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Korea Under the American Military Government, 1945-1948
(review)

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Army's log. The stirring, lengthy, Anglophobic screed offered by Clarence Huebner about the Sicily campaign is doctrinally wrong and also would have been eliminated by any military expert. The diaries of Bradley aide Chet Hansen, and the emotional, prejudiced views of Patton chief of staff Hobart Gay, have to be used extremely carefully but are widely quoted as fact. As a former staff college instructor, I found Hirshon's judgment on military operations frequently wrong, probably due to his lack of original research into the context of Patton's operations and the war itself. Even his occasional attempts to praise Patton sometime misfire. His statement that Patton's Army suffered the lowest trench foot and cold weather casualties due to his leadership is patently false, easily disproved by checking the Army Medical Department's official history.

Hirshon's exposure of and repetitive emphasis on Patton's dark side is a good corrective to the hero worship paid to Patton, but the author's own lack of balance does not confirm his admission that Patton was a great soldier, which he undoubtedly was, and leaves a balanced assessment of his subject hanging. While often interesting, Hirshon offers little new and falls far short of Martin Blumenson's edited *Patton Papers* and Carlo D'Este's more complete and balanced, *Genius for War*. As for Hirshon's great claim that he has proven that everyone else is wrong, and that Patton was not dyslexic, one has to wonder, based on other instances, if his depth of research is as definitive as he believes.

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Korea Under the American Military Government, 1945–1948. Edited by Bonnie B. C. Oh. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002. ISBN 0-275-97456-1. Map. Photographs. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xiv, 178. \$64.95.

Judging only by the introduction by the editor, Professor of Korean Studies Bonnie B. C. Oh of Georgetown University, *Korea Under the American Military Government* sounds as if it is just another trashing of the U.S. Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK), 1945–48. "The U.S. policy in postwar Korea demonstrated a lack of vision, planning, and coordination between the branches of the U.S. home government and with the U.S. personnel in Korea, as well as a paucity of consideration for the people of the land. Overall, the policy was comprised of reactive, incremental stop-gap measures" (p. 2). Since this anthology includes essays by James I. Matray and Bruce Cumings, one awaits another revisionist attack on American intentions and policy execution. William Stueck's essay is more balanced but still critical. Been there, read those before. No thanks to the American contributors, however, the other essayists provide a more complex picture of Korean-American relations in the southern occupation zone. At least, the other authors, all Korean academics, give the reader some sense of Ameri-

can difficulties, Soviet intransigence, and bitter Korean political rivalries.

The level of original contribution by the four Korean authors varies, but ends with accumulated insight. Choi Sang-yong reviews the postwar trusteeship issue as an expression of American anticolonialism. No Korean, however, will admit that Korea could not have governed itself without a fratricidal civil war, whether the Russians and Americans came to disarm the Japanese or not, and Choi is no exception. However, he is careful to show how nationalist political leaders (of whom Syngman Rhee is the only one familiar to Americans) could make the antitrusteeship position a rallying point for opposition to the USAMGIK and the U.S.-U.S.S.R. Joint Commission (1946–47). Jeon Sang Sook's essay examines the effort to create a Left-Right Coalition movement in 1946, led by Kim Kyu-sik and Yo Un-hyong, that would stop political polarization in the American zone. Bonnie Oh continues this investigation in "Kim Kyu-sik and the Coalition Effort," the book's best essay. Park Chan-pyo investigates the USAMGIK's "Koreanization" in 1946–47 and discovers American and Korean progressive reformers hard at work to give at least South Korea responsible, effective government, not just anti-Communism as a substitute for democracy.

However important, *Korea Under the American Military Government* does not provide a full picture of occupied Korea. There is no discussion of law-and-order issues and the high level of postwar violence, including the Autumn Harvest Uprising (October-November 1946). Although American military and diplomatic records (the dominant source for all the essays) are packed with incident reports, there is no discussion of terrorism, smuggling, counterfeiting, black marketeering, street violence, and police corruption. No author deals with the role of nonofficial Americans like the missionary community or the issue of the political preference afforded English-speaking American-educated Korean Christians of whom Syngman Rhee was the least favorite. Although I do not favor the high level of conspiracy theory that characterizes Korean political history, these essays make a strong case that personalism shaped postwar South Korea as well as North Korea. Professor Oh's volume should encourage others to return to the primary sources in our search for the real Korea after World War II.

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The Royal Navy and the Palestine Patrol. By Ninian Stewart. ISBN 0-7146-8243-3. Portland, Oreg.: Frank Cass, 2002. Photographs. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xvi, 217. \$25.00.

Few post-World War II peacetime naval assignments were as difficult as that given the Royal Navy off the Palestinian coast from 1945 until Britain withdrew from the Palestinian mandate in 1948. Thousands of desperate