

Naval War College Review

Volume 52
Number 4 *Autumn*

Article 11

1999

Military Georaphy for Professionals and the Public

Kevin L. McMullen

John M. Collins

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Recommended Citation

McMullen, Kevin L. and Collins, John M. (1999) "Military Georaphy for Professionals and the Public," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 52 : No. 4 , Article 11.

Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol52/iss4/11>

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supporting analysts who use, or intend to use, models. Hughes clearly lays out the appropriate uses of models and how best to avoid misapplication. His brief and to-the-point discussion of the relationship between client (decision maker), analyst, and models, on pages 13 and 14, is particularly pertinent.

Several chapters discuss the importance that real-world combat results and data have for model development and credibility. Since real-world combat is (thankfully) infrequent, such data should be eagerly sought after when it becomes available. Yet at least three authors allude to the fact that operations researchers are usually unprepared to identify and collect it. This would appear to be a fundamental planning failure on the part of the military operations research community. It needs fixing.

Mike Cornforth
Center for Naval Analyses
Operations Evaluation Group Representative,
USS *Constellation* Battle Group

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Collins, John M. *Military Geography for Professionals and the Public*. Washington, D.C. National Defense Univ. Press (available from Govt. Print. Off. [202] 512-0132), 1998. 435pp. \$39

This work discusses geography as an important factor in military operations. According to John Collins, "commanders at every level must consistently manipulate geographic influences advantageously to gain a decisive edge." In a democracy, citizens as well as politicians also must master any subject that is important to public policy. Therefore, Collins has written a book that will, as he intended, be useful as a textbook for civilians and as a handbook for military officers.

John M. Collins is a retired Army officer who fought in Europe, Korea, and Vietnam, and earned an M.A. in geography. Since his retirement in 1972, Collins has published ten books (most on

the changing military balance between the United States and the Soviet Union), twenty studies for the Congressional Research Service, and various articles. He wrote this book while serving as a distinguished visiting research fellow at the National Defense University. It is, therefore, the result of a lifetime of practice, study, and reflection.

Collins's subject, military geography, is admittedly a broad one, but his book is an introductory work, and he has organized it coherently. Between a brief overview and three useful appendices (acronyms, glossary, and basic library), the book contains four major sections. Part 1, "Physical Geography," contains chapters on spatial relationships, such as the form of the land (rivers), oceans, and seashores, atmosphere, regional peculiarities (like frigid seas), inner and outer space (including strategic locations in space), and natural resources. Part 2, "Cultural Geography," contains

chapters on populations, urbanization, lines of communication, military bases, and fortifications. Part 3, "Political-Military Geography," includes the predilections of the military services, geographical frictions (such as rival claims to fresh water), and military areas of responsibility. Finally, Part 4 explains how to analyze specific areas and then reviews the planning for Operation NEPTUNE in Normandy and Operation Plan Ei. PASO in Vietnam. Interspersed throughout are forty charts, sixty-seven maps, thirty-two tables, and thirty-three photographs.

This book has six principal strengths. First, it is comprehensive, and second, its prose is direct and lucid; thus, it is superior to the verbose official publications on joint doctrine. Third, Collins trusts the reader to possess a general knowledge of military history and to comprehend brief explanations—such as that attack submarines operating in the arctic should have stubbier hulls because such boats can maneuver better than cigar-shaped ones in the inverted world of upside-down mountains of ice. One result of this trust is *Military Geography's* fourth strength: the book is pithy. It contains the maximum information that could have been explained in four hundred pages. The fifth is that the author applies the geographical information in each chapter to historical events, so that he can illuminate the principles. Finally, the author makes explicit what professional officers may have known already but did not realize they knew. For example, air operations differ from space operations because they must employ different vehicles in different media; airplanes need the

atmosphere to provide oxygen and lift, but spacecraft need neither and must avoid friction. Another example is that atmospheric interfaces, gravity, and radiation restrict the orbital options and trajectories of spacecraft. In fact, "routes in space are relatively easy for opponents to predict." The Van Allen radiation belts and solar flares restrict routes for manned craft, and the necessary reentry angles also canalize approaches. Moreover, maneuver over the shore by maritime forces does not really present the enemy with unlimited potential threats to attempt to defend against simultaneously, because "topographical features that narrow the number of suitable drop zones and amphibious landing sites generally favor defenders who can concentrate forces at probable points of decision."

This book does have two flaws as a resource for the general public. First, the author often refers the reader to a map but never explains the steps in the application of the principle. (This is the necessary converse of trusting the reader.) Second, each chapter ends with a list of key points; however, some points never appeared in the text.

Aside from the model citizen, who should use *Military Geography*? Almost all officers who read it will have their knowledge of military geography expanded; officers teaching Reserve Officer Training Corps units can use it as a reference and make copies available to students; and officers drafting plans at the strategic or operational level of war would benefit from using it as a handbook to direct their investigations of the geographic factors. A company commander may not carry this book,

but assistant operations officers should have it on their bookshelves.

KEVIN L. MCMULLEN
 Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army Reserve

Kaplan, Robert D. *An Empire Wilder-
 ness: Travels into America's Future*.
 New York: Random House, 1998.
 393pp. \$27.50

Robert Kaplan offers in this book some provocative variations on a theme he first sounded in a February 1994 article in *Atlantic Monthly* (of which he is a contributing editor) and later developed in his 1996 best seller, *The Ends of the Earth*. His earlier work suggests that the nation-state may be losing its relevance for much of the developing world, where ethnic conflict, crime, and anarchy are surging, and domination by clan leaders and warlords seems destined to replace the authority of governments. Now Kaplan suggests that even in the United States the concept of a national government as the focal point of allegiance is fading, raising questions about our continued ability to perform essential functions, such as controlling nuclear weapons and regulating water use. In making his case, Kaplan focuses not on crime and anarchy (although both are conspicuous in his portraits of inner cities) but on the perceived globalization, stratification, and communalization of American society.

As the most visible sign that globalization is breaking down our sense of national identity, Kaplan describes how international influences increasingly affect the ethnic composition, architecture, fashion, and diet of American

communities, including towns in once-remote areas. At a more basic level, he notes that regional economic ties are linking cities like Tucson and Portland more closely with suppliers and markets across the Mexican and Canadian borders, and in some cases with other Pacific rim economies, rather than with U.S. communities thousands of miles away.

More disturbing for our unity as a people are the stratification and communalization Kaplan discerns in virtually every community. He sees growing disparities in income leading to increasingly formalized boundaries, as affluent citizens seek to isolate themselves ever more securely from growing numbers of lower-income compatriots. The result is a proliferation of gated communities and "urban pods," localities more sharply defined and exclusive than the suburbs of earlier eras. Kaplan notes that greater St. Louis, Missouri, now encompasses ninety-two incorporated cities, some with as few as a dozen inhabitants—lot size and building restrictions determine who can afford to move in.

Kaplan bases his case on impressions gained from visiting dozens of cities and smaller communities in the Midwest, Southwest, and Pacific Northwest, including Omaha, Nebraska; Los Angeles and Orange County, California; Tucson, Arizona; Santa Fe, New Mexico; Lincoln, Nebraska; Bozeman, Montana; Missoula, Montana; and Portland, Oregon. Visits to Vancouver, Canada, and several Mexican cities, as well as the Hopi community at Black Mesa, Arizona, make for illuminating comparisons, a particularly dramatic example being the juxtaposition of