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Atlantis lost : the American experience with De Gaulle, 1958-1969

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Atlantis Lost

**The American Experience with De Gaulle,
1958-1969**

Sebastian Reyn

Atlantis Lost: The American Experience with De Gaulle, 1958-1969

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Prof. dr. A. van Staden

“Therefore both writers and readers of history should not pay so much attention to the actual narrative of events, as to what precedes, what accompanies, and what follows each. For if we take from history the discussion of why, how, and wherefore each thing was done, and whether the result was what we should have reasonably expected, what is left is a clever essay but not a lesson, and while pleasing for the moment of no possible benefit for the future.”

Polybius, *Histories*

“The ultimate goal of the Atlantic nations should be to develop a genuine Atlantic commonwealth, in which common institutions are increasingly developed to address common problems.”

Dean Acheson, *1961 Report to President Kennedy*

“When all is said and done, Great Britain is an island;
France the cape of a continent;
America another world.”

Charles de Gaulle, *War Memoirs*

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Editorial Note

For all editorial matters, I have followed *The Chicago Manual of Style* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993, 14th edition). For reasons of readability, I have therefore made use of English translations of French texts whenever these were available.

to Gioia, once again

"FRENCH IMPRESSIONISM, I GUESS."



CASFIELD, NEWARK NEWS

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Acknowledgments

Every study is an odyssey of the mind. My odyssey may have been long in time, stretching out over fifteen years of intermittent work, but I am grateful for having learned so much along the way. Its length in time, I feel, allowed for ideas to mature. Nor do I apologize for the heftiness of this study. In this regard, I sympathize with Thomas Mann's words in the foreword to his big novel *Der Zauberberg* (1924): "We shall tell it at length, in precise and thorough detail – for when was a story short on diversion or long on boredom simply because of the time and space required for the telling? Unafraid of the odium of appearing too meticulous, we are much more inclined to the view that only thoroughness can be truly entertaining."¹ As both de Gaulle and Uncle Sam conjure up powerful images and associations, a study of this sort lends itself to taking one side or the other and hence to ready-made conclusions and worn-out clichés, which I was determined to avoid. Now that I have reached my destination and drawn my *own* conclusions, based in the main on a thorough review of the documentary record, I am resigned to the verdict of the reader.

While an odyssey such as this one is largely solitary, it could not have been completed without the help of others. In particular my wife Gioia has been an indispensable source of support and a sound judge of all that has been written in the subsequent pages. As she has had to share most of the burden, this book is dedicated to her. I furthermore thank my father for setting the example of thoroughness in academics, even as I cannot claim to understand his mathematical field of research (phase portraits of planar quadratic systems). I thank my mother for her stubborn and oft-repeated belief that issues beyond academia continue to be far more important.

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¹ Thomas Mann, *The Magic Mountain* (London: The Folio Society, 2000), xv. *Der Zauberberg* was first published in 1924.

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