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Review by **Galia Golan**, Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya, Israel

Using archival material from the former Soviet Union, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, Guy Laron has thrown still more light not only on events leading up to the 1967 Arab-Israeli War but, also, on the broader matter of Soviet policy in the Third World. With regard to the first, he has added significantly to the material already uncovered, in particular information regarding disagreements within the CPSU Politburo regarding relations with Egypt and the war itself. Indeed it may well be these disagreements that have led to misinterpretations over the years about the Soviet role (or, in fact, lack of a role) in the Egyptian decisions of May and June 1967. Various Soviet leaders, particularly in the defense establishment would appear to have misled some Egyptian counterparts, although both archival material and other accounts -- reinforced by Laron's findings -- have clearly proven that they consistently communicated their official opposition to an armed conflict and sought to deter Egypt from anything but a diplomatic resolution of the crisis with Israel. Laron connects this Soviet opposition to a new war in the Middle East with Moscow's broader policy of pulling back from involvement with radical third world countries (including Egypt), both because of the economic price and the risk of confrontation with the U.S.

At the time, there had been a change in Soviet military doctrine -- to a greater "external function" for Soviet forces (particularly the navy), and Moscow was seeking bases abroad, including Egypt and Syria, that were needed at least until longer range aircraft, aircraft carriers, and servicing of the fleet at sea were developed. This is not contradicted by the fact, pointed out by Laron, that the Soviets were also concerned over political losses in the third world, specifically but not only events in Indonesia, as well as the economic burden of involvement. They also sought to ease tension with the U.S., after the Cuban Missile Crisis and Khrushchev's dangerously adventuresome policy. Laron, however, has found that many of the measures previously believed to have been introduced only after

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the death of Gamal Nasser, for example, the demand for payment for arms, or such things as arguments with the Egyptian leader over arms deliveries, economic policies, intentions of going to war and so forth, occurred well before Anwar Sadat. The early 1970s did see broader changes in Soviet economic relations in the third world, shifting to countries with which Moscow could have a more favorable balance of payments, and there was also still greater concern in the early 1970s over what Moscow was getting out of its third-world involvement, leading to a decision to demand the creation of Marxist-Leninist parties so as to better ensure continuity of relationships there. But Laron finds earlier signs of almost all of these policies. In this article, Laron continues to provide important insights as well as solid evidence, not only contributing significantly to our understanding of Soviet foreign policy but also debunking many of the conspiracy theories that have often characterized studies of the Cold War.

Professor **Galia Golan** is Professor of Government, Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya and Darwin Professor emerita, Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

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