Symonds proves effective in revealing the totality of the naval war as a global effort with clear impact on the course of World War II. The work is well researched through primary and secondary sources and has an engaging style that lends it to scholars and general readers alike for a greater understanding of the role of sea power in the world’s greatest conflict.

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Having contemplated looking at nationality in the Red Army during the Great Patriotic War back in the 1990s when choosing a Ph.D. topic, and having considered the matter more recently in broader work, I was keen to review Roberto J. Carmack’s study of Kazakhstan in World War II. I, as no doubt many readers of this journal will be, was particularly interested in Kazakhs and the Red Army, a theme that is certainly a component of this book even if not its exclusive focus. Readers looking for analysis of the place of Kazakhs in the Red Army will find this material in the earlier part of this book, which looks at the nature and mechanics of the Soviet mobilization of Kazakhs into the Red Army in its first chapter. Related material on propaganda and assimilation continues into the second. Much of the book, however, considers broader themes relating as much if not more to the home front as to frontline activities, before moving on to look at the ramifications of the wartime experience for the place of Kazakhs and Kazakhstan within the Soviet empire.

When I first began reading this book, it struck me that it read like a dissertation, despite there being no mention of it being based on one in the acknowledgements or introduction. Further investigation does indicate that it is indeed based on the author’s 2015 University of Wisconsin Ph.D. thesis, “A ‘Fortress of the Soviet Home Front’: Mobilization and Ethnicity in Kazakhstan during World War II.” In many ways this title provides a better sense of the book. Even in the chapters dealing with Kazakhs and the Red Army, for example, readers cannot expect to find extensive detail on the organisation, equipment, and frontline utilization of Kazakh-dominated units.

What readers will find is an excellent analysis of how wider Soviet policies were applied in a Kazakh context, and how a non-Slav national group was treated differently from the core, Slavic elements of the empire. Carmack is careful to delineate between Kazakhs, Russians, and other Soviet nationalities within Kazakhstan—including those deported to Kazakhstan—as well as compare wartime Kazakhstan with the remainder of the Soviet Union. The book is very much
a work looking at “war and society,” which is particularly evident in its thematic rather than chronological approach.

Carmack’s source base is excellent, with considerable use made of Kazakh archival sources, primarily Communist Party sources but including some originating from within the state apparatus. There are also some sources from central Soviet archives, although it is worth noting that none of the sources are from specifically military archives. Carmack has made excellent and thorough use of the available secondary literature in all the relevant languages of those principal groups under study, and English. Extensive notes and a bibliography take up 90 of the book’s 263 pages.

Carmack’s book is undoubtedly a significant addition to the literature on both Soviet nationalities and the Great Patriotic War, and is recommended reading for those interested in the place of Kazakhs and Kazakhstan within not only the wider Soviet war effort, but also more specifically the Red Army. I would certainly consider assigning this book in a graduate-level course on the Red Army during the war as a valuable case study, and indeed would have been pleased to have it to make reference to when recently considering Soviet nationalities in the Red Army in broader work.

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Panagiotis Dimitrakis is the author of multiple volumes detailing foreign affairs from World War II to the present. He has published extensively on European, Middle Eastern, and Asian affairs. In The Hidden War in Argentina, Dimitrakis has extended his work to include Latin American affairs. He is a welcome addition to the study of the region.

Hidden War is divided into fourteen chapters. The chapters are generally chronological in their organization, but each is a virtual essay in itself. The writing is generally quite good, especially considering the complexity of the subject, which included multiple actors, not just nations, but various groups within each nation. It is difficult to write about this subject without confusing the reader, but Dimitrakis has provided considerable clarity on the events of the time.

In the introduction, Dimitrakis offers his thesis: the British intelligence agency MI6 achieved the most, shadowing their German rivals and identifying collaborators and their activities. Dimitrakis notes that this point of view is bolstered by the Germans in their contemporaneous reports. While this conclusion is correct in many respects, it does not highlight the most significant issues: that both Germany and the United States were amateurs at spy craft; that events forced them to establish spy networks quickly; and that within both Germany’s and the United