



Antony Beevor, Artemis Cooper. *Paris after the Liberation 1944-1949.* London: Penguin Books, 2004. xii + 436 pp. \$16.00 (paper), ISBN 978-0-14-243792-6.



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After the Germans Left

This volume, originally published in 1994, now appears in a slightly revised edition. The book is less a scholarly monograph than an intelligent work of synthesis written for a broad audience. As such, it shows the strengths and weaknesses of a work of popular history that is nevertheless based on a considerable knowledge of primary and secondary sources relating to French politics, culture, and society from the last months of the Second World War to the early stages of the Cold War in Europe.

Beevor has previously written on the Spanish Civil War, the battle of Stalingrad, and the fall of Berlin in 1945. Cooper is also a prolific writer, biographer, and memoirist, and the granddaughter of Duff Cooper, who figures prominently in the book. They approach their subject with a wry wit and an eye for telling detail and the book contains a wealth of anecdotes drawn from the voluminous diaries, letters, and memoirs of the period, as well as interviews with surviving witnesses of the crowded stage of postwar Paris. And what a dazzling cast it is! In addition to the usual suspects, such as Charles

de Gaulle, Albert Camus, and Jean Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, those who figure prominently include Ernest Hemingway, Raymond Aron, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Maurice Thorez, Arletty, Philippe PÃ©tain, Colonel Passy, Georges Bidault, Louis Aragon, AndrÃ© Gide, and Robert Brasillach. Even a modest acquaintance with the literature on postwar France would suggest that there is no shortage of studies of all of these actors.

One of the major deficits of the book is the scant attention given to the question of policy toward Germany in the early postwar years in France. This lacuna is unfortunate, as there is relatively little scholarly literature on this subject in English. While the book includes a rather perfunctory account of the liberation itself and the postwar *Ã©puration*, little mention is made of Robert Schumann or Jean Monnet, the architects of Franco-German cooperation, and no evidence is given of the considerations that led to the first steps toward the European Coal and Steel Community, the progenitor of the European Union. One detects here a certain indifference, even dis-

dain, toward the importance of the Franco-German relationship, and a tendency to focus on the development of NATO and the trans-Atlantic alliance, both typical of much Anglo-American writing on the period. Indeed, the one brief reference to the plans for the Community implies that they were determined primarily by anti-British sentiment (p. 375).

In short, Beevor and Cooper have produced a highly readable, occasionally gossipy, account of postwar Paris.

However, readers seeking an introduction to the subject might be better served by Herbert Lottman's *The Left Bank: Writers, Artists, and Politics from the Popular Front to the Cold War*.^[1]

Note

[1]. Herbert Lottman, *The Left Bank: Writers, Artists, and Politics from the Popular Front to the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

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