



***The Global Cold War:
Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times***
Roundtable Review

Reviewed Works:

Odd Arne Westad. *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times.* New York: Cambridge University Press, October 2005. ISBN-13: 978-0-52185-364-4. \$35.00 (hardback). ISBN-13: 978-0-52170-314-7. \$19.99 (paperback, published March 2007).

Roundtable Editor: Thomas Maddux

Reviewers: Jerald Combs, William Hitchcock, David Painter, Natalia Yegorova

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ROUNDTABLE *Review*

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Introduction by Thomas Maddux, California State University, Northridge

The reviewers agree with the award presenters that Odd Arne Westad's *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* is a very impressive work of international history that definitely merits the prestigious awards that it has received: the Bancroft Prize, the Akira Iriye International History Book Award, and the Michael Harrington Award from the American Political Science Association. As co-director of the London School of Economics's Cold War Studies Centre and editor of *Cold War History*, Westad has a significant role in the shaping of the new Cold War history. As William Hitchcock emphasizes in his conclusion, "the book reveals that 'the new cold war history' has finally arrived. This new history is global, as was the cold war; it is multi-lingual, as was the cold war; and it operates on a north-south axis as well as on an east-west one, as did the cold war. Westad's book is a model that challenges us to continue to think and write globally."

Westad's study suggests the possibilities for further influential contributions. First, the author's inclusion of extensive research in Soviet archives, with emphasis on the 1970s and 1980s provides one of the most original contributions of the book. The analysis of U.S. policy is necessarily not as original, but the inclusion of both major Cold War adversaries is necessary to advance the scholarship in the field. Second, Westad also includes an analysis of third world leaders from the first leaders of post-World War II independence movements to leaders through the 1980s in Afghanistan, Angola, Ethiopia, and Nicaragua and elsewhere. His inclusive approach is similar to the works of Piero Gleijeses, William LeoGrande, and others. Third, Westad avoids some of the partisanship of Cold War studies on the Third World in which authors, reaching back to the 1960s, focus their excessively pro and con interpretations on one side or the other of the external Cold War participants and ignore the Third World leaders. Westad's focus is on understanding the perspectives of all of the participants, the reasons for specific interventions by the U.S. and the Soviet Union, and, to a lesser extent, their Western allies, China, and Fidel Castro's Cuba, as well as the contributions of Third World leaders to encouraging and facilitating these interventions. Westad criticizes all external and internal Third World participants in terms of the destructive results of the Cold War in the Third World. Fourth, while Westad looks backward into the history of Soviet and U.S. expansionism as well as the legacies of colonialism in Third World areas, he also looks forward beyond the Cold War into current problems as part of his thesis on the continuation of Cold War policies into the 21st century.

Despite the awards and strengths of Westad's international approach, the reviewers raise some questions and express some reservations with respect to Westad's assessments and perspective:

- 1.) Westad views the Soviet Union and the United States as similar in their overall ideological commitment to different modernity projects linked to similar legacies of expansion: the United States in pursuit of an empire of liberty with property in an ordered democratic society, and the Soviet Union applying Marxist-Leninist concepts to Czarist

expansionism to promote social justice by overthrowing capitalism and imperialism. (4-5) Westad's emphasis on culture and ideology as central to the perspectives and objectives of both Cold War antagonists reflects the shift since the end of the Cold War to revive the importance of the commitment of U.S. leaders to democracy and capitalism, its survival and spread, and Soviet leaders to a Marxist class conflict perspective and commitment to support revolutions abroad. Several reviewers, however, question whether Westad's concept of both powers pursuing different modernist objectives with Third World countries is too general and minimizes too much the influence of security and geopolitical calculations on both sides and the role of economic and domestic political influences on U.S. policy.¹ Several are also troubled by the sense of parallelism in Westad's central thesis on the two powers and by implication the perception that neither was any more preferable to the other in their projects for the Third World and the methods that they used from armed intervention to civilian advisors and economic projects.

2.) Geopolitical considerations related to superpower status (or the quest for it in the case of the Soviet Union), security, and strategic calculations certainly play a role in shaping the policies of both Cold War combatants. Several reviewers question, however, whether Westad gives sufficient weight to these factors in relation to his ideological framework. Did the Soviet Union in the 1970s and early 1980s expand its involvement in distant areas to spread its modernist vision or did superpower status, competition, and some initial success lead it further afield? As the first of the Cold War powers to enter the Third World after WWII, did the U.S. respond to the collapse of Western colonialism and ensuing crises such as the Congo or Fidel Castro's victory in Cuba out of its ideological perspective or out of concerns about the impact of the changes taking places on its Western allies and U.S. security?

3.) The role of economic considerations in shaping especially U.S. policies receives more consideration from Westad, although he both emphasizes the importance of capitalist ideas and institutions in the U.S. perspective and policies and at the same time downgrades the importance of business interests on U.S. policy. Thus, Westad modifies somewhat the primacy placed on economics by some revisionists and at the same time increases the centrality of a broader commitment to free market exchanges. (28-29) In a number of crisis situations, Westad mentions U.S. concerns about strategic resources in Africa, oil in the Near East, and investments in Latin America as influencing policy, but he consistently gives these economic concerns less weight than the larger quest to promote the American model. Westad also discusses the impact of the American use of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as Cold War weapons to promote its economic model to the Third World. (154)

4.) Does Westad give the U.S. too much credit for creating the Third World by 1970 "both in a positive and negative sense? Through its policies of confronting revolution,

¹ See also Mark Lawrence's review, "The Other Cold War" in *Reviews in American History* 34.3 (September 2006): 385-392.

Washington had helped form blocks of resistance and a very basic form of Third World solidarity. Ironically, its interventionist policies had also contributed to radicalizing many Third World regimes On the other hand, through the world economic system that it had created, the United States had helped prolong the time that was needed for most countries to break out of poverty. This in itself increased the appeal of the Left in most areas of the Third World.” (157)

5.) Is there any specialist on the Third World who would argue that the Cold War had a positive impact on the Third World? Westad certainly emphasizes the failures and disastrous impact of the Cold War interventions and competitions, the destructive wars against the peasantry, the continuing wars by Third World leaders against their own peasant communities, the cultural violence, and the failure of many aid programs and grandiose economic projects to bring the promised modernization. (400-401) Westad defines the tragedy of the Cold War quite differently than John Gaddis did in his article, “The Tragedy of the Cold War.”² According to Westad “the tragedy of Cold War history, both as far as the Third World and the superpowers themselves were concerned, was that two historical projects that were genuinely anticolonial in their origins became part of a much older pattern of domination because of the intensity of their conflict, the stakes they believed were involved, and the almost apocalyptic fear of the consequences if the opponent won.” (397) Does Westad fairly distribute the blame for the failures or does the U.S. receive an excessive amount of criticism for the results? Westad certainly recognizes the contributions of Third World leaders (398-399) and his analysis of the 1970s-80s on Ethiopia and the Horn as well as Afghanistan emphasizes the extent to which the Soviet Union’s application of its modernization model with respect to its own views on the Soviet revolution and the prospects of similar results in Somalia, Yemen, Ethiopia, Angola, and Afghanistan had destructive results and as much if not more failure than the U.S. modernization model. Finally, “what if” the U.S. had not pursued an interventionist approach toward the Third World and limited its involvement to aid and technical assistance programs, the Peace Corps, and support for UN and nongovernmental agency activities? Would this have encouraged the Soviet Union and its allies, China, and Cuba to follow a similar approach that hopefully would have been less destructive?

6.) Westad’s conclusion points to the issue of alternatives and the question of whether he applies too much hindsight and presentism in his conclusion. For example, Westad starts with the Eisenhower administration’s effort to facilitate the removal of Western colonialism from the Third World but at the same time help ensure that newly independent colonies and their neighborhoods remain politically and economically aligned with the Western powers. Westad rightly criticizes the U.S. interventions from Indonesia against Sukarno, to Vietnam and Laos, to Iran and the overthrow of Mossaedeq in 1953, Guatemala and Arbenz in 1954, Castro and Cuba in 1960, and the Congo and Lumumba in 1960. If Washington at that time and in later interventions believed, however incorrectly, that a security threat existed with respect to possible connections between these situations and

² John Lewis Gaddis, “The Tragedy of the Cold War,” *Diplomatic History* 17.1 (January 1993): 1-16. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-7709.1993.tb00156.x. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7709.1993.tb00156.x>.

the security threat of the Soviet Union, should that reduce somewhat the intensity of Westad's criticism?

7.) Westad devotes considerable attention to Mikhail Gorbachev's reorientation of Soviet policies in Afghanistan and the Third World in general and offers new insights on the internal deliberations within the Kremlin and with its representatives abroad. The preceding chapter on Ronald Reagan does not provide much new analysis with the exception of the important integration of Washington's effort to use the IMF and World Bank to require market conditions for aid in conjunction with the recession of 1981-82 and as a result to pressure and encourage Third World countries to shift away from a Soviet socialist model to a more open, market economy. (357-363) On the contentious question of whether or not Reagan's rhetoric and stepped up aid to so-called "freedom fighters" resisting Soviet supported communist regimes in Afghanistan, Angola, Nicaragua, and Cambodia had an impact on Gorbachev's policies after 1985 leading to the end of the Cold War, Westad makes a plausible argument against the conservative "victory" school by suggesting that "Reagan's attempts at spreading counterrevolution did not push the Soviets toward withdrawing—on the contrary, evidence indicates that at least up to early 1987 American pressure made it more difficult for Moscow to find a way of its Third World predicament." (364)

8) Several reviewers question Westad's conclusion that the "most important aspects of the Cold War were neither military nor strategic, nor Europe-centered but connected to political and social development in the Third World." (396) The relationship between the Cold War in Europe and in the Third World would require at least another chapter or book to fully develop this thesis. By the 1960s when Westad moves from general analysis to more detailed development of the impact of the Vietnamese and Cuban confrontations and beyond, the fire and smoke of confrontation and intervention has moved out of Europe, although the Cuban missile crisis has a critical strategic center along with Westad's ideological calculations on all sides.

9) Westad makes a forceful case for continuity extending back to early U.S. and Russian expansionism, to the "Cold War as a continuation of colonialism through slightly different means," (396) to the assertion that post-September 11th "rampant interventionism" by the Bush administration "is not an aberration but a continuation—in slightly more extreme form—of US policy during the Cold War." The Soviet Union is not present to limit U.S. policy "but the ideology of interventionism is the same, with the same overall aims: only by changing markets and changing minds on a global scale can the United States really be secure."

Participants:

Odd Arne Westad is Professor of International History at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). He co-directs the [LSE Cold War Studies Centre](#) with Professor Michael Cox, is an editor of the journal *Cold War History* and the editor (with Professor

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Melvyn Leffler) of the forthcoming three-volume *Cambridge History of the Cold War*. Westad received his PhD in history from the University of North Carolina in 1990. During the 1980s he worked for several international aid agencies in Southern Africa and in Pakistan. In 2000, Professor Westad was awarded the Bernath Lecture Prize from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations.

Westad's main fields of interests are the international history of the Cold War and contemporary East Asian history. Professor Westad has published twelve books on international history and contemporary international affairs. His 2006 book *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge University Press) won the Bancroft Prize, the Akira Iriye International History Book Award, and the Michael Harrington Award from the American Political Science Association. Other major books from recent years include *The Cold War: A History in Documents and Eyewitness Accounts* (OUP, 2003; with Jussi Hanhimaki); *Decisive Encounters: The Chinese Civil War, 1945-1950* (Stanford UP, 2003), and *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, Theory* (Routledge, 2000).

Jerald A. Combs (Ph.D. UCLA 1964) is Professor of History Emeritus at San Francisco State University where he retired after serving nine years as chair of the History Department and two years as Dean of Undergraduate Studies. He is the author of *The Jay Treaty: Political Battleground of the Founding Fathers* (University of California Press, 1970); *American Diplomatic History: Two Centuries of Changing Interpretations* (University of California Press, 1983); and is now working on the third edition of his textbook *The History of American Foreign Policy* to be published by M.E. Sharpe. His latest publication is "A Missed Chance for Peace? Opportunities for Détente in Europe," in *The Cold War after Stalin's Death: A Missed Opportunity for Peace?*, edited by Klaus Larres and Kenneth Osgood (Rowman and Littlefield, 2006).

William Hitchcock is a Professor of History at Temple University. He received his Ph.D. from Yale University. His books include *France Restored: Cold War Diplomacy and the Quest for Stability in Europe, 1945-1954* (1998), *From War to Peace: Altered Strategic Landscapes in the Twentieth Century* (2000) co-edited with Paul Kennedy, and *The Struggle for Europe: The Turbulent History of a Divided Continent, 1945-2002* (2004). His current research focuses on a history of the year 1945 in Europe that explores the civilian experience of war and liberation. He teaches a variety of courses that deal with twentieth century European and international history and is Director of the International History Workshop.

David Painter is Associate Professor of History at Georgetown University. He holds degrees from King College, Oxford University, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Ph.D, 1982). He teaches U.S. diplomatic history and international history and is Director of the Master of Arts in Global, International, and Comparative History program. His major publications include *The Cold War: An International History* (1999), and *Oil and the American Century: The Political Economy of US Foreign Oil Policy, 1941-1954* (1986). He also edited with Melvyn P. Leffler, *Origins of the Cold War: An International History* (1994,

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2005). Professor Painter's research focuses on the political economy of US foreign relations, the Cold War, and US policy toward the Third World. He is currently working on a book-length project on oil and world power in the 20th century as well as a number of smaller projects including an analysis of oil and natural resources, 1945-62, for the *Cambridge History of the Cold War*.

Natalia Yegorova, Dr. of sciences (history) is a Chief researcher at the Institute of General History, Russian Academy of Sciences, where she serves as the Head of the Cold War Studies Center. Yegorova is an expert in the field of Soviet-American Relations and history of the Cold War. She is the author of the books *Isolationism and U.S. European policy, 1933—1941* (1995), *Postwar U.S.—Soviet Relations in American Historiography* (1981) and the co-author as well as co-editor of the book *The Cold War. 1945-1963. Historical Retrospect* (2003). Her numerous articles are devoted to different questions of Soviet foreign policy since 1945, the Soviet decision-making process and European security. Currently she is engaged in her Center's project on multilateral diplomacy and particularly in researching of peace movement during the Cold War. She was a fellow of the Norwegian Nobel Institute (1998) and the British Academy of Sciences (1999, 2003). She is a member of the editorial board of the annual *American Studies* (Moscow) and the journal *Cold War History* (London).

First let it be said that Odd Arne Westad has offered a magisterial survey of the Cold War in the Third World that fully deserves its Bancroft Prize. Remarkably for a work of this breadth, Westad has combined the use of a wide array of secondary works with significant research in recently available primary documents. He has written clearly and vividly in a way that is accessible to the wider public yet sufficiently detailed, documented, and balanced to be convincing to a professional audience. While he does not offer any startlingly new information, his book will inspire some rethinking by many Cold War historians regardless of their politics.

Jerald A. Combs (Ph.D. UCLA 1964) is Professor of History Emeritus at San Francisco State University where he retired after serving nine years as chair of the History Department and two years as Dean of Undergraduate Studies. He is the author of The Jay Treaty: Political Battleground of the Founding Fathers (University of California Press, 1970); American Diplomatic History: Two Centuries of Changing Interpretations (University of California Press, 1983); and is now working on the third edition of his textbook The History of American Foreign Policy to be published by M.E. Sharpe. His latest publication is "A Missed Chance for Peace? Opportunities for Détente in Europe," in The Cold War after Stalin's Death: A Missed Opportunity for Peace?, edited by Klaus Larres and Kenneth Osgood (Rowman and Littlefield, 2006).

Westad's thesis is that the most important aspects of the Cold War were not the European, strategic, or military issues around which most histories of the period have centered but instead involved the attempts of the United States and the Soviet Union to impose their own versions of "high modernism" on the Third World. These Third World interventions by the superpowers, aided by local elites who invited such interventions to modernize their nations and reform or abolish their own peasantry, brought little but disaster according to Westad. He sympathizes fully with those who resisted modernism to protect the religious and peasant values that the superpowers and local elites sought to eliminate and he regards modernism, whether of the American liberal-capitalist or Soviet communist version, as simply colonialism and foreign control by another name.

While Westad blames both the United States and the Soviet Union for their Third World interventions, he is harsher on the United States. The Soviets were constrained during the Stalin and early Khrushchev years because they lacked the ability of the United States to project their influence globally through superior economic, naval, and air power. Thus, it was American interventionism in the 1950s and 60s that "created the Third World" because those interventions inspired a common resistance among anti-colonial leaders premised on the principle of national sovereignty without sufficient concern for the issue of internal liberty. Not only did the United States create the Third World by its interventions, according to Westad, but it destroyed those societies by imposing brutal dictatorial governments and a version of development (modernization) that was one-sided in favoring developed over developing economies. A few nations with an industrial capital base, access to international markets, and export-oriented policies ultimately did well, especially in

Southeast Asia, but most did very poorly. By demolishing Third World societies, American interventions left those societies vulnerable to further disasters of their own making.

Westad overreaches in casting so much blame on the United States for the shape of the Third World, especially when he does not analyze just how things would or should have worked if Americans had not intervened. Nevertheless, Westad's account of the line-up of American interventions in the Third World during the early Cold War, especially when that line-up is unleavened with the discussions of the brutal conduct of Stalin and the Soviets in Europe that mix with the narrations of Third World interventions in most general histories of the Cold War, makes for devastating reading. There is no denying Westad's descriptions of the atrocious and dictatorial governments that the United States helped to install in Iran, Guatemala, Indonesia, and the Congo and the vicious and unjustified means it used in combating what it feared might be revolutionary and Soviet-leaning regimes. There is also no denying the way in which American interventionism was discredited in the eyes of almost all of the Third World by its actions in Vietnam, Cuba, and the Middle East, where the United States supported Israel in its conflict with rising Arab nationalism. I hope that some specialists in the particular interventions Westad describes will comment in this roundtable on the accuracy of Westad's abbreviated histories of those incidents, but to this generalist they seemed quite balanced and in accord with best recent secondary works on those topics. The one exception is his description of the Six Day War of 1967, in which he blames the United States for failing to restrain Israel without any mention of the Soviet role in falsely warning Egypt that Israel was mobilizing for an invasion.

In the most original part of Westad's book, the author uses primary sources from recently opened archives in the former communist world to describe the Soviet Union's own Third World interventions, which accelerated especially in the 1970s. In that decade, many Third World leaders responded to the discrediting of America's interventionism in Vietnam, Cuba, Angola, and the Middle East and the failures of the U.S. model of modernization by turning to the Soviet model of modernism along with Soviet military, economic, technological, and political aid. In Westad's view, these Soviet interventions were as misguided and ruinous as America's. Like the United States, the Soviet Union also was founded on universalist European and Enlightenment ideas rather than identity, and Soviet interventions based on these principles, like American interventions, inspired nativist reactions. Westad offers excellent and well-documented accounts of the Soviet Union's relatively unsuccessful attempts to control Cuba, its support of the vicious regime of Mengistu in Ethiopia, its contributions to the chaos of Angola, and its doomed and violent intervention in Afghanistan. He also points out that the Soviet model of development— heavy industry, collective agriculture, avoiding the world market, and state mobilization and nationalization of major economic resources—failed disastrously and left the former colonial states that tried it in great poverty.

Meanwhile, of course, the United States under Nixon and Kissinger was continuing to intervene with mixed success to install or support dictatorial and atrocious regimes that could serve as American proxies in their areas. This included Brazil, Argentina, and

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Pinochet's Chile in Latin America, Iran in the Persian Gulf, South Africa in Angola and elsewhere in Africa, and Suharto's Indonesia in Asia. American Cold War interventionism then culminated with Ronald Reagan's aggressive support of rebels against leftist regimes in Central America and support for the Islamic fundamentalist rebels against the Soviets in Afghanistan.

This book, I believe, will have a significant impact on the historiography of American foreign relations. It is a powerful indictment of American foreign policy in the Third World, one that all but the most determined and ideological nationalists will find persuasive, and one therefore that will contribute greatly to the revisionist view of the Cold War. Westad provides a very sophisticated view of American motives. He has shifted away from the economic interpretation of American (and to some extent of Soviet) foreign policy that appeared in revisionist histories in its strictest form in the works of historians like Gabriel Kolko and in less rigid form in the Open Door interpretations of William Appleman Williams and the Wisconsin school. He has offered a more cultural/ideological interpretation in which economics play an important but only partial role. Westad asserts that strictly economic motives for American foreign policy are inadequate to explain American policy and points to the inconsistencies of U.S. tariff policy and the lack of clout that business exercised with various presidents as evidence for that. He emphasizes instead the cultural and ideological influences on American interventionist policies that include racism, beliefs in technology and modernization, entrepreneurial aggressiveness, and individualistic anti-collective interpretations of liberty. Thus, he incorporates many of the insights from the cultural turn in the history of American foreign relations. One could perhaps interpret the cultural and ideological factors and the motives they created for American policies more favorably than Westad does, but it seems to me that he has been essentially fair in assessing them.

He also incorporates the recently available documents from the Communist side of the Cold War in ways that earlier revisionism could not. The fact that these documents condemn much of Soviet policy undercuts the sort of revisionism that blamed the United States almost entirely for the Cold War but does not lessen the criticisms that can still be made of U.S. policy, for clearly American interventionism in the Third World preceded Soviet interventions.

Another factor that makes Westad's book so persuasive is the contemporary atmosphere in which it is being read. With the end of significant threats to the United States emanating from Russia and the First World, it is natural that people will concentrate on the history of American policies toward the Third World areas that constitute present catastrophes and dangers. After reading this book, it is impossible to believe that a repudiation of the unpopular policies of George W. Bush by the United States will make much difference to the attitudes toward America in the Third World however much it might improve attitudes in the First World.

But however persuasive Westad may be in his portrayal of U.S. policy toward the Third World, by omitting the concurrent Cold War in the First World, he removes a historical context that is important to proper historical judgment of the Cold War and American policy overall. For revisionists who regard the United States as the aggressor in the First and Second Worlds as well as the Third World and who see Soviet policy as essentially defensive, that context will not make much difference and they will see American policy in the First and Third Worlds as all of a piece. But if the Soviet Union really did pose a security threat to the United States, or even if American leaders mistakenly believed that the Soviets posed a threat, it casts U.S. policy in the Third World in a somewhat different light.

One does not need to go to the lengths of John Gaddis in his *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience* to argue that fears for national security underlay the entire history of American foreign policy or even as far as his Cold War security arguments in *We Now Know* and *The Cold War: A New History* to believe that the Soviets did indeed present a threat and that American policy was at least partially a response to that threat.¹ Historians with access to the recently opened documents of the communist world do seem to have reached a consensus that Stalin wanted to cooperate with the West at least temporarily after World War II, but there certainly is no consensus on whether the kind of concessions the West would have had to make to continue that cooperation were desirable given the nature of Stalin's regime and suspicions about his long-term plans. Certainly the new documents leave little doubt of the enmity that the Soviet leaders and Mao's China felt for the United States. Clearly both Khrushchev and Brezhnev regarded détente as a mere tactic and saw it as no restraint whatever in their expansive policy toward the Third World.

Revisionists can argue that the United States nevertheless had little to fear from its communist adversaries. After all, America was militarily and economically far more powerful than they were. But once the Soviets acquired nuclear weapons it was not at all clear that U.S. nuclear supremacy was useful except to deter the Soviet employment of such weapons. And while the United States certainly had greater naval and air power to project into the world at large, the Soviets had conventional supremacy in the European theater that seemed so vital to the world balance of power.

While there is thus a continuing debate about the communist threat in the First World and American policy toward it, there does seem to be a consensus among historians that the United States exaggerated the threat of Soviet activities in the Third World in that Third World nationalism was likely to make Soviet interventions as self-defeating as American ones. Moreover, the consensus of historians also seems to be that American interventions had most of the grievous consequences that Westad has so well described. But if American leaders truly believed that communist activities in the Third World posed a security threat

¹ John Lewis Gaddis, *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997); Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005).

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to the United States because they would shift the balance toward the Communist great powers, then again it places U.S. interventions in a somewhat different context. The mitigation for American policy might be slight, but that mitigation ought at least to be part of the overall judgment.

Further mitigating the regrettable American policies toward the Third World is the fact that devising a proper policy toward developing nations is difficult even under the best of circumstances and with the best of motives. That difficulty can be seen in the rather anemic prescription for such a policy Westad offers at the end of his book. "If there is one big lesson of the Cold War," he says, "it is that unilateral military intervention does not work to anyone's advantage, while open borders, cultural interaction, and fair economic exchange benefit all." He argues that nations need to "stimulate interaction while recognizing diversity, and, when needed, acting multilaterally to forestall disastrous events." Westad believes that there is little hope that the United States will accept such a policy because it has been interventionist throughout its history, not just during the Cold War, and that the only chance to change that policy would be if American dissenters came to power. He opines that "there is also another America, symbolized by the resistance to the war in Vietnam, the protests against intervention in Central America, and the opposition to the invasion and occupation of Iraq."

Well, amen to all of that, but the devil is in the details. Just how does his call for "open borders [and] cultural interaction" differ from modernism and fit with the peasant and religious values he implicitly defends. Beyond the call for "fair economic exchange," what sorts of economic arrangements need to be fostered by and with the Third World? And since the United States will inevitably influence these arrangements even if it avoids unilateral military intervention, what sort of policies should the United States follow to accommodate its own interests while confronting the issues of poverty in the developing world and terrorist threats to the West? There is certainly no consensus on specific foreign policies in the "other America," whatever that "other America" might be when at some point the opposition to the Vietnam and Iraq wars encompassed a majority of the people.

It would have been helpful if Westad had made clearer the preferable alternative to U.S. intervention in the Cold War. Was it essentially abstention, as realists critical of intervention argued, or a different kind of engagement in favor of revolutionary movements, as revisionists maintained? But even without offering a clear alternative, Westad has performed a great service by describing the history and consequences of U.S. and Soviet interventions.

Review by William Hitchcock, Temple University

This past June, I attended the SHAFR annual meeting, which convened in the suburbs of northern Virginia. I have always enjoyed going to SHAFR because I see old friends, meet new friends, and get the inside scoop on developments in our field. This year, I was impressed with the talent and poise of a crop of outstanding graduate students (a number of them from Temple, I am proud to say). There were also thoughtful plenary sessions on topics such as the relationship between the media and historians, and the practice of biography in diplomatic history. That said, I was dismayed by what I felt to be a narrowing of the range of topics at the meeting. It seemed to me – and here I exaggerate only a little – that the conference was devoted almost exclusively to the history of U.S. foreign relations between 1961 and 1974. America's travails in Vietnam received the lion's share of the conference's scholarly focus, and it seemed that every hair on Henry Kissinger's head had a dozen scholars affixed to it. There seemed an air of the *ancien régime* about the proceedings. Over the past fifteen years, SHAFR, I thought, had moved in exciting new directions, both methodologically and conceptually. But this meeting struck me as a reversion to an earlier set of concerns and approaches: the biography of a small number of decision-makers; a stress on U.S. actions in the world, rather than the interplay and interchange of the U.S. with the world; and a conceptual plainness that seemed, well, a little old hat.

William Hitchcock is a Professor of History at Temple University. He received his Ph.D. from Yale University. His books include France Restored: Cold War Diplomacy and the Quest for Stability in Europe, 1945-1954 (1998), From War to Peace: Altered Strategic Landscapes in the Twentieth Century (2000) co-edited with Paul Kennedy, and The Struggle for Europe: The Turbulent History of a Divided Continent, 1945-2002 (2004). His current research focuses on a history of the year 1945 in Europe that explores the civilian experience of war and liberation. He teaches a variety of courses that deal with twentieth century European and international history and is Director of the International History Workshop.

I was surprised by this because I have the impression that our field – and here I am really thinking about “our field” as the international history of the 20th century – is in the midst of a period of dynamic change and expansion. As teachers and scholars, we are sensitive and alert as never before to the interconnection between national histories and global processes, whether economic, technological, ideological, environmental, migratory, or military. The history of the cold war, it seems to me, has profited especially from these broader perspectives, and Arne Westad has done a great deal to push the field in this direction. For example, the extraordinary meetings that he and Professor Mel Leffler have been convening as part of the forthcoming multivolume *Cambridge History of the Cold War* have showcased an astonishing array of scholars whose work sheds new light on the cold war, drawing on archives in many countries and benefiting from the conceptual advances that our peers have been making over the past two decades. There are far more chapters in that collection that are transnational than national in focus. Crossing boundaries has become normative practice in the writing of cold war history.

Now comes Arne Westad's new book, *The Global Cold War*. The word "landmark" is a cliché and overused, but surely this book deserves that term. *The Global Cold War* is the most original and path-breaking work of cold war history to have been published since the end of the cold war itself. It is a rich, exacting, impressive, complex and ambitious book that shows how far our field has come and suggests the directions we might travel in the future. It is also exhausting, intimidating, and not always an easy read.

Westad has consulted an extraordinary range of archives from Moscow to Beijing, Berlin to Belgrade, Pretoria to Rome and beyond. He has mastered a vast, multilingual secondary literature, making the book a model of the new international history. Yet even more important than this global mining effort is the conceptual scheme at work here. The book is profoundly revisionist, swinging the scholarly pendulum sharply away from what some have seen as a return to orthodoxy evident in the recent work of John Lewis Gaddis (in his not-very-new *The Cold War: A New History*) and Marc Trachtenberg (whose excellent volume, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-63*, is essentially limited to a focus on trans-Atlantic diplomacy toward the German problem). Unlike these two leading cold war scholars, Westad operates on a truly global scale. He has shifted the story of the cold war from Europe to the periphery. Westad articulates two broad theses: that the cold war must be seen as a part of a century-long ideological contest between two powerful, ambitious, imperial states; and that the cold war was not only (or even principally) a bilateral military-strategic contest centered on Europe but should be seen more broadly as a multifaceted contest of social and political ideals located in the Third World. With this double-barreled argument, we are dealing with a very different sort of cold war history from what we have become accustomed to.

Westad defies the conventional wisdom, which has long seen the cold war as centered on Europe and buttressed by alliances and nuclear weapons. If Europe was all that mattered, Westad asks, why would the superpowers have expended so much time and money in a contest for dominance on the periphery? Westad argues that it was on the periphery that the cold war stakes were highest. While Europe was frozen by the cold war into two stable blocs, the developing world appeared as a dynamic laboratory for new ideas about human progress. Both superpowers intervened there not merely to gain some tactical military advantage over one another but to carry out global schemes of modernization that were premised on their own positivist, technocratic faiths. From this perspective, the cold war in the Third World looks a great deal like the imperial rivalries that preceded it: "The Cold War," Westad states succinctly, "was a continuation of colonialism through slightly different means [396]."

After two fascinating but necessarily brief chapters that place U.S. and Soviet cold war thinking into the broader context of American and Russian imperial ambitions and expansionist ideologies, Westad zeroes in on the peripheral conflicts of the 1970s and 1980s in illuminating detail. His chapters on Cuba, Vietnam, Southern Africa, Ethiopia, Iran, Afghanistan and Central America are based on vast archival work. The essential argument

is maintained throughout: the United States believed that to protect its own interests and also to advance market capitalism and democracy, it had to reshape the developing world. This ambitious global effort provoked resistance and opened the way for Third World revolutionaries to reach out to the Soviet Union which, because of its own imperial ambitions and ideologically charged designs to reshape the Third World, happily responded with aid, weapons, and diplomatic support. The Third World became a site of great power conflict not by chance, but by design: it was, for both superpowers, the principal stake of the cold war contest.

Westad's book introduces a subversive concept that cold war historians must confront: that the cold war is more properly understood as a North-South contest rather than an East-West one. Westad sees American and Soviet leaders as "high modernists" [33, 397] who spoke a common language of western superiority; it was peasant resistance to western ideologies, both U.S. and Soviet, that fueled peripheral wars which in turn further enmeshed the superpowers. Westad believes that Third World radicals and revolutionaries had as much to do in shaping the course of the cold war as did leaders in Washington and Moscow, and that is why the legacy of the cold war is most sharply felt not in the West but in the roiling and unsettled Third World. Here is international history at its best and most controversial.

Mind you, I am not at all sure that Westad is right. As a European historian, and someone who has spent some time trying to make France appear relevant in the history of the cold war, I am uneasy with Westad's dismissal of Europe. He assumes that once Europe was frozen *by* the cold war, it was therefore frozen *out* of the cold war. Here, I urge a careful reading of Marc Trachtenberg's judicious analysis of the way in which the cold war order was structured; he reminds us that the cold war order in Europe was no accident but was a carefully managed system premised on a clear set of rules and compromises based on a divided Germany. Getting the nations of Europe, including the Soviet Union, to agree and adhere to those rules, was not an easy matter, nor is it a diplomatic process that scholars should demote to the second tier, while dashing off to Pretoria to look for the real cold war. It is precisely because the cold war both started and ended in Europe that we cannot ignore the internal European dynamics of the conflict. The European-centered cold war may seem old news to us now because we understand how it came about and how that cold war came to an end; but familiarity should not breed contempt.

Another issue that we as a community of scholars will have to chew over is Westad's argument that U.S. and Soviet development strategies were simply two sides of the same coin: each state was hawking its own variant of a brand of modernity and development to the rest of the world. These variants were both offshoots from the same stem of the European enlightenment, and therefore equally ambitious, equally megalomaniacal, and equally inclined to resort to cruelty and violence to achieve their ends. If I am reading Westad correctly, he believes that any one, especially historians, who views the United States as having a legitimate moral mission to play in world affairs is delusional, and indeed is no different from the zealous Bolsheviks who believed that the use of power was justified

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by the beauty of their long-term millenarian goals (see paragraph on bottom of 403 to top of 404). From the perspective of Nicaragua or Ethiopia, this dual curse on both superpowers may seem compelling. As a historian of Europe, however, I am uneasy with it. U.S. and Soviet hegemony over Europeans during the cold war did not look the same to Europeans. The daily reality of life under these two regimes in Europe was starkly opposed, and the two systems really cannot be breezily equated. I dare say Westad would agree; but if he did so, he might open himself up to the criticism that he has too hastily conflated American and Soviet “high modernism.”

My expressions of concern do not in the least detract from my admiration for the truly Stakhanovite intellectual and archival effort that Westad has undertaken. In my mind, the book’s significance lies in its conceptual ambition, and I believe the book reveals that “the new cold war history” has finally arrived. This new history is global, as was the cold war; it is multi-lingual, as was the cold war; and it operates on a north-south axis as well as on an east-west one, as did the cold war. Westad’s book is a model that challenges us to continue to think and write globally.

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Review by David S. Painter, Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University

Although most scholars recognize that the Cold War had a major impact on the Third World, far fewer acknowledge that the Third World played a significant role in the Cold War. Without denigrating the importance of the division of Europe and the arms race, international historian Odd Arne Westad puts the Third World at the heart of the Cold War, arguing that “the most important aspects of the Cold War were neither military nor strategic, nor Europe-centered, but connected to political and social development in the Third World” (p. 396). Based on research in archives in Moscow, Beijing, Belgrade, Pretoria, Berlin, Rome, and Washington, the invaluable collections at the Cold War International History Project and the National Security Archive, and wide reading in secondary sources in several languages, *The Global Cold War* should convince even the most Eurocentric scholars of the central role of the Third World in the Cold War.

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Westad argues that the United States and the Soviet Union, as the main proponents of competing “modernity projects,” were “driven to intervene in the Third World by the ideologies inherent in their politics” (p. 4). In his view, “Washington and Moscow needed to change the world in order to prove the universal applicability of their ideologies, and the elites of the newly independent states proved fertile ground for their competition” (p. 4). Westad repeats this emphasis on ideology in opening chapters on the U.S. and Soviet interventionism, but in the rest of the book his analysis of motivation takes into account a wider range of factors, including, in the U.S. case, race and the systemic impact of economic factors.¹

¹ On race, see Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987); and Thomas Borstelmann, *The Cold War and the Color Line: American Race Relations in the Global Arena* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001). On Westad's emphasis on ideology, see the astute review by Mark Atwood Lawrence, “The Other Cold War,” *Reviews in American History* 34.3 (September 2006): 385-92.

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Whatever their motivation, “U.S. and Soviet interventionisms to a very large extent shaped both the international and the domestic framework within which political, social, and cultural changes in the Third World took place” (p. 3). Indeed, Westad believes that U.S. and Soviet intervention in the Third World during the Cold War was so pervasive that it constituted “a continuation of European attempts at controlling Third World peoples” (p. 5; see also p. 396).

Many of the basic features of U.S. and Soviet policy toward the Third World were already evident before the Cold War began. Westad joins a growing number of scholars in viewing the history of U.S. interaction with the Third World as encompassing the history of U.S. expansion across the North American continent. This history included a legacy of territorial and commercial expansion at the expense of less powerful, ethnically different peoples, large doses of racism; ideologies of exceptionalism and mission that facilitated and justified this expansion in the name of expanding the realm of freedom; and strategic considerations reinforcing the drive behind American economic and political expansion.²

The Soviet Union was heir to a similar legacy of expansion, and took over an empire that contained many non-European peoples. The Czarist elite justified Russian expansion as spreading civilization to “backward” peoples, and Westad argues that their Communist successors defended the expansion of Soviet power in similar terms. Indeed, after the failure of revolution in Europe following World War I, Lenin looked to the anti-imperialist struggles of the peoples of the Third World as the key to the eventual defeat of capitalism. Although direct Soviet involvement in Third World affairs declined under Stalin, who concentrated on problems closer to home, the example of a successful anti-imperialist revolution inspired Third World revolutionaries, and Soviet victory in World War II enhanced the prestige of the Soviet model of development. Following World War II the Soviets provided assistance to Communist-led movements in China, Korea, and Vietnam, and in the 1950s the Soviets looked to the Third World as an arena where they could exploit divisions among their capitalist rivals and gain new allies in their uneven struggle with the United States.³

The era of decolonization, roughly 1945-1975, provided a window of opportunity for the Soviet Union and a window of vulnerability for the United States and its allies. Decolonization not only redrew the political map but also challenged Western domination of the Third World. At the end of World War II, most Third World countries outside Latin America were still colonies or mandates of Western European countries or locked in some

² Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*; Walter L. Williams, “United States Indian Policy and the Debate Over Philippine Annexation: Implications for the Study of American Imperialism,” *Journal of American History* 66.4 (March 1980): 810-31; David S. Painter, “Explaining the History of U.S. Relations with the Third World,” *Diplomatic History* 19.3 (Summer 1995): 525-48.

³ Michael Cox, “The Soviet-American Conflict in the Third World,” in Peter Shearman and Phil Williams, eds., *The Superpowers, Central America, and the Middle East* (London: Brassey’s Defence Publishers, 1988), 171-85.

sort of unequal relationship with a Western European nation. Therefore, U.S. and Soviet policies toward the Third World were often significantly shaped by the fact that the main colonial powers were key U.S. allies in the Cold War. In addition, many independence movements, radicalized by years of colonial control and repression, sought more than mere political independence. They also wanted to free their economies from foreign control, to eliminate all vestiges of colonial rule within their societies, and to challenge the West's cultural hegemony.⁴ Because they were usually fighting against Western, capitalist control, many Third World movements took on an anti-Western and/or anti-capitalist tinge, and in many movements Communists played an important role. Thus Third World liberation movements had the potential to bring to power groups hostile to Western capitalism and sympathetic to statist formulas for rapidly modernizing their economies.

While most conflicts in the Third World were largely indigenous in origin and their outcome shaped more by their internal histories and characteristics than by U.S. and Soviet intervention, instability and conflict in the Third World fed Soviet-American rivalry. Both sides sought allies in the Third World, and Third World elites often looked to either or both of the superpowers for support in their internal struggles (pp. 397-98). The Cold War made decolonization more difficult and more violent, and in Latin America, most of which had achieved independence in the nineteenth century, and in countries that had avoided becoming colonies, such as China, Iran, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan, the Cold War polarized efforts at political, economic, and social change.

From the end of World War II until the early 1970s “the United States intervened repeatedly to influence the processes of change that were taking place throughout the Third World (p. 110). Driving U.S. intervention was a “combination of ideological predilections, racial stereotyping, Cold War political and strategic aims,” and the revolutionary situations that existed throughout the Third World in this period (p. 111). In addition, while the bulk of U.S. trade and investment was with Europe, the Third World was important as a source of raw materials and as a potential market, and later as a location for U.S. manufacturing investment. In addition, the voracious appetite of the U.S. economy for oil and other raw materials, coupled with their uneven distribution among the nations of the earth, increased U.S. interest and involvement in the Third World, where many of these raw materials were located. U.S. leaders also recognized that access to Third World resources was very important to the economic health of key U.S. allies.

Westad provides astute and succinct analyses of such important issues as the U.S. response to decolonization in Southeast Asia, U.S. policy in the Middle East, the United States and African decolonization, U.S. efforts to maintain a sphere of influence in Latin America, and the impact of U.S. economic power on the Third World. With the exception of Vietnam, the United States was able to limit communist gains in the Third World, but its policy of confronting revolutionary change in the Third World radicalized many Third World

⁴ S. Neil McFarlane, *Superpower Rivalry and Third World Radicalism: The Idea of National Liberation* (Baltimore: 1985); Hedley Bull, “The Revolt Against the West,” in Adam Watson, ed., *The Expansion of International Society* (New York: 1985), 217-28.

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movements and regimes and pushed them into close association with the Soviet Union, which willingly provided military and economic assistance. By the end of the 1960s, Westad concludes, U.S. policy had in many ways, both positive and negative, played a key role in creating the Third World as a separate and distinct entity (p. 157).

Westad's masterful coverage of the 1960s underlines the importance of that decade for the Cold War in the Third World. Although the survival of the Cuban Revolution and the stalemate in Vietnam were defeats for the United States, other events such as the Sino-Soviet split, the 1964 military coup in Brazil and the general turn to the right in Latin America, the counter-revolution in Indonesia in 1965, the overthrows of Ben Bella in Algeria in 1965 and Nkrumah in Ghana in 1966, and the waning of Nasser's power following defeat in the 1967 War were probably more important in the long run. These defeats, followed by the dramatic exclusion of the Soviets from Egypt in the early 1970s -- as well as the Sino-Soviet split and the example of Cuban and Vietnamese resistance to U.S. power -- help explain why the Soviets played a more active role in the Third World in the 1970s.⁵

Westad argues that the 1970s and the early 1980s were the period "when superpower conflict in the Third World was at its peak and when developments in the Third World had most significance for the wider conduct of the Cold War" (p. 4). One big difference was that for the first time, the Soviets possessed the power projection capability to intervene in areas far from their borders. Drawing on new material mainly but not exclusively from Soviet archives, Westad provides a detailed analysis of Soviet intervention in Angola and Ethiopia in the 1970s and in Afghanistan in 1970s and 1980s. His work on Angola complements nicely the path-breaking studies of Cuban policy by Piero Gleijeses, while his work on Soviet policy toward Ethiopia and Afghanistan stands out as the key archivally based accounts of these important interventions.⁶ More high-level documents are available on Soviet policies on these matters than on U.S. policies, and Westad's analysis of U.S. policy is not as grounded in primary sources as his analysis of Soviet policy.

The Soviets were pulled reluctantly into Angola by the Cubans and by concerns about U.S. and Chinese involvement. Although they moved quickly to take advantage of the situation in Ethiopia, Westad shows that Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was primarily defensive in nature. Although each case was different, in all three cases, Soviet intervention seems to have been mainly motivated by ideological concerns. Contrary to US fears at the time, Westad found no evidence that Soviet intervention in Ethiopia and Afghanistan was motivated by a plan to control access to the Persian Gulf.

⁵ See also Cox, "Soviet-American Conflict in the Third World," 177.

⁶ Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Gleijeses, "Moscow's Proxy? Cuba and Africa, 1975-1988," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 8 (Fall 2006): 98-146. doi:10.1162/jcws.2006.8.4.98. <http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1162/jcws.2006.8.4.98>. Gleijeses's article also discusses Cuban involvement in Ethiopia.

For the Reagan administration “Third World left-wing radicalism was part of a global threat to the United States,” and “confronting the Third World was part of the greater project to restore American power that the New Right had embarked on in the 1970s” (p. 357). One result of the wave of revolutions in the 1970s was that for the first time in the Cold War there existed a large number of Communist-led regimes in the Third World. This situation led to a reversal of the typical Cold War pattern of the United States supporting Third World governments and the Soviets supporting insurgent groups. During the 1980s, the United States stepped up its intervention in the Third World, though the change was more in intensity than in aims. The Carter administration had opposed the Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua, aided the Salvadoran military, laid the groundwork for the U.S. Central Command, and provided covert military assistance to the Afghan resistance. The Reagan administration intensified these efforts and added others under the rubric of a “Reagan Doctrine” that sought to overthrow Soviet-backed regimes in the Third World. In addition, the Third World debt crisis enabled the United States, working with the Bretton Woods institutions, to impose market-oriented changes on Third World nations, in effect extending the Cold War into the global economy (p. 359-63).

Although the so-called “Reagan Victory School” claims that Reagan’s policies “won” the Cold War in the Third World by raising the costs to the Soviets and forcing them to withdraw, Westad argues that the “evidence indicates that at least up to early 1987 American pressure made it *more* (italics in the original) difficult for Moscow to find a way out of its Third World predicament” (p. 364).⁷ In addition, the direct economic costs of involvement in the Third World were fairly low; Westad estimates that Soviet military and civilian assistance to the Third World in the 1980s, including the costs of the war in Afghanistan, was “probably less than 2.5 percent of total state expenditures” (p. 401).

Rather than winning the Cold War, Reagan’s policies, and those of his successor, George H.W. Bush, prolonged conflicts and suffering throughout the Third World. Gorbachev withdrew from involvement in the Third World largely because of disillusionment with the course of Third World revolutions, a desire to decrease U.S. hostility, and a genuine belief in self-determination (pp. 380, 385). In a striking refutation of the maxim that the enemy of my enemy is my friend, U.S. military aid to the Afghan resistance, channeled largely through the Pakistani secret services, strengthened radical Islamist groups, many of which were hostile to the United States as well as to the Soviet Union, and sowed the seeds of future problems (pp. 351-53, 356).⁸

⁷ On the end of the Cold War, see David S. Painter and Thomas S. Blanton, “The End of the Cold War,” in Jean-Christophe Agnew and Roy Rosenzweig, eds., *A Companion to Post-1945 America* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 479-500.

⁸ See also Mahmood Mamdani, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror* (New York: Pantheon, 2004).

The Soviet Union disintegrated and disappeared in 1991, and the differential impact of globalization makes it increasingly difficult to conceptualize the Third World as a distinct entity. In contrast, as Westad points out in a powerful and provocative conclusion, the United States, “an interventionist power for most of its existence,” has continued to use violence to try to control the Third World and has made intervention “into a permanent state of affairs” (p. 406). The results of U.S. intervention in the Third World, he concludes, have been “truly dismal.” “Instead of being a force for good – which they no doubt intended to be – these incursions have devastated many societies and left them more vulnerable to further disasters of their own making” (p. 404). The “negotiated surrender of Communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union,” Westad argues in a sharp rebuke to U.S. Cold War triumphalism, has blinded U.S. policymakers, pundits, and analysts to “the results of decades of disastrous intervention in the Third World” (p. 404).

Lest this conclusion seem too pessimistic, Westad reminds his readers of an alternative tradition, one “symbolized by the resistance to the war in Vietnam, the protests against intervention in Central America, and the opposition to the invasion and occupation of Iraq” (p. 406). The future, he believes, depends to a great extent on U.S. policymakers learning “the one big lesson of the Cold War . . . that unilateral military intervention does not work to anyone’s advantage, while open borders, cultural interaction, and fair economic exchange benefit all” (p. 465).

Winner of the 2006 Bancroft Prize in American History, *The Global Cold War* makes a significant contribution to Cold War history and to international history in general.⁹ Its unique combination of archivally based analysis of U.S. and Soviet policies toward the Third World and firm command of the secondary literature -- including a deep knowledge of the social, political, and economic histories of Third World nations -- make it required reading for all students of international relations.

⁹ It is a shame that such an outstanding study contains a number of errors that should have been caught during the editorial process; the Dardanelles is referred to as the Straits of Hormuz (p. 59); U.S. counterinsurgency operative Edwin Lansdale’s name is misspelled as Lonsdale (p. 117 and in the index); and Nixon’s Latin American visit is misdated as occurring in 1957 instead of 1958 (p. 149). These errors appear in the later paperback as well as the original hardcover edition.

The publication in 2007 of a paperback edition of Odd Arne Westad's *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, two years after its initial publication, serves as an additional stimulus for the continuation of discussions about the concept and the content of this fundamental work by a well known expert in history of the Cold War and its specifics in Asia.

From the very beginning it should be mentioned that this is a rather successful attempt to realize one of the main principles of the new Cold War history—writing it as international history. In spite of the fact that Westad focuses his attention on the confrontational condominium of the two superpowers—the United States of America (U.S.A.) and the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.)—his analysis of their interventionist policy in Asia, Africa and Latin America in close relationship with internal events in these regions takes the Cold War out of the traditional framework of the Soviet-American conflict. That gives the opportunity to represent a wide panorama of the globalization (internationalization) of the Cold War, which was, according to the author's interpretation, the “conflict over the concept of European modernity” (4), and in which the so-called Third World countries were involved since the end of the 1960s.

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Singling out the clash of the two contrary concepts of modernization (with the accent on liberty in the U.S.A. and social justice in the U.S.S.R.) as the influential factor in the formation of the bilateral system of international relations after the Second World War, Westad emphasizes the ideological constituent of the superpowers' confrontation in the Third World and their messianism. He underlines the fact that each of the parties believed that its ideological values in particular as well as its model of development would be conducive to the progress of the Third World countries.

The accent of ideology in studying the postwar confrontation is by no means new, but a distinctive feature of Westad's approach is that he examines the Cold War in a linkage with the pan-European colonial and neocolonial experience, and connects this interpretation to the active interventionist policy of the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. in the Third World in 1970s-1980s. It is this period that is at the center of the author's attention. At the same time in the book

there are retrospective historical essays devoted both to the formation of the U.S. interventionist ideology and policy under the pretext of the spreading of democracy (aided by anticommunism since 1920s) and the imperial past of tsarist Russia, inherited by the U.S.S.R. after 1917. These introductory chapters demonstrate the sources of superpowers' interventionism and the territories of their early geopolitical interests which partly coincided with the regions of future rivalry for the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R in the Third World. Most likely this similarity of regional policy may excuse the fact that the author considers the first collision of superpowers after the end of the Second World War in Iran and Turkey as the beginning of their confrontation in the Third World, though his own definition of this term, born in the 1950s, implies former colonial or semicolonial countries as well as the process of decolonization after the Second World War (2-3). The same element of presentism is apparent in Westad's history of American and Russian interventionism, where the author uses the term 'the Third World'.

The novelty of Westad's monograph (in comparison with many other books, devoted to the collapse of colonial empires after 1945, the Non-Aligned Movement, crises in the Third World etc.) is not only in his thesis about the extension of the Cold War into the Third World and its great influence on this part of the world. Relying heavily on a large corpus of scholarly works, new documentary materials, including Russian archives, as well as oral history, Westad presents a comparative analysis of each superpower's interventionism in the Third World.

As it is shown in the book, the dynamics of the American interventionist policy since 1945 have been undulating. Under the administration of Harry Truman it was of limited character, excluding the Korean War. President Dwight Eisenhower initiated global covert interventions. The administrations of John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson were in favor of the "battle for hearts and minds" in the Third World (27), inasmuch as they considered development intervention (the activity of the Peace Corps, the Alliance for Progress and others) as an alternative to military intervention. Nevertheless, this did not prevent American involvement in the war in Vietnam. During the years of détente under the President Richard Nixon and partly under Jimmy Carter some reduction of "direct American intervention in the Third World" took place (197). However it was replaced by "renewed dedication to interventionism" (331) when Ronald Reagan came to power.

Westad singles out a counteraction to the Communist threat as the main driving force in increasing U.S. involvement in the Third World. He doesn't deny that both "before and during the Cold War there have been occasions when concrete business interests have had a direct and decisive role in American interventions" but emphasizes that the role of the market in American foreign policy was a component part of its comprehensive ideology (28). Besides, the author supposes that during the Cold War the United States was a "reluctant economic imperialist" (30), and investments in the Third World were not highly profitable. At the same time the United States, as a leading economic superpower, strove to assume a responsibility for the development of the world economy, including new independent states, that would ideally follow the American pattern. As a result, along with the expansion of democracy this factor should have contributed to the containment of Communism in the Third World

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countries. Thus Westad tries to bind U.S. ideology with the development of the free market, modernization and intervention, but ultimately, in his analysis, anticommunism remained the dominant feature of American policy in the Third World.

Within the context of his analysis of the American reaction to a dangerous “challenge” on the part of the Third World at the end of the 1970s, Westad criticizes a point of view, which still exists in historiography, that all revolutionary movements in Asian, African and Latin American countries were inspired by the U.S.S.R. He argues that to a considerable degree these processes were not the result of Soviet involvement, but a cause of it (332). On the basis of his study of abundant concrete materials about events in Cuba, South-East Asia, Nicaragua, Ethiopia, Angola, South Africa etc., Westad demonstrates the large influence of regional factors, related to the processes of decolonization, the formation of new independent states, the aggravation of ethnic issues and the struggle of national elites for power. These factors served as a starting-point for revolutionary changes and civil wars in the Third World. But Westad simultaneously notes that the revolutionary forces were often headed by the Left, which were under the influence of Marxism and “the general leftward trend of the 1960s” (97). Viewed from this ideological position, the Soviet experiment seemed more attractive, than the capitalist way of development burdened by the colonial past. Besides, the Left opposition took into account the principle of the proletarian internationalism, which was proclaimed by the U.S.S.R. and other countries of the Soviet bloc, and was interpreted as a wide support for national-liberation movements.

Turning to Soviet foreign interventions, Westad finds their roots in the expansionism of the tsarist empire and the activities of the Comintern with its dominant idea of the world revolution. The author believes that it is possible to characterize the Comintern’s policy toward countries in the East in 1920s as the first phase of Soviet interventionism in the Third World (51, 168). This phase ended with Stalin’s coming to power. Westad underlines that Stalin, unlike Lenin, “refused to believe that Africa, Asia, or Latin America had any short-term potential for socialism because the historical conditions for the creation of the proletariat Communist parties did not yet exist there” (55). This led to the decline of the Comintern’s influence in the Third World between 1928 and 1943. As a result of the analysis of Stalin’s relations with Mao Zedong during the Chinese communists’ struggle with Chiang Kai-shek’s Guomindang as well as the support of the Soviet leader for Kim Il Sung’s plan for reunification of Korea by military force in 1950-1953, Westad concludes that after 1945 Stalin continued to have doubts that “social processes in the Third World by themselves would lead toward socialism”. For this reason the Soviet leader supposed that Third World Communism should have as its main aim the serving of “Soviet purposes in the global Cold War” (66). This great-power chauvinism brought together the Soviet Union with the United States which also believed that what was good for America was good for other countries.

The beginning of the second phase in Soviet policy in the Third World Westad connects with the activity of Nikita Khrushchev, who rejected Stalin’s negative attitude to the national-bourgeois movements and advocated more assistance to the Communist and working parties of the Third World irrespective of their prospects for coming to power. “By the early 1960s,”

the author writes, "Soviet ideology had already reached a stage where the competition for influence in the Third World was an essential part of the existence of socialism" (72). The first years of Leonid Brezhnev's leadership were, however, marked by some lack of attention to the Third World countries because of the serious influence on Soviet policy of the Sino-Soviet conflict, events in the Congo, the Cuban Missiles Crisis as well as defeats of radical regimes in Ghana, Algeria and Indonesia in 1965-1966. Examining the reasons for a new raise of Soviet interventionism in the 1970s—1980s, which, contrary to the Soviet desire, delivered a blow to the détente policy, Westad emphasizes that the Communist victory in Vietnam and the radical turn in many liberation movements were estimated among many Kremlin's advisers "as creating an international arena in which their zeal for socialist transformation could be realized" (202).

Besides the Congolese crisis in the beginning of 1960s a lot of attention in the book is devoted to the main directions of the Soviet battle for Africa in 1970s -- from the support of Ethiopia in its revolutionary transformation and a conflict with Somalia to the Soviet-Cuban intervention in Angola. As with the Soviet invasions in Africa Westad scrupulously analyses Soviet policy in Afghanistan after the overthrow of the Mohammed Daoud regime in April 1978. Relying on documents from the Russian archives, Westad shows, step by step, how within the conditions of the unfolding civil war as well as the increasing split among Afghan Communists the CPSU Politburo's decision about intervention of the Soviet troops in Afghanistan came to fruition in December 1979.

In view of the above it should be noted that in comparison with the chapters of the book that are devoted to American interventionism, Westad's analysis of the complicated mechanism of the Soviet decision-making process concerning the key decisions on the Third World is more comprehensive. Having at his disposal a number of very interesting documents from the CPSU Central Committee's International Department (which at present are reclassified) as well as interviews with former officials of the Central Committee apparatus and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Westad reveals noticeable differences among the Kremlin advisers in their approaches to the broader Soviet Third-World engagement. He underlines that such advisers from the party apparatus as Vadim Zagladin, Georgii Shakhnazarov, Karen Brutents, Alexander Yakovlev, and Vadim Medvedev, who later found themselves in the front line of Perestroika, were not in favor of limitless Soviet intervention and "stressed the need to be careful and to evaluate each situation on its own premises" (205). As Westad shows, in these very circles the skeptical attitude toward possibility of building socialism in Ethiopia, Angola, South Yemen and other countries of the Third World was wide-spread. Among the members of the Politburo, who worried that the Soviet intervention in the Third World caused damage to the U.S.S.R economy, Westad singles out Alexei Kosygin and Andrei Kirilenko. Nevertheless, he argues that not until after Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in April 1985, and only two years later, did Soviet active interference in the affairs of the Third World countries began to decrease. The withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan, begun at the end of 1988, symbolizes this process.

At the same time Westad draws attention to the important fact that several radical states of the Third World in 1983-1984 (that is before Gorbachev's reforming of Soviet foreign policy) began to retreat from the ideals of Soviet-style Marxism-Leninism, including a planned economy, and to move gradually "toward market-based economy" as a better model for overcoming social and economic difficulties (363). From the point of view of the superpowers' struggle for the Third World, these changes represented evidence of both the U.S.S.R.'s decreasing influence and the consolidation of the position of the United States, which was not going to abandon its interventionist policy even after the end of the Cold War. Underlining that the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. were not the equal superpowers (having in mind first of all their respective economic power), Westad argues that it was the American vision of development, its repeated interventions and need for raw materials that had not only positive but, to a considerable degree, negative effects on the formation of the Third World (157, 403, 404). Westad's research of American foreign policy in the Third World clearly reveals that today's interventionism by the U.S.A. as the only global superpower was not a spontaneous reaction to the challenge of world terrorism. It had a deep historical roots and experience.

As far as the influence of the Cold War ideology and interventions of both superpowers is concerned, the author concludes that they "helped put a number of Third World countries in a state of semipermanent civil war" or made it much harder to settle some conflicts inherited from the colonial period (398). From Westad's study of the Islamic defiance at the end of the twentieth century another general conclusion is advanced, namely, that the rise of Islamism as a political ideology, stimulated by the Iranian revolution of 1978 and the Soviet military invasion in Afghanistan, represented the peculiar alternative to both Western and Communist modernization in the Third World.

As mentioned above, *The Global Cold War* is an appreciable contribution to the study of this phenomenon of the second half of the twentieth century as international history. In addition to an analysis of superpowers policy, Westad examines in detail the internal and external events in those countries of the Third World which became the objects of American or Soviet intervention. Within the framework of the Sino-Soviet split since the early 1960s and its influence on Third World countries Westad pays particular attention to Vietnam and Cuba as revolutionary examples and as distinct cases. He considers that Fidel Castro's main reason for his decision to "develop a much more aggressive policy of assistance to other Third World movements as part of its defense of the principle of revolution" was "the Cuban leadership's disappointment with the Soviet capitulation during the missiles crisis" (175-176). Concerning Vietnam's revolutionary influence Westad concludes that the military successes of the Vietnamese Communists in their war against the U.S.A. emboldened the Left in Indochina and beyond. But simultaneously he notes that "Vietnam never engaged in the kind of socialist internationalism outside its own immediate region that we see in the case of Cuba" (190).

There is a lot of material about different aspects of Third World history in the book's chapter devoted to the process of decolonization and the Non-Aligned movement. And the author's analysis is well supplemented by short biographies of such political leaders as Jawarhalal Nehru, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Sukarno, and others. Westad also includes biographical essays in

his description of the complicated processes of the formation of new independent states (those about Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, Patrice Lumumba, Mengistu Haile Mariam, and others). On the whole this offers the possibility of estimating Cold War influence on the development of the Third World and, on the other hand, understanding the contribution of these countries to the evolution of the superpowers' confrontation.

However, such a multifaceted a book cannot help provoking a desire to argue against some of the theses put forward by the author. First of all, it is Westad's interesting but rather controversial assumption that the essence of the Cold War was the contest between superpowers not in Europe or in military-strategic spheres but in the Third World. From this angle Westad also interprets the Cold War "as a continuation of colonialism through slightly different means" (396). Sharing Westad's opinion that the Cold War had significant influence on the processes of decolonization, the appearance of the Non-Alignment movement and the further development of the new independent states, it is difficult to agree with his attempt to represent the policy of the superpowers and the complicated processes in the Third World as the central direction of the Cold War. In spite of the importance of struggle for the Third World it nevertheless stayed at the periphery of the clash of superpower interests.

One more critical remark deals with Westad's over-indulgence of the ideological factor. This accent on ideology as the main driving force of U.S. and Soviet policy in the Third World countries excludes from his analysis many other very important factors (strategic, political, economic etc.) which exerted a great influence upon the interventions of these superpowers. The fact that the author nevertheless had to mention the existence of American oil interests in Iran (120, 121), the strategic importance of South Africa for the United States as well as Ethiopia for the Soviet Union (212, 268), or the Soviet leaders' estimations of the successes of their interventionist policy in the Third World as proof that the U.S.S.R. was a real global power (209, 286) shows that the ideological framework is rather limited. Developing Westad's remark about the Soviet linkage of interventionism with superpower status, it should be mentioned that this factor is very important for understanding Soviet activity in underdeveloped countries since the mid-1970s. According to Karen Brutents (whom Westad considers as the main dissident in the CPSU Central Committee apparatus), just feeling that the U.S.S.R was a real superpower with global interests compelled it to involve itself more and more into so distant regions as the Central and South Africa, South-East Asia or the Caribbean¹. The Third World was the open space for gaining new positions for the Soviet Union not only in its ideological but in its geopolitical rivalry with the U.S.A.

The Global Cold War is a wide-ranging project, which on the whole Westad has successfully realized in spite of the difficulties of his task. The polemical acuteness of the book and a bulk of facts, correspondingly interpreted, stimulate both those who share author's concepts and their opponents to take a new look at the history of the Cold War, many aspects of which are still disputable or unexplored.

¹ K.N Brutents, *Nesbyvsheesia. Neravnodushnye Zametki o Perestroike* (Might-Have-Been. Not Indifferent Notes about Perestroika) (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya, 2005):115-117.

Author's Response by Odd Arne Westad, London School of Economics and Political Science

I am grateful to Professors Combs, Yegorova, Painter, and Hitchcock for taking time to write such comprehensive, fair, and stimulating reviews of my book, and to the H-Diplo editors for organizing the roundtable. A focused discussion is an excellent way of debating the key aspects of a book and I am very glad that *The Global Cold War*, and the issues which it attempts to bring to the forefront, have been selected for such an exchange of ideas. I am, of course, very happy that the reviewers all like the book and have kind things to say about it, but for the sake of argument I want to concentrate on those points where there are disagreements or at least a difference in emphasis.

Odd Arne Westad is Professor of International History at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). He co-directs the [LSE Cold War Studies Centre](#) with Professor Michael Cox, is an editor of the journal *Cold War History* and the editor (with Professor Melvyn Leffler) of the forthcoming three-volume Cambridge History of the Cold War. Westad received his PhD in history from the University of North Carolina in 1990. During the 1980s he worked for several international aid agencies in Southern Africa and in Pakistan. In 2000, Professor Westad was awarded the Bernath Lecture Prize from the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations.

Just as in the general debate about the book, there are three main questions that are up for discussion here.¹ Many of my friends and colleagues ask why I focus exclusively on the Third World and disregard Europe. Others query my emphasis on the role of ideologies. And quite a few disagree with my views on why interventions almost never deliver their intended results. The latter discussion is of course entangled in the current debates over Iraq and Afghanistan; more so now, probably, than when the book was first published more than two years ago.

Before going on to deal with the main historical issues one by one, I need to dwell a bit on the question of the book's contemporary relevance. I knew, of course, when finishing up the manuscript, that the book would be read and commented on with an eye to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is unavoidable and – to some extent – welcome; I made the final revisions of the book very much with Bush's wars in mind. While I am no great believer in generic "lessons from history", I do believe (or at least hope) that there is something that can be learnt from historians.

The relevance here, for me, is as follows: The interventionism that the United States practices today came out of policies pursued during the Cold War and out of a mindset that allows policymakers to argue successfully that Americans will only be safe when the world

¹ There are a number of excellent reviews of *The Global Cold War*. Mark Lawrence's "The Other Cold War", *Reviews in American History*, 34.3 (September 2006): 385-392 is an outstanding (though not uncritical) discussion. Others, by Sir Lawrence Freedman (in *Foreign Affairs*), Anatol Lieven (in *London Review of Books*), and Ian Roxborough (featured review in the *American Historical Review*) are worth having a look at, as is the roundtable in *Cold War History*, with contributions by Jeremi Suri, William Wohlforth and myself.

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has become more like America. My argument is that U.S. interventions during the Cold War were not, on the whole, reasons for exultation in the United States or abroad, and that any suggestion, at any time, that the world needs to be remade in order to make one country secure is usually a product of misapprehension or megalomania, or sometimes both.² I will comment further on the historical debates about interventions below, but, as for the contemporary relevance, not only do I see conceptual links in terms of execution between Cold War interventions and the disasters of the 2000s; I also find that a lot of bad history lessons are being spread by those who argue in favor of the United States presence in Iraq now and who may argue in similar terms with regard to other crises in the future.

Natalia Yegorova, who with her path-breaking work on the Soviet Union and the Iran crises in 1945-46 has done so much to open up the documents-based study of Moscow's Third World policy, disagrees with my emphasis on non-European matters in the Cold War. William Hitchcock – who is the author of one of the best histories of Cold War Europe (the other is Tony Judt's) – also reminds us of the centrality of that continent. Hitchcock is entirely right, of course, when he warns against seeing the European cold war as old news because we understand it fairly well (as we now do to some extent, through the work of Marc Trachtenberg, for instance). “Familiarity,” Hitchcock cautions, “should not breed contempt”.

But what I have tried to do in *The Global Cold War* is the opposite of disregarding Europe; it is rather (*pace* Castlereagh, the old reactionary) to bring the Third World into play to rectify the balance in the Second, or at least in the historiography regarding it. For far too long Europe has been seen as not just the only cause of the Cold War but also as its key engine throughout. The existence of an overview of the conflict in the Third World will help, I hope, those who work primarily on Europe not only to see influences and parallels they have not been aware of before, but also to rethink the Cold War as a *global* system (in which Europe, surely, played its important part). My account should therefore be seen as a somewhat overdue piece of historiographical “affirmative action”, which focuses on the Third World in order to overcome the explicit Eurocentricity of earlier accounts. It is a bit curious, though, that rather few reviewers criticised two generations of geographical oversimplification of the Cold War in general overviews – be it from the Right or the Left – as long as they centered on the two Superpowers and on Europe.

For the record, and before moving on, everyone who has read it will of course know that this book is *not* an attempt at a general overview of the Cold War. It is a history (very simplified) of the Cold War as it played out in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. As I noted in an earlier debate on the book (with William Wohlforth), it is slightly unfair to take me to task for not having written a general history of the Cold War, since that was never my aim. It is very clear to me, therefore, that if I were to undertake such a project, then Europe (and

² J.M. Roberts, *The New Penguin History of the World* (fifth ed., revised and updated by O.A. Westad; London: Penguin, 2007) has helped me appreciate the historical parallels on the latter point; they are many, from Sargon's Akkad to Napoleonic France.

indeed the United States and the Soviet Union in domestic terms) would loom much larger in it.

There is also a need to note what I am claiming as the relevance of the book. When I write that one of its claims is that the most important aspects of the Cold War were “connected to political and social development in the Third World”, I am not first and foremost thinking about the Third World’s role in the Cold War but about the Cold War’s role in the Third World. My friends are right in noting that if I want to establish the former, I will have to write a general overview to lay things out in terms of balance between the different arenas on which the conflict was conducted. But the latter point is the most important to me: In the sense of global or transnational history, incorporating the many definitive trends of the late 20th century that were *not* determined by the Cold War, it is the way the conflict exacerbated, skewed, or stymied developments in the South that matters most to what our world looks like today.

David Painter, who has written so insightfully on the Cold War and the quest for energy resources, and Natalia Yegorova are both skeptical of my emphasis on ideology over other factors in shaping the course of the Cold War in the Third World. Yegorova does underline, as does Painter, that I do take other causes – such as security, military strategy, economic gain, and access to resources – seriously in my attempt to present an overall picture. But they are both right, of course, that I stress ideologies as far more important on a larger number of issues than any of the other causes that are generally debated in the literature. I have no trouble in owning up to it: I am – unabashedly – a Cold War *essentialist*, someone who finds – after studying the historical record – that leaders mostly meant what they said about why they engaged in interventions abroad. We may disagree with their motives (we should!). We may even question whether they were honest to themselves (though that line of argument does not take us very far). But the picture that the available materials leave is that policies on both sides were dependent on fairly comprehensive and often stated views of how the world works and of one’s own place in it.

I wrote the three first chapters of *The Global Cold War* very much because I wanted to comment on the confusion that exists with regard to the uses of the concept ‘ideology’ in international history. To me, as you will see from the book, the concept needs to be liberated from two camps that have taken turns in keeping it hostage for much of the time this historiography has been in existence. The first camp claims that ideology equals political theory, very often in a formal sense; in other words: Soviet ideology *was* Marxism-Leninism in its Stalinist form. US leaders did not have an ideology because they did not (all) subscribe to a political theory. This use of the concept restricts it *ad absurdum*. The second camp sees ideology as a community of faith, as the ties that bind, as a mutual solidarity society in which policies are determined by the need to assist brethren abroad. If Stalin made agreements with Chiang Kai-shek rather than Mao Zedong in 1945, ideology was therefore not important to him. If Carter preferred the Shah against Iranian democrats in 1977, then ideology was therefore of limited interest in the White House.

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The problem with this definition is that it sets ideologies as communities rather than extensive world-views; it emphasizes schools over ideas. It was quite possible to be a Marxist in 1945 and believe that China was not ripe for revolution (in fact, it was difficult to be a Marxist and believe in any of Mao's gobbledygook). It was overwhelmingly possible to be a believer in liberal capitalism (and a Democrat; a Southern one to boot) in 1977 and see the Shah as a better alternative for Iran's development than the Iranian left-wing or the clerics.

Natalia Yegorova in her review refers to Karen N. Brutents – the very influential Deputy Head of the CPSU CC's International Department – as someone who stresses power and prestige instead of ideology as the driving force in Soviet Third World policy. Having read Brutents's recent books – by far the best and most honest memoirs to come out of the former Soviet foreign policy elite – I would disagree with Natalia on this point.³ (I must also confess that I base my view on many hours of interviews with Karen Nersessovich himself.) His sense is that, to the very end, power considerations influenced Soviet foreign policy, while ideology determined it. (I still remember my first meeting with him, during which he launched a strong attack against John Lewis Gaddis [the pre-*We Now Know* Gaddis, that is] for disregarding the role of ideology in Soviet foreign policy!)

It is very unfortunate, though, that much New Cold War History sees ideology as first and foremost a Soviet phenomenon. To me it has become more and more obvious that it, using the definition above, was even more important on the U.S. side on the conflict. I have laid out the reasons why in the book – there is no need to repeat them here. But if there is one point that I would like to see discussed further in terms of broad interpretations, this is it: That ideology, as a comprehensive world-view, was more important to U.S. policymakers than to their Soviet counterparts during most of the Cold War.

I am very grateful to Jerald A. Combs, who through his books taught me and my cohort the historiography of the Cold War, for his positive review.⁴ Professor Combs asks what would have happened had the United States *not* intervened as often as it did during the Cold War. Though counterfactuals always make me a bit uneasy, my sense is that many places would have seen considerably less bloodshed as a result. South Africa would have had majority rule earlier if not for U.S. policies. Namibia would have been independent. Angola would have been spared a devastating civil war. Vietnam would have reunified earlier. In development terms the results would have been mixed, I think. The ANC and SWAPO would probably have moved fast towards reasonably competent governments. The MPLA in Angola would most likely have descended into the same corrupt quagmire as it is in today. The Vietnamese Communists would have been even more doctrinaire if they had

³ *Tridtsat let na Staroi Ploshchadi* [Thirty Years at the Old Square] (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnaia otnoshenii, 1998) and *Nesbyvsheesia: neravnodushnye zametki o perestroike* [What Was Not to Be: Engaged Notes on Perestroika] (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnaia otnoshenii, 2005).

⁴ Especially his *American Diplomatic History: Two Centuries of Changing Interpretations* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983; I still use it with my graduate students).

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taken over in 1965 than they were ten years later. But a lot of lives would have been saved in the process.

Let me add just a couple of comments on 'development'. Combs (and Ian Roxborough, in his excellent review in the *AHR*) both see me as a bit of a 'peasant romantic'. Let me assure them that I am too close in terms of background to the peasant world to feel any form of romantic attraction to it – it is, often, a harsh life. But I do still believe that the many forms of violence perpetrated against peasant communities in the name of progress are indefensible. It is morally wrong, as well as counterproductive, to treat whole population groups as statistics. The arrogance with which outsiders often approach Third World communities is a recipe for disaster, because it breeds resistance through ignoring local knowledge. I am not against vaccinations, or alphabetization, or clean water. But I am for more humility and respect for the choices of others when involving oneself with cultures abroad.

The same goes, to some extent at least, for the overall anti-interventionist argument that the book presents. As shown in *The Global Cold War*, I have very little patience with Cold War socialist utopias. All of them were dysfunctional. Some were horror-shows, like the Soviet-backed Mengistu regime in Ethiopia or Pol Pot's Cambodia, which China supported. The reason why I focus in on the United States and its actions is simply that it was, by far, the most powerful nation during the Cold War, and the one that could set the parameters that others would operate by. During the époque I am looking at, the United States, in terms of its foreign interventions, got it wrong more often than it got it right, and a lot of human suffering resulted. In policy terms, if there was an alternative, I think it was the same as it is for the United States today: democracies do not intervene abroad unless they are attacked or they are prevailed upon to do so by a world organization. This is an attitude that might seem 'lame', as some American reviewers have pointed out. But if so, that is an affliction that post-Iraq policymakers should be praying for.

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