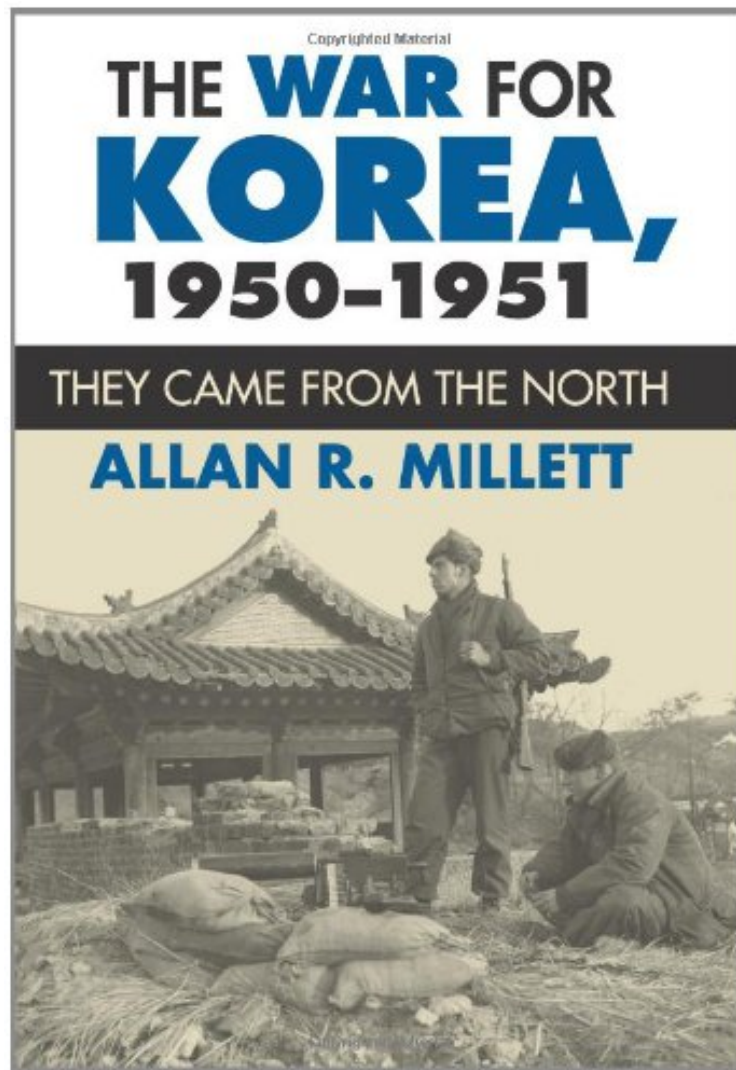


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The War for Korea, 1950-1951: They Came from the North (Modern War Studies (Hardcover))

Allan R. Millett

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Allan R. Millett : The War for Korea, 1950-1951: They Came from the North (Modern War Studies (Hardcover)) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The War for Korea, 1950-1951: They Came from the North (Modern War Studies (Hardcover)):

14 of 15 people found the following review helpful. It's all about contextBy Bryan GibbyA subordinate of the Duke of Wellington at Waterloo is supposed to have said of Napoleon that "he moves his cannon with the likeness of a pistol."

Allan Millett with similar agility and deftness maneuvers from the tactics and battlefield engagements of this internationalized Korean War to the strategic and policy debates that raged more or less continuously in Moscow, Beijing, Washington, (and to a lesser extent in coverage) in Seoul and Pyongyang. Dr. Millett has been immersed in the Korean War for over twenty years and it shows with his command of every conceivable source -- memoirs, operational reports, political reports and cables, letters and journals, official studies and books, and a vast secondary literature in Korean, Chinese, Russian, and English. The writing style is crisp, engaging, at times humorous, but always incisive in detail and analysis. Dr. Millett's greatest contribution perhaps is to lay out the full context of the War. In this second of three volumes, the "what" is always accompanied and explained by the "how" and "why." The focus of this volume is the internationalized war beginning with the North Korean invasion in June 1950 and terminating with the initial tentative feelers for a negotiated settlement a year later. The intervention of foreign powers (North Korean, United Nations/United States, and the People's Republic of China) in the southern civil war is fully assessed with a comprehensive analysis of the military impact and the delicate political maneuvering that all parties had to manage. The deliberations of the Truman administration ought not to occasion much surprise; more notable perhaps is the policy wrangling on the Communist side. Millett shows clearly how decisions made and not made in the various capitals affected the strategy and conduct of the shooting war. (Students of U.S. Cold War policy and history will be pleased with the detailed narrative of American defense policy and the debates, painstakingly reconstructed from primary sources, surrounding rearmament and military intervention.) The analysis of campaigns and battles is first rate and thorough. Some aspects that most histories remain obscure on but are clearly illuminated here are: the competence and preparedness of the Korean People's Army (less than presumed), the fighting ability and spirit of the ROK Army (greater than usually acknowledged), the tactical and operational handicaps of the U.S. Eighth Army, the personalities that affected tactical and strategic choices, the difficulties and real accomplishments of the Chinese People's Volunteer Force, Stalin's conundrum and his resolution to fight to the last Chinese. A cliché in the business is that the Korean War is "the forgotten war." This label is not true as there are dozens of Korean War histories. However, it is true that the war is generally misunderstood -- then and now. Too much effort has traditionally devolved on the American-Chinese confrontation, which has skewed many interpretations of the conflict. Millett brings us back to the reality that this was a Korean conflict (it was their war first). Intervention ensured that a general status quo would prevail. How that status quo would be settled, and whether (and how) it could be maintained is only hinted at in this volume, but will be the central question of volume three, covering the years 1951-1953.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book is for the serious student of the Korean ... By David J. Moore This book is for the serious student of the Korean War and it covers a mostly neglected element of the war, that is; the vigorous prosecution of the war by the South Koreans after initial setbacks, 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. ... and this is one of the most informative and best documented books I have read. By Jerri Garofalo I am researching a lesser known but major battle during the Korean War and this is one of the most informative and best documented books I have read, and I have read many. Mr Millett does not fall for some of the frequently told falsehoods, but tells it like it really was.

In *The War for Korea, 1945-1950: A House Burning*, one of our most distinguished military historians argued that the conflict on the Korean peninsula in the middle of the twentieth century was first and foremost a war between Koreans that began in 1948. In the second volume of a monumental trilogy, Allan R. Millett now shifts his focus to the twelve-month period from North Korea's invasion of South Korea on June 25, 1950, through the end of June 1951—the most active phase of the internationalized "Korean War." Moving deftly between the battlefield and the halls of power, Millett weaves together military operations and tactics without losing sight of Cold War geopolitics, strategy, and civil-military relations. Filled with new insights on the conflict, his book is the first to give combined arms its due, looking at the contributions and challenges of integrating naval and air power with the ground forces of United Nations Command and showing the importance of Korean support services. He also provides the most complete, and sympathetic, account of the role of South Korea's armed forces, drawing heavily on ROK and Korea Military Advisory Group sources. Millett integrates non-American perspectives into the narrative—especially those of Mao Zedong, Chinese military commander Peng Dehuai, Josef Stalin, Kim Il-sung, and Syngman Rhee. And he portrays Walton Walker and Matthew Ridgway as the heroes of Korea, both of whom had a more profound understanding of the situation than Douglas MacArthur, whose greatest flaw was not his politics but his strategic and operational incompetence. Researched in South Korean, Chinese, and Soviet as well as American and UN sources, Millett has exploited previously ignored or neglected oral history collections—including interviews with American and South Korean officers—and has made extensive use of reports based on interrogations of North Korean and Chinese POWs. The end result is masterful work that provides both a gripping narrative and a greater understanding of this key conflict in international and American history.

“An extraordinarily thoughtful, provocative, and detailed narrative of how the conflict on the peninsula evolved from a ‘local war’ into a major military confrontation between the United States and Communist China, and how it remained

a 'limited war.' It further confirms Millett's position as the world's leading scholar of military history in general and the Korean War history in particular."—Chen Jian, author of *China's Road to the Korean War* "Millett's gripping story vividly captures the most dynamic period of the war. . . . Essential reading for those who would understand this conflict."—Colonel (Ret.) Donald W. Boose, Jr., author of *U.S. Army Forces in the Korean War* From the Back Cover "An extraordinarily thoughtful, provocative, and detailed narrative of how the conflict on the peninsula evolved from a 'local war' into a major military confrontation between the United States and Communist China, and how it remained a 'limited war.' It further confirms Millett's position as the world's leading scholar of military history in general and the Korean War history in particular."--Chen Jian, author of *China's Road to the Korean War* "Millett's gripping story vividly captures the most dynamic period of the war. . . . Essential reading for those who would understand this conflict."--Colonel (Ret.) Donald W. Boose, Jr., author of *U.S. Army Forces in the Korean War* About the Author Allan R. Millett is Ambrose Professor of History and Director of the Eisenhower Center for American Studies at the University of New Orleans and is the recipient of the Pritzker Military Library Literature Award for Lifetime Achievement in Military Writing. His previous books include *Semper Fidelis: The History of the United States Marine Corps*, *A War To Be Won: Fighting the Second World War*, *For the Common Defense: The Military History of the United States of America*, *Their War for Korea*, and *The War for Korea, 1945-1950: A House Burning* (see page 27).