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The United States Army and the Korean War (review)

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Cold War and for the continuing legacy of instability in East Asia. The value of the text is enhanced by the reproduction of admirable photographs. This book may be recommended to anyone wishing to obtain an up-to-date synthesis of the major disputes and controversies involved in the Korean war.

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The United States Army and the Korean War. CD-ROM. Annapolis, Md.: U.S. Naval Institute, 2000. PIN 076812-000. Available through the Naval Institute web site www.usni.org or by calling 800-233-8764. \$24.95 plus s&h. Free to veterans groups and Korean War commemorative organizations.

This CD-ROM, which comes in a four-disc set, is an excellent and convenient source for those doing historical research on the Korean War, America's "forgotten war." Disc one contains the three major military histories of the first year of the Korean War written by the Army Department of Military History. The authors had access to official Army records, most of them served in Korea, and they interviewed participants extensively. The books are *Policy and Direction: The First Year*, by James F. Schnabel; *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu*, by Roy Appleman; and *Ebb and Flow*, by Billy C. Mossman. Appleman does a good job of covering the United Nations' strong defense in 1950 of the Pusan Perimeter, the breakout and attack into North Korea to the Yalu River, and the entry of the Chinese and the mauling of Eighth Army. Mossman covers combat operations until July 1951.

Disc two contains the book *Truce Tent and Fighting Front*, by Walter G. Hermes; *The Medics War*, by Albert Cowdrey; and five monographs covering different aspects of the war. Hermes covers the last two years of the war and the diplomacy carried on by both sides. Cowdrey effectively treats the changes in medical support since World War II. Not only had drugs improved, but the helicopter became the workhorse in evacuating the wounded. In addition, Cowdrey discusses development of MASH units to get the medical aid stations as close as possible to the front lines. The five monographs are *Combat Support in Korea*, *Combat Actions in Korea*, *KMAG in Peace and War*, *Black Soldier-White Army*, and *U.S. Army Mobilization and Logistics in the Korean War: A Research Approach*.

Discs three and four cover all three years of the war by way of photographs and posters. *Pictorial Korea*, by Miller, Owen, and Tackley includes most of the famous photographs that people remember about the war, many by Al Chang. One of the military questions inherent in any book on the Korean War is, "Why after Inchon did MacArthur keep X Corps separate from Eighth Army?" General Matthew Ridgway in his book, *The Korean War*, makes this point very clear. He states that the Joint Chiefs of Staff questioned MacArthur's decision after the Chinese entered and suggested he "close the gap" between them and establish a continuous line. This question

is only partially answered in the books given as references.

Overall, the discs are an excellent source for anyone studying the war from a military point of view. Two books written after the war might have been included, to round out the sources, *The River and Gauntlet*, by S. L. A. Marshall, and *MacArthur's War—Korea and the Undoing of An American Hero*, by Stanley Weintraub. However, I would suggest that any scholar of the Korean War would also need to consult *The Forgotten War*, by Clay Blair; *Korea, the First War We Lost*, by Bevin Alexander; and *Refighting the Last War—Command and Crisis in Korea 1950–1953*, by D. Clayton James.

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Red Wings Over the Yalu: China, the Soviet Union, and the Air War in Korea. By Xiaoming Zhang. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2002. ISBN 1-58544-201-1. Maps. Photographs Appendixes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xii, 300. \$39.95.

This is an important book. For over fifty years the fighter battles during the Korean War have captured the imagination of writers and readers and produced a seemingly endless stream of books on the subject. But almost all have rehashed the same material and have covered the subject from the U.S. perspective: little new has appeared since the publication of Frank Futrell's official USAF history, *The United States Air Force in Korea*, in 1961.

Zhang breaks out of this cycle by using Chinese and Soviet sources. These include not only documents, but also interviews with Chinese air force veterans of the Korean War. Zhang discusses the historiography and highlights the areas where the documents are unavailable. The author also provides the context of how a ground-oriented military quickly created a large air force. He does an excellent job of showing the growing pains of the Chinese Air Force (only created in November 1949); the maneuvers at the top levels (the haggling between the Chinese and Russians); as well as the issues at the tactical level (such as limited pilot training). The author presents a balanced and even-handed account, not only between the military and diplomatic dimensions, but also between the actions of the Communist and U.S. airmen. He concludes that the impact of U.S. air superiority on the communists was substantial and that the fighter battle was not a one-sided American triumph as described by western authors. Zhang is more successful in arguing his first conclusion than the second.

Zhang's efforts to elevate the record of the communist airmen falls short. The problem centers on the matter of claimed victories and acknowledged losses posted by the combatants. The author's difficulties are a partial result of making limited use of USAF archives and instead relying on some questionable secondary sources and communist documents. (Can we put the same faith in communist documents as in U.S. documents? By inference, Zhang does just that.) It is certainly possible that the communists may have