings. There are myths in every culture that are not amenable to mere 'facts,' as Denis de Rougemont once told me with some insistence.[32]

As for the review by Frédéric Heurtebize, I was again very pleased that my basic intent was recognised and applauded. So while accepting with gratitude all the positive and negative points he makes, I will try and address those of Heurtebize's comments that struck me most. I realise, for example, that to venture into Bergsonian territory is not for the faint-hearted, especially for an 'Anglo-Saxon,' but Henri's Bergson's influence on the Generation of 1914 was so marked in France and the rejection of Bergson so noticeable in Britain that I felt it essential to place it at the centre of my approach. British philosophy in the post-Great War era embarked on a somewhat sterile pursuit of 'realism', with few exceptions, of whom the Scottish philosopher and eminent politician Richard Haldane is maybe one. I realised this more clearly after finishing the book, but I would recommend a recently published biography of Haldane for an explanation of why this was the case.[33] 'Continental' philosophy was rejected by most of the Anglo-American philosophical elite (though not by Haldane), and this fact may go some way to explaining the mutual incomprehension of the French exiles of 1940-1945 and their Anglo-American hosts who would have been influenced by that debate. Again, 'sensibility' is important and yet difficult to convey. But that is but a brief comment on a complicated issue.

On the review's slightly more negative, but nonetheless helpful, points, I am perfectly happy to go along with them. I am more or less in agreement, now, that the book should have stopped in 1958. I had decided that the use of 1961 would give a 'bridge' to the 1960s and over the two Republics, but that has now given me a slightly difficult task in Vol 3, where some of the early sections will have to be to re-visit de Gaulle's resumption of power. But ending books is more difficult than beginning them, and I was not sure in the summer of 2019 that I would be resuming my research and writing. On the question of "historical destiny," Heurtebize is perfectly correct to assert that both the British and the Americans have one, but they certainly did not, and maybe do not, express it with quite the fervour of de Gaulle and his followers. The British indeed don't much like politicians talking of either 'liberty' or '*liberté,*' which they see as terms that ring with self-importance or pretentiousness. De Gaulle is as equally admired as he is sometimes detested *outre-Manche*, but never ignored. In France de Gaulle had, and indeed has, a rare 'cult of the personality' that is authentic. In Britain and the U.S. in general such views are rarely attached quite so firmly to one person, even when that person is a Prime Minister Winston Churchill or a President Franklin D. Roosevelt Again, that may well be attached to the lack of a feeling of humiliation in Britain or the United States, even an arrogance that unfortunately persists, though I am increasingly at a loss to say why. But it must be said that both of these latter figures still stand the test of time as all-time favourite historical figures in Britain and the United States. So maybe it would have been truer to say that the 'historical destiny' of my three target countries has been forever marked by *all three* of these mythical figures, and that one can't mention any of them without mentioning the two others? For me, the world order since 1945 has had a French, as well as an Anglo-American, flavour, and that is one I hope I have conveyed in this book.

[32] I lived in Geneva for ten years and conversed with him many times

[33] John Campbell and Richard McLauchlan, *Haldane: The Forgotten Statesman Who Shaped Modern Britain* (London: Hurst and Company, 2020).