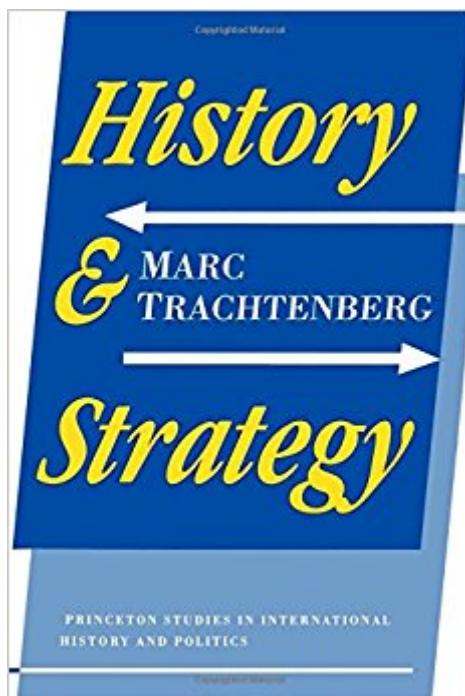


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History And Strategy



Synopsis

This work is a powerful demonstration of how historical analysis can be brought to bear on the study of strategic issues, and, conversely, how strategic thinking can help drive historical research. Based largely on newly released American archives, History and Strategy focuses on the twenty years following World War II. By bridging the sizable gap between the intellectual world of historians and that of strategists and political scientists, the essays here present a fresh and unified view of how to explore international politics in the nuclear era. The book begins with an overview of strategic thought in America from 1952 through 1966 and ends with a discussion of "making sense" of the nuclear age. Trachtenberg reevaluates the immediate causes of World War I, studies the impact of the shifting nuclear balance on American strategy in the early 1950s, examines the relationship between the nuclearization of NATO and U.S.-West European relations, and looks at the Berlin and the Cuban crises. He shows throughout that there are startling discoveries to be made about events that seem to have been thoroughly investigated.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

History and Strategy is a rare work for a historian. This is because Marc Trachtenberg takes into account major arguments from the political science field of international relations. He addresses questions like crisis stability, nuclear massive retaliation, and the effect of offensive doctrines on the outbreak of war. He does so in several somewhat distinct chapters, including ones on the outbreak of the First World War, American nuclear strategy, the Berlin Crisis, and the Cuban Missile

Crisis. Although hardly a revisionist work, Trachtenberg challenges certain popular arguments and addresses certain important questions in the international relations literature. For example, he shows that offensive doctrines cannot be considered the primary factor behind the outbreak of the First World War. As another example, he explains why Eisenhower never used America's great nuclear superiority against the USSR in the 1950s. History and Strategy is a very strong work that demonstrates how historical analysis can be used very effectively in the field of international relations. By doing so, he gives history greater purpose while providing the historical substance so often lacking in international relations texts.

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