The Korean War by Allan R. Millett. Potomac Books, 2007, 144 pp., $14.95.

Allan Millett's latest work on American military history, *The Korean War*, is a contribution to the Essential Bibliography Series, edited by Naval War College professor Michael Pavkovic. The series seeks to produce bibliographical reference books by noted scholars on important themes in military history. Millett, a former Marine officer, holds an emeritus professor position with Ohio State University and currently directs the Eisenhower Center for American Studies at the University of New Orleans. His previous works include *For the Common Defense*, a synthetic work of America's military history co-written with Peter Maslowski, which stands as a seminal work in the field and made several of the armed forces' reading lists. Most recently, he produced *A House Burning: The War for Korea*, the first in a two-part series on the Korean conflict. His interest in what many have termed the "forgotten war" points to why he was chosen to produce this annotated bibliographical work on the conflict.

This book follows the standard organizational construct set out by the editor for each work in the series. *The Korean War* begins with an essay outlining the major events and themes of the conflict. Following the essay are several topical chapters centered on discussing different historical works related to the central theme. Millett's essay fills more than one-third of the entire work and highlights some of the recent revelations made during his research into translated Korean archives. Although North Korean archives still remain closed to Western historians, Millett traveled several times to the Asian peninsula and discussed the war with those who experienced it firsthand. Despite the end of the Cold War, he believes the Korean War provides "a way to understand the possibilities and problems of nation-building as well as the perils of postcolonial politics" (p. 3). Millett's essay reflects some of the latest scholarship in the field, including the role of the Soviet Union in the conflict and the decision by China to enter the war. The entire book is a bibliographic reference, so readers will need to search for the essay's references in the text, since he wrote the piece void of footnotes. His final conclusion provides insight into the devastation of the conflict for the Koreans and the role the Korean War played in the Cold War. As Millett surmises, "The belligerents gained something from the Korean War, but the Korean people had lost the most" (p. 95).

Millett divides the remainder of the book into five bibliographical chapters that address different subjects in topical as well as chronological order. The first chapter deals with the communist alliance. Millett ordered the chapters so that those dealing with the Asian belligerents are at the fore, since "their story is the least known" (p. 1). Drawing on references in English, Korean, Russian, and Chinese, he describes how recent scholarship has shattered some of the stereotypes held regarding the combatants, including the notion that Chinese soldiers were "drug-crazed peasants" or that North Koreans were "murderous sociopaths" (p. 97). Additionally, recently released Russian archives regarding 262 American POWs revised the myth that Americans held a 10:1 advantage over communist forces

in the air. The actual number derived from the new archival sources, Millett contends, is actually 2.5:1.

In the third chapter, Millett delves into the Korean War from the Korean viewpoint. In the last couple of decades, historical scholarship revealed the devastation and sacrifice "all" Koreans (North and South) experienced throughout the war. Furthermore, new research has uncovered the role of American policy in the genesis of the conflict. According to Millett, some works have argued that American policy may have precipitated the conflict. This argument provides for a transition to his third section, which examines the Korean War from an international perspective and places the conflict in the broader context of the Cold War. As Millett describes, the international perspective sheds light on several of the senior officers of allied contingencies. In addition to works on US commanders, Millett highlights recent historical pieces on United Nations commanders. Furthermore, he describes where archival collections of personal papers can be found for those interested in conducting further research.

Millett closes his bibliographical discussion in a chapter devoted strictly to the military aspects of the Korean War. He outlines works that discuss everything from the larger campaigns to individual unit histories. While some of these works may not be in total compliance with the concept of the "new military history," they do provide the reader a greater understanding of this oft forgotten war. Millett also highlights some interesting published accounts that can aid researchers and those interested merely in the Korean War. The author's discussion, however, is not limited to soldiers only. He outlines works from veterans of every domain in the conflict: land, sea, and air.

Anyone seeking to do research into the Korean War or interested in the state of the current scholarship on the conflict will find Millett's work loaded with a wealth of information. In addition to the bibliographical references, *The Korean War* lists numerous Web sites and sources of information on the Internet. This work would be an incredible addition to any personal or professional library.

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