

Livi Bacci also displays a degree of cultural insensitivity bordering on eurocentrism when it comes to portraying native peoples. He describes the Movimas, for instance, as “a relatively barbarous tribe”, while the Itonomas are “another primitive tribe” (pp.60f). All the native inhabitants of the region become one, sometimes referred to as the Mojos, sometimes as the Indios.

El Dorado in the Marshes is peculiar in that it attempts to marry the search for El Dorado with a study of the Jesuit missions in the lowlands of eastern Bolivia. It is a forced conjunction of themes. Moreover, neither theme is addressed in sufficient depth to add to already published material.

PETER ROSS

History and Philosophy, University of New South Wales

Allies against the Rising Sun: The United States, the British Nations, and the Defeat of Imperial Japan. By Nicholas Evan Sarantakes (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2009, pp. xxi + 458. US\$39.95.

Nicholas Sarantakes is Associate Professor, Department of Strategy and Policy, U.S. Naval War College. This book, his third, is concerned, firstly, with the participation of Great Britain and three Commonwealth nations — Australia, Canada, and New Zealand — in the Pacific War and, secondly, with their efforts to secure significant roles for themselves in the anticipated invasion of the Japanese home islands to force Japan to surrender unconditionally. To assure that they would have a voice in post-war decisions regarding Southeast Asia, these nations believed they were obligated to assist America in defeating Japan.

The British strategy to be used in the Pacific involved severe disagreements between Prime Minister Churchill and his Chiefs of Staff (COS). Overtired from the European war and anxious for the restoration of the Empire, Churchill insisted that the British first retake their Pacific colonies. The COS, instead, unanimously argued that a British Pacific Fleet (BPF) should assist the U.S. as soon as possible in the war against Japan. This dispute nearly led to a catastrophic joint resignation of the Chiefs.

Later, at Quebec in September 1944, unexpectedly reversing himself, Churchill proposed that the BPF join the U.S. Navy in attacking the Japanese homeland. President Roosevelt immediately accepted the offer. Admiral King, U.S. Chief of Naval Operations, met cranky resentment from everyone else when he opposed the proposal, citing the vast logistic complications a BPF would entail, but eventually secured agreement that the BPF should be entirely self-sufficient, a standard never fully achieved.

Unaccustomed to long periods away from port and unpracticed in fueling at sea, the BPF adapted gamely, while operating in scorching summer temperatures without air-conditioned ships or adequate refrigeration facilities. Somehow, the British found the shipping to provide the fuel, ammunition, parts, clothing, food, etc., required. However, as the book rightly emphasizes, the crucial contribution of the BPF was its symbolic value in reinforcing ties late in the war and after the war between the British nations and America, rather than its military contributions (which were probably overstated by Sarantakes).

Sarantakes enhances his excellent accounts of debates and of military and naval actions with profiles and obituaries of the principal figures. He also deals with the debate over how Japan should be brought to surrender unconditionally. Succeeding to the Presidency on Roosevelt's death in April 1945, Truman, never briefed by FDR, had to depend on the advice of his COS. Pending the test of the A-bomb on 16 July,

Truman accepted their recommendation of “an invasion *and* a blockade *and* a bombing campaign” involving “conventional *and* atomic explosives”.

Lacking in Sarantakes’ book is an adequate account of the looming threat of the atomic bomb, the use of which resulted in “the Defeat of Imperial Japan.” However, in footnotes on page 9 the author does provide guidance to the literature regarding the bomb as well as other issues pertinent to the closing phases of the war. Although Sarantakes discusses the U.S. desire to soften the implications of the term “unconditional surrender”, he does not focus on Under Secretary of State Grew’s suggestion (of May-June 1945) that guaranteeing the continuance of Hirohito’s “reign” might prove decisive. America never tried Grew’s idea but did accede immediately, after the August bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, when Japan, before surrendering, requested assurances regarding the Emperor’s status.

Granting Sarantakes’ thesis that “war serves politics” — and its corollary, “might makes right” — should we not strive for the day when rational processes replace war as the ultimate tool of world politics? Certainly Sarantakes’ description of the fire-bombing of Tokyo and its resulting inferno should stir us to make that day happen while we still have time. A vexing concluding question: If a defeated enemy had killed hundreds of thousands of noncombatants by fire-bombing and A-bombing and if its leaders had been tried for crimes against humanity, what would have been the verdicts?

PAUL S. BURTNESS

Northern Illinois University

WARREN U. OBER

University of Waterloo, Ontario

The Party: The Secret World of China’s Communist Rulers. By Richard McGregor (New York: HarperCollins, 2010), pp. xviii + 302. Illustrated. US\$27.99 (hb).

Richard McGregor has worked in Asia for nearly two decades, primarily in China as bureau chief for the *Financial Times*. He has witnessed the incomparable emergence of China as an economic and political power. Hundreds of millions of Chinese have risen above poverty, but with the related development of massive inequalities and widespread corruption. China has achieved unprecedented economic growth rates, patterns of domestic and public saving the envy of most OECD countries, and growing international confidence and assertiveness (from enforcing the one-China policy to global resource acquisition). The recent dependence of the USA on Chinese credit during the global financial crisis emboldens the Chinese to say that the West got it wrong and they got it right. In many ways the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has never been more powerful or successful. And yet the CCP’s inner workings are not well known outside China.

The Party helps remedy this problem. McGregor has interviewed poor peasants, entrepreneurs, intellectuals, civil rights activists, lawyers, former prisoners, parents of children poisoned by contaminated milk powder, junior officials, and senior Party figures. McGregor disguises some interviews — or their results — because of potential reprisals or political sensitivity. But overall McGregor is open about his wealth of primary and secondary sources in Chinese and English, and he quotes seemingly fearless critics such as the irrepressible Li Rui, former secretary of Mao Zedong and trenchant critic both of Mao’s crimes and the Party’s unwillingness honestly to appraise its checkered history. McGregor is also clear in differentiating between the brutal authoritarianism of China’s recent past (such as the Anti-Rightist Movement or