

abroad in later wars. Does the Vietnamese-American commemoration of the Vietnam War and the Vietnamese-American veteran response to the initial forms of remembrance of their service in Afghanistan and Iraq reflect the cultural tropes Kieran has found among other American veterans and their communities? Have they been affected by the long-established American militaristic values that Kieran argues prevent a more “robust” debate of the costs of American interventionism? At least a start in the direction of greater inclusiveness has been made by Viet Thanh Nguyen in his *Nothing Ever Dies: Vietnam and the Memory of War*, (2016). While it has some of the same weaknesses as *Forever Vietnam, Nothing Ever Dies*, it includes Vietnamese, Cambodians, Koreans, and Laotians in its interpretation of the way the demonization of the foe and valorizing of the sacrifices of veterans’ in the memorialization of war can serve to enable future wars.

Despite the caveats offered here, *Forever Vietnam* is a major contribution to the study of how the American War in Vietnam is remembered in the United States and how the manner in which it is remembered has shaped, and is likely to continue to shape future American discourse on global affairs. It is accessible to general and undergraduate readers, and highly recommended for senior seminars and graduate students in American Diplomatic and Military History and International Relations.

Marc Jason Gilbert, *Hawaii Pacific University*

LAURENT CÉSARI

*Le problème diplomatique de l’Indochine, 1945–1957*

Paris, Les Indes savantes, 2013. 424 pages. 36,00 €

Laurent Césari is one of France’s most notable specialists in the international history of the Indochina wars. In 1995, he published an excellent diplomatic history of the three Indochina Wars: *L’Indochine en guerres, 1945–1993* [Indochina in Wars, 1945–1993] (Paris: Editions Bélin, 1995). A decade later, he carefully examined the diplomatic crisis over Laos, which brought the world’s big powers to the brink of war in the early 1960s in a book titled *Les grandes puissances et le Laos, 1954–1964* [The Great Powers and Laos,

1954–1964] (Artois: Artois Presses Université, 2007). In the book under review here, *Le problème diplomatique de l'Indochine, 1945–1957* [The Diplomatic Problem of Indochina, 1945–1957], Césari provides a highly readable diplomatic history of Franco-American relations during the First Indochina War.

*Le problème diplomatique de l'Indochine* is based on Césari's doctoral dissertation submitted in 1991 at the Université de Paris 4. The author took advantage of the opening of new archival holdings in France and the United States in the 1980s to provide a detailed account of Franco-American relations between 1945, when violence broke out in southern Vietnam between the French and the forces of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam led by Hồ Chí Minh, and 1957, when the French finally let go of their colony for good following the Geneva Conference of 1954. At the core of Césari's study is the increasingly complex and intertwined diplomatic relationship between French and American policymakers in Washington, Paris, Hà Nội, and Sài Gòn. Césari succinctly sums up in an opening section the relationship between the French and Americans in the early years of the Indochina War. But what interests him most, and dominates the remainder of the book, is the ever increasing American involvement in the Indochina War after 1950 in order to contain the perceived spread of Sino-Soviet communism.

The crucial year in Césari's analysis is 1950. It marks the rapid internationalization of the Indochina War, symbolized by Mao Zedong's diplomatic and military support of Hồ Chí Minh's Vietnam and rapid American support of the French and the creation of their Associated State of Vietnam in 1949 led by the former emperor, Bảo Đại. Césari does a good job of explaining how and why the Korean War affected and intensified American involvement in Indochina, which both reassured the French but also created new problems for them. Some of the best pages of Césari's book analyze how the French saw, in the internationalization of the Indochina War, the possibility to reestablish themselves as one of the *grandes puissances* in international affairs. Césari also does a nice job of explaining how the Indochina War was connected to European questions such as the rearming of West Germany and the creation of a European Army.

Césari also provides new information on financial aspects of Franco-American relations. He rightfully stresses the importance of the 1953

devaluation of the piastre as the last straw for Vietnamese partners fed up with the French refusal to cede more independence to the Associated State of Vietnam. To his credit, Césari avoids writing off as French puppets Bảo Đại and other non-communist nationalists connected to the Associated State of Vietnam. Instead he shows how Vietnamese non-communist nationalists stepped up their assault on the French Union as others did in Cambodia, Tunisia, and Morocco. While one still awaits an in-depth study of the connection between the French Union and the Indochina War, Césari shows that it was no accident that the empire from Indochina to North Africa started to fall apart as the diplomatic showdown at Geneva shaped up. Césari covers the big power negotiations at Geneva but he also examines how a variety of Indochinese and North African nationalists (including Ngô Đình Diệm) waged diplomatic war on the French Union at the same time.

Unfortunately, Césari never lays out a clearly defined argument in the introduction or elsewhere in the book to help his readers understand exactly what he wants us to understand by the “diplomatic problem.” What the book does deliver is a solid, insightful account of Franco-American diplomatic relations during the Indochina War, including a fine analysis of the Geneva Conference of 1954 and of the French exit from Indochina three years later.

*Christopher Goscha, Professor of International Relations,  
Université du Québec à Montréal*

K. W. TAYLOR, ED

*Voices from the Second Republic of South Vietnam (1967–1975)*

Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 2014. 180 pages. \$23.95 (paper)

Undoubtedly the most exciting development in the historiography of the American War in Vietnam in recent years has been work exploring the motivations and actions of South Vietnamese. Unlike orthodox interpretations of the war that marginalize South Vietnamese, this scholarship demonstrates that these actors played important roles in shaping the course of the