
Reviewed by Michael L. Krenn, Appalachian State University

The tidal wave of wonderful works on the issue of race, civil rights, and U.S. diplomacy during the Cold War that have appeared in recent years begs the question of whether anything else of significance can be said on the topic. Books and articles by Brenda Gayle Plummer, Penny Von Eschen, Tom Borstelmann, Carol Anderson, Mary Dudziak, Cary Fraser, Gerald Horne, and a host of others have been published in the last decade or so. Any new scholarship, therefore, faces the somewhat daunting task of finding something original and significant to add to the literature or run the risk of reinventing the wheel. *The Opinions of Mankind: Racial Issues, Press, and Propaganda in the Cold War*, by Richard Lentz and Karla K. Gower, manages to do a bit of the former and, unfortunately, much of the latter.

Lentz and Gower perform a herculean bit of research in scouring U.S. newspapers and magazines, as well as some English-language versions of foreign print media, in pursuit of their main tasks: illustrating how America’s race problem was portrayed by the U.S. media to both domestic and foreign audiences and explaining how the coverage simultaneously helped to damage the American image abroad and motivate change and civil rights progress at home in the years from 1946 to 1965. Using a straightforward chronological approach, the chapters focus on major events in the civil rights struggle in the United States and then summarize the press coverage from both U.S. and overseas sources. In doing so, the authors add some interesting information to the existing literature on race and U.S. foreign policy during the Cold War. Whereas most of the scholarship has focused almost exclusively on African Americans, Lentz and Gower devote separate chapters to the roles played by Native Americans, Latin Americans (and, to a lesser extent, Hispanic Americans), and Asians and Asian Americans in the propaganda battle between the United States and the Communist bloc. This is a terrifically important contribution and will, one hopes, spur additional research.

The book also performs a useful role by collating so much of the press coverage at home and abroad dealing with race and civil rights. The wide-ranging coverage gives extra credence to the argument that the civil rights struggle in the United States was one of international importance. In addition, the focus on press coverage from Com-
munist China is an interesting addition to the discussion, which so often relies entirely on the attacks leveled by Soviet newspapers and magazines.

Despite these contributions, the book too often retreads familiar soil. In part, this can be attributed to the lack of attention to some of the most significant works in the field. The authors include no references to Plummer’s work; Von Eschen’s 1996 book *Race against Empire*; Cary Fraser’s important article on the Little Rock crisis; books by Borstelmann and Thomas Noer discussing U.S. relations with white minority regimes in Africa; or my 1999 book on African Americans as diplomats in the Cold War. Instead of breaking new ground, therefore, much of the current volume is spent on unnecessarily repeating what is found in these earlier studies. Much the same holds true for the authors’ discussion of U.S. racial attitudes toward Latin America. They present arguments as significant contributions without any mention of the works of Frederick Pike, James William Park, or John J. Johnson.

This is particularly unfortunate because other topics, such as South Africa, the fascinating role of people such as Carl Rowan (who served as both unofficial critic of American racism and United States Information Agency director), and the 1964 murders of the three civil rights workers in Mississippi, are either skimmed over or ignored altogether. A particularly troubling example of these kinds of omissions occurs in the chapter dealing with *Sputnik* and the Little Rock crisis. The infamous “Unfinished Business” exhibit on the grounds of the U.S. pavilion at the world’s fair of 1958 was a consummate expression of American propaganda torturously dealing with the intersections of the civil rights issue and the Cold War. Despite the heavy press coverage of this event, no mention of it is made in the book.

The book’s contentions about the role of the press in the propaganda war over the issue of civil rights waged between the United States and the Communist bloc are overwhelmed by repetition and an avalanche of quotations, with fully one-third of the book devoted to endnotes. Instead of sustained analysis, the authors too often rely on moving from one summary to another of this or that newspaper or magazine story or government report. They contend that the coverage “about race had considerable impact abroad” (p. 211), but their argument is supported almost entirely by references to the sheer numbers of news outlets and publications. The precise nature of the “considerable impact” is left undefined. In addition, the relationship between the press and the U.S. government is somewhat hazy. The authors argue several times that the news media and foreign policy officials in Washington often exhibited identical attitudes and opinions. Was this simply a result of a shared Cold War ethos, or was the connection between the two groups more intimate than is commonly assumed? Finally, although the authors cite African American media sources, the conclusion that “the press put those perceptions [of America’s race problem] in the context of the global Cold War” (p. 211) does not give enough credit to those sources. In fact, the unrelenting efforts of African American newspapers and magazines were what finally led to the wider acknowledgment of the connections between the U.S. civil rights struggle, anti-colonialism, the battle against apartheid, and the propaganda war with the Soviet Union.

In conclusion, this book might have been more effectively presented as one or
two tightly argued articles dealing with the truly important contributions noted earlier in this review. Without a more thorough grasp of the significant work that has already been done in the field of race, civil rights, and the Cold War, the authors spend far too many pages reinventing scholarly wheels and missing opportunities to explore other topics and events that might have proven useful to their analysis.


 Reviewed by Melvyn P. Leffler, University of Virginia

The Cold War was about the dollar gap, argues Curt Cardwell in this provocative yet exaggerated account of the early post–World War II years. U.S. officials, Cardwell claims, were not really preoccupied with a threat from the Soviet Union; they were obsessed with the balance of payments problems of their prospective allies in Asia and Europe. They feared that Britain, France, West Germany, and Japan would not have sufficient dollars to buy U.S. goods and that an open world economy would be endangered. Other scholars (like William Borden) have argued this case with regard to Japan and East Asia, says Cardwell, but few have underscored the importance of the dollar gap in relation to West European recovery, to U.S. rearmament efforts, and to the writing of NSC 68.

Many scholars of the Cold War will find it difficult to accept the basic framework of this book. Relying primarily on Geoffrey Roberts’s work on Soviet foreign policy, Cardwell insists that Iosif Stalin wanted postwar cooperation. Stalin’s security concerns “were authentic” (p. 41). He “felt betrayed and disrespected” (p. 267). He did not want to Communize Eastern Europe, yet U.S. multilateralists refused to acknowledge his legitimate security anxieties and “would stop at nothing to see their goal fulfilled, even when the measures called for posed a direct threat to the Soviet Union, real or perceived” (p. 268). Although these claims merit serious consideration, Cardwell’s benign view of Stalin’s actions and intentions does not mesh well with less forgiving portraits of Stalin’s personality and policies.

But readers should not dismiss this volume out of hand. Cardwell has much to say that is valuable about postwar U.S. foreign policy. He shows how the dollar gap catalyzed U.S. policymakers’ anxieties in the initial postwar years and shaped the passage of the British loan in 1946, the aid to Greece and Turkey in March 1947, and the European Recovery Program (ERP) in 1947–1948. Although Western Europe started to recover, he argues, the dollar gap was not solved. Cardwell’s major contribution is to show the extent to which U.S. officials feared that the Marshall Plan would end in 1952 without having fixed the dollar gap, thereby compelling America’s allies to revert to autarkic trade practices and state planning. Given these apprehensions, U.S. officials worked hard to think of new ways to sustain the outflow of dollars. Knowing that Congress would resist the prolongation of assistance, policymakers decided they
had once again to magnify the Soviet threat. They therefore embraced the hyperbolic language of NSC 68 and focused on rearmament. Although the evidence for all of this, Cardwell admits, “is largely circumstantial,” in his view it is nonetheless “compelling” (p. 161). In short, “the Soviet Union was containable, the dollar gap was not” (p. 180).

Let me acknowledge here that Cardwell is seeking, among other things, to rebut my arguments in A Preponderance of Power. U.S. officials, he insists, were not concerned with national security. They simply packaged their economic anxieties about the future of an open world in the wrapping of national security. They exaggerated the specter of a Soviet threat in order to scare the U.S. Congress and the American people. Again and again, Cardwell makes the point that “the dollar gap had no intrinsic relationship to the Soviet Union and, therefore, to the Cold War” (p. 71).

To support his view, Cardwell emphasizes that Dean Acheson and Paul Nitze did not expect a Soviet attack in early 1950. They were, he claims, not alarmed by Stalin’s detonation of a nuclear bomb in August 1949 or by the Communist takeover of China or by the overall specter of growing Soviet power. Because U.S. officials believed that Stalin did not want war, the only possible explanation for NSC 68 is that Acheson and Nitze wanted to use the bogeyman of a Soviet/Communist threat to sustain the outflow of U.S. dollars after the expiration of the ERP in 1952.

What Cardwell does not understand is that officials might not have expected an immediate Soviet attack, but they were nonetheless alarmed by the prospective growth of Soviet/Communist power. The dollar gap was one of many factors that the Soviet Union might exploit or might derive advantages from, and, overall, the security dilemma offers a much better framework for grasping the origins of the Cold War than does the dollar gap. Although NSC 68 did have a few lines stating that “even if there were no Soviet Union we would face the great problem of the free society,” Cardwell lifts this passage from context and fails to note the following sentences: “The Kremlin design seeks to impose order among nations by means which would destroy our free and democratic system. The Kremlin’s possession of atomic weapons puts new power behind its design, and increases the jeopardy to our system.” (See the text in U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950, Vol. I: National Security, pp. 262–263.) It was the “Kremlin’s design,” as perceived by U.S. officials, not the dollar gap, that inspired their deepest fears.

Nonetheless, Cardwell is to be congratulated for underscoring the importance of the dollar gap as a key ingredient in the dynamics of the early Cold War. It was a problem that officials agonized about, but its saliency derived mostly from the specter of mounting Soviet power. Anyone who doubts this should read Cardwell’s book and then examine NSC 68 and the documents surrounding it in the Foreign Relations of the United States, Vol. I, pp. 126–492. For U.S. officials, national security meant something more than economic prosperity or economic supremacy. National security, as I wrote in Preponderance of Power (p. 13), meant “defending the nation’s core values, its organizing ideology, and its free political and economic institutions.” Although Cardwell misconstrues or misunderstands the argument I made there (see pp. 5–6 of his book, and especially p. 85, note 54), the more capacious argument I presented in...
Preponderance (especially pp. 10–24, 157–164, 312–369, 495–520) is more satisfying than the narrow focus of Cardwell’s volume, more in keeping with the voluminous evidence, and more likely to underscore the resonance of a revisionist critique that is not singularly focused on U.S. responsibility for the Cold War and on the exclusive role of economic factors. I agree with Cardwell that the survival of a democratic capitalist system was the ultimate goal of U.S. officials, but in my view they saw the challenges in much more complex ways and defined the benefits in more than economic terms.


Reviewed by Gary R. Hess, Bowling Green State University

The fifteen essays in Connecting Histories provide an international history of the transformation of Southeast Asia during the early years of the Cold War. The scholars who participated in this study, which is part of the International Cold War History Project of the Woodrow Wilson Center, make use where feasible of documentary sources. Although a few of the essays deal with policies of external powers, most focus on the emerging Southeast Asian countries, all of which except Thailand experienced decolonization, and how they defined their interests within the context of the Cold War.

Ideology stands out as a fundamental determinant of Chinese and Vietnamese Communist strategy. Chen Jian challenges the conventional interpretation that China’s commitment to “peaceful coexistence” represented a retreat from a revolutionary foreign policy, contending instead that its appeal to developing peoples enabled Beijing “to link—in its own ways—communist revolution and decolonization” (p. 166). Two studies of Vietnamese Communists, one by Tuong Vu and the other by Christopher Goscha, question the widely held view that the Vietnamese subordinated ideology to nationalism. An examination of the Vietnamese Communists’ worldview during the 1940s finds a conventional Communist interpretation of the West and an assumption that Vietnam was destined to play an important role in the inevitable world revolution. Ho Chi Minh and other leaders thus welcomed Sino-Soviet recognition of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) in 1950. An important perspective on the Soviet side is provided by the late Ilya Gaiduk’s analysis of Iosif Stalin’s cautious response to Asian Communist movements—a reflection not of any questioning of Communist ideology but of practical matters: preoccupation with European problems, distrust of Asian leaders, skepticism of their strength, and apprehension that the Soviet Union would be drawn into supporting their insurrections.

The major Communist powers’ recognition of the DRV, followed by Western recognition of the French-created Bao Dai Solution as a non-Communist alternative, brought the Cold War squarely to Southeast Asia. Ang Cheng Guan’s essay makes the important point that all non-Communist countries were wary of Communist activi-
ties and ambitions and thus embraced, to varying degrees, the plausibility of the “domino theory.” Yet as Goscha points out, this posed a dilemma for Asian leaders—most notably in India, Indonesia, and Burma—whose overriding concern was being drawn into a Cold War confrontation. This led them to embrace nonalignment. Samuel Crowl adds that India’s Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, by hosting the Asian Relations Conference of 1947 and by steadfastly supporting the Indonesian revolution, made the non-Western countries a force in international affairs. The fifteen-nation New Delhi Conference in January 1949 to protest Dutch repression “indicated that the new nations did not have to compromise their independence and succumb to pressures to join a Cold War bloc, that the international system was changing, and that other choices were developing, such as non-alignment” (p. 252). This new international force culminated in the 29-country Bandung Conference of 1955.

Thailand and Malaya rejected nonalignment in favor of association with the West. As Daniel Fineman underscores, Prime Minister Phibun Songkhram’s decision to become a U.S. ally was a defining moment in Thailand’s history, ending the tradition of maintaining proper relations with all external powers. Recognition of Bao Dai (for whom Phibun had little regard) and the dispatch of Thai troops to fight in the Korean War were a small price to pay for U.S. military assistance. According to Danny Wong Tze Ken, Malaya’s campaign against Communist insurgents made anti-Communism its overriding foreign policy objective, which led to uncritical support of South Vietnam even as Ngo Dinh Diem’s authority eroded.

Among the more imaginative essays are those by Michael Charney, Remy Madinier, and Edward Miller demonstrating how leaders used culture to influence short-term political development in Burma, Indonesia, and South Vietnam respectively. In Burma, U Nu, whose democratic leadership has been obscured by nearly fifty years of military rule, relied on propaganda linking Buddhism to the state, thus marginalizing political opposition and the frontier insurgency. In Indonesia, the Masjumi Party politicized Islam into the prime agency of Western-style democracy and a decentralized state. In South Vietnam, Diem’s “personalism” reflected the interest of several regional leaders in a pan-Asian alternative to Western concepts of development and modernization.

For all of its strengths, Connecting Histories suffers from some imprecision, incompleteness, and digression. First, the prominence of India, which is evident in several essays, underscores the meaninglessness of distinguishing between South and Southeast Asia when addressing the Cold War’s advance to the South. The project would have benefited from broadening its scope to include essays on India’s international influence and on the adjustment of India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka to decolonization and the Cold War. Second, among the countries of Southeast Asia, the Philippines is almost completely ignored. Inexplicably, its history is relegated to a one-page description of its pro-American policy and a couple of other brief references. Although less egregious, Cambodia and Laos, which achieved independence in 1954, receive scant attention aside from being an extension of developments in Vietnam. The Philippines, Cambodia, and Laos thus have no status as regional “actors.” Third, the policy of the United States, while discussed in several of the essays, lacks any compre-
hensive overview. The essays by Gaiduk and Chen Jian provide instructive introductions to the policies of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, but the volume lacks a comparable essay on the role of the United States, which was the most prominent of any external power. The essays by Mark Lawrence on the Bao Dai Solution and Richard Mason on U.S. reluctance to accept Indonesian nonalignment underscore the difficulties of applying containment in the midst of decolonization; but apart from these discussions, U.S. objectives and policies are left obscure. Finally, a couple of the essays do not “fit.” Those by Anne Foster on the Netherlands’ adjustment to losing Indonesia and Martin Thomas on the shortcomings of British intelligence—while fascinating and important in their own right—add little to our understanding of Southeast Asian developments.

Overall, however, Connecting Histories substantially enhances the scholarship on a critical region at a formative moment.

✣✣✣


Reviewed by Andrea Weiss, City College of New York

Robert J. Corber’s study draws on and synthesizes the growing body of work in lesbian and gay film studies, extending that work in one significant way: by arguing that the homophobic discourse around female homosexuality in the United States shifted during the Cold War to focus on the slippery image of the femme lesbian rather than the more easily identified gender-transgressive butch. In the cultural hysteria of that era, the femme was considered the more dangerous figure because, similar to the Communist, she could pass as “normal.” This enabled her to seduce other women and convert them to “the life,” destroy the institution of marriage, subvert all-American values, and threaten to undermine the national fabric, all without arousing suspicion.

The argument is interesting, and Corber threads it through a rereading of several beloved Hollywood classics that we might not have considered under the rubric of “Cold War movies,” although they subscribe to Cold War ideologies pertaining to gender and sexuality. Many viewers might not immediately consider these films in terms of their lesbian representation, either. Because of the tight reign of the Motion Picture Production Code, roughly from 1934 to 1961, the narrow parameters of what could be represented on screen meant that the various constructions of lesbianism in these films flew, and continue to fly, below the radar for many viewers—which makes Corber’s reading of them all the more interesting.

Corber devotes entire chapters to the films All About Eve (Joseph Mankiewicz, 1950), The Children’s Hour (William Wyler, 1962), and Marnie (Alfred Hitchcock, 1964), all films that already have been discussed in terms of their “queerness,” first by gay film critic Vito Russo in his pioneering book The Celluloid Closet (1989), again by this reviewer in my Vampires and Violets: Lesbians in the Cinema (1992), and in
greater detail by Patricia White in her *Uninvited: Classical Hollywood Cinema and Lesbian Representability* (1999), not to mention quite a few others since then. However, by focusing on the dangerous femme of the Cold War era, Corber looks at scenes we have known and loved for decades, forcing us to consider them in a new light. At the end of *All About Eve*, when a young fan slips into Eve’s dressing room much the way Eve (Anne Baxter) had first slipped into Margo’s (Bette Davis), the girl dresses in Eve’s cloak, holds up Eve’s award and takes a bow, and we see her image in the three-way dressing room mirror multiplied ad infinitum. Corber reads in this scene “the fear that the feminine woman who makes a lesbian object choice will reproduce herself almost endlessly by converting other women to lesbianism” (p. 40).

The pleasure of revisiting such scenes and considering them in terms of Cold War ideologies is diminished, however, by the somewhat clumsy writing style of the book. Readers’ eyes are apt to glaze over after one too many sentences such as “*Marnie* interrogates the construction of female subjectivity in relation to patriarchal social and economic arrangements” (p. 21), not to mention the many repetitions, such as numerous references to Joan Crawford as “a kind of female Horatio Alger.” The problems, however, are not just stylistic. In the introduction, Corber explains the untidy coexistence of older and newer discourses on lesbianism (inverted gender identity being the older; aberrant object choice being the newer) by stating, “Movies continued to draw on an older model of sexuality that linked gender and sexual nonconformity, even as they underwrote the Cold War construction of the lesbian” (p. 5). A few pages later: “Despite the emergence of object choice as an overriding principle of social and sexual difference, the older model of lesbianism did not wholly disappear” (p. 18). In the very next paragraph he repeats, “Thus even as Cold War homophobia validated the new model of sexuality, it continued to incorporate the older model, which associated lesbianism with masculinity” (p. 19). Did he think we were not paying close enough attention in the previous paragraph? Referring to *Mildred Pierce* (Michael Curtiz, 1941), Corber claims that Joan Crawford as Mildred Pierce “has already disrupted the reproduction of normative gender and sexual identities” (p. 107) even though we just learned in the previous paragraph that “she has already disrupted the structures of desire and identification on which the reproduction of normative gender and sexual identities depends” (p. 107). One wonders whether he gave himself the peculiar challenge of trying to write an entire book while confining himself to only a limited pool of available words.

Despite these flaws, *Cold War Femme* brings several new insights into the fields of cinema studies and Cold War studies. Corber’s reading of the contradictory star personas of Doris Day, Joan Crawford, and Bette Davis, which, in different ways for each of them, at once challenged and confirmed Cold War sexual mores, is enlightening and nuanced. Corber moves fluidly from text to context and back to text again, and he seems equally adept at historical and filmic analysis. He draws attention to the figure of the femme, whose history and representation have been often eclipsed, both in homophobic discourse and even in lesbian/gay scholarship, by the more visible figure of the butch. Unfortunately, his stilted writing style may cause readers to abandon the book before gleaning its contributions to the field.

Reviewed by Scott Saul, University of California, Berkeley

“No commodity is quite so strange, / As this thing called cultural exchange,” wrote Dave Brubeck and Iola Brubeck in their musical *The Real Ambassadors*, which riffed on pianist Dave’s experience as a State Department–sponsored jazz musician who was sent on a tour of Poland, India, and the Middle East in 1958. Jazz diplomacy—which Lisa Davenport traces in its heyday from the mid-1950s to the late-1960s—was indeed a strange commodity in the Cold War, and Davenport draws out one facet of its strangeness: that the same jazz musicians who were treated as second-class citizens by the government-sanctioned regime of Jim Crow were trotted out to Africa, Latin America, South Asia, and Eastern Europe as examples of American democratic culture at its finest. Jazz diplomacy was a practice anticipated by Henry Luce’s famed “American Century” essay (1941), in which Luce argued that “American jazz” was part of a new global lingua franca emanating from U.S. popular culture, a lingua franca that the United States should integrate into its foreign policy. But as jazz diplomacy unfolded in the context of momentous events—the Civil Rights movement, the decolonization of Africa and Asia, and the cultural and political rivalry of the United States and the Soviet Union—it took on a charge that Luce could not have anticipated.

What, indeed, would be the terms of “cultural exchange” when Dizzy Gillespie brought his band in 1956, under State Department auspices, to Athens, where students had just stoned the U.S. Information Office to protest U.S. support of the current Greek political regime? Was Dizzy an antidote to American power or its representative?

*Jazz Diplomacy* faces the challenge of having been conceived alongside, but published after, Penny Von Eschen’s *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), which took a more prismatic view of the project of jazz diplomacy. Von Eschen’s book considers at greater length the perspective of jazz musicians themselves, who were enlivened by their contacts abroad even as they were frustrated by the terms of State Department sponsorship; the impact of the tours on resistance movements within the countries visited; the strategic interests that drove jazz diplomacy (e.g., the targeting of buffer states such as Turkey and oil-rich states such as Iran); and the coincidence of jazz diplomacy with other forms of persuasion and influence, running the gamut from tie-ins with American-based multinationals such as Pepsi-Cola to coups and even assassinations. What Davenport offers, by contrast, is an account heavily weighted by her admirable research into State Department and other government files. She surpasses Von Eschen, perhaps, in her account of the condescension that suffused the attitudes of State Department attachés posted in West Africa, South Asia, and the Middle East, who often looked down on the perceived vulgarity of jazz, of the populations they aimed to draw...
into the American orbit, or both. “I am a little afraid of [jazz] myself” (p. 76), one New Delhi–based consul declared not atypically.

Unfortunately, Davenport’s credibility is eroded by regular errors of fact, especially when she steps outside the precincts of the State Department. She misidentifies the white Dixieland musician Red Nichols as the black bebop pianist-composer Herbie Nichols (p. 79)—a mistake that, in jazz circles, would be tantamount to confusing Harry S. Truman with Truman Capote. She misnames Charles Mingus’s landmark protest composition “Fables of Faubus” as “Foibles of Faubus” (p. 63); she calls jazz guitarist Charlie Byrd a “folk artist” (p. 92); she repeatedly misspells the great Chicago jazz trombonist-singer Jack Teagarden’s last name (counterintuitively, as “Teagardan”; pp. 78, 120); she misnames The Real Ambassadors as The Real Ambassador (p. 44); she calls Woody Herman the leader of a “New Orleans-style jazz orchestra” (p. 110) when he was a leading figure in big band swing; and so on. Such mistakes might have been corrected by an alert editor, but they bespeak Davenport’s troubling lack of facility with the musical idiom that is one half of her chosen topic. Just as State Department officials often had trouble grasping the faultlines within the jazz community, so Davenport oversimplifies her subject—as when she argues that “mainstream musicians embraced a different notion of freedom than the jazz rebels” (p. 84) but leaves unclear how their notion of freedom was different and, more important, how their different sense of freedom appealed to State Department officials and the entrepreneurs involved in these cultural exchanges. Jazz Diplomacy often gestures toward arguments related to the music but does not follow through with them.

A more generous reading of Jazz Diplomacy might suggest that Davenport has landed on a puzzling irony of American cultural history and, like many others, has had trouble unpacking it. Davenport remarks that jazz was both “an instrument of Cold War containment” and part of “the globalization of African American culture in the twentieth century” (p. 149). The conclusion she then draws is that, through jazz diplomacy, “musicians, artists, and politicians worldwide elevated jazz and culture above the contentious realm of Cold War politics” (p. 149). But it is difficult to see how the global diffusion of African American music—understood in the context of decolonization as a force of cultural resistance—transcended Cold War politics. In the Baltic Republics and Eastern Europe no less than West Africa, jazz was heard as music suffused with the spirit of a suppressed but resilient minority. Davenport ends with President Richard Nixon bestowing the Medal of Freedom on jazz giant Duke Ellington—a moment she presents positively as jazz’s recognition in the highest precinct of U.S. power. A more grassroots-oriented historian might have investigated the reception of jazz outside the United States and the halls of power. Some of the same Greek students who had just stoned the U.S. Information Service in 1956 took up Dizzy as their hero, lifting him on their shoulders and chanting “Dizzy! Dizzy!” What were they thinking, and where did they go from there? We await the history that delves fully into their experience of the United States and its jazz ambassadors.

Reviewed by James J. Sheehan, Stanford University

Like many contested territories, Cold War Berlin had several names. To the Federal Republic and its allies, the city was divided into East and West Berlin, the sectors that had been occupied and regulated by the victorious powers since the end of Second World War. To the German Democratic Republic (GDR), the city was simply Berlin, sometimes further identified as the Capital of the GDR, a name that proclaimed the city’s autonomy as well as its geographical and political connection to the east. Next to this Berlin was a place called West Berlin, an alien and, after 1961, increasingly remote entity that was farther away from its eastern neighbor than Moscow or Sofia. City maps printed in the east left the area of West Berlin blank, reaffirming the fact that nothing was there to interest a law-abiding citizen of the GDR. As it turned out, these empty spaces became a screen on which easterners could project their own hopes, fears, and unfulfilled desires.

Manfred Wilke’s Der Weg zur Mauer is the first volume in a series sponsored by the Stiftung Berliner Mauer, one of the many German foundations that encourage scholarly research and public discussions on historical issues. Wilke puts the problem of Berlin into a broadly conceived historical context. He begins with the emergence of the Cold War, traces the subsequent division of Europe into east and west, the creation of the two German states, and the apparent thaw following Stalin’s death in 1953, and then focuses on the international crisis over the status of Berlin that began in 1958 and produced the wall that surrounded the western part of the city in 1961. Although Wilke does not provide any startling new information or interpretations, he gives a clearly written and well-balanced account, largely based on the extensive secondary literature and a judicious use of documents, most of them printed and translated into German.

In contrast to Hope Harrison’s powerfully argued analysis in Driving the Soviets Up the Wall (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), which stressed the primacy of East Germany’s policies during the crisis, Wilke places the burden of responsibility on the shoulders of the Soviet leadership. This is also the position recently taken by Jonathan Haslam in Russia’s Cold War: From the October Revolution to the Fall of the Wall (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), which is based on a careful examination of the Soviet documents. I am not sure that it is necessary or even very useful to calibrate the relative weight of the major participants in the final decision to build a wall. Yoked together in an uncomfortable but indissoluble community of fate, Nikita Khrushchev and Walter Ulbricht both played decisive roles. Of course Ulbricht was ultimately dependent on Soviet support, not only to confront the Western allies but also to maintain power at home. Khrushchev, like many stronger members of an unequal alliance, was constrained by his partner’s weakness. No matter how difficult and demanding the East Germans were, he could not abandon them because they oc-
cupied a key geopolitical and ideological position on the Soviet Union’s western perimeter. The difference between Ulbricht and Khrushchev had less to do with the relative influence of their policies than with the different perspectives from which each viewed the question of Berlin. Khrushchev’s interest in Berlin was always instrumental: to him, the city was just one piece on a complex international chess board; its isolation and vulnerability seemed to give him an opportunity to divide his enemies, derail West German rearmament, and perhaps even drive the Americans out of Europe—which was and would remain the Soviets’ most important aspiration. Ulbricht’s goal was simpler, more immediate, and significantly more urgent: unless he could stop the increasingly rapid flow of refugees leaving the GDR by way of West Berlin, his regime would eventually bleed to death. If Ulbricht’s responsibility for the wall sometimes seems greater than Khrushchev’s, this is because for him the stakes were so much higher. Alone among the various participants in the crisis, his very survival hung in the balance. Once the Soviet authorities realized this, they had no alternative but to accept the necessity of blocking East Germans’ access to West Berlin, even while they backed away from their efforts to force the Allies to recognize East Germany and give up their rights over the western sectors of the city.

In the end, no one was fully satisfied with the outcome of the Berlin crisis. Every government had to settle for less than it wanted. As Wilke’s account makes clear, what mattered most is what did not happen: the superpowers were not pulled into the armed conflict they both feared, the balance of power in Europe was not disrupted, the Allies did not abandon West Berlin, the GDR did not collapse. Two years after the wall was built, the crisis was not resolved, but simply faded away. Except for those living in its shadow, the wall eventually allowed most people to forget about Berlin until 1989 when, to almost everyone’s surprise, the German capital once again, and probably for the last time, captured the world’s attention.

In his portraits of Europe written in 1983, the Italian journalist Luigi Barzini titled his chapter on Germany “The Mutable Germans” and wrote, “Germany is a trompe l’oeil Protean country. As everyone knows, only when one tied down Proteus, the prophetic old man of the sea, could one make him reveal the shape of things to come. But he couldn’t be pinned down easily; he continued to change” (The Europeans, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983, pp. 69–70). The German Prometheus continues to take new shapes and character at a dizzying pace and continues in Barzini’s view to determine the future of Europe. The great historian Fritz Stern has titled his own memoir
of Germany Five Germanies I Have Known. Just as we got to know the cozy Bonn Republic and the unbearably boring and repressive German Democratic Republic, Germany morphed into the new unified Berlin Republic.

On the twentieth anniversary of this unification the Georgetown University BMW Center for German and European Studies convened a workshop to assess this new Germany. This publication, ably edited and shaped by two of the center’s faculty, Jeffery Anderson and Eric Langenbacher, is the result.

As the editors note, the purpose of the volume is “to present a comprehensive portrait of German politics and society two decades after unification” (p. 4). They assembled an impressive array of specialists to look at the history, culture, society, politics, public policy, and political economy of the Berlin Republic. The range is wide and ambitious, including historical memory, immigration and integration, gender politics, film and culture, the party system, education, and the overall political economy. With the exception of Beverly Crawford’s and Abraham Newman’s chapters on Germany’s post-wall foreign policy, it does not extensively look at Germany’s role in Europe and the wider world.

Overall the verdict on the Berlin Republic is a positive one. Unified Germany continues to be a well-functioning democracy, although it is now more complex and perhaps less governable because of the emergence of a five-party system, the continuing east-west divisions, and the new complexities of an overly expanded federal system with the addition of five new states (Länder). Two of the premier U.S. historians of contemporary Germany, Konrad Jarausch and Charles Maier, offer thoughtful historical reflections on the changed German republic and set the context for the more detailed political, social, economic, and cultural analyses that follow. Jarausch looks at why the old Federal Republic succeeded after the failure of Weimar, homing in on the importance of the complete defeat of 1945, which eliminated the “stab in the back legend” used by Adolf Hitler and others to discredit Weimar, the creation of an elaborate welfare state, and the embrace of the West. He also notes some of the deficiencies of the current Berlin Republic, including the continuing problem of inner unification and the lack of integration of foreign minorities. He concludes with some interesting lessons for democratic nation-building based on the German experience and concludes that the old separate way (Sonderweg) has come to an end. Maier likewise concludes that German society has mellowed over the past two decades and that Germany is in much better shape today than the United States, being less divided and less vulnerable to political gridlock and extremism.

The survey of the various policy areas tends to confirm that Modell Deutschland is back. The divisions that characterized unified Germany in the early 1990s have been ameliorated though perhaps not eliminated in such areas as higher education and gender politics. Even in the area of economic policy, although unemployment remains higher in the east and out-migration continues, there have been dramatic improvements in productivity, infrastructure, and housing. The partial liberalization of the labor market undertaken during Gerhard Schröder’s chancellorship has resulted in the transformation of the welfare state and the emergence of a new model of organized capitalism. Although the essays were written before the dramatic consequences of the
financial crisis were apparent, the reemergence of a German model of an export-driven coordinated economy coupled with the serious decline of the Anglo-American finance-driven model were already becoming apparent and have only accelerated since the publication of the volume. As Langenbacher concludes, Germans have much to be proud of and offer much for the rest of the world to admire.

Yet the Germany chronicled and analyzed in this volume may be changing yet again. Although it is now the success story of the West, its political system seems to be decoupling from the economic system. The decline of the two major people's parties, the implosion of the Liberal Free Democrats, the persistence of the neo-Communist Linke, and the lack of strong and effective political leaders stands in marked contrast to the success and global innovation of the private sector.

As Barzini observed almost three decades ago, Germany tends to hold the fate of Europe, but conversely Germany is also shaped by the international environment in which it is so deeply intertwined. Few states are as networked or as vulnerable to the outside world as Germany. A transformation in its international context is confronting the Berlin Republic with major new stimuli and challenges. Here the debate between Beverly Crawford, who contends that Germany will continue to pursue a normative foreign policy that downplays power, and Abraham Newman, who contends that unified Germany has broken with this pattern and now pursues a more nationally assertive and self-interested policy that minimizes both risk and responsibility, will be central to an understanding of where German foreign policy will go.

The unraveling of Europe over the debt crisis has reopened questions about Germany's European vocation at a time when new generations of German leaders shaped by different historical memories will be coming on the scene. The opening of the post-American era also places new demands on Germany for leadership in areas in which in the past it could rely on public goods provided by Washington. Germany's booming, globalized export economy is pulling the country eastward and to some degree is marginalizing Europe in Germany's worldview. From the Bonn to the Berlin Republic is an excellent place to begin to assess what has changed and to serve as a baseline for the changes that are to come.


Reviewed by Richard Drake, University of Montana

In 1994, Elena Aga-Rossi and Victor Zaslavsky gave a paper criticizing Palmiro Togliatti, who for nearly forty years, until his death in 1964, served as the leader of the Italian Communist Party (PCI). This husband-and-wife team of historians had gained access to the recently opened Soviet archives. They claimed in their paper that the archival records irrefutably proved how Togliatti had followed Iosif Stalin's lead in im-
plementing the 1944 policy known as the “svolta di Salerno,” the turn at Salerno, whereby the PCI had abandoned its revolutionary strategy and had adopted a moderate and cooperative policy with the other anti-Fascist parties. Historians by and large had accepted the Communist interpretation of this policy as the creation of Togliatti, whose independence from the Soviet Union, it was said, became the precondition of his successful effort to build a genuinely national and democratic Communist Party in Italy. Aga-Rossi and Zaslavsky contended in their paper that the Soviet archives told a completely different story about the *svolta di Salerno* from the one recorded in conventional histories. In fact, Stalin made the decision to have the PCI cooperate with the other anti-Fascist parties in a government of national unity. The Soviet leader thought of Italy at this time strictly as a bargaining chip, to be sacrificed to the West for bigger prizes in Eastern Europe. Togliatti, as he always had done in the past, loyally supported Stalin. Such a thesis gravely offended the Togliatti priesthood. Aga-Rossi and Zaslavsky lamented that their paper “thus gave rise to a long debate, often conducted in polemical form, at times far removed from scientific discussion” (See the Italian version of the book, Elena Aga-Rossi and Victor Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin: Il PCI e la politica estera staliniana negli archivi di Mosca*, 2nd ed., Bologna: Il Mulino, 2007, p. 9.)

The polemics grew much louder when their book appeared in 1997. They claimed that the pattern of Stalin's dominance over the PCI in all matters of serious concern to the Soviet Union, as manifested in the actual history of the *svolta di Salerno*, continued unabated until the dictator’s death in 1953. The Soviet documents proved that Togliatti, in the manner of Stalinists everywhere, aspired above all “to satisfy the interests of the Soviet Union” (See Elena Aga-Rossi and Victor Zaslavsky, *Togliatti e Stalin: Il PCI e la politica estera staliniana negli archivi di Mosca*, Bologna: Il Mulino, 1997), p. 149.)

Devoted to Stalin, Togliatti defended the Soviet Union and the people's republics of Eastern Europe as the most democratic societies on earth. While compelled to adapt his tactics and rhetoric to the democratic context made unavoidable by Italy's inclusion in the U.S. sphere of influence, he had a thoroughgoing Marxist-Leninist mentality, which meant that for him the freedom to oppose government could exist only in a non-Communist society. Togliatti praised, as the political fulfillment of Communist philosophy, Stalin's methods for disposing of those who opposed the Soviet dictatorship of the proletariat.

In their 1997 book, Aga-Rossi and Zaslavsky characterized Togliatti as a moderate Stalinist. Brilliant, learned, and intellectually nimble, he was not the worst of the breed. Nevertheless, the archival documents revealed that on issue after issue of Stalin's foreign policy the Italian leader worked as a loyal servant of the Soviet Empire: chiefly—in addition to the *svolta di Salerno* policy—the disposition of Trieste and of Italian prisoners of war in the Soviet Union, as well as the decision to oppose the Marshall Plan and the formulation of PCI strategy during the watershed 1948 elections. For each of these issues, Aga-Rossi and Zaslavsky followed the paper trail from the Kremlin to Rome and back. The documents, they said, left no doubt that the PCI did
as it was told and put Soviet interests above those of the Italian State. Their argument became subtle at this point. As a long-time member of the power elite in the international Communist movement, the charismatic Togliatti was an influential figure in his own right. He was not a mere henchman of Stalin but more a privileged interlocutor whose longstanding dependence on the dictator and overlapping ideological viewpoint generally brought the two men to the same conclusions and had the practical effect of making the PCI an instrument of Soviet foreign policy.

A second edition of the book appeared in 2007 from which the English translation (under review here) is taken. In the ten years since the first edition, new evidence had emerged affecting their analysis of Italy’s early Cold War history. The new information in the second edition principally concerns Stalin’s motives for supporting the Greek insurrection of 1947 and the reasons for the rupture between him and Josip Broz Tito the next year. Aga-Rossi and Zaslavsky contend that Stalin’s Mediterranean policy in Greece and Yugoslavia must be taken into account in order to comprehend fully the decisions he made about Italy in the crucial 1947–1948 period. According to the stenographic notes for a 10 February 1948 meeting among Soviet, Bulgarian, and Yugoslav leaders, he made such decisions on the basis of what he called the “correlation of forces” principle. He explained aphoristically: “You should strike if you can win and avoid the battlefield if you cannot” (p. 259).

Stalin thought in 1947 that the Greek Communists could win, but mounting opposition against them, particularly from the United States, caused him to retreat. The lesson in Greece, Aga-Rossi and Zaslavsky argue, undoubtedly influenced Stalin to give up on the plan for a possible insurrection in Italy the following year when many in the PCI wanted one. They also cite the looming rupture between Stalin and Tito as another factor in the abandonment of the military option against the U.S.-backed Christian Democratic status quo. Stalin feared that the soon-to-be-renegade Tito would be a complicating factor in an Italian insurrection. As far as Italy went, the correlation-of-forces principle did not operate in Stalin’s favor, and he adopted the cautious strategy that the ever-faithful Togliatti implemented.

In the second edition, Aga-Rossi and Zaslavsky present additional material of a contextual nature on the Communist paramilitary apparatus, the Soviet financing of the PCI and other left-wing groups, and the Soviet role in subsidizing and utilizing the peace movement in Italy. In seeking the balance point of his eclectic and contentious party, Togliatti became increasingly moderate. Perhaps most significant in view of the armed struggle later waged by the Red Brigades and other radical groups nurtured on the extremist fringe of Italy’s Marxist-Leninist movement, he sought to tamp down the PCI’s culture of armed revolution. Although the authors laud him for the way he dealt with revolutionaries like Pietro Secchia, their thesis in the book logically implies that the major credit for Togliatti’s moderation belongs to helmsman Stalin. The praise they give Togliatti does not begin to offset their crushing indictment of him as a duplicitous leader: “while pretending to play the role of a national party defending Italian interests, the PCI was following to the letter the dictates of the international Communist movement and Soviet foreign policy” (p. 262). Their book will
long remain required reading as the case for the prosecution against Togliatti. He continues to have many well-placed defenders, but Aga-Rossi and Zaslavsky have raised the Togliatti question to a level of high historical importance.


Reviewed by Günter Bischof, University of New Orleans

The convergence of national foreign policies with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the European Union (EU) is a crucial challenge all EU member-states face. If EU-Europe ever wants its voice to be heard as a powerful actor in the international arena, such a common foreign policy is needed. How do you hold on to national traditions in the face of unrelenting pressure from Brussels to align your foreign policy (bilateral and multilateral) with the demands of the EU’s central agenda? Large EU member-states such as Germany, France, and Great Britain, all of which are also members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), naturally have more weight in the EU’s common councils than do small states. Once the CFSP became a European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) after 1999, setting up a European Rapid Reaction Force (ERRF), small states such as Austria and Ireland, which are not NATO members, had a problem on their hands. Participating in EU military interventionism and being forced to include defense matters in their foreign policy agenda does not square with their neutral status. Alecu de Flers’s tight case study pursues the growing convergence of these two small EU member-states with the ever-constricting common European foreign and security policy in spite of the recent militarization of EU foreign policy. In Robert Kagan’s controversial language, maybe the EU is heading toward being from Mars rather than Venus.

Alecu de Flers briefly summarizes the evolution of EESP from the European Political Cooperation established in 1970 to the Maastricht (1993) and Amsterdam (1999) Treaties and the evolution of controversial defense tasks being incorporated into the tightening EU foreign and security agendas. She explains how the breakup of Yugoslavia and the crisis in the Balkans demonstrated the powerlessness of the EU to respond to crisis scenarios on the European continent and the need for “robust” interventionism (p. 20). She is a sure guide through the baroque tergiversations of EU foreign and security policy and the irritating salad of acronyms that goes with it to describe Brussels’s arcane politics. Her study stays on the surface level, however, and does not go into any depth analyzing crises such as Kosovo or Iraq.

The meat and bones of this book comes in the two case studies on Ireland and Austria. Alecu de Flers analyzes how the foreign policy of these two neutrals was “Europeanized” as a result of their admission into the European Economic Community/European Union in 1973 (Ireland) and 1995 (Austria). In three chapters each, she investigates how Ireland’s and Austria’s institutional framework in their foreign
offices and the substance of their foreign policy were “Europeanized” and how this “distancing” (p. 50) from their traditions affected their neutral status. Ireland’s Department of Foreign Affairs needed to move away from its almost exclusive focus on relations with the United Kingdom and expand its missions to meet the demands of the CFSP, whereas Austria’s Foreign Ministry was better prepared to meet the demands of participation. Although Washington and Moscow were the most important foreign capitals in the Cold War era, the central focus of Dublin’s and Vienna’s foreign policy became Brussels after they joined the EU (including appointment to new posts such as “European Correspondent”). Now three-quarters of Dublin’s time in foreign policy is dedicated to CFSP matters (p. 100). CFSP has led to a “broadening of the foreign policy agenda” (p. 36) and to both a “Europeanization” and a “globalization” of Irish and Austrian foreign affairs (p. 103). Most notably, Irish and Austrian voting behavior in the United Nations became closely aligned (“Europeanized”) with the voting behavior of EU members after their joining the EU. The bulk of Alecu de Flers’s empirical evidence is dedicated to explaining this shift in EU voting behavior and gets bogged down in pedestrian vote counting.

How much room to maneuver, then, do small states have in the common EFSP? Although Ireland developed some specific expertise (Falklands crisis, South African apartheid, human rights abuses in East Timor), Austria’s expertise in the Western Balkans was tapped by Brussels after the break-up of Yugoslavia. Dublin and Vienna leave it to the EU “greats” to define the CFSP. Do small states have leverage? Alecu de Flers ignores a vast body of literature on the “leverage of the weak” during the Cold War. Tony Smith with his “pericentric” approach and Hope Harrison have shown what might be called “the power of the impotent.” Even Austria displayed some leverage during the Austrian State Treaty negotiations. Alecu de Flers’s study seems to suggest that after the Cold War the EU took on a stronger role in directing its members’ foreign policy than NATO and the Warsaw Pact did in aligning their members during the East-West conflict. Such substantive change over time, important to the historian, seems to fall by the wayside in the theory-driven approach of the political scientist.

Alecu de Flers operates with a similarly static concept of neutrality. She notes how the “Petersberg tasks” of the ESPD required neutral members to join the bandwagon in sensitive new fields of peacekeeping and crisis management (p. 21). She rallies clear empirical evidence of how public opinion in both countries insisted on the maintenance of neutrality (e.g., p. 119). The EU generally ignored the concerns of neutral member-states. The political elites in Ireland and Austria were fully aware of the EU’s consistent demands to water down their neutrality. Although Ireland held referenda that saw the public vote in favor of neutrality, Austrian governments largely ignored the public because of fears that the CFSP security agenda might be rejected. The EU’s ESPD thus has been consistently undermining the neutrality status of its member-states—this may be the (unacknowledged) major finding of Alecu de Flers’s study.

Reviewed by Marco Wyss, Center for Security Studies, ETH Zurich

Mikael Nilsson sets out to prove that in the early Cold War the United States used its military technology to wean Sweden from its traditional policy of neutrality, forcing the Swedish government to accept U.S. hegemony. Nilsson focuses on guided missiles, a technology transfer that has received little attention in either U.S. or Swedish historiography. Sweden, together with the United States, Britain, and the Soviet Union was among the first countries to work on guided missile development. Sweden’s research and development was based on German V1 and V2 rockets that had erroneously crashed on Swedish territory toward the end of the Second World War. This did not, however, make up for the lack of technological know-how and resources of a small country. To overcome these obstacles, Stockholm looked westward, but Washington would help only in exchange for consent to its hegemony.

Nilsson admits that hegemony does not rely solely on forceful measures and that lesser powers can submit themselves for their own security and prosperity. Yet he emphasizes that resisting U.S. military and economic might in Western Europe during the early Cold War was difficult. In the immediate postwar period, Sweden nevertheless tried to remain aloof from any bloc building in Europe because it intended to maintain its traditional policy of neutrality. The crux of the matter was that consent to U.S. hegemony undermined the credibility and thus the practicability of neutrality. Consequently, because the stakes appeared high, the Swedes looked for ways and means to collaborate with the United States without overtly siding with it. The process that brought about Swedish consent to U.S. hegemony was gradual.

Before the full onset of the Cold War, Sweden’s foreign policy was generally unconstrained. But by 1948, as the Swedes attempted to establish a neutral Scandinavian Defense Union, they began to feel the weight of U.S. power. According to Nilsson, Washington’s threat to withhold arms deliveries from a neutral defense union was instrumental in bringing Denmark and Norway into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Stockholm, for its part, remained neutral, and without military technological support from the United States its guided missiles program ran into a “cul-de-sac” (p. 174). By the late 1940s, however, Swedish leaders found that remaining aloof from the Western bloc was becoming ever more difficult if they desired their country to be economically prosperous and to equip its armed forces according to the defense policy of armed neutrality. Therefore, Stockholm gave its consent to U.S. hegemony in two steps. First, through its participation in the European Recovery Program, it effectively aligned itself with the Western side. Second, through its agreement to comply with the rules of the Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls, it participated in the strategic embargo against the Soviet bloc. As a consequence of these processes, by early 1952, Harry S. Truman had declared Sweden eligible for reimbursable military aid under the Mutual Defense Assistance Act.
Despite this eligibility, which underlined Sweden’s importance in U.S. strategic thinking, Stockholm did not immediately receive access to guided missile technology. Washington could not deliver to a neutral what it was withholding from its allies. However, by the late 1950s, the Eisenhower administration decided to release guided missile technologies to NATO countries, and Sweden was treated on the same footing as Washington’s allies because of its prior consent to U.S. hegemony. Consequently, as the 1960s began, Stockholm became a privileged buyer of U.S. missile systems. Although these purchases led to ever more constraining military-technological arrangements with the United States, they also led to the abandonment of Sweden’s independent missile program, which had formed the basis for the country’s licensing and manufacturing agreements with foreign countries.

The transfer of military technology from the United States to Sweden was interwoven with important defense coordination between the two countries. Nilsson thus concludes that the Swedes undermined the credibility and practicality of their neutrality. Although the Swedish government pretended that technology was “something neutral in itself” (p. 407), it was aware that this was not the case. Sweden knew that if it attempted to negotiate with the USSR for Soviet weapons this would compromise neutrality in U.S. eyes, as well as in the view of the Swedish public. Meanwhile, Washington was willing to adapt to Stockholm’s neutral sensibilities to a certain extent and did not force the Swedes into formal security cooperation so long as they gave their consent to U.S. hegemony.

The argument that Washington used military technology to gain Stockholm’s consent to its hegemony is well presented, convincing, and based on a large array of U.S. and Swedish primary sources. Nevertheless, several questions remain. Nilsson does not discuss whether the superpower’s hegemonic aspirations were intentional, functional, or accidental. On the one hand, he presents Washington as an international actor with clear intentions, but on the other hand he clearly shows the differing attitudes of the various U.S. departments and services that interacted with Sweden and portrays foreign policymakers as having adapted to events and international circumstances. Another question is whether Sweden was forced into subordination by its desire for access to guided missiles or to military technology per se. Would Sweden not also have given its consent to U.S. hegemony for modern tanks and jet engines? In addition, one would like to know more about the Anglo-Swedish armaments relationship (Britain was Sweden’s main arms supplier in the early Cold War), particularly because the Swedes bought their first guided missiles in the United Kingdom, not the United States.

Notwithstanding these minor problems, the book offers enormous insight into the role that military technology plays in international relations, the establishment of U.S. dominance in Western Europe, and the shift of Sweden’s foreign policy from neutrality to subordination to a hegemonic power during the early Cold War. In addition, the historiographical chapter skillfully presents neutrality and Swedish foreign policy during the Cold War and thus gives indirect access to the vast amount of Swedish historical literature not translated or written in English. Finally, as Nilsson observes, similar studies of other European neutrals such as Switzerland would allow for interesting comparisons and more general conclusions.

Reviewed by Nelly P. Stromquist, University of Maryland

This book seeks to provide “both a political biography of Paulo Freire and an examination of the politics of literacy during the Cold War” (p. 2). It consists of six chapters: an introductory chapter setting the historical context (addressing primarily the 1950s), two chapters dealing with Freire’s work in Brazil, one describing his influence in Nicaragua, and another examining initiatives from his position in the World Council of Churches (WCC), an influential coalition of more than 300 Christian denominations based in Geneva. The book ends with an epilogue.

I found the book’s title, *Paulo Freire & the Cold War Politics of Literacy*, intriguing, but as I read the book the title seemed misleading. The traditional sense of “Cold War” refers to the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union and their local, national, and regional alliances following World War II, a conflict in which both sides struggled for primacy of their respective political and economic models (capitalism under democratic governance vs. socialism under the leadership of a Communist Party). The title suggests a tension that was not reflected in the work of Freire. I could not find evidence in the book that either camp—locally or internationally—attempted to manipulate his work directly.

The book presents the trajectory of Freire’s contribution to adult education, tracing his work from his engagement in the northeast of Brazil (Nordeste) to his position as a key member of the WCC’s Office of Education. Although Freire’s work as secretary of education in the dominant state of Sao Paulo is also discussed, this section is brief, and the strong political nature of his work in that setting is underexamined. As a historian, Kirkendall conducts impressive archival work, locating obscure documents in many parts of the world and giving numerous details about the many social and political contacts Freire had. Kirkendall also demystifies some of the successes Freire presumably had in making his literacy approaches a reality. His references are extensive and meticulous. Yet, Kirkendall does not offer an analysis of Freire’s books, thus missing an examination of the evolution of his thought across various experiences during his lifetime.

Although Kirkendall does exhaustive work tracing Freire’s social and political connections, he makes little effort to deal systematically with the substance of Freire’s work: his philosophy of education and how he saw literacy in the process of developing a sharper understanding of one’s sociopolitical environment. Missing from Kirkendall’s account is Freire’s work in the Cajamar Institute, a venue that offered seminars and courses to workers in the Nordeste and provided the central experience that made Freire and other popular educators of his time recognize the importance of inculcating among its citizens a critical understanding of Brazilian society and history.
According to Freire himself, the Cajamar Institute functioned as a seed for a popular university that would depart from the traditional model and help workers understand the compelling reasons for liberation and devise better methods for such a struggle, as discussed in Myles Horton and Paulo Freire, *We Make the Road by Walking: Conversations on Education and Social Change* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990). Also not mentioned is Freire’s discovery of Antonio Gramsci’s thought, which occurred through Freire’s work with educators in Chile—an influence that shaped his endorsement of collective action. On this point, see Peter Mayo, *Gramsci, Freire, and Adult Education: Possibilities for Transformation* (London: Zed Books, 1999). In addition, Kirkendall does not discuss the friendships Freire established with U.S. adult educators, from Myles Horton to Donaldo Macedo, who have further disseminated his work. Kirkendall does mention Freire’s influence on Jonathan Kozol, but Kozol is not an adult educator.

On the question of literacy, Kirkendall misses some key aspects of Freire’s methods. Freire’s position on primers and methods constitute core aspects of his philosophy, which called for an intensive production of text written at the local level (and thus an explicit avoidance of primers) and participatory methods based on dialogue. Kirkendall states, “Most African countries were too linguistically diverse and rural for Freire’s techniques to be effective there” (p. 122). The literacy techniques Freire recommended called for the creation of small discussion groups, the use of generative words, and the identification of oppressive living conditions in one’s environment—all elements that would seem to apply cross-culturally and cross-linguistically. Kirkendall concludes that Freire’s methods failed in Africa because of the continent’s linguistic diversity even though earlier in the book he quotes Linda Harasim to support the claim that Freire’s failure in Guinea Bissau was due to extreme economic conditions (88 percent of the population lived on subsistence farming), the leadership’s contradictory political positions on national reconstruction, “some unexamined assumptions of Freire’s theory and method,” his emphasis on “moral and philosophical notions,” and lack of a “practical plan of action.” In this list of reasons, neither linguistic diversity nor rurality appears as a key variable. Even though Harasim’s explanation does include farmers, she underscores their poverty rather than their location in the countryside. Freire’s methods are difficult to implement, but primarily because they require highly trained facilitators able to translate consciousness-raising into ongoing literacy exercises and practices. Making literacy flourish in poor environments will be difficult because of the absence of print and the limited possibility of developing literacy habits in those contexts—regardless of the literacy method employed.

Chapter 5, which deals with the Sandinistas’ literacy program in Nicaragua, is called “the Last Utopian Experiment of the Cold War.” Why is a mass campaign “a utopian experiment”? This chapter, although informative, bears little relation to the work of Freire, who was not involved beyond a short visit. A much more important influence in Nicaragua was the Cuban model of mass campaigns. The literacy efforts in Nicaragua—as well as the entire Sandinista regime—were opposed by the U.S. government. This reflects the struggle by the United States to contest socialist influences in Nicaragua, but the connection to Freire is slight.
In his epilogue, Kirkendall asserts that Freire’s emergence as a historical figure was due to the Cold War. He argues that “The Cold War shaped his career, and both limited and expanded his horizons” (p. 165), maintaining that Freire’s “political evolution would have been dramatically different had he not been a nationalist forced by political circumstances to work for a decade and a half in exile” (p. 167). I have been trying to make sense of this claim. Early literacy efforts in Brazil were funded by the United States beginning in 1962 and then cancelled in 1964 out of fear that the programs would lead to a revolution. It is also true that Eduardo Frei’s government in Chile was the recipient of substantial U.S. aid to strengthen democracy in that country, and Frei’s programs included literacy. But the assertion that Freire was a success because of the Cold War—in the sense that the Cold War opened a space for literacy—is not only difficult to prove but tends to diminish the value of Freire’s work because it implies he was merely a fortunate beneficiary of the international political tensions that precipitated the military coup d’état in Brazil, forcing him to seek exile and leading inadvertently to the global dissemination of his ideas. This is a long and convoluted causal chain.

At the time of the Brazilian coup d’état, Freire was well known not only in Brazil but in other parts of the world—thus the invitations to work in Chile, the United States, and Switzerland. To attribute his success to his subsequent global visibility is to diminish the quality of his ideas. To link Freire’s success to the Cold War would require, at a minimum, a demonstration of interest on the part of the U.S. government to promote literacy and thus Freire. Yet, Freire’s invitation to the United States came from renowned adult educators, and he left the United States to work in the WCC in response to a WCC invitation rather than because of any active sponsorship by the U.S. government. Conversely, the WCC to my knowledge has never taken a position against Communism or socialism that would implicate it as an actor in Cold War events.

Writing about the political left in Latin America, Kirkendall states that “the Cold War provided an impetus at times for a deepening and consolidation of democracy in parts of South America” (p. 166), and as a result “the Latin American left embraced pluralism in political competition” (p. 167). To assert that the political left in Latin America was inspired by the Cold War is to deprive the movement for equality and social justice of any indigenous roots and rationale and to see it merely as a response to conflicts originating elsewhere. This kind of assertion remains unsubstantiated in the book.

The two African literacy campaigns in which Freire was directly involved were not particularly successful, but his thought as an educational philosopher has endured by making us aware that the struggle for humanity is ours and that the oppressed need to work both within themselves and later with the oppressor to regain full identity as human beings. Kirkendall assures us that Freire’s work was more successful when he emphasized process over results and that he influenced the work of many nongovernmental organizations in the Latin American region. These assertions contain much truth, but the outcomes have been largely independent of the Cold War and its various facets. Moreover, today—21 years after the ending of the Cold War—the pursuit

212
of universal literacy continues and is reflected in the goals and indicators of two global policies—Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals.


*Reviewed by Malcolm Byrne, National Security Archive*

A video marking 60 years of broadcasting at Radio Free Europe (RFE) and Radio Liberty (RL) begins with a grainy, black-and-white clip of Ronald Reagan narrating a promotional film about the radios. As footage of a radio tower rolls by, Reagan intones: “This powerful 135,000-watt Radio Free Europe transmitter pierces the Iron Curtain with the truth, answering the lies of the Kremlin, and bringing a message of hope to millions.”

This tongue-in-cheek glimpse of a bygone era is entertaining, but the segment also unintentionally points up one of several ambiguities that have shadowed RFE and RL ever since *Ramparts* magazine and *The New York Times* published articles in 1967 exposing the radios’ ties to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Were the stations supposed to be independent sources of news and information, as their sponsors claimed? Or were they just propaganda tools of the U.S. government, as the ham-handed Reagan promotional video unwittingly suggests?

Ross Johnson’s fervent hope in this valuable new book is to be able finally to settle some of these nagging questions and misperceptions. By focusing on RFE’s and RL’s formative first two decades, he not only fills a gap in the literature but manages to convey many of the subtleties and complexities about the radios’ formation and early development that helped give rise to their somewhat ambiguous image.

The chief cause of this ambiguity was RFE’s and RL’s relationship to the CIA. Johnson does not see that connection as a problem and explains why in his view the agency turned out to be a helpful, even necessary, institutional base. One reason was policy-related. George Kennan conceived of the idea to establish a broadcasting operation using Soviet-bloc émigrés as a weapon of psychological warfare, which placed it squarely under the purview of institutions like Frank Wisner’s Office of Policy Coordination and the CIA.

The relationship also had a financial basis. Voice of America (VOA) already existed through public funding. In the postwar environment it was highly unlikely that Congress would be willing to appropriate money for a second, similar-sounding government radio operation. Far easier to use the agency’s clandestine funds.

Another source of confusion is the fact that the nature of RFE’s and RL’s mission changed over time. RFE’s first broadcasts out of New York in July 1951 were unvarnished propaganda salvos against the Soviet-bloc regimes—“short and negative,” reflecting the perspective of U.S. hardliners. Only after management succeeded, following some political and bureaucratic struggle, in transferring production and trans-
mission operations from New York to Munich did “a second RFE” emerge, eventually developing a quite different role as “surrogate broadcaster” for the captive nations. The service would no longer be a simple mouthpiece for the United States but one run substantially by émigré broadcasters who were thought to know best what would work with their audiences.

The decision to grant considerable autonomy to the individual services was critical to RFE’s (and RL’s) long-term success. But it also played a part during RFE’s bleakest episode—the 1956 Hungarian revolution. Johnson calls that experience “the story that never dies.” His defense of the overarching—and relatively circumspect—official policies that were in effect well before the uprising is spirited but also well-sourced. So is his critique of certain instances in which the guidance coming from headquarters was not honored in the breach. The violations that did occur, he says, were less dire than many have believed. What is more, the really egregious broadcasts more likely came from the “many other foreign radio stations” that were broadcasting to Hungary during the revolution (such as the right-wing Radio Madrid).

Some of these points are disputed by other researchers (and certainly many Hungarians are unlikely to be persuaded), but Johnson’s access to all the available recordings, log tapes, transcripts, and ex post facto investigations, as well as his willingness to criticize the problems that he acknowledges did occur, add weight to his analysis.

A particularly fascinating section of the book deals with the twin topics of “reach” and suppression. How effective were RFE and RL at tapping into audiences behind the Iron Curtain? How can that reach be measured? On the other side of the Curtain, what did the Soviet-bloc governments do to try to prevent penetration of their societies? Some of the answers to the first two questions have long been available from interviews of travelers to the West—more than 150,000 starting in the 1960s—which suggest that about one-third of Soviet adults and almost one-half of East European adults were regular listeners. No wonder the regimes reacted—sometimes brutally. Jamming was the principal tactic, at a cost of up to $150 million annually—more than the cost of the broadcasts themselves. But counterpropaganda, listener intimidation, infiltration of radio staffs, even assassinations of RFE/RL staff and bombings of facilities were also tried. Dark days indeed.

Not nearly as exciting but of real value is Johnson’s reconstruction of the radios’ internal operations, structure, policies, and personalities. This includes coverage of some of the lesser known but significant moments in their evolution, notably the handling of the East German uprisings in 1953 and the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia. (Interestingly, Johnson describes 1953—not 1956—as “the turning point for RFE broadcast policy.”)

Johnson has spent much of his career in and around the two stations, rising to director of RFE. This might be expected to color his views, but much as he admires the organization and its role in the Cold War, he is fully prepared to recognize faults and shortcomings and to hold management and staff duly accountable. Those frank opinions on a variety of issues, along with his ability to situate RFE/RL’s evolution in the context of historical events and especially his skillful use of a wide array of primary
sources, are the main elements that make this an engaging contribution to Cold War history.

✣✣✣


Reviewed by Judith Reppy, Cornell University

Is there an American way of war? A quick Internet search reveals that a lot of authors think so, but unfortunately there is no consensus on exactly what that way might be and how closely it is linked to new technology. Much depends on the timeframe adopted: the argument identified with Donald Rumsfeld and the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) that the U.S. military should emphasize technological solutions over all others dominated the scene during George W. Bush’s first administration, but it suffered a setback after 2006 with Secretary of Defense Robert Gates’s emphasis on “fighting the wars we are in.” The Air Force, the technological service par excellence, has declined from its supreme position at the end of the 1991 Gulf War to a service chastened by its failure to manage its nuclear responsibilities and a series of procurement scandals, while the Army and Marines have gained importance through their roles in the land battles of the 2003 Gulf War and subsequent years of counterinsurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In *Technology and the American Way of War since 1945*, Thomas Mahnken aligns himself with the school of thought that sees a historical continuity in America’s strategic goals, even as the technologies and types of battles waged have varied. He argues that technology and service culture, operating in a changing strategic environment, have interacted so as to mutually constitute an “American Way of War.” The obduracy of military culture in the face of radical technological change is a main theme of the book: “On balance, the services shaped technology far more than technology shaped the services” (p. 11). To support his argument, Mahnken offers a history of U.S. weapons developments since 1945 in five chapters, connecting his many examples to changes in the perceived threat, service preferences, and technological advances in each period.

Even with this broad canvas, which explicitly includes the political aspects of the strategic environment, the perspective is skewed heavily toward a narrow military framing of the issues. Technological choices are made for military reasons, curiously deracinated from social movements. In Mahnken’s telling, the end of conscription and the introduction of an all-volunteer force (AVF) had no impact on technology (indeed the creation of the AVF and its effects on the composition of the armed forces are not even mentioned). Intermediate-range nuclear weapons are deployed in Europe in the 1980s and then removed without reference to the European Nuclear Disarmament movement, which mobilized the populations of the European members of the North

215
Atlantic Treaty Organization against the weapons and influenced government attitudes. The Soviet Union is defeated by U.S. technological might, and the Cold War ends without any recognition of Mikhail Gorbachev’s leadership role. Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan in 2001 is portrayed as a victory for high-tech weaponry, one that demonstrates the U.S. military’s ability to adapt to a new way of fighting. Mahnken offers no discussion of the subsequent deterioration in security in Afghanistan, a development that resulted in a growing U.S. death toll after 2005, the deaths of many Afghan civilians, and fears that the United States would follow other countries in failing to pacify the country. Of course, no author writing about near-contemporaneous events can hope to foretell the future in detail, but fewer pages spent on listing the successive models of various aircraft and missiles in favor of a more nuanced discussion of the political context in which those weapons have been used would have improved his chances.

Mahnken’s book invites comparison to an earlier work by Steven P. Rosen, *Winning the Next War: Innovation and the Modern Military* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991). Like Mahnken, Rosen takes military culture seriously, but he organizes his argument around a distinction between how militaries innovate in peacetime compared to what they do in wartime. Analyzing fewer cases in greater depth, Rosen argues that the military needs to learn to ask the right question—that is, to have a workable theory of victory—before it can make sensible decisions on technology and strategy. Rosen’s work has influenced generations of graduate students and scholars, but it is barely recognized by Mahnken, who relies for most of his examples on a multitude of case studies generated in military educational institutions. An advantage of this approach is the wealth of detail told from the military perspective; a disadvantage is the lack of analytical depth. One substantial advantage of Mahnken’s book, however, is its full treatment of the effects of nuclear weapons on the military services and on U.S. strategic thinking, a topic that Rosen explicitly eschews. That virtue, along with the book’s even-handed treatment of interservice politics, makes *Technology and the American Way of War since 1945* a good choice for an undergraduate course in military technology or for anyone wanting to be reminded how far weapons technology has come since 1945.


Reviewed by Anar Valiyev and Natavan Aghayeva, Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy

The Ottoman and Russian empires had a long history of rivalry. From the mid-18th century to 1918 the two empires went to war with each other several times. No other country in Russia’s neighborhood has fought Russia so many times. After World War I, when Ottoman Turkey and Tsarist Russia were on opposite sides, the two countries in their new incarnations became archrivals in the Black Sea region and Mediterra-
nean. This new book by the well-known Azerbaijani historian Jamil Hasanli sheds valuable light on a key moment in the early post-1945 era that shaped the next 45 years of Soviet-Turkish relations. Stalin and the Turkish Crisis of the Cold War, 1945–1953 adduces a wealth of evidence to show the complicated nature of bilateral relations during World War II and afterward, highlighting the impact of personalities and other factors. The title of the book hints that Iosif Stalin was the main architect of the Turkish crisis of 1945–1953, the same way he was the initiator of the crisis across the perimeter of the Soviet border (the Azerbaijan/Iranian crisis in 1944–1948), the Berlin blockade of 1948–1949, and the Korean war of 1950–1953.

For decades, the Truman doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and the division of Europe after World War II were considered the main catalysts of Cold War. Hasanli goes against the flow and challenges the received wisdom about the early Cold War. He argues that the confrontation between the Allies over Iranian Azerbaijan and Turkey is what precipitated the Cold War, or in his terms “the war of nerves.” The particular value of Hasanli’s book is its rejection of a Europe-centric focus. He argues that “the wave of research on the Cold War in Europe brought by the euphoria of the 1990s upon collapse of the Soviet Union” (p. viii) has obscured the importance of the confrontation over Turkey.

In making his case, Hasanli draws on declassified archival documents from Moscow, Washington, and Ankara, including top-secret materials sent by the Soviet embassy in Ankara to the Soviet Foreign Ministry, regular reviews of the Turkish press with commentaries of embassy officials, secret instructions from Moscow to the Soviet embassy, and the Soviet Politburo’s decisions on Turkey. Further valuable materials used in the study are speeches and correspondence of heads of states, letters, and documents produced by diplomatic offices, military agencies, and intelligence services.

The book consists of an introduction, eight chapters, and a conclusion. It recounts the history of Soviet-Turkish relations during the interwar period, particularly the period 1939–1945. Chapter 2 deals with the “War of Nerves,” the political maneuvering and negotiations between Turkey and the Soviet Union. Hasanli argues that the Soviet Union was the main actor as it attempted to lodge territorial claims against Turkey and to set up a military base in the Straits. Although the main focus is on Ankara and Moscow, Hasanli also discusses the involvement of other interested parties, including the United States and Great Britain. George Kennan’s remark about Soviet policy toward Turkey—“I am sure that the Soviets will not temper their appetite for the Straits. On the contrary, they will take every chance to weaken the west’s influence on Turkey and establish friendly regime there” (p. 109)—neatly summarizes Soviets plans toward Turkey. Chapter 3 looks at Stalin’s policy toward Turkey. Hasanli shows the role of the Soviet republics of Armenia and to a lesser extent Georgia in ties with Turkey. He discusses Soviet preparations for annexing Turkish territories, the repatriation of Armenians from the Middle East to Armenia, and the deportation of Azerbaijani Turks from Armenia to Azerbaijan.

In chapter 4, Hasanli describes the domestic situation in Turkey and how the Soviet threat forced the Turkish establishment and people to incline toward the West and the United States in particular. Hasanli seeks to draw parallels between Soviet pol-
icy toward Turkey and Soviet policy toward Iran. In the next chapter, he explains why Soviet territorial claims failed. Noting the support of the United States, he also stresses popular support in Turkey: “A united front against the Soviet threat brought together the people and the state, the government and the opposition, and contributed to improving the situation both inside and outside the country” (p. 245). Chapter 6 covers the internal politics of the republics of the South Caucasus and shows how Soviet policy toward Turkey affected domestic politics in the USSR's southernmost republics. When hopes of adding territory to Soviet Armenia and Georgia at the expense of Turkey fell through, the leaders of Armenia and Georgia tried to lodge territorial claims against Azerbaijan, including Karabakh and other territories. Even though the leader of Soviet Azerbaijan, Mir-Jafar Bagirov, was able to reject such claims, he was unable to prevent the deportation of 130,000 Azerbaijani from Armenia to cotton-growing regions of Azerbaijan. Their houses were transferred to Armenians repatriated from the Middle East. The final two chapters show the evolution of Turkish policy, Turkey’s place in the Truman Doctrine, and Turkey’s accession to NATO.

Overall, Stalin and the Turkish Crisis of the Cold War-1953 is a marvelous addition to the literature on the early Cold War. Some readers may feel overwhelmed by too many historical facts and diplomatic correspondence that can tax their concentration, but most will find it a well-structured, detailed presentation that can be read with profit by scholars, students, and others interested in the Cold War’s origins.


Reviewed by Roger E. Kanet, University of Miami

Soon after Iosif Stalin’s death in 1953 the new Soviet leadership headed by Nikita S. Khrushchev revived Vladimir Lenin’s view that the interests of the USSR and those of the anticolonial forces throughout Asia and Africa coincided and that liberation groups challenging colonial power or in charge of newly independent states were likely allies in the struggle against the capitalist West. As one of the analysts in the West who for more than a quarter of a century attempted to track and understand the intricacies of the relationships between Moscow and the emerging governments and leaders of Africa and the Third World, I find Sergey Mazov’s A Distant Front in the Cold War to be a fascinating narrative, one that draws on documentary and archival materials that provide the detailed evidence concerning Soviet policy simply unavailable to analysts in the West—or in the Soviet Union itself—during the Cold War.

One surprising fact that emerges from a reading of Mazov’s excellent study is the degree to which earlier analysts generally “got it right”—with one major exception, as he points out, of generally assuming that Moscow had a comprehensive strategy in place and that its initiatives, even in the first decade of involvement in Africa, were
guided by that strategy. In fact, as Mazov demonstrates throughout the book, specific concrete opportunities to challenge the West and Western influence in Africa were the driving force in Soviet policy during the period from 1956 to 1964. Therefore, policy was much more ad hoc and reactive in nature than earlier Western analysts assumed. Moreover, African leaders had substantial influence over the ways Soviet policy developed and the degree to which it succeeded—or, one might note in the four cases that Mazov reviews, the reasons it failed.

Mazov provides four detailed cases studies of Soviet policy during the Khrushchev years—those of Ghana, Guinea, Mali, and Congo. (He also discusses Moscow’s failed efforts to establish diplomatic relations with Liberia before its contacts with these three countries. U.S. pressure against the William Tubman government played the determining role in this failure.) In the first three countries Moscow was able to establish solid relations with the new postcolonial governments, but those relations proved to be quite fragile and heavily dependent on the vagaries of local politics and on the effective political and economic intervention of the United States and the former colonial powers. In the case of Congo the de facto control over the United Nations (UN) and its policies in Congo exercised by the United States and its allies and Moscow’s dependence on Congolese actors doomed Soviet efforts to establish a strong and stable relationship. (Mazov never asserts that the United States had de facto control over the UN, but this is the conclusion that emerges from his narrative, as well as from most other assessments of the Congo crisis of the early 1960s.)

Mazov organizes his study along strictly chronological lines in chapters that each cover two to four years. This results in breaks in the narrative that Mazov could have avoided if he had organized the narrative around the major cases and not by year. Overall, however, he effectively presents his argument and the supporting evidence, which is drawn from a broad range of archival sources, not just Soviet, as well as from some of the original Western analyses.

Mazov makes several points throughout his analysis that the reader with an interest in the development of Soviet policy toward and relations with Africa in the decade that he examines will find of special interests. The first is the degree to which the success of Soviet policy hinged on political developments within the host countries and the effectiveness of the United States, in particular, in undercutting Soviet efforts. This comes across most clearly in the case of the Soviet Union’s frustrated efforts to establish diplomatic relations with Liberia and in the disastrous results of several years of Moscow’s efforts to support the ‘progressive’ forces in Congo. In West Africa the USSR’s incompetence in providing for the economic and trade needs of its would-be partners alienated those countries and contributed to Moscow’s eventual failure to achieve its objectives.

The overall message that emerges from A Distant Front in the Cold War is that the Soviet Union was simply not ready in the late 1950s and early 1960s to engage the West effectively in the competition for influence in Africa. Soviet leaders knew little or nothing about the region, its peoples, and their leaders. Moreover, despite their many political advantages over the colonialist West, they lacked the infrastructure to compete with the United States in the region, as became clear in Congo. Moreover, they
were often held hostage to the vagaries of domestic politics, as African leaders attempted to play them and their overtures of support and assistance off against their preference for expanded support from the West.

The reader interested in a balanced and well-grounded history of the early days of the Soviet-U.S. competition for presence and influence in Africa will find Mazov's treatment of the issue illuminating. *A Distant Front in the Cold War* is likely to remain the definitive work on Soviet policy in the early years of that competition until the day when the key Soviet archives that have never been opened to researchers (e.g., those of the Soviet Politburo, the Soviet state security organs and the Soviet military intelligence agency) are finally accessible.


Reviewed by Nicholas Daniloff, Northeastern University and Davis Center for Russian and East Asian Studies, Harvard University

In 1991, as the Soviet Union began to disintegrate, sparks of nationalism erupted over the territory of the Eurasian superpower. The Baltic states struck out for freedom from forced annexation into the Soviet Union. Georgia declared its independence, and Ukraine followed soon after. The Cold War order was dissolving, and the longing for self-determination, or outright independence, was striking new chords.

These stirrings hit that area of southern Russian known as the North Caucasus with particular violence. For centuries, the Russians had regarded this area of stunningly beautiful mountains as entrancing, even if the locals seemed rebellious. The hoped-for “Caucasus without the Caucasians” (*Kavkaz bez Kavkaztsev*) has been a slogan all too often on the tongues of nationalist-minded Russians.

In November 1991, Chechnya declared its independence—not from the Soviet Union like Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—but from its most important constituent part, the Russian Federation. President Boris Yeltsin’s chief of military staff, Marshal Pavel Grachev, declared that a battalion of assault troops could put down the rebellion within a few weeks. How wrong he was!

The troops Yeltsin dispatched in the fall of 1994 encountered stiff resistance from the Chechens, who fought the ill-trained Russian recruits to a standstill. The outcome was a negotiated agreement at Khasavyurt in 1996 under which the fighting stopped, Russian federal forces pulled out, prisoners were exchanged, and both sides agreed to desist from the use of force in the future and to negotiate a stable political status for Chechnya by the year 2001. Chechnya had won de facto independence. Russian military leaders had been humiliated and began contemplating revenge.

The situation deteriorated, and Russian leaders feared for the disintegration of Russia itself. Under Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudaev the area became lawless and dangerous. Trains were raided by rebels, foreign aid workers were kidnapped,
some were beheaded, bombs started going off unpredictably. In January 1997, Aslan Maskhadov was chosen as Chechnya's first president in elections that the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe termed “free and fair,” but he was unable to stabilize the situation.

The Chechen independence movement now began to cede to radical homegrown Islamists, encouraged by emissaries from abroad, who escalated the struggle for freedom from Moscow by detonating bombs on Russian territory. In the fall of 1999, a raiding party headed by the Chechen extremist Shamil Basayev launched an incursion into neighboring Dagestan.

Russian Premier Vladimir Putin, who had just been appointed prime minister (and would become acting president by the end of the year), declared he would hunt down and kill terrorists wherever they were, including “in the shit house.” He launched a new invasion to “restore constitutional order.” Only this time he unleashed overwhelming force. Again the Chechens resisted, but they were powerless against carpet bombing, needle bombs, vacuum bombs, bunker-busting bombs, and anti-personnel mines, some disguised as toys intended to blow the arms off unwary children. Chechens denounced the cruel Russian attacks as state-sponsored terrorism. Hundreds of thousands fled.

Oliver Bullough, a recent history graduate of Oxford University, arrived in Moscow as a new correspondent for the British news agency Reuters in 2002, three years after the second Russian-Chechen war began. In October 2002, while on a feature assignment in the Russian capital, he learned that Chechen rebels had seized the Dubrovka theater across town. He dropped everything and rushed to the scene where some 40 Chechen fighters had seized the house and threatened to kill the audience unless the Russian government brought the bombing of Chechnya to an end. Eventually, the Russians pumped a debilitating gas into the theater, permitting the rescue of most of the 850 hostages and the killing of the hostage-takers. This was Bullough’s first introduction to the violence of the Chechen struggle and the fierce reaction from the Russians.

Barely two years later, on 1 September 2004, he was dispatched to Northern Ossetia to cover the takeover of School No. 1 in Beslan by Chechen and Ingush terrorists, who took more than 1,100 people hostage (including close to 780 schoolchildren). Again the rebels demanded an end to Russian operations in Chechnya, to no avail. Russian forces stormed the school in an assault that killed 334 including 186 children.

Bullough vividly recalls the stench of rotting bodies.

These searing experiences raised for him the question, Who are the Chechens and other peoples of the Caucasus, and why do they have such troubled relationship with Russia? In time, he decided to wander through this mountainous region much in the tradition of such nineteenth-century travelers as James Bell, John Longworth, Alexandre Dumas, and George Kennan the Elder. Bullough’s encounters with the people are the most fascinating part of this book, a truly rich travelogue.

Bullough used his skill as a historian to dig out details from long-forgotten memoirs and archives. He conducted lengthy interviews with the people he met along the
way, not just in the Caucasus but also in the lands of exile, Turkey, Jordan, and Israel. The people talking through Bullough bring the continuing plight of the North Caucasus alive. As he traveled, he found oppressed locals who quoted the wish they asked swallows to carry to their god: “If our lives be short, then let our fame be great!

“But, in truth, their god did not keep his side of the bargain,” Bullough writes. “Despite what he promised them, their lives have been cut shot, fairness has passed them by, they have known endless grief, and their fame has not been great” (p. 9).

One of the most poignant moments in this history occurred during Russia’s manifest-destiny push in the mid-nineteenth century. Alexander II’s armies succeeded in expelling almost the entire nation of Circassians from their homeland bordering the Black Sea. By midcentury some 300,000 had perished and more than a million had found sanctuary in Turkey.

One of the areas “liberated” by the Russians was the territory around Sochi, the famous Black Sea resort that includes Krasnaya Polyana (Red Glade), a favorite skiing site of Putin where the downhill events of the 2014 Winter Olympics will be held. The fact that these games will unfold precisely in the place where the Russians celebrated the final defeat of the Circassians in 1864 has outraged the Circassian diaspora around the world and raised the specter of a Munich Olympics–type attack. The heavy security that will be required for these Olympics could discolor the triumph of the athletes.

Bullough concludes that few visitors to these glorious surroundings of Russia’s Deep South “would know at what cost their country purchased the clean air and sun of the south. The Circassians still remember; as do the Chechens, the mountain Turks, the Ingush and the others. But the Russians have not preserved the memory of their wars for the Caucasus, and the ghosts of their victims will haunt them till they do” (p. 461).

My Perestroika: A Film by Robin Hessman, Red Square Productions, 2010. DVD, 87 min.

Reviewed by Rochelle Goldberg Ruthchild, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University

“As a child, I was completely uninterested in life in the West. I thought, I am so lucky that I live in the Soviet Union!” “We felt like we didn’t have a care in the world.”

So observe two of the chief characters in Robin Hessman’s documentary My Perestroika, a must-see for anyone seeking to understand the transformation of the Soviet Union into Russia, from Leonid Brezhnev through Mikhail Gorbachev to Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin. It is hard for westerners brought up in the Cold War era to understand the Soviet Union as a lost paradise, but to Hessman’s credit she sensitively explores the nuances of the fall of the first Communist state through a focus on the personal experiences of five individuals. Surveying the paths taken by these former...
classmates at Moscow Public School 57, Hessman provides important insights into
the impact of the changes wrought by the collapse of the Soviet Union on the kinds of
people who make up the Russian middle class, some of whom have been visible in the
anti-Putin protests.

The classmates are Lyuba and Boris, now teachers at the school, married with a
son Mark; Olga, a single mother working for a pool table vendor; Andrei, owner of
several Café Coton men’s shirt shops, and Ruslan, an ex-punk rocker, divorced, with
one son.

Hessman skillfully weaves into her documentary snippets of Soviet propaganda
films, patriotic songs, and home movies. The film begins with a 1977 youth march in
Red Square, as well as home movies from Boris’s family. A boy thanks Brezhnev for de-
fending all the children of the planet. “Communists—fighters for the People’s Happi-
ness,” declares one film. Another shows nuclear attack drills, with students putting on
gas masks. In between there is young Boris, in children’s short shorts, playing happily
with his friends.

With all the changes, some things have not changed. Boris has lived in the same
apartment all his life. He now shares it with Lyuba and Mark. Olga lives around the
corner in the same apartment in which she grew up. Like most urban Russians, their
living space amounts to a few rooms, filled with a lifetime of books, records, and as-
sorted memorabilia.

The film soon reveals the reality behind the blissful Soviet images of happiness.
In reminiscing about the past, Olga talks about the “information drought” that she re-
members growing up, nothing in the newspapers, nothing on television. She and her
friends read the books that were available and hung out. Ruslan, too, recalls the same
faces, the same messages on television, for peace, against American imperialism.

The Soviet myth of community masks old hatreds. Boris’s father is Jewish; his
mother is not. When they married, perhaps they believed such differences no longer
mattered, that internationalism would trump nationalism. But Boris’s mother under-
stands Soviet reality. She counsels her son that with an obviously Jewish last name like
Meyerson, he has to be extra-patriotic, join the Komsomol, wear his membership pin
very visibly. When Boris and Lyuba get together, her mother exclaims, “I knew some
Jew would latch onto you!”

Andrei would seem to be the perfect candidate for upward mobility in the Soviet
system. He is ethnically Russian, not a smoker or drinker, and served in the border
guard. He tells how in 1985 he was encouraged to apply for Communist Party mem-
bership but was rejected. The head of the party committee explains his reasoning:
“What if you commit a crime after we accept you for membership?” Andrei bitterly
observes that at that time they accepted all sorts of alcoholics.

Gorbachev represented change. Ruslan observes: “We were surprised that they
didn’t shoot him.” When he finished his army service in 1986, he “came into a differ-
ent country.” The atmosphere was freer, the police were not arresting punks. Ruslan
has a son, Nikita, who is like his father: “I live outside society.” But he takes Nikita out
to the trendy local Pizza Hut.

Of the five, Olga and Ruslan appear to have fared the worst. In the last years of
Gorbachev’s rule, Olga married in 1988, went to college in 1989, had a baby in 1990. She completely immersed herself in family life. For a while things were rosy. But then in the Wild West times after the Soviet collapse, her banker boyfriend and his driver were murdered. She had returned to her apartment the night before to take her son Gosha to daycare. Left with a small child and no money, she had to find work. An old friend found her a job emptying cash boxes at billiard tables in bars. “Emotionally it was really tough.” Now, she comments, “we’re barely above the poverty line.” Women especially suffered through the transition. Olga notes that as a single woman she is among “the ones who fell behind. Our classmates all married, and their husbands are making money.” Ruslan is not among the moneymakers. Also single, he makes money giving banjo lessons. Nicknamed “Stoop” Stupin, he joined the Moscow Rock Club, which had been created by the Soviet state security organs. After twelve years with the punk rock band Naiv (from 1988 to 2000), he quit, protesting the group’s hypocrisy in becoming a “show-business machine.” At some point, his wife threw him out. Shown at a Naiv reunion, he is introduced as “Ruslan Stupin from the Soviet Union.” Indeed, he feels closer to those who, like Boris and Lyuba, live by the values of the past.

Andrei has the most transformed capitalist life, living in a light and spacious apartment, with IKEA-type furniture. He owns a network of shops, “Café Coton,” selling high-end men’s shirts. His wife appears to be a homemaker, without a paying job. “It was impossible to believe that I would have my own business someday.” But Andrei, too, has troubles. He would like his staffers to wear the store’s shirts as they do in France, but he is told that his workers would rebel, that “the west has a different mentality from us.”

Aside from the propaganda movies, the film largely takes place in the cramped interior spaces typical of Russian homes. The kitchen is the locus of most social activity; friends gather around the table, drink and smoke. The women prepare food. The one major foray into public space occurs in 1991, in the mass demonstrations against the hardliners’ unsuccessful coup to remove Gorbachev. All remember these events. Because all the television channels started showing the ballet Swan Lake, they knew something serious had happened. Ruslan, hung over, woke up and saw tanks rolling down one of Moscow’s main streets. Protesters gathered around the White House, Russia’s parliament building. Boris and Lyuba were there. As Lyuba comments: “Isolation, Cold War, no travel—we didn’t want to go back to that.” She remembers “that pure feeling of freedom” of the demonstration. Olga was at her dacha, but her sister went. Andrei says he probably would have gone but was away on vacation in Sochi. Yeltsin, standing on a tank, was inspiring, telling the crowds that “the fate of the country’s democratic development is in your hands.” But things soon fell apart. The five are disillusioned and cynical. Ruslan observes that Yeltsin, “eternally young and eternally drunk” could not lead, that the democrats’ proposals were unreal. To Boris, the ideals born in the early 1990s were profaned. None of them is fond of Putin. Olga voted for the nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskii. She is sure her vote will not count, that “they already chose without us.” Her hairdresser is nostalgic for the elections of
the 1990s, when the results were not predictable. Andrei did not vote. Boris also abstains: “I’d rather vote for the American President.”

The film ends with Boris and Lyuba, Ruslan, and Andrei taking their children to their alma mater, School No. 57, where Boris and Lyuba also teach. The school is beginning its 131st year; the eleventh graders/seniors take the first graders by the hand and escort them to their classrooms. Will the values, continuity, and idealism articulated in the film endure as Putin consolidates his power?

Since My Perestroika screened, Hessman reports that Olga is still working for the pool table company, Andrei is still selling shirts, Boris and Lyuba are still teaching. Ruslan is now part of a new “punk-bluegrass” band called Boozeman Acoustic Jam. None of them went to the anti-Putin demonstrations, but many of Boris’s students did.

Hessman’s film is an invaluable teaching tool for portraying the complex changes experienced by real people in Moscow’s urban space as the socialist paradise succumbed to external pressures and internal contradictions. It’s a must-see for educators, students, policymakers—anyone interested in Russia.


Reviewed by Amanda E. Wooden, Bucknell University

Collective action puzzles provide useful frameworks for evaluating the role of environmental movements in the former Soviet region. These theoretical puzzles bear on such questions as: What motivates people to engage in public dissent? How do activists develop what Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink in Activists beyond Borders call “common frames of meaning” to attract support? And when is activism effective? For example, environmental concerns spearheaded criticism of the Soviet system and contributed to its decline. Subsequent optimistic expectations that open economies would lead to progressive environmental policies gave way to pessimism by the 2000s. The late–Soviet period environmental movements seemed transformative but transient, as environmental activism fizzled in the early post-Soviet period. Until large protest rallies were held in Moscow and some other Russian cities in late 2011 and early 2012, scholarly assumptions about collective action in the region included the notions that apathy exists about environmental and social problems, civil societies are almost entirely absent, and a legal basis for natural resource policy reform does not exist. This volume edited by Julian Agyeman and Yelena Ogneva-Himmelberger provides a welcome departure from both simplified pessimistic as well as overly optimistic assumptions. Environmental Justice and Sustainability in the Former Soviet Union provides nuanced, complex views of the state of environmental politics in the post-Soviet
space; it identifies motivations and frames for collective action. The book’s contributors help explain why environmental justice and sustainability movements have emerged, identify when these two types of discourses have joined, and demonstrate why environmental movements have been successful in some cases and not in others. A key conclusion of several chapters is that success may be determined by how closely sustainability and justice are united in the frames and discourses used by environmental movements. In doing so, this volume fulfills its goal of beginning a dialogue about a new way to view environmental politics and social justice interacting in the 2010s: through the lens of “just sustainability.”

The “just sustainability” concept guiding the volume’s contributions is defined in the introduction as an agenda “which addresses ‘the need to ensure a better quality of life for all, now and into the future, in a just and equitable manner, while living within the limits of supporting ecosystems’” (p. 3). In other words, “a sustainable society must also be a just society” and these could be politically compatible ideas, as discussed in Julian Agyeman, Robert D. Bullard, and Bob Evans, *Just Sustainabilities: Development in an Unequal World* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), p. 3. The editors refer to the just sustainability concept as a “middle way” between the “brown” environmental justice discourse—that some groups are disproportionately affected by environmental harm or do not receive a proportional share of environmental goods—and the “green” sustainable development agenda. The former, Agyeman notes in an earlier work—*Sustainable Communities and the Challenge of Environmental Justice* (New York: New York University Press, 2005)—is a “bottom-up,” grassroots community approach and the latter is a “top-down,” international community agenda. Given the former Soviet Union’s combination of serious environmental and health hazards, socioeconomic pressures, ethnocultural heterogeneity, and natural capital maldistribution, it is high time that environmental and justice issues are evaluated together in, and about, the region.

Agyeman’s and Ogneva-Himmelberger’s volume engages deeply in the changing and continuous political elements of post-Soviet environmental politics, such as rapid shifts in the political importance of equity, center-periphery, and interethnic group relations; the rise of interest group politics, civil society and state relations; and the complex new roles of international actors. The book embraces a variety of environmental justice concepts and presents multidisciplinary case studies. The editors do not falsely raise expectations about the representativeness of the cases they examine, but they suggest the selections provide multiple perspectives on some of the many important issues of the last two decades. This is not a Russo-centric book, as volumes on the post-Soviet space often are, and is organized deliberately to avoid marginalizing the non-Russian chapters. Five chapters concern the Russian Federation, ranging across the country—and over time—most dealing with native peoples and less-studied regions such as Sakhalin Island, the Sakha Republic in subarctic Russia, and the Tunka Valley in the Irkutsk Oblast of Siberia. Half of the book concerns other successor countries: Azerbaijan, Latvia, Kazakhstan, Estonia, and Tajikistan. The broad regional coverage and understudied-cases reflect a variety of methodological approaches and conceptual frameworks and leave the reader better able to identify post-Soviet space
similarities and cultural differences. The cases are stand-alone rich reads that will provide meat for discussion among similarly specialized scholars. But threads of environmental justice discourse, definitions, and histories connect the chapters and provide insight for non-specialists. In all, the volume will be a useful and unique contribution to courses in environmental justice, environmental politics, sociology, and post-Soviet studies.

The editors achieve what they intended: to describe examples of environmental awareness and types of activism in the former Soviet republics, such as what kinds of environmental agendas—brown, green, or in-between—are emerging. The introduction and conclusion act mostly as useful bookends, but the many particularly rich chapters begin “just sustainability” conversations. The first chapters provide a solid historical foundation for subsequent contributions, and some—such as Shannon O’Lear, Jessica K. Graybill, Kate Watters, Maaris Raudsepp, and so on—use archival, interview, and survey research methods to elegant effect. Brian Donahoe reaches back into Russia’s imperial natural resource policy legacy. Susan Crate studies historical dimensions of the Viliui Sakha’s environmental plight. Laura A. Henry investigates the instrumentalization and internationalization of sustainability in the Russian Federation and the inheritance of Soviet environmentalism in the Lake Baikal area’s rich civil society. Katherine Metzo continues this topic by investigating a “culturally specific form of collective action” among the Buryats in the Tunka Valley near Baikal (p. 122). Tamara Steger provides a fascinating investigation of the “Singing Revolution” in Latvia. The editors make an interesting choice for the final case study: Dominic Stucker’s chapter focuses not on collective concern about pollution—the typical environmental justice focus—but on natural capital maldistribution and the plight of Tajikistan’s rural poor. Graybill’s chapter on competing discourses best captures the variety of ways environmental and social issues are understood by groups within, as well as across, communities.

In admirably embracing complexity, what is lost is continuity and theoretical insight. The varying and sometimes contradictory concepts of environmental justice used by the contributors make the book seem disjointed, although this is useful and clearly intentional. The editors resist narrowly defining the concepts and methods their contributors use. This wide berth perhaps reflects the nature of the contribution selection process, which if discussed in the preface might better have underscored the volume’s organizational and conceptual logic. One finds surprisingly little theoretical discussion, such as engagement with the collective action literature. The editors hope to introduce a research agenda, and although this can be inferred, it is not clearly or cohesively outlined in the conclusion. These theoretical and conceptual limitations are minor. Altogether the result is a collection of chapters that speak richly for themselves yet complement one another. Agyeman and Ogneva-Himmelberger’s volume is an important beginning for generating long overdue dialogue about social justice and environmental sustainability interactions in the former Soviet Union.

✣✣✣
Quenby Olmsted Hughes, “In the Interest of Democracy”: The Rise and Fall of the Early Cold War Alliance between the American Federation of Labor and the Central Intelligence Agency. Bern: Peter Lang, 2011. 204 pp. $55.95.

Reviewed by Arch Puddington, Freedom House

Even as the membership and political influence of organized labor in the United States continue a steady decline, the trade union movement’s role during the Cold War remains a subject of intense and occasionally combustible debate. To its critics, labor made a bargain with the devil by collaborating with the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in opposing the suppression of unions in Europe and elsewhere that were under Communist influence. Others, however, are convinced that American labor merits credit for having stood resolutely against a totalitarian movement whose principal objectives included the extermination of independent trade unions.

The subject of Quenby Olmsted Hughes’s study is the early period of partnership between the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the intelligence community. During the period covered in this study (1946–1954), American labor was divided into two competing federations. The AFL, the larger of the two, was dominated by craft unions, avoided alignment with political parties, and was wary of the left. Its rival, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), was younger (it was launched in the late 1930s), led by the newer industrial unions, and strongly tied to the liberal wing of the Democratic Party.

Hughes points to several reasons for the AFL’s willingness to work with, and accept money from, the government in an anti-Soviet alliance. First, the AFL had consistently rejected the European pattern of trade union development whereby unions would function as appendages of parties of the left. Samuel Gompers, the federation’s dominant personality during the first half of the twentieth century, was especially suspicious of the socialists and Communists who gained influence in union affairs. He regarded them as irresponsible dilettantes who were prepared to use labor as cannon fodder in the class struggle.

Second, the AFL was disturbed by Communist tactics in takeover campaigns against U.S. unions and feared that the movement’s ruthlesslessness would destroy democratic trade unionism in fragile postwar societies.

Finally, there was the role of Jay Lovestone. Lovestone had been a leading personality in the American Communist Party during the 1920s, only to be purged by Stalin himself for acts of defiance. Lovestone emerged from the political wilderness as a wily and relentless anti-Communist who had taken on the mission of thwarting the party’s ambitions toward labor. Lovestone was a bare-knuckle faction fighter, and the tactics he resorted to were often indistinguishable from those employed by his Communist enemies. At war’s end, Lovestone had a position with the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union, whose leader, David Dubinsky, was a fervent anti-Communist internationalist with influence in the AFL.

Labor was initially drawn into the Cold War by Communist success in destroying democratic union movements in Eastern Europe and the growing fear that Stalin
intended to use Communist unions in Western Europe as a Trojan Horse against democracy. U.S. officials were particularly concerned about the increasingly destructive role played by the Confédération Générale du Travail, the Communist-controlled French union federation, which had staged a series of strikes aimed at, among other things, thwarting the delivery of Marshall Plan goods. Officials in Washington turned to Lovestone and his deputy, Irving Brown, another veteran of radical politics with anti-Stalinist views. Working through an entity called the Free Trade Union Committee (FTUC), Lovestone and Brown succeeded not only in ensuring the continued flow of Marshall Plan goods but in denying the Communists a monopoly over French labor.

Although the CIA was impressed by labor’s exploits in France, the intelligence agency and labor had an uncomfortable relationship almost from the start. Part of the problem was cultural. Lovestone and Brown were Jews from radical political backgrounds who, despite their anti-Communism, remained wedded to left-wing perspectives on many international issues. The CIA officers who dealt with labor—contemptuously dismissed by Lovestone as the “Fizz kids”—often came from elite establishment backgrounds. Lovestone would deride the liaison officials from the Office of Policy Coordination as “people . . . in the Social Register” and “cocktail party type[s] common in Washington” (p. 166).

More to the point, Lovestone was convinced that he knew more about Communism, Communist tactics, and the methods required to defeat Communist aggression than those in Washington who were supposed to be leading the struggle against Soviet expansion. To be sure, there were occasions when the FTUC and the CIA worked effectively together on strategically significant projects. The best example is the advocacy campaign against “slave labor” in the Soviet Union. With funding from the government, labor produced what probably stands as the first real study of the Gulag. The study was accompanied by a map showing the locations of the forced-labor camps. The study drew considerable public attention, and the issue was eventually taken up by the United Nations, much to Moscow’s fury.

The slave labor campaign was a case of organic connection between a political issue, American labor, and the CIA (which may have played a role in pinpointing camp locations). On other occasions, Lovestone battled with the CIA over issues on which his expertise and judgment were much more tenuous. One such war involved the direction of Radio Free Europe (RFE) and its parent entity, the National Committee for a Free Europe (NCFE). In its initial conception, RFE was to include a radio network and a center that would work with exiles from Communism to forge a unified anti-Soviet force. The radio station proved a Cold War success story; the exile center proved a fool’s errand and was quickly abandoned. Lovestone, an important participant in RFE’s planning, argued for the exile project, and when the decision was made to jettison the effort, he used vituperative language to accuse the NCFE of acting in bad faith.

Despite a neutral tone, Hughes comes across as sympathetic to labor’s foreign policy involvement and unfazed by the CIA ties. She concludes, correctly, that the AFL retained its independence even as it accepted government money “to fight a com-
mon enemy” (p. 175). She has written a solid history of the origins of American labor’s Cold War adventure, a journey that was to culminate in the AFL-CIO’s support for Poland’s Solidarność and its recognition as a model for foreign affairs activism by what is today called civil society.

✣✣✣


Reviewed by Brian J. DeMare, Tulane University

Mao Zedong’s Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution endured for ten long years, yet the first months of the Cultural Revolution, characterized by extreme Red Guard violence, have come to symbolize the decade. Focusing largely on these critical months during the summer and autumn of 1966, Andrew G. Walder has produced a rich, nuanced investigation into one of the most dramatic and complex moments during Mao’s rule. Walder’s major contribution is to dispel the myth of “conservative” and “rebel” Red Guard factions. In the early months of the Cultural Revolution, Red Guards continually divided along shifting factional lines. Because similar factional conflict would become a hallmark of the Cultural Revolution, these early factional divides among Red Guards have been imbued with great significance. Factional conflicts among Red Guards have been traditionally understood as products of social and political inequalities under the Maoist state. Groups that would benefit from the maintenance of the status quo have been classed with the “conservative” label.

Walder’s close reading of Cultural Revolution documents demonstrates, however, that Beijing university and high school students were a largely homogenous group composed of students closely tied to school and party power networks. Walder instead traces the growth of Red Guard factions to the interactions between students and the work teams sent to manage the Cultural Revolution on Beijing campuses. For the most part, these teams attacked university administrations, thus shattering the networks that had previously united staff, faculty, and students. Most students followed the directives of their work team, but a minority of students clashed with and were subsequently punished by the visiting teams. These punished students, now facing an uncertain political future, would become radical “rebel” Red Guards, intent on seeking revenge against work teams and eventually the ministry officials behind the teams as they sought to clear their names and secure their futures. Walder thus corrects a long-standing misunderstanding about the relationship between class status and Red Guard factions, a misunderstanding that can in part be traced back to Red Guard Tan Lifu, a son of a revolutionary and a poster boy for the majority (pro-work team) faction. Tan Lifu claimed that his opponents were blinded by suspect class loyalties, but Walder notes that Tan Lifu’s opponents were in fact from revolutionary backgrounds.

Walder also brings into his narrative the distinct Red Guard movement emerging from the capital’s high schools. High school work teams, staffed by lower-level cadres,
typically did not dare to criticize the offspring of the party elite, and the interactions between students and work teams did little to create factions. High school Red Guards focused on bringing the Cultural Revolution to the streets of Beijing, invading homes and vandalizing museums. These experiences raised questions about the use of violence, and it was over this critical issue that high school Red Guards found themselves divided, with some forming “picket corps” to curb violence and attacks on ministries. This would bring them into conflict with the minority faction “rebel” Red Guards, who were invading ministries in an attempt to clear their names.

As summer turned to fall in 1966, disparate Red Guard groups scattered throughout the capital began to link up in city-wide networks, a process Walder traces both at the university level and through the actions of Zhang Chunqiao and other leading figures in the Cultural Revolution. Despite early fame for the high school Red Guards, the actions of the “picket corps” in defending ministries from attacks made them expendable. Once Mao had indicated his support for the minority “rebel” Red Guard faction, his followers oversaw the toppling of the leadership of majority faction and high school Red Guards. Observing this process, Walder argues that the Red Guard rebellion of the minority “rebel” Red Guards, directed as it was from above, was essentially bureaucratic in nature.

Walder’s study is richly sourced, drawing on a diverse set of Cultural Revolution documents including handbills, wall posters, and Red Guard recollections. In particular, his research makes excellent use of the Cultural Revolution Database. As a result, his text shows great insight into the experiences of Beida and Qinghua Red Guards. For example, Walder traces the rise of Qinghua’s notorious Kuai Dafu, showing how a chance encounter with Bo Yibo, whom Kuai unknowingly called an “old fat guy” (p. 71), would help catapult Kuai to fame. But Walder is able to move beyond these leading campuses and fully explore Beijing’s dense network of educational institutions. Thus, readers will also encounter Song Binbin as an unknown high school activist, well before her fateful meeting with Mao catapulted her to fame as Song Yaowu.

As Walder’s text traces the ground-level emergence of factions on Beijing campuses, its tight focus necessarily leaves aside the larger narrative of the Cultural Revolution. The book therefore is most suitable for specialists and readers familiar with the emerging historiography of the era. As Walder admits, it is difficult to draw wider conclusions about Cultural Revolution factionalism from this study. The processes driving the emergence of Red Guard factions, most critically the interactions between students and work teams, were clearly specific to Beijing. Still, this new understanding of Red Guards as mass participants in the bureaucratic politics of the Mao era, struggling above all else to secure their political futures, marks an important achievement in elucidating one of the most turbulent moments of Maoist China.