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J. F. V. Keiger, *France and the World Since 1870* (International Relations and the Great Powers, ed. John Gooch) London: Arnold; New York: Oxford, 2001. viii+ 261 pp. Notes, bibliography, and index. \$24.95 (pb). ISBN 0 340 58507 8.

Review by Carole Fink, The Ohio State University.

This clear, concise survey of France's global international history will be useful for graduate and undergraduate courses as well as for the general reader. It depicts a France which, under five different political regimes between 1870 and the present, has been transformed from a defeated state to one of the victors in both world wars and the cold war; from Germany's archrival to its close, if wary, ally; from the world's second largest empire to the possessor of a small but strategic chain of global possessions; from an economy lacking in dynamism to the world's fourth-largest; and from Europe's scourge to one of its proponents of union.

In eight tersely-written, thematic chapters laced with apt quotations and good examples, John Keiger, professor of International History at the University of Salford and author of *France and the Origins of the First World War* (1983) and *Raymond Poincaré* (1997), describes the modernization of France's global relations, with particular emphasis on the personal, ideological, and institutional elements in this development.

In a brief but evocative opening chapter, "Determinants," Keiger juxtaposes the elements of geography, demography, and economy with the more abstract conceptions of the state, national identity, and external image. If its location and diversity have been at the root of France's calamities, its leaders and publicists have sought to offset its vulnerability by creating a "collective mentality" based on a mythical nation that is both unified and civilized, rational and cosmopolitan, benevolent and tolerant, and which, according to Keiger, has dominated more than a century of French foreign-policy formulation.

Following this theme, in chapter two, dealing with the institutional nexus, Keiger describes a highly consistent decision-making process, formerly implemented by the Quai d'Orsay's closed bureaucratic elite in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and by a few key ambassadors and now implemented by the centralized presidency of the Fifth Republic. Dismissing the impact of parliament, the military, business and commercial interests as well as the press, Keiger sees both a narrow pattern and extraordinary public consensus behind France's continental and global diplomacy.

By contrast, in chapter three, "Strategy and Defence," Keiger demonstrates the concealed and often non-rational side of French policymaking, from the policy of "outright offensive" in 1914 to the decisions to create a now obsolescent nuclear strike force. In chapter four, focusing on "French Intelligence," Keiger documents a fairly grim picture of mismanagement and incompetence from the Dreyfus Affair, to the massive infiltration of KGB agents under the Fourth and Fifth Republic, and to the Rainbow Warrior fiasco in 1985.

Four chapters are devoted to France's special problems. "Germany," the longest and most nuanced, traces the cycles of belligerence and detente. "The Anglo-Saxons" examines a history of distrustful

partnerships and outright enmity. "Russia" documents the transformation of an indispensable World War I ally to an implacable enemy. "Empire," which recounts the acquisition, expansion, and losses after World War II, only briefly hints at the somber legacy at home and abroad.

Keiger's final chapter, "The Post-Cold War Era," presents a grave picture of a newly-vulnerable France. Emerging from its longtime protected sphere between the two superpowers, with a less decisive leadership and more fragmented sense of its national identity, France has been reduced to a medium-sized, if nuclear, power, still with a permanent Security Council seat but facing numerous challenges in Europe and abroad.

If another Gaullist era is now highly improbable, Keiger suggests that France might solve its current insecurity by issuing a new appeal to universal values and transforming its frayed national myth to encompass the forces of "globalization, regionalization, multiculturalism, and the 'right to difference'" (p. 239). But the emphasis throughout his book on the durability of certain ideas, structures, and personnel makes this possibility appear remote.

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