Ted Hopf. _Reconstructing the Cold War: The Early Years, 1945-1958_. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012. ISBN: 9780199858484 (hardcover, $39.95).

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Introduction by Campbell Craig, Aberystwyth University

H-Diplo has assembled a very impressive interdisciplinary (and international) lineup for this roundtable; all four reviewers provide, in my opinion, excellent analysis. Each of them finds much to praise about the book under review, in particular Ted Hopf's fascinating historical account of Soviet political culture during the first thirteen years of the Cold War and how it shaped, and was shaped by, elite conceptions of Cold War foreign policy. All of them have some criticisms, primarily methodological ones about Hopf's employment of International Relations (IR) positivist theorising in the book. In this introduction I will briefly summarise the four reviews and then offer a couple of concluding points.

Probably the most positive review is by James Richter, who argues, in contrast with other reviewers, that Hopf's attempt to develop testable predictions and generalisations from his constructivist narrative is worthwhile and successful. Richter points in particular to the chapter on Nikita Khrushchev's foreign policy, in which Hopf "describes how the increased tolerance of difference at home…was then projected onto the international arena." The causal explanation is clear: Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation policies reflected an extant Soviet culture which in turn decisively shaped a new Cold War policy. Was this really what happened? Richter seems to suggest so, though he offers an alternative explanation which I will revisit later.

Geoffrey Roberts, who knows more about the history of Soviet foreign policy during the early Cold War than just about anyone else, also praises Hopf's attention to political culture in the USSR and his debunking of the totalitarian model which completely disregards the role (or even existence) of Soviet society in the making of high policy. He does point out that Hopf's social constructivist model can explain the internal development of a certain kind of foreign policy but cannot show why, for example, the Soviet Union was antagonistic towards the U.S. rather than some other country. Roberts also criticises Hopf for failing even to mention the rise of the communist/popular front 'Peace Movement' in the late 1940s and early 1950s, which, Roberts argues, wielded real political influence and was compatible with the determination of old Bolsheviks like Vyacheslav Molotov and even Joseph Stalin to avoid great-power conflict and try to forge a long-term peace. It is a valid criticism, since the peace movement campaign fits neatly within Hopf's social narrative, though it is worth wondering why, if Stalin and Molotov wanted to commit to a world of peace, they tested an atomic bomb and worked frantically to build a hydrogen bomb during precisely this period. The answer may lie in Stalin's insistence, at the 19th Party Congress in 1952, that wars among imperialist powers remained inevitable even in the atomic age.

Patrick Thaddeus Jackson finds more to criticise. Like the other reviewers he is quite impressed by Hopf's extensive primary and secondary research and his compelling narrative, but Jackson dislikes Hopf's attempt to insert positivist argumentation into what would otherwise be a perfectly interesting and persuasive historical analysis. Jackson is "dizzied" by Hopf's sudden introduction of awkward schematics and odd iterations of testable hypotheses, which seem as though they were hastily inserted at the last minute.

"The dizziness would be reduced, and the overall argument strengthened, if the neopositivist methodological trappings simply vanished," Jackson asserts.

David Snyder offers perhaps the most negative assessment. He lauds Hopf for insisting that culture matters, that it shaped the making of foreign policy even in the Soviet Union, but he has little patience for Hopf's use of IR constructivism, which he regards as a variant of discourse analysis that has been used by historians for decades. This, he argues, leads to a "stilted and schematic" argument which hinders rather than advances our understanding of the period. Moreover, Snyder (like Roberts) wonders whether it is really possible to develop a comprehensive account of Soviet foreign policy without explaining how the USSR responded to particular actions undertaken by its superpower rival, the United States.

All four reviewers speak to the problems of blending international relations theory into a work of history, and point to the awkwardness that can result from doing so too mechanically. Indeed, Jackson suggests that the 'Cold War' between international historians and IR theorists may be beginning to thaw. What would this entail? As Adam Humphreys has recently written, in what I regard as the most important recent study of this problem[1], what it should entail first is a recognition by IR theorists that their work is ineluctably based upon their understanding of the past, that it is therefore literally impossible to write about international relations in a wholly deductive manner, and so that it makes much more sense to develop more modest kinds of theories, or what Humphreys calls 'heuristics,' which honestly acknowledge the influence of history and aim at producing a convincing explanation rather than a social science law. What Humphreys is suggesting is that the difference between IR theorists and international historians is actually far smaller than it appears: it is only superficially magnified by the continuing pressure within U.S. social science upon scholars to develop hypotheses, variables, laws, and theories. In Britain, where few IR scholars even pretend to be interested in neopositivist theorising and no one does quantitative analysis, this is much less of a problem.

All four reviewers point as well to the difficulties of explaining a foreign policy entirely in domestic social terms. Hopf insists that his is a middle-range theory not meant to speak to larger structural questions, but it is difficult for his account to avoid the issue entirely. As Snyder stresses, the creation of the Marshall Plan in 1947, and its serious implementation over the next couple of years, clearly shook the Kremlin. Hopf alludes to this repeatedly in the first half of the book. Yet the US was not predestined to develop such a plan, and indeed it was, at least initially, a very hard political sell in Washington that Truman might well have abandoned. Would Soviet foreign policy have followed the same direction if that had happened? If not, the causal weight of Soviet society clearly diminishes. Or consider, even more starkly, the effect of nuclear weapons upon Khrushchev. One can plausibly claim that his policy to accept diversity in the Soviet bloc stemmed from the domestic imperative of de-Stalinisation, but, as Richter nicely puts it, "one wonders how much the threat of nuclear

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[1] Adam Humphreys, "The Heuristic Application of Explanatory Theories in International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* 17 (2), pp. 257-77.

annihilation reinforced the belief that it is more practical to tolerate differences than attempt to eradicate them." That could be said of American leaders as well.

Participants:

Ted Hopf is a Professor of Political Science at National University of Singapore. His main fields of interest are international relations theory, qualitative research methods, and identity, with special reference to the Soviet Union and the former Soviet space. In addition to articles published in *American Political Science Review, European Journal of International Relations, International Organization, Review of International Studies* and *International Security*, and numerous book chapters, he has edited or authored five books. His most recent book, *Reconstructing the Cold War: The Early Years, 1945-1958* (Oxford 2012), won the 2013 American Political Science Association Robert Jervis-Paul Schroeder Award for Best Book in International Relations and History and the 2013 Marshall D. Shulman Award, presented by the Association of Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies for the best book published that year on the international politics of the former Soviet Union and Central Europe. *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies, Moscow, 1955 and 1999* (Cornell University Press, 2002) won the 2003 Shulman Award. Hopf received his B.A. from Princeton University in 1983 and Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1989.

Campbell Craig is Professor of International Politics at Aberystwyth University, and is also currently a visiting Fernand Braudel fellow at the European University Institute in Florence. He is author, with Fredrik Logevall, of *America's Cold War: the Politics of Insecurity* (Harvard University Press); with Jan Ruzicka, of 'The Nonproliferation Complex,' published in the most recent edition of *Ethics and International Affairs*; and many other books and articles.

Patrick Thaddeus Jackson is currently Professor of International Relations and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education in the School of International Service at the American University in Washington, DC. He received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Columbia University in 2001. His book *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations* (Routledge, 2011) received the Yale H. Ferguson Award for the book that most contributes to advancing International Relations as a pluralist field of study, and he is presently the Series Editor of the University of Michigan Press' book series Configurations: Critical Studies of World Politics. He received the School of International Service's Scholar/Teacher of the Year award in 2011, and was named the 2012 Professor of the Year for Washington DC by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education.

James Richter is a professor of politics at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine. He is the author of *Khrushchev's Double Bind: International Pressures and Domestic Coalition Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994). His recent research has focused on civic activism and government policy in Russia and he is currently working on a book comparing civic activism in Russia and China.

Geoffrey Roberts is Professor and Head of the School of History, University College Cork, Ireland. His latest books are *Molotov: Stalin's Cold Warrior* (Potomac 2012) and *Stalin's General: The Life of Georgy Zhukov* (Random House 2012), which won the 2013 Society for Military History Distinguished Book Award for Biography.

David J. Snyder received a Ph.D. from Southern Illinois University in 2006 and is an Instructor of History at the University of South Carolina. His forthcoming articles include "'A Test of Sentiments': Civil Aviation, Alliance Politics, and the KLM Challenge in Dutch-American Relations," with Giles Scott-Smith, *Diplomatic History*, (forthcoming 2014); and "'Things Other than Babies and the Kitchen': Domesticity, Rearmament, and the Limits of U.S. Public Diplomacy to the Netherlands, 1951-1953," *Journal of Cold War Studies* (forthcoming 2013).

Review by Patrick Thaddeus Jackson, American University

Stories of the Cold War

R eading Ted Hopf's work can be something of a dizzying experience. This is not the sort of dizziness that comes from broad macrohistorical sweep; Hopf's empirical analyses are invariably meticulous, and he generally eschews overly ambitious claims about enormous abstractions causing equally grandiose outcomes (like 'democracy causes peace' or 'interdependence leads to cooperation'). In his most recent book, instead of 'identity rather than interest causes foreign policy,' and even instead of 'Soviet foreign policy was a function of Soviet identity,' we get the much more nuanced and considerably more defensible claim that, contrary to what we might expect of an expansionist and rising power like the Soviet Union, opportunities to compete with the United States for allies in the decolonizing world, and opportunities to strengthen alliances with Eastern European countries by allowing those nations to implement slightly different domestic social and economic arrangements, were ignored under Stalin and only seized on as part of widespread de-Stalinization. Hopf's claims are careful, amply documented, and generally quite plausible.

Instead, the dizziness of reading Hopf's book comes from the rapid twists of the head that are sometimes required to abruptly shift from richly-documented interpretation to extremely thin neopositivist causal reasoning. To be suddenly interrupted in the midst of an engaging account of the Stalinist "discourse of danger" by an enumerated list of "testable propositions" (70) about how the Soviet Union related to other states is somewhat jarring, as is the causal sequence Hopf "expect[s] to uncover if [his] theoretical approach is correct":

> Predominant Discourse of Soviet Identity ➔ Soviet Understanding of Significant External Others Through that Discourse ➔ Soviet Relations with Those External Others Consistent with that Understanding (71).

This is an attempt to force what we might call careful textual ethnography – the act of bringing an ethnographer's sensibility to textual data sources, endeavoring to reconstruct a cultural world primarily through a close reading of its emblematic texts – into a methodological straightjacket that does not fit it especially well. The implicit claim seems to be that unless we can identify sequential relationships between more or less independent variables like "predominant discourse" and outcomes like "Soviet relations with external others," we cannot generate useful insights into the Soviet Union or the Cold War. But this is extremely problematic, especially since Hopf's book generates many useful insights but fails to live up to its own overly restrictive methodological strictures. The dizziness would be reduced, and the overall argument strengthened, if the neopositivist methodological trappings simply vanished, so the text could just focus on concretely, and graphically, illustrating the ways that the Soviet leadership drew on more widely-circulated accounts of Soviet identity to make sense of the international environment in which they found themselves.

Indeed, the strength of Hopf's work is precisely that it seeks to explicitly connect broad shifts in Soviet identity with specific foreign policy actions. This is not simply a descriptive book about Soviet elites and their desires, and how those desires translated into strategies on the world stage. Instead, Hopf suggests that even the authoritarian Soviet elite were embedded enough in their broader society that they did not simply ignore popular stories of the Soviet project – even those stories that were officially suppressed – but drew strategically on aspects of that wider public discourse in framing their understandings of how to act, both domestically, and eventually, internationally. This point is made most starkly at the beginning of Hopf's discussion of de-Stalinization, when he notes the seeming oddity of Lavrentii Beria being among the leading early advocates of the relaxation of many of the Stalinist policies that Beria had previously been instrumental in executing:

> Perhaps Beria was just a more astute politician than his rivals. He sensed the change broader society wanted for the Soviet Union and started announcing policies to reflect these desires. In doing so, he caught his rivals on the Presidium by surprise… (144)

The mechanism here, although Hopf doesn't spell this out as explicitly as he might have, is something like 'legitimation,' the process by which (as Max Weber might have put it) raw coercive domination is transformed into the broadly acceptable exercise of authority. This transformation, which is never as complete or comprehensive as the state leadership might like because of the ever-present possibility of novel stories arising in the gaps or on the margins of the official narrative, relies in the first instance on elites not straying too far from the pre-existing narrative elements already in circulation among the target audience. In his sadly under-appreciated and under-utilized book *Identity, Interest, and Action*, Erik Ringmar notes that the "emplotting" of state policy relies on an acknowledgement that not every story is available to all people at all times; rather, it is the specific history of a given society that clarifies which elements are available when.[1] Legitimation is thus local and contextual, subject to change when novel stories arise—a point underpinning Hopf's central claim in the book that post-Stalinist stories rejecting the discourse of danger in favor of a more permissive approach to variety within the overall project of building world socialism made possible a very different set of foreign policy practices.

In stressing the essential cultural continuity between Soviet elites and the broader public, Hopf places his argument alongside other synthetic accounts of the social identity of the Soviet Union, such as Stephen Kotkin's *Magnetic Mountain* and Francis Spufford's *Red Plenty*.[2] The theme and ultimate subject all of these works is the set of cultural understandings, the narrative elements, that elites and members of the Soviet public alike used to make sense of the world. Hopf's book is considerably more careful and analytically

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[1] Ringmar, Erik. 1996. *Identity, Interest and Action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 76.

[2] Kotkin, Stephen. 1995. *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization*. Berkeley: University of California Press; Spufford, Francis. 2012. *Red Plenty*. Graywolf Press.

precise in breaking down and classifying those narrative elements, following not just a single thread ('industry' for Kotkin and 'abundance' for Spufford) but a variety of dimensions on which the predominant official discourse of Soviet identity under Stalin related to the broader societal discourse, sometimes opposing and sometimes reinforcing one another. As a result, we are presented with a picture not of a single uniform project in which all parties were tightly enmeshed, or a dominant discourse that simply drove dissent underground permanently, but a field of contestation within which struggles took place over time. According to Hopf, the Stalinist discourse and the societal discourse disagreed about the infallibility of the Soviet project and in the degree of optimism about particular state-imposed reforms, but largely agreed that the Soviet Union should be a modern country within which the Russian nation took a leading role; that configuration set the boundaries of the possible within which policy was legitimated, and the changing balance of the Stalinist and the societal discourse with respect to infallibility and optimism explains changes in Soviet relations with Yugoslavia, China, and other strategic partners, including countries in its own traditional 'near abroad.'

Part of how Hopf arrives at this explanation is that his sources of evidence are considerably more varied and wider-ranging than the sources usually drawn on in historical works of this kind. Rejecting the bifurcation of elite history and social history, Hopf immersed himself both in official archives and in everyday cultural products such as novels and films, seeking to reconstruct the relevant discourses in meticulous detail. It is this extensive reliance on primary sources that separates Hopf's book methodologically from the more imaginative exercise of a book like Spufford's: where Spufford aims to convey to the reader a sense of the Soviet project from the inside by drawing elements together into a coherent narrative, Hopf aims to inductively generate an inventory of elements that serve as sense-making tools in actual empirical practice. But the practical differences are not as clear-cut as this abstract methodological contrast might suggest: because of its methodological commitments, Hopf's account cannot help but draw elements together to produce a somewhat abstracted picture. 'Discourses' are not simple empirical objects; they are conceptual constructs through which we can perhaps perceive the explanatory role of different elements of social identity. So it is not just the evidence that leads Hopf to his portrayal of areas of reinforcement and competition between official and societal discourses, but the way that he uses that evidence to tell a broader story about foreign policy change.

This is a typical observation for scholarship informed by an ethnographic sensibility, although it often goes by the more technical name of 'the hermeneutic circle': the meaning and significance of a part of the story doesn't become clear until we know the whole story in which it is emplotted, but that whole story only emerges from the parts themselves.[3] The whole story, for Hopf's purposes, has two components that are highly significant for any reading of individual pieces of evidence: the causal factors implicated in the story are

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[3] This insight is central to the contributions to, for example, Yanow, Dvora, and Peri Schwartz-Shea. 2006. *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe.

intersubjective discourses rather than individual perceptions, and the plot of the story focuses on change rather than continuity. Because the target of Hopf's investigation is conceptually distinct both from the contents of the heads of any particular individuals and from the nuances of any particular expression of cultural value, he must 'read' documents so as to locate them within a broader conceptual whole, producing what Karl Mannheim might have called a "total ideology" but for the fact that Hopf's reading leads him to identify analytically autonomous clusters of identity-claims rather than a single overarching and coherent universe of discourse.[4] This attention to difference is in turn related to the fact that Hopf's book is telling a story about shifts rather than stability, and this story necessitates a focus on variation and a downplaying of similarities. Take the same evidence and tell a different story, a story about fundamental continuities in Soviet foreign policy over the years of the Cold War, and continuities in discourse will perhaps stand out more. Or tell a story about particular people shaping state actions, and 'discourse' perhaps recedes in favor of a focus on individual perceptions.

I do not mean to suggest that there is anything *wrong* with this methodological situation. Indeed, the hermeneutic circle is a fundamental component of explanatory work conducted with an ethnographic sensibility, or indeed of any explanatory work that rejects the firm distinction between observing mind and observed world that animates the kind of "representational" analysis that claims to merely portray the world "as it really is in itself" without any interpretive mediation. But political science as a discipline is still largely inspired by the vision of representational analysis, and regards the hermeneutic circle not as a fundamental facet of human knowing but as a technical problem to be solved. Inasmuch as Hopf's book is located in that scholarly stream, at times the text speaks almost boastfully of having "a falsifiable argument with variables that vary" (27); this is methodological shorthand for the neopositivist strategy of ferreting out systematic and general causal relationships through repeated hypothesis-testing. Many political scientists erroneously think that this eliminates the hermeneutic circle by ensuring that over time, representations asymptotically approach really real reality.

In the case of Hopf's book, sustaining an argument of this sort requires a firm separation between societal and official discourses and between those discourses and "the identities used by Soviet decision-makers when making their foreign policy choices" (25) so that systematic variations and correlations among these elements (and the course of Soviet foreign policy) can be glimpsed. But Hopf is too careful an interpretive historian to adhere to this framework at the expense of telling the explanatory story that makes the most sense of the evidence, so in his account of the post-Stalin thaw – the fulcrum of change on which the argument pivots – the lines between predominant domestic identity discourse and foreign policy identity are blurred and dissolved. Instead of the change in domestic Soviet identity that embraced greater diversity of socialism *preceding* and then *causing* a change in Soviet external relations, we have instead a contemporaneous change in Soviet discourse that is simultaneously 'internal' and 'external' in its embrace of diversity within the socialist camp. Hopf's evidence suggests that the post-Stalin Soviet leadership did not first

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[4] Mannheim, Karl. 1936. *Ideology and Utopia*. San Diego: Harvest Books.

reject the "discourse of danger" domestically before proceeding to reject it internationally; rather, the re-evaluation of Stalinist policies in Eastern Europe began at the same time as Stalinist policies were being re-evaluated at home and more space for popular dissent and reinterpretation of the Stalinist legacy was being created. Likewise, the reframing of anti-colonial struggles in the Third World as providing potential Soviet allies was inextricably linked, Hopf suggests, to the Soviet leadership's understanding of Central Asia: "It was as if the Soviet Union had its own decolonizing world right within its borders" (238), and the shift to understanding that region as developing towards socialism instead of dangerously deviating from an orthodox Soviet model was thus simultaneously a shift in discourse about both foreign and domestic matters. Again, the 'internal' and 'external' changes happened *at the same time*, and make sense more as streams in a single discursive shift than as a tight sequence of variables affecting one another in a linear way.

In this way, the weakness of Hopf's book is not in the richly detailed empirical story that it tells—a story that connects Soviet identity discourse with Soviet state action in ways that demonstrates the empirical productivity of constructivist theoretical assumptions about the importance of legitimation even in the authoritarian Soviet Union. Connecting discourse and action in a careful, meticulously-documented way is in fact the scholarly contribution here, and while I am not qualified to comment on the validity of Hopf's reading of the documentary sources (others in this Forum, who are actually historians of the period, are far better positioned to be able to do so), I will certainly vouch for the integrity of the book's theoretical contribution. In fact, if neopositivist framework had simply been dropped as inadequate – which would have required not more than the removal of a few paragraphs from the first chapter, and a revision of the conclusion in order to avoid claims about having successfully tested a general hypothesis about discourse and policy – this would be a methodologically consistent contribution that I would hold up for my students as exemplary interpretive social science. As it is, the book retains a somewhat dizzying quality because of the mismatch between its overall methodological frame and its practical execution, but perhaps that fissure in the official discourse might lead to something of a methodological thaw in the future.

Review by James Richter, Bates College

*R*econstructing the Cold War is the first installment of an unusually ambitious, intriguing, and important research project that explores the sources of Soviet international behavior in domestic discourses of identity (Full disclosure: I am mentioned in the acknowledgments for discussions with the author mostly during the early stages of his research). While there are numerous studies in the constructivist tradition that link foreign policy to domestic notions of identity, most of these have taken one of two different paths. More conventional studies looking for a causal link between the two have limited their claims to what might be called 'state identity'—the legitimating accounts of state institutions—and focused their research on official pronouncements and documents of participants in the decision-making process.[1] Less conventional approaches, freed from the shackles of positivism, have mined popular culture to analyze broader social discourses that make certain kinds of foreign policies reasonable and legitimate.[2] These latter studies frequently offer invaluable insights into states' foreign policy behavior; sadly, their arguments do not easily lend themselves to the kind of falsifiable tests that give positivist studies their status within the discipline.

This project combines the strengths of both approaches. Like the more interpretive studies, Hopf argues that the broader social discourses that organize domestic conceptions of the self also frame the decision-making process in foreign policy. For example, to the extent that prevailing social discourses define the Soviet self as a Russian "center of modernity atop a hierarchy of modern development," that definition of the self will organize Soviet interpretations of global politics as well (255). Consequently, to the extent that this discourses places the Soviet self in paternalist relation to its non-Russian, peripheral or less modern groups within the Soviet Union, then paternalism will also inform Soviet behavior towards clients and allies in Eastern Europe and (later) the developing world.

Unlike the more interpretive studies, however, Hopf puts these hypotheses to a series of rigorous tests. First, he systematically samples an impressively varied selection of sources, including popular novels, certain specialized journals and newspapers, and even the Harvard Project's interviews with émigrés in the 1950s, in order to identify and map out the key categories in competing discourses of Soviet identity. He then samples official documents to determine to what extent these categories also structured communications

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[1] Examples include Rawi Abdelai, *National Purpose in the World Economy: Post-Soviet States in Comparative Perspective,* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001); Shibley Z. Telhami and Michael Barnett, *Identity and Foreign Policy in the Middle East* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002); James Richter, "The Politics of National Identity," in Celeste Wallander, ed., *The Sources of Russian Foreign Policy after the Cold War* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), pp. 69-94.

[2] David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of* Identity (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992); Susan Jeffords, "Commentary: Culture and National Identity in US Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History*, 18 (Winter, 1994), 91-97.

among policy-makers. He finds they are usually, but not always, the same. For example, official rhetoric during late Stalinism included a discourse of danger, particularly towards the West, that was not shared uniformly across Soviet society, even among elites. Similarly, the foreign policy elite's concern for the Soviet Union's status as a great power during the 1950s did not circulate widely through the broader population. Finally, Hopf compares the official discourse with actual policy.

Some readers might be tempted to skim briefly over chapters two and four, which chart the domestic political, social and cultural currents of late Stalinism and the Thaw, respectively. I would advise against it. Hopf has gathered an enormous amount of information, and read widely and judiciously in the secondary literature, to provide a highly readable and nuanced account of a critical period in Soviet history, a period that only recently has received the scholarly attention it deserves. He shows how, after a brief period of uncertainty, official rhetoric after the war became dominated by a discourse of danger that tolerated no divergence from the Stalinist ideal. More interestingly, he describes in rich detail an alternative discourse within popular novels and some specialized journals that relaxed the discourse of danger and focused on improving the quality of everyday life. After Joseph Stalin died, the new leadership had no choice but to consult this subaltern discourse, and ultimately adopted an official rhetoric that was less fearful, more confident, more pragmatic, and more tolerant of difference. This new discourse implicitly recognized a realm where people could nurture their private feelings and aspirations without fear of repression, provided they did not publicly challenge official ideology.

The third and fifth chapters test whether these discourses also structured Soviet international behavior. In both cases, the evidence is compelling, particularly with respect to Eastern Europe. In the late Stalinist period, the emergence of the discourse of danger in 1947 coincided with the creation of the Cominform, the Soviet denunciation of Yugoslav leader Josip Broz Tito, and the coup in Czechoslovakia. But it is Hopf's discussion of Soviet foreign policy after Stalin's death that is most persuasive. Here he describes how the increased tolerance of difference at home, in particular a space where individuals could step away from rigid orthodoxy without being branded as enemies, was then projected onto the international arena: the Soviet Union again embraced Yugoslavia as a member of the socialist camp, accepted Austrian neutrality, and even identified peaceful coexistence an important objective of Soviet foreign policy. More importantly, the new discourse enabled the Kremlin to reach out to nationalist regimes in the Third World as potential allies in the struggle against imperialism, something the Stalinist intolerance of difference did not allow.

My one reservation with Hopf's historical treatment of Soviet foreign policy, particularly in the early Khrushchev era, is that he discounts the role that class identity played in organizing Soviet images of the outside world.   Class did not figure strongly in discourses about self and other in domestic politics, largely because Stalin declared in the 1930s that the victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie (including the kulaks) had ended class antagonism in the Soviet Union (Nikita Khrushchev pushed this argument even further in 1961 when he redesignated the communist party the "party of the whole people"--

presumably a subject for Hopf's second volume).[3] In foreign policy, however, class remained an important category for assigning similarity and otherness. For example, Hopf rightfully emphasizes Khrushchev's secret speech at the Twentieth Party Congress as a fundamental turning point in official Soviet discourse, but he mentions only briefly Khrushchev's public address during the Congress, which announced a significant change in the official account of world politics: seeking to reconcile the policy of peaceful coexistence with the promise of socialism's ultimate victory, Khrushchev argued that a change in the correlation of forces had made it possible for the working classes in capitalist countries to take power without violent revolution.

This quibble aside, Hopf's argument has enormous theoretical implications that should generate much productive research on the relations between domestic social structure, national identity, and international politics. First, one hopes future scholars will test whether this theory can be transposed to countries where the public discourse is less regulated than in the Soviet Union. A brief look at the history of U.S. foreign policy towards Haiti suggests that Hopf may be on to something. Although the Haitian revolution of 1804 modeled itself closely after the example of the United States, the U.S. government did not recognize the new state until 1862, presumably because the government could not tolerate the political sovereignty of Africans either at home or abroad. The affinities between U.S. imperialism at the turn of the twentieth century, and particularly the domination of the Caribbean, with the contemporaneous victory of Jim Crow in the South are also suggestive.

In addition to establishing the theory's generalizability, new research could refine and elaborate some of the many questions raised by Hopf's analysis. For example, though Hopf discusses briefly how one particular discourse gains precedence over other, competing discourses in domestic society, his answer remains undertheorized. He emphasizes that discourses need institutional homes in government or society to sustain them and give them strength. But he never fully explains where these discourses come from, why some rise to the top and others do not, and most importantly, under what circumstances prevailing discourses change. He does argue that some prevailing discourses may be "discredited or abandoned," but he does not specify why or under what conditions this is likely to occur (22). To be fair, the purpose of this book is not to determine where discourses of identity come from, but simply to determine to what extent they shape foreign policy as well. But a survey of Cold War history will require some explanation of how and why foreign policy evolved.

The question of which discourse prevails when could be addressed more easily if Hopf's theoretical framework included a more explicit consideration of social power. Though Hopf samples broadly in popular culture, his research is still centered on discourses among elites, or at least among the Soviet middle class. Given the Party's control over the public

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[3] A very brief discussion of Khrushchev's formulation, "Party of the whole people," in the context of Soviet domestic and foreign policy debates can be found in James G. Richter, *Khrushchev's Double Bind: International Pressures and Domestic Coalition Politics* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 105, 128.

sphere during this period, he could hardly have done otherwise. Even the subaltern discourse Hopf identifies in the late Stalinist era, expressing confidence that the regime need no longer mistrust the Russian people, seems to have been shared widely, if discretely, among members of the Soviet technical elites and even members of the *nomenklatura.*

Public discourses of this kind, as James Scott tells us, tend to consist of the stories elites tell themselves to explain why they hold the positions they do.[4] This does not suggest that such discourses are necessarily the intentional and instrumental products of people in power, though of course they can be. It does mean that members of the elite must have been able to navigate similar institutional milieus and therefore have either internalized or learned to operate within the discourses embedded within those milieus, that these discourses help explain what function such institutions play in society and why, and that these institutions can harness the resources to act upon these discourses and give them tangible substance.

In short, the prevailing discourse should not be seen merely as a way of organizing reality, but more specifically as a legitimating account for a particular social structure. Again, this does mean that the participants do not believe the account, but it does mean that their motivations for holding onto that account are that much greater, and that the beneficiaries of such accounts will resist efforts to challenge them (think here of the angry white male syndrome). It also means they have added incentive, when they can, to project them onto the international sphere.

Bringing power and legitimacy more fully into Hopf's theory has several advantages. First, it offers a more refined explanation of why Khrushchev's version of the discourse of difference defeated Georgy Malenkov's version after Stalin's death. Both tapped into the subaltern discourse Hopf identifies, but Khrushchev's strategy also incorporated discursive strands that informed the regime's most fundamental institutional base. Malenkov's approach may have improved the quality of everyday life but it would also have diminished the role of ideological struggle and social mobilization so crucial to the Party's leading role. Khrushchev offered a strategy that offered peace while continuing the ideological struggle and offered better living conditions while retaining a campaignist approach to economic development.

Second, it provides further insights into the ferocity of Stalin's discourse of danger after 1947. Hopf demonstrates that Stalin had "real" reasons to fear impatience for reform after the end of the war (43-45), but this does not explain the vehemence of the response. The real target seems to have been the mere existence of uncertainty rather than any number of specific threats.

Third, bringing power into the analysis helps explain why societal discourses correspond more closely with foreign policy towards potential client states than towards other great

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[4] See James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990), 18.

powers. The great powers usually have the means to act upon the cognitive categories implicit within these discourses when dealing with weaker states, but less able to do so with regard to their equals. This is true not only of relations between the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (as opposed to the United States) after World War II, but also between the United States and the Caribbean states (as opposed to the European powers) at the turn of the 20th Century.   This does not mean that societal discourses understandings of other great powers are irrelevant. Certainly the discourse of danger helps explain the intractability of cold war diplomacy during the late Stalinist period. It does suggest that great powers are likely to act in ways that may challenge prevailing discourses, perhaps with consequences for domestic structures. For example, Hopf persuasively shows that the discourse of difference preceded the emergence of nuclear weapons at the war's end, but one wonders how much the threat of nuclear annihilation reinforced the belief that it is more practical to tolerate differences than attempt to eradicate them.

To conclude, this book is an impressive achievement and absolutely essential reading for all people interested in the history of the cold war, comparative foreign policy and/or constructivist approaches to international politics. It is also simply fascinating. I only hope it proves seminal as well.

Review by Geoffrey Roberts, University College Cork, Ireland

I n *Reconstructing the Cold War* Ted Hopf aims to show that the best way to understand the twists, turns, and transformations of Soviet foreign relations from 1945-1958 is through "societal constructivism" – the idea that "how the Soviet Union understood itself at home explains how it related to other states abroad"(5) .

During the early years of the Cold War Soviet self-identity was dominated by what Hopf calls the 'discourse of danger', by fears and perceptions that the Socialist system was under acute threat at home and abroad. The prevalence of this discourse led to the breakdown of the early postwar Soviet-Western détente, to Andrei Zhdanov's two-camp doctrine and the establishment of the Cominform in 1947, and, most important, to the intolerance of differences within the Communist movement and the consequent construction of a tightly controlled Soviet and Stalinist socialist bloc. While Stalin was the main agent and personification of this discourse of danger, his fears were shared by the Soviet elite and infused popular discourse as well. At the same time, there continued to exist elements of an alternative 'discourse of difference' – the idea that the socialist system was not under existential threat and the Soviet Union could and should tolerate a degree of difference at home and abroad. After Stalin's death in 1953 this discourse of difference came to the fore and displaced the discourse of danger as the predominant identity of the Soviet elite and society. The result was a more relaxed foreign and domestic policy and a more pluralist communist movement and socialist camp.

Hopf's utilisation of these concepts is very fruitful. The distinction between the discourses of danger and difference is a good way to conceptualise differences between Soviet foreign policy in the late and post-Stalin eras. The way the Soviets saw themselves is a critical explanatory variable in the story of Moscow's postwar foreign policy. Welcome, too, is Hopf's emphasis on the influence of Soviet popular discourse on elite foreign policy-making. Even in the highly authoritarian Soviet state, society was important and made a difference. As with his previous book on Soviet foreign policy,[1] Hopf's combination of deft theoretical analysis and solid empirical detail is a challenge both to constructivist theorists and to narrative historians like me.

Hopf positions his work theoretically as a species of social constructivism. Constructivism is the view that what matters most to the action that takes place in the human world is not objective reality (the way the world is) or subjective reality (the way the world is perceived) but intersubjective reality – shared understandings that are constructed through discourse and expressed as identities. Hopf distinguishes his brand of social constructivism - societal constructivism - from systemic constructivism which argues that it is in their relations with each other that states construct their identities as foreign policy actors. In contrast, Hopf highlights the importance of the domestic sources of foreign

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[1] T. Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics: Identities and Foreign Policies*, Moscow 1955 and 1999 (Cornell 2002).

policy-related identities, notably the discourse that takes place in society and its influence on the elite.

In this book Hopf presents as a soft rather than a hard societal constructivist. Objective and subjective realities, as well as intersubjectivity, feature centrally in his reconstruction of the early cold war. The key Soviet actor was Josef Stalin. The postwar discourse of danger revived the Soviet dictator's prewar belief that the Soviet Union was subject to threatening capitalist encirclement and that the more successful socialism was the more intense the class struggle domestically and internationally. Equally, it was Stalin who held the discourse of danger at bay in 1945-1946 by his stress on the possibilities of postwar co-operation with the west. Hopf might have added that Stalin's attitudes and policies in 1945-1946 – above all the hope that the Soviet-Western grand alliance would continue – had been formed during the middle years of the war and that the discourse of collaboration prevailed for as long as the discourse of danger did.[2]

When Stalin abandoned the discourse of collaboration in 1947, it was in response to real dangers and threats at home and abroad, not just imagined ones. It was not societal or even elite discourse that mattered in this respect: it was Stalin's personal choices, thus underlining the power of the dictator's agency. Similarly, Hopf accepts that societal constructivism cannot explain everything, for example, the Soviet Union's antagonistic relations with the United States. These were an effect of inter-state relations and the formation within that context of a Soviet great power identity - a perspective that points to systemic constructivism or even realism as a better mode of explanation of that aspect of the Cold War.

What then does societal constructivism explain that is important to our understanding of the history of the Cold War? According to Hopf societal constructivism explains the radical changes that occurred in Soviet foreign policy after Stalin's death. When Stalin died the predominance of the discourse of danger died with him. Under the influence of society, the Soviet elite embraced the discourse of difference and all the attendant changes in foreign relations that it entailed. In support of his argument Hopf points to Lavrenty Beria's adoption of a liberal foreign policy after Stalin's death:

> From the theoretical point of view it is important that Beria became the earliest and most enthusiastic proponent of the discourse of difference. He clearly was not some closet liberal waiting for Stalin's death. His assumption of the role of the party elite's greatest liberal, however, demonstrates the power of societal discourse. Why else adopt the discourse, if it did not have some political advantage or resonate among the public? And Beria's colleagues on the Politburo thought precisely this way about it, fearing Beria's policy positions were designed to garner public support for himself in the ongoing and ensuing leadership struggle. He was arrested and shot. But demonstrating the structural

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[2] See G. Roberts, *Stalin's Wars: From World War to Cold War, 1939-1953* (Yale University Press, 2006).

> aspects of societal constructivism, the discourse of difference did not die with
> Beria. It was adopted, first by Malenkov, and finally by Khrushchev and the ruling
> elite in general. *Societal discourses have a power of their own, even if their
> translation into official policy requires political elites to adopt them, believe
> them, be socialised into them, or simply manipulate them for political purposes*
> (257-258, emphasis added).

Hopf develops this line of analysis in his detailed treatment of the post-Stalin Soviet
leadership struggle, a narrative in which a conservative Vyacheslav Molotov is depicted as
a continuing adherent of the discourse of danger who clashes with Nikita Khrushchev and
the rest of the leadership. This part of Hopf's narrative, it should be noted, reflects the
conventional story of Molotov's role in Soviet foreign policy after Stalin's death, a story that
can be traced to the Central Committee resolution that condemned Molotov when he finally
lost his power struggle with Khrushchev in June 1957. Indeed, Hopf quotes the accusations
of Molotov's opponents within the Soviet leadership, many of which we now know to be
untrue.

The problem with Hopf's interpretation is that Beria's foreign policy positions were not his
alone but were shared by other Soviet leaders, including Molotov. This was true, too, of
Beria's position on the German question – which favoured reunification on certain terms.
When Beria was denounced at the July 1953 Central Committee plenum, leading the charge
was Khrushchev, and he used Beria's position on the German question as a stick to beat
him with. But it was domestic rather foreign policy issues that were central to Beria's
ouster. Beria and the security apparatus he controlled were seen as a threat by Khrushchev
and others, as representing the danger of a new Stalin usurping the collective leadership
that had been established after the dictator's death. There was also an ethnic dimension to
Beria's fall: Beria like Stalin was Georgian, and his rivals for the leadership mostly Russian.

But perhaps society influenced the Soviet elite more generally and not just Beria? This
raises the question of cause and effect. Did the post-Stalin Soviet elite adopt the discourse
of difference because of society or vice versa? The obvious answer is that both were true:
the Soviet elite created discourse and identity as well as being influenced by society's
adoption and elaboration of it. There was a dialectic between elite and society. How this
dialectic played out in practice is a matter of history, not theory. This does not undermine
the explanatory force of societal constructivism as expounded by Hopf but it certainly
refines it.

While Hopf's book is an important contribution to the story of how Soviet discourse and
identity evolved and changed in the 1940s and 1950s it contains a major lacuna: between
the discourses of danger and difference there was an intermediary phase. The discourse of
danger in its acute form was, in fact, quite short-lived, at least in relation to foreign policy
and relations outside of the communist bloc. Indeed, by the late 1940s the discourse of
danger had been largely superseded by the discourse of the struggle for peace.

The peace struggle discourse grew out of the discourse of danger. It was in response to this discourse that the postwar communist peace movement was launched in 1948. Over the next several years it grew into a mass movement that impacted significantly on international public opinion. The 1950 Stockholm Appeal to prohibit nuclear weapons - which garnered a half billion signatures – a quarter of the world's population at the time – is the best known communist-led peace campaign but there were other, even more successful, campaigns as well. Central to the identity of the peace movement was the idea that the forces of peace were potentially strong enough to prevent war, ban the bomb, and end the cold war. Peace movement discourse repudiated the doctrine of the inevitability of war long before Khrushchev did so at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956. By the early 1950s, the Zhdanov doctrine had been de facto abandoned and the Cominform reduced to acting as an auxiliary of the peace movement.

The peace movement was communist-led but broad in its political orientation and represented a return to Popular Front politics following the leftist deviation represented by the establishment of the Cominform. As it evolved in the early 1950s, the peace movement became more politically diverse and less closely identified with Soviet foreign policy. In December 1952 the movement sponsored a Congress of the Peoples for Peace in Vienna that attracted the participation of a range of social, cultural, religious and political groups. Here were some of the seeds of the post-Stalin discourse of difference. One of the key players in the peace movement was Ilya Ehrenburg, a Soviet representative on the World Peace Council, identified by Hopf as a key agent of societal constructivism and of the discourse of difference after Stalin's death.

Crucially, the struggle for peace was waged at home as well as abroad.[3] Within the Soviet Union there developed a mass popular peace movement which articulated and reinforced Soviet self-identity that the USSR was fundamentally a peace-loving state. The Soviet peace movement was an initiative from above but one that provoked a mass popular response from below, which was not surprising given the recent ravages of war. The mobilisational success of the peace movement at home and abroad gave the Soviet leadership confidence in the struggle for peace and embedded Soviet identity as peace-loving at both popular and elite level. The peace movement's discourse impacted on Soviet discourse on international politics which began to talk about 'world society' and 'international public opinion' and stressed the importance of 'trust' in interstate relations. Implicit in this new discourse was the idea of an emergent international civil society – a realm of private citizen initiative and engagement with global issues. The peace movement also played a pioneering role in re-opening Soviet society to outside influences and engagements in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The massive coverage of the peace movement in the Soviet press provided a

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[3] See T. Johnston, "Peace or Pacifism? The Soviet 'Struggle for Peace in All the World', 1948-1954", *Slavic and East European Review*, vol.86, no.2, April 2008. Also Johnston's book: *Being Soviet: Identity, Rumour, and Everyday Life under Stalin 1939-1953* (Oxford University Press 2011).

window to the outside world, as did the visits to the USSR of increasing numbers of peace activists, visits reciprocated by Soviet delegations abroad.[4]

The discourse of the struggle for peace emerged, developed, indeed came to the fore while Stalin was still alive. While Stalin resisted the peace movement's doctrinal innovation, insisting that inter-capitalist wars were inevitable, at least in theory, he was mostly supportive.

The methodology deployed by Hopf in constructing his book is to sample texts that help to reconstruct the intersubjective reality of the Soviets from 1945-1958. However, his sampling does not include the peace struggle discourse even though this was a dominant theme of Soviet public discourse and identity from the late 1940s. Moreover, the significance of the Soviet turn to peace in the late 1940s for our understanding of Moscow's foreign policy was highlighted by Marshal Shulman as long ago as 1963.[5]

It is a pity Hopf does not deal with the peace movement since it provides striking evidence in support of his societal constructivist hypothesis. The popular discourse of the peace movement did influence the Soviet elite, including Stalin. At the same time, the peace movement's discourse was framed and influenced by Soviet elite discourse. That the peace struggle discourse was able to emerge from within the discourse of danger demonstrates the malleability of that discourse and the autonomous role of human agency in the construction, amendment, and transformation of discourses.

After Stalin's death the Soviet leadership launched a so-called peace offensive calling for a negotiated resolution of Cold-War differences. Often seen as a new departure, it was, in fact, a continuation of Soviet peace campaigning during the late Stalin era. Partly under Ehrenburg's influence, the peace movement responded by launching a campaign for negotiations and for a reduction of international tensions. The peace movement's campaign then became central themes of Soviet foreign policy and of the Soviet domestic campaign for peace. This was the starting point for the radical changes in post-Stalin Soviet foreign policy and for the rise of the discourse of difference.[6]

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[4] Detailed statistics on the exchange of peace delegations between the Soviet Union and the outside world from1953-1955 may be found in Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Noveishei Istorii (RGANI), F.5, Op.28, Dd.120, 360, 384. These files form part of the collection of RGANI microfilms held by the Harvard Project on Cold War Studies, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies. Many over materials on the post-Stalin communist peace movement are contained in these files. The aforementioned Johnston article provides some figures for the extent of the coverage of the national and international peace movement in the Soviet press.

[5] Marshall D. Shulman, *Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraised* (Harvard University Press 1963). Hopf's book *Social Construction of International Politics* won the 2003 Marshal D. Shulman Award.

[6] See G. Roberts, "Averting Armageddon: The Communist Peace Movement after World War II" in S. Smith (ed), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism* (Oxford University Press 2014).

Contra Hopf the key player in the post-Stalin Soviet peace campaign was not Beria, Georgy Malenkov or Khrushchev but Molotov. Molotov was, as Hopf argues, a conservative in domestic policy and an adherent of the discourse of danger. But unlike Stalin, the dangers that Molotov saw were external rather than internal, above all the danger of a German revival and the consequent outbreak of a new world war. Molotov's response to the war danger was to propose a system of pan-European collective security that would straddle the cold war divide. He was also prepared to compromise on the German question, even if that meant giving up the communist-controlled GDR, providing a reunited Germany remained disarmed and neutral. Molotov's peace campaign faltered in the face of western resistance but was finally vetoed by Khrushchev at a meeting of the Presidium in November 1955.

The paradox of Molotov's domestic conservatism and foreign policy radicalism speaks to the complexities of the discourse of danger and the differing ways that individuals could think and act within that discourse. Even at the height of the discourse of danger's power in the mid-late 1940s Molotov tried to find ways to settle the German question and resolve the Cold War – a stance that contributed to his removal as Foreign Minister in 1949 and to Stalin's criticism of him in 1952 as a conciliator and compromiser in the Cold War.[7]

In this review of Hopf's book I have focussed on the issues that particularly interest me as an historian of Soviet foreign policy during the early cold war. By no means does my discussion exhaust the richness of this book as a stimulating and illuminating contribution to the historiography and theory of the Cold War.

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[7] On Molotov: G. Roberts, *Molotov: Stalin's Cold Warrior* (Potomac 2012).

Review by David J. Snyder, University of South Carolina

Ted Hopf's *Reconstructing the Cold* War is the first in a projected three-volume exploration of Soviet foreign policy during the Cold War. The volume under consideration examines the early Cold War years from 1945 through the post-Stalinist 'thaw' of the later 1950s. Few historians of the period will come to the book without having already reached sharp conclusions about this history, but Hopf's ambitious study provocatively reconsiders this well-covered territory.

Hopf opens with a series of enigmas. Why, in early 1948, during a period of grave and increasing Cold War threats to the Soviet Union, did Moscow sever political and military ties with Yugoslavia, its most important ally? Why would Soviet leadership reject formal relations with Ho Chi Minh in 1950 but then open new fronts of the Cold War throughout the developing world after 1955, precisely when it simultaneously embraced a mini-détente with the United States? Why should Moscow allow its relations with China to deteriorate when, presumably, Chinese leadership of post-colonial socialist revolution in the developing world should have been a geopolitical asset? These are "hard Cold War puzzles" (5) Hopf rightly notes, and his book seeks to provide the answers.

To Hopf, neither the cold calculations of realism nor the hot insecurities of Stalinism account for the confounding twists and turns of Soviet foreign policy in the period. Rather, employing a theory he calls "societal constructivism," Hopf identifies a prevailing set of discourses, each with broad social and institutional support, which underwrite and motivate policy choices. For Hopf, these discourses are matters of identity: "How the Soviet Union understood itself at home," he writes, "explains how it related to other states abroad." (5) From this vantage, patterns emerge that bring order to the apparent turmoil of Soviet policy-making.

There are, in particular, two "discourses of identity" that shaped Soviet relations with the external world, what Hopf calls a "discourse of danger" and a "discourse of difference." (6) The "discourse of danger" associated with Stalin and the institutions of Stalinism included a sense of the socialist project being imperiled by encircling and aggressive capitalism, the centrality of the Russian nation within Soviet politics, and the conviction that the Soviet Union represented the best hope for modernity. The dominant motif here is fear, both geopolitical fear and also fear of western cultural contamination, and it is this essential fear that motivated Soviet policy to the outside world. This discourse is rooted in Soviet institutions as much in the paranoia of Joseph Stalin himself, and Hopf notes that many officials "overfulfilled" (31) their expectations of Stalin's wishes, including those within the eastern bloc periphery. One of the pleasures of reading Hopf's early chapters is the discovery that on numerous occasions Stalin himself was obliged to rein-in overly Stalinist officials.

The "discourse of difference" emerged almost overnight upon the death of Stalin. This view of the world perceived the Soviet project as increasingly more secure, and hence the Soviet Union became increasingly tolerant of differences within the socialist camp. After 1953,

Soviet policymakers embraced the idea that there could be multiple roads to socialism. The "discourse of danger" and the "discourse of difference" carry profound policy consequences, but they are first broad social and cultural discourses that existed in relation to, but ultimately independent of, formal governing institutions. Even during the height of Stalinist repression, for example, the "discourse of difference" existed not only in samizdat publications but within many artistic, intellectual, scientific, and even governing institutions, according to Hopf.

Each of these discourses receives extended treatment in chapters that alternate with each discourse's foreign policy implications for the 1948-53 and 1953-58 periods. The "discourse of danger" becomes most evident after 1948, as the aggressive Marshall Plan, the creation of NATO, and the victory of the Chinese communists heightened Soviet insecurities and emboldened Soviet aggressiveness. Stalin had initially expected cooperation with the allies, but by 1947, and certainly 1948 when the Marshall Plan was announced, the Kremlin's worst fears were realized. The period was characterized by increased Stalinization in the eastern bloc in a process driven both by Moscow as well as by the "overfulfillment" of Stalinist aims by officials within those eastern bloc countries. During this time, officials perceived danger not only from the West, but from competitors for the mantle of world socialist leadership. If multiple roads to socialism could be taken, the ideological basis of the Soviet model would be brought into question. Hence Yugoslavian leader Josip Broz Tito had to go in order to ensure the ideological loyalty of communists around the world, despite the Kremlin's desperate need for military allies at the time. One criticism to offer at this point concerns Hopf's characterization of the Marshall Plan, late in the book, as "innocuous" and "benign." (262, 265) It was neither of those and Moscow had good reason to react defensively.[1]

The model presented here requires very precise periodization, and the death of Stalin looms large in this book. "The previously repressed discourse of difference," Hopf writes, "was almost instantly empowered against the literally dead Stalinist discourse of danger." (143) Drawing on deep wells of ideological nonconformity, Soviet officials now felt increasingly secure in the socialist project, producing new relaxations and tolerations. One is surprised to read that it was not Nikita Khrushchev but in fact Lavrentiy Beria who first embraced this "discourse of difference." Very quickly officials lost the habit of seeing the Soviet experiment as being under threat. Yugoslavia was rehabilitated, and new openings to the west pursued, including the agreement on Austria and 1955's "spirit of Geneva," i.e. that short-lived period of Cold War optimism that ensued after the death of Stalin and as a result of the Geneva summit that year between President Dwight Eisenhower and Soviet premier Nikolai Bulganin. With multiple roads to socialism no longer seen as a threat, Moscow began to identify new arenas within the developing world for the Cold-War struggle that had not been recognized as politically friendly earlier. The "discourse of difference" produced its own kind of convergence theory, as policymakers found it easier to accept that even c non-socialist post-colonial nationalisms might well eventually become

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[1] See, e.g., Michael Cox and Caroline Kennedy-Pipe, "The Tragedy of American Diplomacy? Rethinking the Marshall Plan," *Journal of Cold War Studies,* Winter 2005, 7(1), 97-134.

socialist. This period of "thaw," (143) as Hopf deftly tells it, ironically witnessed an intensification of the Cold War, as the Soviet Union now saw a much-expanded global map on which to wage Cold War. The so-called thaw, in other words, had the lethal consequence of bringing the Cold War to the developing world, intensifying rather than moderating the Cold War.

The thaw did not mean a new chance for peace with the Americans, however. Hopf is clear that "societal constructivism" (vii and *passim.*) extends to state-state relations within an international system such as the Cold War, but he does not claim that cultural discourses have the power to alter the prevailing system itself. A general repudiation of the Cold War was not in the offing. But just as the "discourse of difference" would produce a mini-détente with the United States, and open the USSR to new opportunities in the developing world, it would sour relations with China as Chinese communism took a hard turn to the right, embracing its own form of Stalinism in Mao's Great Leap Forward. Political competition within the developing world plus the Chinese refusal any longer to play 'little brother' to Moscow produced the Sino-Soviet split. Hopf claims that "societal constructivism" explains other apparent inconsistencies as well, notably the 1953 workers' uprising in the GDR and the 1956 suppression of the Hungarian counter-revolution. (Chapter 5: "The Thaw Abroad, 1953-58," *passim*.) These are the exceptions that make his point: the uprising in the GDR was a response to a local Stalinism that the newly tolerant Kremlin was even at the time working hard to repudiate; the 1956 uprising in Hungary was the result of reformers' 'overfulfilling' the promise of the thaw itself. Order still had to be maintained, especially against "exemplary deviations" (192).

Despite the current penchant for interdisciplinarity, Hopf's book suggests disciplinary firewalls are alive and well. For historians who have made the 'cultural turn,' the introduction is a curious artifact. Hopf presents the theory of "societal constructivism" as a cultural explanation for state relations with other states within an international system such as the Cold War. While I have no argument with Hopf's theory per se, what Hopf is in fact describing is discourse theory, though with no nod to Michel Foucault or, so far as I can tell, much of the writing normally associated with cultural studies.[2] For historians who have come to discourse theory via a cultural studies framework, Hopf's International Relations-incubated theory of discourse sometimes seems a bit stilted and schematic. The "discourse of danger" and the "discourse of difference" co-exist, but in always a zero-sum game, the retreat of one an advance for the other and vice versa. The several tables and charts of these discourses and their constituent parts provide less, rather than more, clarity. Graduate students in IR may well need the careful taxonomy Hopf provides, but

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[2] There are many works of diplomatic history or international relations written from a cultural studies/discourse theory perspective. For example, Kristin L. Hoganson, *Consumer's Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), Dennis Merrill, *Negotiating Paradise: U.S. Tourism and Empire in Twentieth-Century Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), Richard Pells, *Not Like US: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated, and Transformed American Culture since World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1997.) I take it as a non-controversial assertion that a cultural approach has become increasingly foundational in many subfields of international relations history.

readers steeped in critical theory will find the introduction a little precious, as if Political Science had just discovered culture. It is also not clear why Hopf's theorization includes 'identity' when 'discourse' does the necessary work. The argument, for example, that "[t]he Soviet Union had a very particular Self by which it understood the decolonizing world" (238) is a rather pungent formulation. It is enough to note that culture and ideology developed and evolved in the period and these led to alterations in Soviet foreign policy, without the superfluous theorizing that over-determines a state's 'identity.'

Still, Hopf's schematic categorization of "societal constructivism" has at least one solid virtue, which is that it shows that culture has real effects on policy, that indeed it can *produce* policy just as surely as a military threat assessment or a conflict over strategic resources. Culture is not held off at some distance, providing mere context for policy. Rather, Hopf's somewhat awkward naming of the discourses in play solidifies culture and ideology as real, as productive, as a direct stimulation to policy. The labeling, in other words, has a heuristic benefit in that it helps us think about culture as a tangible force. This continuing reminder that culture matters, that culture shapes and maps an impression of the physical world that does not always, and sometimes even rarely, conforms to that world, but nevertheless shapes hard policy, is a welcome reminder. Hopf has given us a useful, if somewhat blunt, tool, for that work.

Author's Response by Ted Hopf, National University of Singapore

I am very grateful to H-Diplo, the Roundtable editor, Thomas Maddux, and the four reviewers for giving me the opportunity to benefit from careful readings of my work and useful advice and criticism. This advice is perhaps more useful in my case as I am committed to publishing two more volumes on the Cold War that relate discourses of Soviet national identity to how the Cold War played out from 1958-1991.

Fortunately, I need not waste space correcting misinterpretations of my work, as the reviewers show they have done their reading.

Patrick Thaddeus Jackson reports that he has been left in a state of vertigo by reading my book.[1] I apologize for that. The reason he is dizzy is because I have spent the last twenty years or so trying to combine an interpretivist ontological commitment to intersubjectivity with a neo-positivist mainstream approach to epistemology and methodology.[2] Despite Jackson's headache, I will continue to do so, because I believe that this combination makes both approaches stronger. The mainstream would benefit by realizing that it cannot willy-nilly impose its theoretical priors on the social world, assuming that concepts like democracy or equality are identical across time and space. Interpretivism, whether executed through discourse analysis or ethnography, is more convincing the more it makes its claims falsifiable, outlines and justifies a sample of texts or practices, considers alternative explanations for what is observed, elaborates some kind of causal story for why we should believe that the intersubjective structure recovered does in fact imply a set of predictable results, and defends why the cases chosen were cases of theoretical interest and relevance. I truly regret that because "of a few paragraphs from the first chapter" and my conclusion, Jackson writes that he will not hold my book up for his "students as exemplary interpretive social science." I say regret because Jackson is precisely the kind of scholar at whom I am directing my plea to pay attention to mainstream methodological conventions in order to make interpretevist work more convincing. I find myself, of course, in agreement with James Richter's review on this point, which suggests that my "project combines the strength of both approaches." The trick is to "let the subjects speak" *before* one imposes any kind of theory-testing on the discourses that emerge as evidence. If the discourses that do emerge are not relevant to the theory one is testing, then too bad for the theory. But that does not mean one should not try to assess the relative validity of competing truth claims based on the intersubjective reality one has uncovered with ethnographic sensibility.

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[1] I am not sure whether this is better, or worse, than the case of Sergey Radchenko, who reported in his review he felt like he was in a dentist's office. "The Cold War as Lego," *Diplomatic History* June 6, 2013, pp. 1-3, http://dh.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2013/06/06/dh.dht081.full.pdf+html

[2] Ted Hopf, "The Limits of Interpreting Evidence," in eds. Richard Ned Lebow and Mark Irving Lichbach, *Theory and Evidence in Comparative Politics and International Relations* (New York: Palgrave 2007), 55-84.

I agree with Jackson that the shift in discourse from one of danger to one of difference immediately after Joseph Stalin's death is a "contemporaneous change in Soviet discourse that is simultaneously 'internal' and 'external' in its embrace of diversity...." But I don't agree with Jackson's conclusion from this "simultaneity" that this counts against a causal story, as opposed to a "stream." I would have thought that simultaneity would be the gold standard in any search for causal effects. The tighter the temporal gap between change and consequence, in this case virtual simultaneity, the stronger a causal claim can be made, for the obvious reason that fewer perturbing variables can be said to be working their effects on the outcome. I place the word "cause" in quotation marks in the book because I do not believe one can demonstrate causality in practice, but one can surely make more, and less, convincing causal claims, and simultaneity should count as one of the most convincing of all, I should think.

Jackson is certainly right that a focus on continuities, rather than change, would produce a different account of the Cold War. But I thought I had produced an account that paid attention to both. If one looks at Table 4.1 on page 147, one can see that there was continuity, as well as change, across the two discursive terrains.[3] The discourse of difference continued the discourse of danger's hierarchical view of the Soviet Union in the world socialist camp, of Russia in the world, and of the Soviet Union as an altogether modern project. Moreover, Soviet great power identity, albeit not a domestic product, continued across the period as well. In fact, these continuities help explain the continued Chinese and East European resentment of Soviet tutelage, even after Stalin's death; Russia's continued treatment of its own periphery, Central Asia, as a model for "non-capitalist development" in the decolonizing world; and the role of Soviet great power identity in fueling a continuing Cold War with the United States and the West. To foreshadow the next volume, the discourse of difference explains not only the split with China that I analyzed in the present volume, but also why it persisted until 1989, across multiple regimes in both Beijing and Moscow. The discourse of difference also explains how the Cold War in the periphery lasted until 1989, as well.

The critiques of Richter and Geoffrey Roberts share a common concern: I have omitted parts of the story that they find very important. Richter finds importantly absent any discussion of class. I am guilty in a way, but only in a way, as my discussion of class identity is subsumed within a Soviet Union that understood itself as the vanguard of the world revolutionary process, i.e., the leader of the international working class, and indeed, a surrogate working class for the decolonizing world that had no substantial proletariat of its own. Indeed, the Russian proletariat headquartered in Moscow was understood as the surrogate working class vanguard for Central Asians who were still at a 'feudal' stage of development when the Bolsheviks took power. More glaring is my omission of a convincing discussion of why the discourse of difference won out over the discourse of danger. After all, we could easily have expected at least one of Stalin's successors to have donned the mantle of Stalinism and argued that he was the true carrier of the discourse of danger. In

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[3] This is one of the tables identified by David Snyder as providing "less, rather than more, clarity." I agree, and have revised the tables for the forthcoming paperback edition.

fact, this did happen, partially, with the case of Vyacheslav Molotov, although even he repeatedly denied being the carrier of Stalinism, even while he warned of plenty of dangers, both at home, and abroad. But the discourse of danger was defeated, permanently, at the June 1957 Party Plenum, as I describe in the book. Richter wants to know why. I agree I have no good answer, and I gratefully accept Richter's helping hand of absolution: "the purpose of this book is not to determine where discourses of identity come from...."[4] I am satisfied with Richter's rendition of Nikita Khrushchev's strategy here, always looking for the middle between the extremes of the two competing discourses, hence first disposing of Georgi Malenkov, portraying him as too tolerant, and then Molotov, for being too dogmatic.[5]

What I am not sure we can do is generate any kind of general theory of discursive competition based on this Soviet case. Even with this account, we only understand the politics of wrong footing rivals by making their renditions of Soviet identity appear illegitimate; we are not offering an understanding of why the particular elements of the two discourses exist in the first place. That task may require deeper and lengthier histories, or genealogies, of the emergence of commonsensical understandings of features of Soviet identity like modernity, ethnicity, hierarchy, class, and so on.

What is missing for Roberts, who candidly confesses he took advantage of the occasion of my review to focus "on the issues that particularly interest [him] as an historian of Soviet foreign policy during the early cold war," is an appreciation of Marshall Shulman's book, *Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraised*.[6] I should probably take this personally. Shulman was my first graduate adviser at Columbia. And my first book, *Social Construction of International Politics*, and this one, have both received the Shulman Award given by the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies for the best book on the international politics of that vast region.[7] Roberts contends, agreeing with Shulman, that the discourse of danger ended by 1950 with Soviet support for the international peace movement against nuclear war. Roberts writes that by the late 1940s, the discourse of danger was over "at least in relation to foreign policy and relations outside the communist bloc." I really cannot agree with this statement. Writing off the entire decolonizing world until 1953 was a product of that discourse of danger. So too was the continuing problematic relationship with China, the excommunication of Yugoslavia, and the fear of Western contamination, which deeply affected much of Soviet domestic life.

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[4] Full disclosure: Richter and I have been colleagues, friends, and critics for over twenty-five years.

[5] This is consistent with the work of George Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders* (London: Unwin Hyman 1982) and James Richter, *Khrushchev's Double Bind* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins 1994).

[6] Marshall Shulman's book, *Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraised* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963).

[7] Ted Hopf, *Social Construction of International Politics*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

It is curious that the peace movement, and the 1950 Stockholm Appeal, which Roberts argues is tantamount to the end of the discourse of danger, is completely absent from my book which covers precisely this period. Upon reflection, it is because in my sample of (thousands) of texts, it virtually never appeared. This is doubtless because my methodology didn't look for the peace movement per se, whereas if I were to write a book about it, as Roberts has, I certainly would have found much to analyze. I think there is some theoretical confusion, too. Roberts writes that the "discourse of the struggle for peace" had superseded the discourse of danger by the late 1940s. In so doing, he conflates a discourse about foreign policy with one about Soviet domestic identity. In fact, I do not even treat discourses of foreign policy as an outcome; instead, my outcome of interest is Soviet *relations* with the external world, not its discursive construction of that world. After all, my hypothesis is that discourses of identity imply how Soviet elites will understand the outside world, and, hence, establish relations with it. (See Jackson above for a graphical representation of my argument) Roberts writes that there was a discursive construction of the Soviet Union as "peace-loving" at home, too. Yes, indeed, but that was a constant from the beginning of my research, in 1945, and doubtless characteristic of Soviet identity since the 1920s. It is hard to assess the causal power of a variable that never varies. Nevertheless, all my responses notwithstanding, in my subsequent volume I will surely pay greater attention to the contribution of the peace movement to Soviet identity, both at home, and in relation to the rest of the world.

In response to David Snyder's review, I suspect I could do no better than to note the understandings of the other reviewers. In particular Roberts summarizes nicely my position on the relationship between discourse and identity, my commitment to an intersubjective ontology, or "shared understandings that are constructed through discourse and expressed as identities." There being no need for critical discourse analysis, there is no need for Foucault.[8] My retention of both discourse and identity has multiple motives. An early one was to remain true to how historians have treated national identity, especially as evidenced in *Becoming National*, an important volume edited by Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny, two of my former colleagues at University of Michigan, and members of the Colloquium for the Study of Social Transformations, an interdisciplinary group of anthropologists, historians, sociologists, and even political scientists, like myself.[9] Participating in the Colloquium was a transformative experience for me, and introduced me to the world of social theory and identity, which informs my theorization of identity and discourse to this day. Another reason I focus on identity is that there is a rich, decades-long,

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[8] I should say, in addition, that I chose not to treat the theorization of identity at length in this volume, having done so in *Social Construction of International Politics*. I thought I would spare my readers a repeat of my analysis of Michel Foucault, Pierre Boudieu, and Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, but perhaps I erred, and will need to reconsider this omission in Volume II of this work.

[9] Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny, *Becoming National* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

literature in experimental social and cognitive psychology which generates many testable propositions about identity's effects on how people go about understanding the world.[10]

If we believe that discourses create subject positions, or identities, then we should also believe that these discourses, and their associated identities, have systematic effects on those who are part of the intersubjective communities they entail. Psychological work on social identities has demonstrated (see note 10) many systematic effects of identity, effects that we can look for, say, in Presidium discussions of Soviet relations with Yugoslavia. Does understanding the Soviet Union as ethnically Russian, as Khrushchev and others repeatedly did during the 1955 Central Committee Plenum on Yugoslavia, systematically make Yugoslavia part of some favored 'in-group?' Yes, it does, and did. Meanwhile, those who rejected such implicit Russian ethnonationalism, Molotov, for example, had no such 'we-feeling' toward Yugoslavs, and so were much more suspicious of them, and of Khrushchev's attempts to effect a rapprochement with Belgrade. These findings are perfectly consistent with decades of experimental work in psychology, and so, pace Patrick Jackson, in fact strengthen my claim of a "causal" relationship between identity and interests, or Soviet identity, and relations with Yugoslavia.

But a focus on discourse must be maintained as well, because despite its name, *social* psychology pays virtually no attention to the social origins of identities. In fact, in experimental settings, social psychologists prime identities in their subjects through devices like showing the Israeli flag, or reading an Armenian history text. Discourse analysis allows us to recover the shared social world of subjects that implies the predominant identities available to them. It is an inductive process to figure out which identities are being produced within a discourse. Once we know the features of those identities, we then can deduce what effects they have for a state's interests and its relations with the rest of the world.

Snyder suggests that on pages 262 and 265 I mischaracterized the Marshall Plan as innocuous and benign. But readers who visit those pages will find I wrote that it was the "most benign of US Cold War policies," a comparative, not absolute, claim. I was comparing U.S. economic aid to Eastern Europe to the U.S. deployment of atomic weapons, deployment of bombers to bases surrounding the Soviet Union, creation of NATO, announcement of the Truman Doctrine, etc. At any rate, what is equally important, to my argument at least, is that Moscow's interpretation of U.S. aid (as dangerous), and its response (full-scale Stalinization of Eastern Europe and excommunication of Josip Broz Tito's Yugoslavia from the socialist community) are consistent with the discourse of danger prevalent at home at the time. While the Cox and Kennedy-Pipe article cited by Snyder suggests malevolent U.S.

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[10] For a review, see Miles Hewstone, Mark Rubin, and Hazel Willis, "Intergroup Bias," *Annual Review of Psychology* (2002) 53:1, 575-604.

intentions in offering the Marshall Plan, the authors don't go so far as to say it aimed at Stalinizing Eastern Europe, or inducing Stalin to end the Soviet alliance with Belgrade.[11]

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[11] Michael Cox and Caroline Kennedy-Pipe, "The Tragedy of American Diplomacy? Rethinking the Marshall Plan," *Journal of Cold War Studies,* Winter 2005, 7(1), 97-134.