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Marc Trachtenberg. *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement 1945-1963.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999. xi + 402 pp. $29.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-691-00273-6; $75.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-691-00183-8.

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Note: H-Diplo recently ran a roundtable discussion on Marc Trachtenberg's book *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963.* The participants were Diane Shaver Clemens, Thomas Maddux, Tony Smith, and Odd Arne Westad. Each part of the roundtable will be posted to the Reviews website as an individual review, with Trachtenberg's comments linked to each individual contribution.

Marc Trachtenberg has made a significant and original contribution in his *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement 1945-1963* (1999) which significantly extends his earlier essays in *History & Strategy* (1991) with respect to both the central assessments and the multi archival research. In the earlier collection, Trachtenberg had to stop short on a number of points, characteristically admitting a lack of documentation to resolve pertinent questions.[1] In his most recent study, Trachtenberg has made excellent use of the Eisenhower and Kennedy archival sources, British and French archives, and published diplomatic documents, microform sources, and German documents and published studies. Trachtenberg has also used the *Bulletin* and Working Paper series of the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) to bring the perspective of the Soviet Union into his analysis of the interaction of the Western allies with the Soviet Union on Germany as well as on the maneuvering among the Western allies over how to bring military power to bear on the security of Western Europe, the NATO alliance, and, most significantly, the German issue culminating in the Berlin Crisis of 1958-1963.

Trachtenberg's thesis is that the "problem of German power lay at the heart of the Cold War; a resolution of that problem was therefore the key to the establishment of a stable international system in Europe, and ultimately in the world as a whole." (p. vii) The development of this focus reflects not only his extensive familiarity with strategic studies but also his historical interest in process, in telling a story that places the German issue and military-nuclear strategy in an evolving, multi sided relationship that culminates in the Berlin crisis. By keeping the focus on Germany, Trachtenberg successfully develops the policies of three U.S. administrations and their interaction with major Western allies.

Trachtenberg rides through or above much of the Cold War disputes along the way, although he is very familiar with the literature and notes the disputes to some extent in footnotes that reflect the author's insights and very judicious treatment of primary documents. For example, Trachtenberg moves expeditiously through the 1945-1949 period in ninety pages with emphasis on the Truman administration's shift from Secretary of State James Byrnes' effort to work out a deal with Joseph Stalin to manage separately German zones of occupation at the Potsdam Conference to a shift by President Truman to a joint administration of Germany in 1946-1947 to a U.S. initiative to unify the Western zones and strengthen Western Europe with the Marshall Plan. Trachtenberg is very aware of the historiography and continuing disagreements over responsibility for the origins of the Cold War in Europe and disputes on the German issue but tends to minimize the significance of this for his thesis and keeps it contained mainly in the footnotes.[2] Historians who have battled over the origins of the Cold War and Germany march through the footnotes – John Gimbel, Bruce Kuklick, John Gaddis, Michael Hogan, and Melvyn Leffler – but Trachtenberg avoids sustained, direct engagement with them.[3]

Yet you can't ride through without disturbing the landscape or at least lending some indirect support to one side or the other. Trachtenberg suggests an opportunity for the beginnings of a stable system in Europe appeared fleetingly in 1945-46 when the U.S. backed off from its protests over Soviet hegemony over Poland and Eastern Europe, and at Potsdam Stalin and Brynes agreed to manage German zones separately, a foreshadowing of the later division of Germany. What undermined this, according to Trachtenberg, was Stalin's desire for more

than the new Eastern Europe sphere as manifested with respect to Iran and Turkey, and the ensuing Truman shift from cooperation to containment of Stalin on Germany and other areas (pp. 13, 35-41). In this sense, Trachtenberg lends weight to the post-revisionist perspective on the origins of the Cold War, particularly in his acute sensitivity to the concept of interaction, what one country says and does in the emerging Cold War will have an impact on its allies and adversaries. Trachtenberg also devotes little attention to the maneuvering over Germany in 1952-54 initiated by Soviet proposals for a unified, neutral Germany. "In public, the allies dismissed this offer as a mere ploy designed to sabotage the process leading to Germany's rearmament as part of the western bloc," notes Trachtenberg, and "it turns out that this claim was correct: the Soviet move really was essentially a maneuver" (p. 129). Thus, Trachtenberg dismisses much of the current interest in whether an opportunity for an early end to the Cold War was missed in the aftermath of Stalin's death.[4]

Trachtenberg's most original discussion involves parts two and three which focus on the evolution of U.S. military strategy and German policy. With access to considerably more official documents than he had for *History & Strategy*, Trachtenberg skillfully develops the positions of Eisenhower and Kennedy on nuclear strategy and Germany in the context of relations with the major NATO allies and provides a number of new insights and valuable perspectives. The impact of windows of danger and opportunity is striking as well as the related Eisenhower administration consideration of preemption and delegation of authority to use nuclear weapons to SACEUR. Ike's determination to withdraw from Europe and his support for an independent European nuclear force to counter the Soviet Union shapes much of the discussion with NATO allies and problems with Moscow in the second half of the 1950s. Allied leaders, particularly Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer, significantly shape the issues into the 1960s as well as the negotiating positions taken by Washington in talks with the Kremlin. In Trachtenberg's analysis, Ike tends to exhibit both his military training–"we have to hit them with all that we have before they can move"–and his leadership skills of caution when faced with real situations such as the Berlin crisis in 1958. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles also exhibits significant realism in his assessments and recommendations out of the glare of the 1952 campaign and gaze of conservative Republicans. Dulles considers neutralism for a unified Germany in 1955 to the outrage of Adenauer (pp. 137-138); Dulles pushes Ike for a flexible response rather than massive retaliation in 1955-56 (pp. 183-191); and Dulles joined Ike in favoring flexibility in dealing with East Germany in the Berlin crisis (pp. 259-263).

Kennedy emerges in Trachtenberg's analysis as a very skillful, if not flawless, leader on the German issue. Whereas revisionists have challenged JFK's diplomacy as excessively preoccupied with victory in the Cold War, hegemony rather than community with European allies, and image over practical accomplishments[5], Trachtenberg joins other authors, such as Fredrik Logevall and David Kaiser who have made extensive use of the records of the Kennedy library and the Department of State, to present an impressive analysis of JFK's increasing mastery of nuclear strategy, the control issue with NATO allies, the conflicting pressures advanced by the Joint Chiefs, State officials, European allies, and, most importantly, relations with the initiator of the central crisis in Europe, Berlin. As Trachtenberg presents the landscape JFK inherited, Ike's drift after the death of Dulles leaves a NATO alliance in disarray over control of nuclear weapons, the future of Germany, and the appropriate response to Nikita Khrushchev's Berlin ultimatum (pp. 238-247). With a most impressive reconstruction of JFK's response to these challenges, Trachtenberg demonstrates how the President overcame opposition to affirm a U.S. commitment to stay in Europe versus Ike's desire to get out, asserted control over an independent SACEUR and over nuclear weapons in Europe, and used new technology to reject medium range ballistic missiles and shift to seaboard forces with a U.S. hand on the nuclear trigger.

JFK also receives very high marks from Trachtenberg for his handling of the Berlin crisis and his efforts to turn the crisis into an opportunity to create a stable political system in Europe. Faced with Khrushchev's demand for a settlement on the status of Berlin and Western recognition of East Germany, JFK, in Trachtenberg's analysis, offers the Soviet leader a general status quo settlement on Europe and implied that West Germany would not develop a nuclear force under German control. "It was as though the Berlin Crisis had taken on a life of its own, as though Khrushchev was no longer mainly interested in getting an agreement that would protect basic Soviet security interests," concludes Trachtenberg. [p. 322] JFK does receive a positive assessment from Trachtenberg with respect to his blending of military maneuvers and talks with Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet foreign minister, as well as continuing, difficult management of British, French and West German leaders marching off in different directions. Trachtenberg suggests that a settlement was in reach in 1962 but the Kremlin refused to accept West Berlin as a free city under western military protec-

tion. "But this, for reasons that remain hard to understand, the USSR simply would not do," even though JFK "… was ready to give the Russians everything they could legitimately ask for," concludes a disappointed Trachtenberg. [p. 348] Nevertheless, after the Cuban missile crisis, Trachtenberg suggests that the elements of a political system fell into place with JFK receiving the most credit for negotiating the Limited Nuclear Test Ban treaty and persuading West Germany to sign it, for working out the continuation of a U.S. troop presence in West Germany, and for minimizing the maneuvers of State Department officials such as George Ball and Charles De Gaulle to thwart Kennedy's policies. Although Khrushchev was not prepared to go along with a formal deal that addressed the whole range issues from nuclear weapons and West Germany to Berlin and Germany's eastern border, the Kremlin did privately move in this direction (pp. 382-398).

Trachtenberg's admitted difficulties in understanding why Khrushchev turned down formal agreements with JFK beyond the test ban does point to a problem in his study and analysis. Understandably Soviet sources are much more limited than what Trachtenberg has used for U.S. and NATO leaders and the author has made use of what was available, most notably CWIHP studies and the *Bulletin*.[6] Yet Trachtenberg's preoccupation with strategic issues may have led him to exaggerate their importance in the Berlin crisis and left him shaking his head over Khrushchev's failure to make a formal settlement with JFK. Trachtenberg suggests throughout that the issue of nuclear weapons getting into West German hands is the most important factor behind Khrushchev's initiating the Berlin crisis with Ike in 1958 and reviving it with JFK in 1961. The studies cited in note six and Trachtenberg's analysis certainly demonstrate that Soviet officials raised this issue throughout the crisis in internal discussions and in talks with Western officials (pp. 251-256, 344). But Khrushchev also exhibited concern about the broader issue of West German power and the growing disparity between West Germany and East Germany. Trachtenberg's focus precludes looking very much at the inner dynamics between Khrushchev and Walter Ulbricht as well as other Eastern bloc leaders on the German issue and Berlin. At some point in the crisis it may be that Khrushchev's priorities shifted to managing relations with Ulbricht and that this contributed to his reluctance to make the "grand deal" with JFK along with perceived opportunities to exploit the obvious difficulties JFK faced with his NATO allies.

The latest Soviet documents also tend to support a shifting multi-causal perspective on Soviet policy. In CWIHP *Bulletin* No. 11 (Winter 1998), the Berlin crisis is discussed by Douglas Selvage and Hope Harrison with new evidence from East German and Polish archives. Selvage and Harrison emphasize Khrushchev's multiple objectives–"to differentiate himself from his ousted opponents, to counter the Federal Republic of Germany's (FRG) expanding role in NATO, and – above all else – to gain international recognition of the GDR" (p. 200). They also note the Soviet leader's characteristic improvisation during the crisis.

There are references in the documents to the importance of keeping nuclear weapons away from West Germany, but what seems to gain increasing importance with Khrushchev is the growing disparity between the economies of West Germany and East Germany, the increasing flight of East Germans to West Germany, and the vulnerabilities that East Germany faced as well as other members of the Eastern bloc if Khrushchev pushed the Berlin issue to the point where the West retaliated with an economic embargo against the Eastern bloc. As he repeatedly urged caution upon Ulbricht of East Germany and declined to sign a peace treaty with the GDR, Khrushchev emphasized the successes that he had achieved: the defeat of Dulles' policy of liberation of Eastern Europe; de facto western recognition of the GDR; and the increasing reluctance of the West to give nuclear weapons to FRG (pp. 207-211, 223-226).

Trachtenberg's view of the Cold War as centered on the issue of German power may also contribute to his bemusement over Khrushchev's failure to accept a status quo arrangement with JFK. Throughout the study there is little reference to the ideological dimensions of the Cold War, the rhetoric and beliefs of Dulles and Khrushchev, the global competition for allies in the good fight of democratic capitalism versus communist socialism, the escalating tensions related to Khrushchev's endorsement and aid to wars of national liberation outside of Europe and JFK's spirited response with the Green Berets, Peace Corps, Alliance for Progress in Latin America, and containment in Southeast Asia. European Cold War issues clearly influenced U.S. responses to problems in Korea and Southeast Asia into the late 1950s.

At what point does the escalating Cold War competition outside of Europe blow back into European issues such as Germany? Do the documents reflect any of the global Cold War competition? According to Zubok and Pleshakov, Khrushchev is not only a sometimes impulsive gambler who precipitates crises but he is also operating within a revolutionary-imperial paradigm with enthusiasm for third world revolutionaries and a com-

mitment to enduring competition with the imperialist West.[7] In the CWIHP documents Khrushchev occasionally expresses his ideological predispositions, noting the West's failed attempt to "subvert the countries of Eastern Europe from the socialist path"; the competition with capitalism as manifested at the American exhibit in Moscow in 1959 which is designed to turn the Soviet people away from the Kremlin but "we want to turn the exhibit against the Americans. We will tell our people: look, this is what the richest country of capitalism has achieved in one hundred years. Socialism will give us the opportunity to achieve this significantly faster"; and regardless of JFK's sometimes conciliatory maneuvers he is following the recommendations of Adenauer and "the imperialist forces will always be against us" (CWHIP, *Bulletin*, No. 11, pp. 205, 212, 234). Neither Khrushchev nor JFK are looking at the German issue and Berlin completely free from their ideological preferences and their escalating global Cold War competition.

Trachtenberg is a master historian at the "top of his game" in this book and "cutting-edge" as well, with an internet supplement at http://www.history.upenn.edu/trachtenberg which includes unpublished documents to illustrate his method of analysis, appendices on various issues, and an informal guide to doing research on Cold War history. All Ph.D. students and scholars will profit immensely from this book and the additional insights at the web site.

[1]. See Trachtenberg's discussion of an October 20, 1961 document from the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library which is "very suggestive" but lacks sufficient context to answer many questions. Trachtenberg, *History & Strategy* (1991), 280-282. This is from Chapter Seven, "Making Sense of the Nuclear Age", an excellent introduction for any history student on the relationship of history to strategic studies and the writing of history.

[2]. On p. 8, n. 8 in reference to the issue of whether or not the U.S. gave Stalin a free hand in Poland in the Yalta agreement, Trachtenberg notes that "this is one of a number of key areas in the interpretation of Cold War history where Left and Right join hands in misconception." Later on p. 46, n. 46 Trachtenberg reviews the literature on the U.S. halt in reparations to the Soviet Union in 1946.

[3]. Trachtenberg did include Carolyn Woods Eisenberg's *Drawing the Line: The American Decision to Divide Germany*, 1944-1949 (1996) in his study but did not have access to Michael J. Hogan's *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the National Security State 1945-1954* (1998) and Wilfried Mausbach, *Zwischen Morgenthau und Marshall: Das wirtschaftspolitische Deutschlandkonzept der USA 1944-1947* (1996). For a thoughtful review of Eisenberg, see Charles S. Maier, "Who Divided Germany?", *Diplomatic History*, XXII, No. 3 (Summer 1998), 481-488.

[4]. See Mark Kramer's three-part series on "The Early Post-Stalin Succession Struggle and Upheavals in East-Central Europe" in the *Journal of Cold War Studies*, I, Numbers 1-3 (1999), and Christian Ostermann, "This Is Not A Politburo, But a Madhouse ": The Post-Stalin Succession Struggle, Soviet Deutschlandpolitik and the SED: New Evidence from Russian, German, and Hungarian Archives", *Bulletin* (Cold War International History Project), X, March 1998, 61-110.

[5]. For a revisionist perspective, see Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *Kennedy's Quest for Victory: American Foreign Policy, 1961-1963* (1989), especially Paterson's introduction and Frank Costigliola's essay, "The Pursuit of Atlantic Community: Nuclear Arms, Dollars, and Berlin," pp. 24-56.

[6]. Hope Harrison, "Ulbricht and the Concrete 'Rose': New Archival Evidence on the Dynamics of Soviet-East German Relations and the Berlin Crisis, 1958-1961," CWIHP Working Paper No. 5 (1993); Vladislav Zubok, "Khrushchev and the Berlin Crisis (1958- 1962)," CWIHP Working Paper No. 6 (1993). Trachtenberg also cites Harrison's dissertation, an unpublished paper by Zubok and Zubok's book with Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (1996).

[7]. Zubok and Pleshakov, pp. 182-194.

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