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Contents

Introduction by Kenton Clymer, Northern Illinois University.....	2
Review by David L. Anderson, California State University, Monterey Bay.....	5
Review by Sudina Paungpetch, Texas A&M University	9
Review by Brad Simpson, Princeton University.....	13
Review by Geoff Wade, Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore	17
Author's Response by Anne L. Foster, Indiana State University.....	22

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Introduction by Kenton Clymer, Northern Illinois University

About the only positive result of the Vietnam War was the explosion of scholarship on Southeast Asia and on American involvement in Southeast Asia. The number of works about American involvement in Vietnam understandably dwarfs all others, but almost all of these concentrate on the period of active American military involvement in Vietnam or on the post-World War II years leading up to that involvement. Anne L. Foster's interests have been an exception, and those who teach courses on American involvement in Southeast Asia or on the American war in Vietnam have been grateful for her 2002 essay, "Before the War: Legacies from the Early Twentieth Century in United States-Vietnam Relations,"¹ which provides students with an excellent introduction to the pre-World War II era. Mark Philip Bradley's outstanding book, *Imagining Vietnam & America* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000), is the other essential source for this period.

In *Projections of Power* Foster returns to the themes in her article but develops them in considerably more depth and detail and, most significantly, expands her focus to colonialism in all of Southeast Asia, not just in Vietnam. She devotes two chapters to economic factors, has a wonderful chapter on culture ("An Empire of the Mind"), and expands her treatment of the common colonial concern with communism. Her discussion of how the colonial powers viewed Japan and in particular its occupation of Manchuria goes well beyond the limited discussion in the article and, as David Anderson observes, "her analogy of Japan as a 'sore tooth' that the Westerners knew needed attention is marvelous."

Throughout her book Foster emphasizes the connections among all of the colonial powers in Southeast Asia, though, as Anderson writes, "the United States is always the touchstone." This is in good part because American colonialism has been minimized in the studies of imperial rule in Southeast Asia. Foster believes that this has been a mistake. "The presence of the United States in Southeast Asia as a colonial power was instrumental in creating the type of imperialism which existed during the period 1919-1941," she writes (ix). It is not that the United States was 'exceptional,' a concept that Foster rejects. (Indeed the fact that the United States is often left out reinforces the idea of exceptionalism.) But if American imperial rule had much in common with the imperialism of other countries, the American variety was also in some ways "different" (as Anderson writes), and the differences could sometimes be as important as the commonalities.

All of the reviewers agree that Foster has written an important book. Anderson thinks it "addresses some of the most seminal issues of U.S. foreign policy," while Simpson states that it is "a significant scholarly achievement which helps reshape our understanding of U. S. power in Southeast Asia on the eve of its global ascendance." Paungpetch compares it to important works by Emily Rosenberg and Thongchai Winichakul, and Geoff Wade, who

¹ Anne Foster, "Before the War: Legacies from the Early Twentieth Century in United States-Vietnam Relations," in *A Companion to the Vietnam War*, eds. Marilyn B. Young and Robert Buzzanco (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 115-129.

finds some significant flaws in the book, acknowledges that it “has opened up key ground for further investigation.”

Most of the reviewers commend Foster for her analysis of colonial economic issues in the 1920s and 1930s. Paungpetch, for example, calls attention to Foster’s observation that American policy pragmatically supported American economic interests. Sometimes this meant competition with the European colonialists, but at other times it required cooperation. Sometimes American businesses appeared to take actions that appeared to have an anti-imperialist effect (such as by employing Southeast Asians in responsible positions and paying good wages). At other times they and the American government took actions that bolstered European colonial rule. The reviewers pay slightly less attention to Foster’s important chapter on the spread of American popular culture, though Anderson situates her discussion within the new literature on globalization, while Simpson and Paungpetch focus on the anxieties that the European colonial officials had about American movies which could conceivably undermine the colonial order.

The reviewers believe that Foster should have given more attention to the perceptions and attitudes of Southeast Asians themselves, and Simpson adds that more might have been done with “bureaucratic conflicts among American officials regarding the limits of U.S. collaboration with colonial rule.” Wade is clearly the most critical reviewer, however. He questions the evidentiary basis for many assertions, and he is especially critical of Foster’s focus on international communism as almost the only force that drew serious concern from colonial administrators. In fact, Wade argues, there were many such issues, most notably “an almost pathological concern with Pan-Islam.”

Wade does note that “Foster is novel in suggesting the great importance of the Philippines for the other colonial powers in Southeast Asia.” And, though Wade would like to have seen more evidence in this case, there is little question that Foster adds considerably to our understanding of American policy in the Philippines in this period. There has been a real flowering of new scholarship on the Philippine-American War (1899-1902) and American colonial rule in the Philippines. Most of the accounts of American rule discuss the early colonial period (1899-1921), but the literature on the 1920s and the 1930s is sparse, particularly on the 1920s. One of Foster’s contributions in this important book is to address this period in Philippine-American history.

Participants:

Anne L. Foster is assistant professor of History at Indiana State University, and taught previously at Saint Anselm College. She is the author of several articles on comparative opium policies of colonial Southeast Asia, including most recently “Opium, the United States and the Civilizing Mission in Colonial Southeast Asia,” *Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* 22 (January 2010). She is also co-editor, with Julian Go, of *The American Colonial State in the Philippines: Global Perspectives* (2003).

Kenton Clymer is Distinguished Research Professor of History at Northern Illinois University. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, where he studied with

Bradford Perkins. His most recent books include a two volume history of American relations with Cambodia (London: Routledge, 2004), which won the Robert H. Ferrell Book Prize in 2005, and an abridged and updated one-volume edition on the same topic, *Troubled Relations: The United States and Cambodia Since 1870* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2007). Clymer is currently working on a general history of American relations with Burma.

David L. Anderson is Professor of History at California State University, Monterey Bay. He is the author or editor of *Imperialism and Idealism: American Diplomats in China* (1985), *Trapped by Success: The Eisenhower Administration and Vietnam* (1991), *Shadow on the White House: Presidents and the Vietnam War* (1993), *Facing My Lai: Moving Beyond the Massacre* (1998), *The Human Tradition in the Vietnam Era* (2000), *The Columbia Guide to the Vietnam War* (2002), *The Vietnam War* (2005), *The War That Never Ends: New Perspectives on the Vietnam War* (2007), and *The Columbia History of the Vietnam War* (2011).

Sudina Paungpetch is a doctoral candidate in the Department of History at Texas A&M University. She is currently working on her dissertation, "Domino by Design: Thai-U.S. Relations during the Vietnam War," which focuses on the impact of U.S. foreign policy on Thai society and politics.

Brad Simpson (Ph.D., Northwestern 2003) is assistant professor of history and international affairs at Princeton University. His first book, *Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and U.S.-Indonesian Relations* (2008, 2010 pb), has just been translated into Indonesian. He is currently working on two book projects, one exploring U.S.-Indonesian-international relations during the Suharto era (1966-1998) and another examining the history of the idea self-determination, exploring its political, cultural and legal descent through post-1945 US foreign relations and international politics.

Geoff Wade received his B.A. (Asian Studies) from the Australian National University and his Ph.D. from the University of Hong Kong and is currently a Senior Research Fellow in the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore. He is a historian with interests in Sino-Southeast Asian historical interactions and comparative historiography, and has worked on a range of related issues including early Islam in Southeast Asia, Chinese expansions over time, Asian commercial networks, Chinese classical textual references to Southeast Asia and the Cold War in Southeast Asia. His most recent edited work *China and Southeast Asia* (Routledge, 2009) comprises a 6-volume survey of seminal works on Southeast Asia-China interactions over time, while together with Karl Hack he edited a special issue of the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* (40/3 2009) entitled "The Origins of the Southeast Asian Cold War".

Anne Foster has produced a well-crafted and richly documented monograph that addresses some of the most seminal issues of U.S. foreign policy, including isolationism and exceptionalism. As is the case with good research in underutilized sources, this book confirms and expands upon what other scholars may have only been able to infer from their work on the same subjects, and it also opens a number of fruitful areas for further research. Scholars have long disputed how to place the economically strong and expanding United States into the context of Western imperialism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Foster approaches this issue by comparing British Burma, French Indochina, the Dutch East Indies, and the American Philippines in the 1920s and 1930s, the period she labels late high-imperialism. The question for Foster, as it has been for other historians, is how distinct and how similar were these four examples of Western colonialism and how they paralleled, influenced, or contradicted each other. She provides fascinating insights into how each external regime related to the peoples of the region and how the four Western powers cooperated or competed with each other in terms of both policy goals and administrative methods. Throughout this layered analysis, the United States is always her touchstone. The Europeans were the old guard. Their colonies predated the American possession of the Philippines, and U.S. power and innovation presented challenges to the existing colonial order. As she notes, however, Washington sought in significant ways to join and revise the system but not to remove the strategic advantages that the West, and particularly the United States, enjoyed in Southeast Asia.

Foster asserts that there has been a “myth of American non-imperialism” that has “led to a lack of attention” to how “empire came to America” (106-7). In fact, there has been considerable scholarly attention to the idea of American empire for many years, but Foster is correct that concepts of what the term “empire” means for America have varied widely. Acknowledgment that America was part of what is sometimes termed an imperial project in Asia has also challenged notions that the United States was isolated from world affairs, especially in the 1920s and 1930s, or that U.S. global behavior was exceptional in comparison to other world powers. William Appleman Williams famously attacked the “legend of isolationism” in the 1920s in his seminal work *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, and much excellent work has followed his lead.¹ Two good reviews of this scholarship done over a decade ago in the wake of Charles Meier’s allegation that American historians were “marking time”—that is, stuck in a rut—in their research on international affairs, are found in Edward P. Crapol, “Coming to Terms with Empire,” and Brian McKercher, “Reaching for the Brass Ring,” excellent historiographical essays in Michael Hogan’s *Paths to Power*.² The point of much of the scholarship on U.S. foreign policy in the

¹ William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: Norton, 1972), 109-61.

² Edward P. Crapol, “Coming to Terms with Empire: The Historiography of Late Nineteenth-Century American Foreign Relations,” in Michael J. Hogan, ed., *Paths to Power: The Historiography of American Foreign Relations to 1941* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 79-116; Brian McKercher, “Reaching

1920s and 1930s is that America was a commercial nation from its beginnings and that, despite a desire to limit political obligations after World War I, the United States was not only part of the world economy but had, by the interwar years, the world's most powerful national economy.³

Foster's evidence clearly documents what she characterizes as the American colonial model developed in the Philippines, which American officials in the era viewed as applicable throughout Southeast Asia. In the fashion of Williams' open door interpretation of American foreign policy, she contends that Americans were committed to free labor and free markets in a laissez-faire system. The U.S. concept of a free Philippines was one fully integrated into the global economic system increasingly dominated by the United States. As Williams notes and Foster documents, for this liberal economic system to work, the people of the Southeast Asian colonies would have to be tutored in self-sufficiency. Hence there was an ambivalence (and a potentially tragic contradiction of self-determination) that put the United States in the position of trying to shape this supposedly open system to fit American needs and expectations. These American efforts often did not sit well with European colonial officials, who feared resistance and nationalist desires among their subject peoples.

In what may be one of the most instructive parts of her argument, Foster discusses how the distinctively different global economic environments of the 1920s and 1930s shifted U.S. policies. In the 1920s, the booming U.S. economy, no better evidenced than by the need for rubber for the rapidly expanding automobile industry, put U.S. interests at odds with European colonial officials over price and production of strategic raw materials. The world economic depression of the 1930s and overt menace of Japan to the stability of Asia shifted the United States to more explicit support of the colonial order to safeguard America's interests. The parallels she draws between the Roosevelt administration's efforts to secure and stimulate America's domestic economy, through programs like the National Recovery Administration and Agricultural Adjustment Administration, with Washington's acceptance of a regulated colonial trade are further examples of Foster's deft analysis.

In important ways, Foster's monograph fits into and strengthens the now well-regarded open door historiography on U.S. foreign policy. U.S. efforts to get the powers to agree to the concept of neutralization of a free Philippines (inspired by the Washington Conference's 9-Power Treaty to ensure an Open Door in Asia), for example, shows the continuing influence of the concept of informal empire that would maximize economic opportunity and minimize political commitment. Her work also provides many examples, however, that are applicable to more recent scholarship on globalization. The current

for the Brass Ring: The Recent Historiography of Interwar American Foreign Relations," *ibid.*, 176-223. For Maier's challenge to historians of American foreign relations, see Charles S. Maier, "Marking Time: The Historiography of International Relations," in *The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States*, ed. Michael Kammen (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 355-87.

³ Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World* (New York: Norton, 2008), 180.

scholarly interest in global interdependence and global culture is a post-Cold War preoccupation reflecting the removal of the polarized ideological and political divide the world had known since World War II. Most students of globalization recognize, however, that the process predates the current era. The “empire of the mind” that Foster discerns from American movies and consumer products, and the inability of the United States to separate itself from the economic advantages of the colonial order, resonate with the cultural and commercial globalization that attracts the interest of international relations analysts today.

Indeed, in many ways, today’s debates over globalization continue the older debate over the meaning of empire and exceptionalism in the U.S. global experience. To cite just one example, international relations scholars are beginning to borrow social network analysis from the sociologists. Miles Kahler has edited a set of essays that explore what are labeled as “networks as structures” and “networks as actors.”⁴ Put simply, these concepts mean that global relations outcomes can result from structures without intentional design or from structures created by conscious collective action. Foster’s descriptions of how the United States operated both from within and from without the colonial institutions in place in Southeast Asia and her findings on how Hollywood films were both predictable and unpredictable in their effect on Southeast Asian viewers echo both the old open door paradigm and the new globalization models.

There are other rich veins that could be mined further in the fascinating archival sources Foster has uncovered in numerous countries and several languages. One particularly striking case that she uncovers is how the Western colonial powers responded to the Japanese seizure of Manchuria. Her analogy of Japan as a “sore tooth” that the Westerners knew needed attention but were avoiding treatment is marvelous (158). She notes that the United States and the other colonial powers shared the decision to accommodate Japan’s possession of Manchuria thinking that Tokyo might be content to join the existing colonial system. In other words, there would be a British Burma, French Indochina, Dutch East Indies, American Philippines, and Japanese Manchuria coexisting in an established colonial order. In retrospect, this hope appears fanciful, but in the context that Foster describes of how European and American officials were pragmatically coordinating their positions in face of the global depression, the possibility that Japan might have joined the club is not so farfetched. Working against this illusive alternative to a Pacific war, of course, were the ambition of powerful elements within Japan and the “decline of Western prestige in Asia,” Foster’s quotation from the ever prescient Edgar Snow (159). As Foster observes with regard to the Nghe-Tinh and Saya San rebellions in Indochina and Burma respectively, Westerners often were blind to the depths of anti-Western sentiment in Southeast Asia.

Foster’s monograph is an important contribution to our understanding of the continuities and contradictions in U.S. attitudes toward Southeast Asia and the perceptions of the United States by the peoples of the region well before the Cold War and the War in

⁴ Miles Kahler, ed., *Networked Politics: Agency, Power, and Governance* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009), 3-7.

Vietnam. It complements well the earlier work of Mark Bradley on Vietnam.⁵ The United States may not have been exceptional in its policies, but it was different. Its Philippine model often bedeviled European colonial officials, and it is significant, according to Foster, that the United States had no secret police agency in the Philippines as the other colonial administrations had in their colonies. At the end of the day, however, the United States was part of and supportive of the colonial system in Southeast Asia that continued to define Western relations with the region long after the colonists' flags were lowered in Rangoon, Hanoi, Batavia, and Manila.

⁵ Mark Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America: The Making of Postcolonial Vietnam, 1919-1950* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

Studies of United States relations with Southeast Asia have focused largely on the Cold War and the Vietnam War, leaving much about the American role in the region prior to the Second World War unexplored. The subject of imperialism in Southeast Asia has generated significant scholarship on the influence of the European powers in shaping colonial orders without examining that of the Americans. Moreover, not many historians have traced American economic, political, and cultural imprints on Southeast Asian societies during the early twentieth century. Professor Anne L. Foster's *Projections of Power: The United States and Europe in Colonial Southeast Asia, 1919-1941* fills these gaps in the existing historiography on U.S. foreign relations, imperialism, and Southeast Asian history. Based on sources in the Dutch, French, British, and U.S. archives, this book provides complex analyses of the political, economic, and diplomatic interactions among imperial powers vis-à-vis Southeast Asians during the crucial but somewhat understudied interwar period. In doing so, Professor Foster makes sense of the contradictions in the U.S. rhetoric of self-determination and actions in support of colonial rule, while calling attention to the problematic notion of American exceptionalism. She argues that a desire to maintain economic and political order informed the U.S. policy in the region, often to the benefit of the European colonizers and at the expense of Southeast Asians. While the Europeans regarded the U.S. as a force necessary for the region's stability, they also competed with the U.S. economically and feared the potentially undermining impact of American ideals and culture which entered their colonies through U.S. consumer goods and movies. According to Professor Foster, the U.S. presence shaped the way Europeans perceived themselves, their power, and the security of their colonial regimes in the region. Southeast Asians, on the other hand, could identify themselves with one another through their struggles against and experiences living within the social and economic structures of colonialism.

Professor Foster makes a compelling case that U.S. imperialism warrants reexamination. Often viewed as a reluctant imperialist, the U.S. emerged from the First World War as the winner of "the public opinion battle" for its proclaimed support of self-determination (16). Yet Washington's approach to the colonial regimes in Southeast Asia reflected pragmatic views of American economic and political interests that coexisted with and occasionally compromised this idealism. As a major importer of the region's raw materials, the U.S. assumed an economically vital position in Southeast Asia. Washington exerted its influence in opening doors for American goods and capital investments in the colonial economies, while ensuring steady supply of key commodities including oil, rubber, and tin for American business. During the boom time of the 1920's, Americans saw the benefits of encouraging exports from indigenous rubber planters, not only because these producers carried lower costs and thus offered better prices compared to the European-owned operations, but also because such an enterprise would lead to "self-sufficiency among the Southeast Asians, an important early step on the way to economic and political independence" (140). The economic sphere, however, served as a ground for not only competition but also cooperation among Americans and Europeans. During the Great Depression, the U.S. eventually set aside its belief in free market forces and worked with the European powers to influence rather than obstruct their efforts to regulate the supply

and prices of rubber. The initial U.S. resistance to such an economic intervention gave way to the necessity dictated by international circumstances. In collaborating with the European powers, the United States helped shore up their colonial empires in Southeast Asia.

In the political realm, U.S. power could both threaten and bolster the European regimes in Southeast Asia. In the face of Japan's imperial ambitions, the Europeans perceived the U.S. presence in the region as crucial, albeit unreliable. The potential independence of the Philippines raised fears, particularly of the Dutch, that such a development in the American colony would pave the way for Japan's expansion to the south at the risk of their colony. The U.S. example in the Philippines also could inspire the colonial subjects to rebel. Washington, however, did cooperate with the European powers in coping with the threats of Japan, and importantly, of communism. Through her discussion of the imperial powers' responses to the spread of Bolshevism, Professor Foster significantly addresses a problem in the scholarship of the Cold War that tends to overlook the challenges posed by communism during the interwar years. She points out that the European and American authorities had already identified communism as a major security concern in the region well before 1945. Perceiving the danger of communist ideas to their colonial empires, the Europeans attempted to counter the growing communist movements by sharing intelligence and coordinating on arrests of communist agents. The exchange of information, regular consultation on security matters, and visits among colonial authorities forged a sense of solidarity among the European colonizers. American officials, who by the 1920's had already "decided that communism and legitimate nationalism were mutually exclusive," also joined the efforts against communism informally, but regularly (40). From the perspective of U.S. authorities, communist appeals to colonized populations of Southeast Asia proved that "communism was a global and undifferentiated threat" (25). In order to deal with "dangerous new choices" introduced by communism, as Professor Foster illustrates with the pursuit and arrest of PKI leader Tan Malaka in Manila, the U.S. colonial authorities were willing to disregard the principles of justice in keeping the colony "safe for democracy" (37). From Professor Foster's account, the Second World War appeared more like a brief respite to the developing hostility towards communism, rather than its beginning.

The cultural impact brought into Southeast Asia through U.S. goods, missionaries, and Hollywood films also was a cause for concern for the Europeans. Professor Foster does a great job of showing that these cultural mediums, whether designed to propagate capitalism, Christian gospels, or American entertainment, all carried political implications and served as instruments through which the colonized peoples could work towards self-rule. The Americans believed that in order for Southeast Asians to become fit for self-government, they must first be sufficiently transformed into producers and consumers of capitalistic goods as part of the international economy. U.S. manufactured goods, along with direct investments in factories that employed and trained natives in American work ethics, raised the standard of living for Southeast Asians, while acculturating them to the American way of life. American missionaries helped expand westernized education, while encouraging locals to take charge of church administration, a small opportunity to practice self-government. No less alarming to the European colonial rulers were the potentially

subversive effects of American movies. Apart from the “routine of freedom” conveyed through Hollywood films, scenes of gun fights and disobedience to authorities provided examples that Europeans did not wish natives to emulate. Moreover, Professor Foster notes that the portrayal of Europeans and Americans acting in sexually suggestive manners “may have reinforced the diminution in European prestige generally, after the senseless carnage of the First World War” (104). Colonial authorities therefore targeted sex and violence in their censorship of movies, to which American officials willingly cooperated. Although Southeast Asian viewers might understand the intended messages of these movies differently, the experience with this form of entertainment began to alter their perceptions about their identities. Through films, the colonized peoples, literate or illiterate, “could create their own images of the rest of the world, and of their place in it, with less and less reference to the images provided by colonial governments” (104). This chapter, entitled “An Empire of the Mind,” will appeal especially to those interested in consumerism and modernity in Southeast Asia. Cultural diplomatic historians will find particularly interesting the American cultural invasion of Southeast Asia in the 1920’s, where Hollywood already served as an American cultural attaché and would become more so during the Cold War.

In spite of the potentially undermining influence of the U.S., in the end Americans, including officials, missionaries, and businessmen, acted in support of the European rule. Whereas they “sided with Europeans in nearly all cases” of disputes between Europe and Southeast Asia, the Americans also were able to maintain the image of “the U.S. as a potential source of change” in the eyes of Southeast Asians (178). Indeed, Washington’s concurrent advocacy of self-rule and support for empire at the end of the Second World War followed the pattern of the U.S. policy during the interwar years. In examining the U.S. relations with the Europeans in colonial Southeast Asia, Professor Foster puts forward an important argument that after 1945 the U.S. “support for independence, rather than support for continued European rule, is what needs to be explained” (179). Also significant is the continuity of the main tenets of U.S. foreign policy between the first and the second halves of the twentieth century that her work illustrates. Scholars of the Cold War in Southeast Asia will appreciate the evidence of the imperial powers’ efforts to deal with communist threats during the 1920’s in this book. *Projections of Power* also renders the narrative of Southeast Asian history during late imperialism richer and more nuanced. With its role and presence, the U.S. was an important player in the region, one that affected the ways in which Europeans and Southeast Asians assessed their opportunities and limitations. Professor Foster successfully reconstructs colonial Southeast Asia with the U.S. in it, while bringing back the U.S. role in colonial Southeast Asia for scholars of imperialism and U.S. foreign relations to ponder.

Projections of Power is ground-breaking. It ties together the histories of U.S. foreign, economic, and cultural relations, European colonialism, and Southeast Asia. The research on which the arguments are based is remarkable, the extensive use of multilingual and multi-archival sources praiseworthy. Professor Foster’s book will engage scholars of U.S. foreign relations, imperialism, and Southeast Asian history, while representing a significant contribution to the historiography of international history. This reviewer has only a few minor comments. Firstly, Professor Foster is more thorough with the Europeans’ views of

the U.S., but less so with Southeast Asians' perspectives, especially in terms of the comparisons between the U.S. and Europeans as imperialists. The wealth of information on the Netherlands Indies in this book is excellent, but a little imbalanced when compared with the British, French, and American colonies. The book's contents are quite specialized, and some historical background is left out. This could be challenging for readers without adequate knowledge of the economics of international trade and Southeast Asian history. Nevertheless, *Projections of Power* will secure a place on the reading lists of U.S. foreign relations and Southeast Asian history alongside Professor Emily S. Rosenberg's *Financial Missionaries to the World: The Politics and Culture of Dollar Diplomacy, 1900-1930*, and Professor Thongchai Winichakul's *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation*.¹

¹ Emily S. Rosenberg, *Financial Missionaries to the World: The Politics and Culture of Dollar Diplomacy, 1900-1930* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994).

Hiding in Plain Sight: U.S. Imperial Power in Southeast Asia

Anne Foster's *Projections of Power: the United States and Europe in Colonial Southeast Asia, 1919-1941* is a significant scholarly achievement which helps to reshape our understanding of U.S. power in Southeast Asia on the eve of its global ascendance. Recalling comparative works such as Mark Bradley's *Imagining America and Vietnam* and Thomas Schoonover's *Uncle Sam's War of 1898 and the Origins of Globalization* she makes the case that the U.S. was "a full partner with European powers in efforts to create and maintain a viable colonial order in SEA" (1). In doing so, Foster challenges the "American exceptionalism" of pre-World War II U.S. imperial studies, which she argues rarely subjects the U.S. to comparative analysis "except as a case against which others may be measured," rather than as a constitutive partner in the evolution and circulation of imperial practices.(4)

Foster's methodological and analytical challenge is to place the U.S. role in Southeast Asia in its proper perspective. Few Americans in the early twentieth century knew or cared much about the region, aside from the Philippines, and the U.S. presence remained the province - to take liberty with Emily Rosenberg's famous formulation - of capitalists, Christians and consuls. The goals of each were broadly congruent: to continue prying open the region to U.S. economic, cultural and political influence, respectively, while seeking after 1919 to contain the challenges of Bolshevism, radical nationalism and a restive and rising Japan. If U.S. officials "worked easily with European officials on many issues," it was because of their "shared outlook and common identity," broadly supportive of continued imperial rule in the region insofar as it was compatible with American ambitions.(15) The global depression of the 1930s and the Japanese threat to Southeast Asia, far from undermining U.S. officials' support for European colonialism, as some historians have argued, in Foster's view actually reinforced it, while giving Britain, the Netherlands and France an increased stake in encouraging a greater American role in the region in spite of the attendant risks.

Southeast Asia in the interwar period might profitably be viewed as a series of overlapping imperial systems whose metropole-colony linkages were being broken down by other, integrative regional processes. In the immediate aftermath of the First World War the most pressing of these, in the view of both European and U.S. officials, were rising Japanese power and nascent Bolshevism. The response to Japan, Foster shows, was reasonably straightforward - enmeshment in a Washington Treaty system that would in theory treat Tokyo as an equal of the U.S. and European powers and give it a stake in the preservation of regional order.

Developing a common response to Bolshevism, the founding of local Communist parties, and the circulation of anticolonial radicals throughout the region proved trickier. Until 1927 informal modes of cooperation - from which the U.S. was "strikingly absent" (25) - seemed to suffice. An unsuccessful rebellion that year by the Netherlands Indies-based

Perserikatan Kommunist di India (PKI), however, raised fears of possible Communist revolt throughout the region. Although Foster shows that the UK, France and U.S. were all skeptical that 'international Communism' rather than local forces were responsible for the revolt, all saw the need for greater police cooperation and intelligence sharing. U.S. officials in Manila, for example, had no problem tracking, arresting and deporting nationalist and Communist leader Tan Malaka (37), while other colonial officials resisted requests that contravened local laws even as they sought greater regional coordination.

Although U.S. and European officials shared a common concern with Bolshevism and anticolonial radicalism more generally, they departed sharply over the question of trade. The First World War disrupted mercantile colonial trade links, spurring a growth in regional trade, production for local markets and direct trade with the U.S., Japan, and China. While European officials sought the restoration of prewar trading patterns, their U.S. counterparts prioritized self-sufficiency (meaning direct trade links with European colonies and direct control over strategic raw materials), the open door and the "Americanizing tendencies" that the latter presumably produced.

The voracious U.S. demand for rubber, tin and oil, and the leverage that these conferred on producing areas, helped to re-shape regional economic relations. Foster offers the best account of these crucial dynamics since Jonathan Marshall's *To Have and Have Not: Southeast Asian Raw Materials and the Origins of the Pacific War* (1995). Throughout the 1920s U.S. and Dutch officials sought to undermine British dominance of world rubber production, encouraging smallholder production in Indonesia to reduce prices and seeking to facilitate direct American investment in order to reduce dependence on British-owned plantations. Meanwhile, Goodyear and U.S. Rubber, the two main U.S. rubber plantation owners, touted themselves as "a model for Europeans and Southeast Asians of progressive, modern, scientific, efficient production" (56, 88-90).

Similar considerations underlay the U.S. effort to gain oil concessions in the Netherlands Indies, though Foster might have done more to stress the sectoral competition between firms as well as the geopolitical competition among states. Although both British and Dutch officials saw in American efforts a "changing regional balance of power," fears of Japan's regional ambitions tempered their concern. Washington suggested, to general Dutch agreement, that the Netherlands had "a better chance of ultimately resisting the Japanese by inviting American capital into the region than by excluding it" (64). Given its potentially decisive economic power in the region, Foster finds it striking "how limited U.S. goals were" - lower rubber prices and greater U.S. access to oil concessions, rather than actions that implied "an American commitment to uphold a particular political constellation in the region," imperial or otherwise (70).

Just as American businessmen believed that U.S. trade and investment in the region "benefited Americans and Southeast Asians alike," so too did a wide range of Americans trust in the potential of American culture to "produce modernity" (43, 70). Lacking the capacity to directly project power in the region that they had after 1945, U.S. officials implicitly relied on American movies, missionaries, labor management techniques and marketing to effect the "transformations of everyday life taking place in Southeast Asia"

(74) that might eventually make self-rule more feasible. Foster provides a wide-ranging discussion of these transformations, highlighting both the ubiquity of U.S. cultural transfer in the interwar period and its ambivalent reception by both colonial officials and - to the extent that extant sources can reveal this - Southeast Asians themselves. French colonial officials in Indochina, to cite but one example, worried about the nationalistic implications of the U.S. Christian Missionary Alliance, which expanded educational opportunities for local residents and promoted indigenous church leaders even as it reproduced the paternalistic ethos that often marked progressive activism. Their Dutch counterparts fretted about the permissive sexual and political mores portrayed in American films, while budding nationalist leaders such as Indonesia's Sukarno wondered at the "possibility of material success for the 'poor boy' or the existence of a nation where 'mechanics possess cars.'"(103)

Many of these possibilities dissipated after 1929, as a global depression revealed to Southeast Asians the vulnerabilities created by enmeshment in the world economy and imperial trading structures. The subsequent turn towards autarchy and closed trading systems virtually everywhere presented U.S. officials with a dilemma: whether to continue pushing the open door or accept various forms of interventionism that might stabilize commodity production even at the expense of U.S. and local producers. As Foster illustrates, U.S. officials over the course of the 1930s reluctantly acceded to the latter, accepting cartel arrangements such as the International Rubber Regulation Committee while pressing successfully for an end to Dutch penal sanctions on tobacco plantations that seemed to violate U.S. conceptions of fair labor practices (121-126, 135).

As the depression deepened in the 1930s, colonial officials in the region faced two challenges for which there were no easy answers - "insistently growing nationalism" and "increasingly worrisome signs of Japan's expansionist desires." Although U.S. officials listened sympathetically when British, French and Dutch officials attempted to blame renewed uprisings in Southeast Asia on the Soviet Union and international Communism, Foster argues, they also viewed repression as a far less effective response than gestures towards limited self-rule, as British officials experimented with in Burma after 1935 or the U.S. did itself when planning for Philippines independence. (168-170). U.S. officials, in Foster's reading, appear to have been less critical of European colonial rule than Mark Bradley and others have suggested. In any case, by this point the most immediate threat to Southeast Asia's colonial system was no longer local uprisings but Japanese power, a development that colonial officials were united in opposing and that seemed to require a far greater American commitment, even at the high price such a commitment was likely to carry.

Projections of Power concludes, echoing Arne Westad, that "similar experiences with European and American rule and influence, and with struggles against that influence, helped Southeast Asians to see themselves as linked in important ways." American engagement with Southeast Asia may have held out liberating possibilities, "but when Depression threatened viability of the system, these same Americans collaborated with Europeans to ensure the survival of the system, even at some cost to American interests."(175,177)

Foster makes fine use of a wide range of sources, including little consulted Dutch and French records that give voice to official views regarding the deepening U.S. presence. Given her goals – as well as the relative brevity of the book – she might have devoted significantly more attention to the engagement of Southeast Asian’s colonial subjects with the various manifestations of U.S. power in the region, as well as to bureaucratic conflicts among American officials regarding the limits of U.S. collaboration with colonial rule. But these are minor concerns. Anne Foster has written a fine and provocative book, and largely succeeds in integrating the United States into the history of interwar Southeast Asia in ways that neither read as prelude to the Cold War nor exaggerate American difference in its colonial attitudes and practices.

How might we assess the role played by the United States in the region which is today known as Southeast Asia during the period between the two great global wars? And how did this role mirror, diverge from, or bluntly counteract the policies of the European powers in the region during the same period? In this volume, Anne Foster suggests the importance of studying this 1919-1941 period given that “nearly all works on United States relations with Southeast Asia have traditionally started their analyses with 1945 or perhaps 1941.” (p. 9) Within this work we have the thesis (or possibly antithesis) that the inter-war period was key both in itself and in terms of the later development of United States’ relations with Southeast Asia, and is therefore certainly worthy of close examination. This is particularly so, Foster suggests, in order to study the contradiction between the imperialist actions and anticolonial sentiments observed in the United States’ engagement with Southeast Asia and with the European powers engaged therein. Specifically, the author claims that “by placing the imperial experiences of Europeans, Americans and Southeast Asians within one analytical framework, this book explains aspects of that imperial system previously difficult to understand.” (p. ix)

How successful is the author in achieving this? The suggestion that there was “an” imperial system in place in Southeast Asia in the early twentieth century certainly requires more interrogation than the author offers. Were there not many imperial systems interplaying during this period? Did there exist “a system” by which these various imperialisms interacted and were separately manifested? Evidence suggests not. Certainly the experiences of the Southeast Asians get short shrift in this analysis with only one-tenth of the personal names in the index being those of Southeast Asian persons. So let us examine the work less as one which gives equal attention to the experiences of “Europeans, Americans and Southeast Asians,” and more as a study of the comparative colonialisms of the European powers and the United States.

The basic theses pursued can be assessed in chapter order. In “New Threats and New Opportunities,” the opening chapter of the work, Foster examines how the United States’ presence in Southeast Asia came to be and how the U.S. acted intermittently in collaboration with the European colonial regimes on issues of common concern. This gave rise to obvious contradictions between its anticolonialist pronouncements and its implicit endorsement of the colonial order through, for example, opposition to Bolshevik threats to that order. The new forces which threatened European and American colonial administrations in Southeast Asia are subsumed in this chapter essentially under this single topic—international Communism-- and the chapter interrogates the gradual movement towards cooperation between the British, French, Dutch and Americans in the gathering and use of intelligence on Communists in Southeast Asia, and even in the temporary arrest and prosecution of Tan Malaka, the prominent Indonesian communist leader.

However, Communism was not the only concern of the European colonialists in the region. Any cursory examination of the intelligence reports of the British and Dutch governments during the 1920s will reveal a far broader perception of risks to colonial administrations beyond Bolshevism. In 1922, for example, a Singapore intelligence organ noted “India” as heading the list of external threats to Malaya, principally due to “active sedition and non-cooperation,” followed by the Netherlands East Indies (“where sedition was rife”), Siam, with possible movements against the throne, China, which was essentially without a government, and Japan, where “dangerous [Indian] sedition” existed. Internal threats within Malaya included religious troubles among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs and “active agents” employed by the Japanese, the pan-Islamists and the seditionists. There was an almost pathological concern with pan-Islam in Southeast Asia and elsewhere among the British and the Dutch, particularly with the emergence of the Khilafat Movement (1919-24), a political campaign which had diverse pan-Islamic and anti-British elements. The movement grew out of the defeat of the Ottoman Empire during World War I, and was essentially aimed at preserving the position of the sultan of Turkey, the Caliph of global Islam. Great swathes of British Malayan intelligence reports detail the activities of Indian, Javanese and Malayan pan-Islamic activists in Southeast Asia, India and the Middle East. But we look in vain in *Projections of Power* for even a mention of Islam, much less its role in galvanizing European colonial intelligence agencies in Southeast Asia prior to the switch in their concerns to international communism in the late 1920s. Is this because the United States’ colonial administration in the Philippines saw little threat in pan-Islamic movements or in Islam as a nationalist coagulant? We do not know because the book does not mention Islam at all. A book dealing with threats to colonial administrations in Southeast Asia between the wars which does not mention Islam is an incomplete work. The perception of Japan as a potential threat to these colonial regimes, present and widely represented throughout the 1920s, is addressed within *Projections of Power* in a later chapter but essentially only for the 1930s.

The economic expansion of U.S. interests in Southeast Asia during the inter-war period provides the grist for Chapter 2, “The Highways of Trade will be Highways of Peace.” This was a sphere in which the United States competed with the European colonial powers as a result of changed economic situations emergent from World War One. Tin and rubber were essential commodities for the rapidly-developing American economy and the figures provided (p. 49) show a burgeoning economic relationship between Malaya and the Netherlands Indies -- the major producers of these commodities -- and the U.S. through the 1910s and 1920s, while the British made eventually unsuccessful efforts to maintain absolute control over the global rubber market. But it was oil which had “a national, strategic importance dwarfing all other commodities as early as the 1920s,” (p. 64) and the see-sawing battle between the European colonial powers (particularly the Netherlands Indies) and the United States, which led to the granting of oil concessions to an American company, is described in detail. With the majority of the region’s oil exports being channelled to the United States, new dependencies were created within and beyond Southeast Asia. But despite its new economic interests in the region, there was no commitment that the United States would defend the political status quo in the region should war break out. Foster suggests that a major contradiction in this sphere can be observed between the actions of Americans – hiring indigenous people for jobs previously

reserved for Europeans or Chinese and “encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit of Southeast Asians” (for which some case studies would have been useful) – and the apparent acceptance of traditional imperialism. Foster sums up the economic imperatives of the Americans as being reflected in the idea that “If imperialism could adapt to the changing economic conditions, that was fine with the United States officials and businessmen. If imperialism could not adapt, then it would come to be replaced by something else.” (p. 71)

The expanding influence of American cultural products is discussed in the third chapter. Foster underlines that, while the Charlie Chaplin movies, Californian raisins, and Chevrolets which entered Southeast Asia were commercial products, these were inextricably tied to U.S. political goals in the region. The Americans (presumably both state and business) “believed that American cultural influence produced modernity” and that “these Southeast Asians would evolve, perhaps slowly but steadily, into people deserving of self-rule.” While the American mission schools may well have had a great effect in fostering an enthusiasm for things American, we read within this chapter that “Across the board, most Southeast Asians from traditionalists to Marxists appeared to have welcomed American culture,” (p. 75) with the claim being substantiated by little in the way of evidence. A few pages later we then read, in explanation of negative views on the missionaries, that “many Europeans and Southeast Asians alike believed that the missionaries were proselytizers for Americanism as much as for Christianity.” (p. 77)

The model role of the Philippines, and especially the Commonwealth of the Philippines after 1935, was promoted by the United States through much of the 1920s and 1930s as demonstrating the way in which to run a colony, premised on benevolent American paternalism. Foster is novel in suggesting the great importance of the Philippines for the other colonial powers in Southeast Asia. She suggests that whatever policy the United States pursued in the Philippines “had important implications for the surrounding countries. Britain, France and especially the Netherlands had to attempt to predict what the United States might do, and what the effect on their own colonies might be.” (p. 86) Given the very innovative nature of this claim and its importance to the overall thesis, further documentary evidence might have been offered in support.

While the author suggests that the promotion of American trade with the region was generally uninhibited by political or ethical concerns, her study of U.S. investment in the region includes the claim that what might be called “liberal developmentalism” saw enlightened U.S. companies engaged in efforts to raise the standard of living of their workers. This proposed dichotomy between American and European companies also needs to be better documented. A post-war Senate document whereby Standard Oil gave testimony as to its beneficence in the Netherlands Indies (p. 201, note 43) is perhaps not the perfect document on which to extrapolate. General Motors’ factory in Batavia is further held up as a model of modern employment practices without any comparison with the enterprises of European ownership around Southeast Asia. (p. 90)

Foster characterises the American dilemma vis-à-vis Southeast Asia by the early 1930s through the following dichotomy: “A visceral desire to turn the collective American back on

the world that proved too threatening or complicated, and an equally powerful desire to transform the world.” (p. 112) Regardless of which was foremost, it was certainly the case that Southeast Asia was affected by the global economic downturn known as the Great Depression. The question is to what degree the effects on the region were the result of U.S. involvement in the Southeast Asian economies and to what extent this was caused by the Southeast Asian engagement with European economies. Likely both were factors.

Trade wars continued between the American and European colonialists of Southeast Asia during the 1930s, particularly with respect of tobacco and rubber. But it was the changing political environment in the region which was to cause greatest concern, with the nationalist Nghe Tinh and Saya San rebellions occurring in French Indo-China and British Burma respectively. Initial steps began to be taken in some colonies in the direction of eventual self-rule. Japanese power was also burgeoning in terms of increased territorial control and as a potential threat to the imperial powers of Southeast Asia. The European powers were anxious that they would be able to call on the forces of the United States if these issues came to threaten the status quo, but Roosevelt’s neutralisation proposal and intended dismantling of nearly all fortifications in the Pacific brought new concern to the European powers. It was a concern based on realism. The inability of the British, French and Dutch (and even the United States) to defend their interests in the region was to be clearly demonstrated in late 1941.

Overall, Foster suggests first that the United States policies with respect to Southeast Asia changed very little during this inter-war period in that the U.S. wished to maintain the colonial order unless it could be changed without a threat to its economic interests. Secondly, Foster avers that due to the influence of the United States’ government and business during this period in terms of investment and trade policies, cultural products and personal involvement, “twentieth-century imperialism in the region needs to be rethought.” (p. 175) This rethinking, in the author’s view, has two elements. The first is that the United States and its economic agents need to be brought more fully into the history of inter-war Southeast Asia, with it being noted that “Twentieth-century imperialism, especially in Southeast Asia, is inexplicable without attention to the nature and effects of the United States exercise of imperial power.” (p. 176) The second aspect is that the existing structure of American foreign policy studies needs to be expanded. By questioning the canard of “American isolationism” prior to World War II and demonstrating the engagement of the United States’ government with foreign lands in Southeast Asia during this period (not to mention earlier efforts in Guam, Samoa and Hawaii), Foster joins the revisionist historians of the Wisconsin School.

There are some minor historical errors which creep in, with it being claimed for example that “no battles occurred in colonial Southeast Asia” (p. 16) during the First World War. This claim ignores the Battle of Penang in October 1914 when the German cruiser *Emden* attacked the port of Georgetown sinking two Allied warships, and also the mutiny of the Fifth Native Light Infantry in Singapore in February 1915, which was at least in part the result of the soldiers’ allegiances to the Caliphate in Turkey.

Does the overall thesis hold up? Certain aspects do, as detailed above. But the overall question of how relevant and influential the United States actually was in Southeast Asia beyond the Philippines can be explored further. In many places in the text, specific documentation to evidence the claims the author makes about what people believed and what trends were occurring is lacking, and there is thus sometimes a sneaking concern that perhaps not all of the ideas or trends were as profound or as influential as the author suggests. A different selection of data could paint a very different story. While a wide range of materials from various traditions is included in the bibliography, it is predominantly American sources which are used to support the conclusions. The ideas and actions of Southeast Asians are sidelined with Sukarno and U Nu being cited, for example, only to demonstrate the importance of movie theaters to Southeast Asians. The omission of materials on Islamic trends and potential threats to colonial power in the region noted above and the failure to mention the roles of Pan-Asianists in changing regional and nationalist political perceptions, suggests that the story as seen from the American prism is only one of many. Was it the case that collaborations forged between the European and Americans in the 1920s in Southeast Asia persisted “throughout the interwar period and into the cold war,” (p. 41) or were these alliances forged more fully across the Atlantic? Again it depends on which sources one reads.

That said, there can be no doubt that the author has opened up key ground for further investigation. The empirical materials are of unquestionable value and enable us to see economic influences perhaps previously ignored. Further studies from British, French, Dutch, Chinese, Japanese and indeed Southeast Asian perspectives, particularly on the role and influence of the United States in the region between the wars, will help to better locate this period in global and imperial history and will ensure a richer and more textured understanding of the Southeast Asian past.

Author's Response by Anne L. Foster, Indiana State University

I am grateful to David Anderson, Sudina Paungpetch, Brad Simpson, and Geoff Wade for their helpful and generous comments on my book, and to Kenton Clymer for his insightful introduction. I appreciate the care with which they evidently read, and it is a real pleasure to have a chance to continue the conversation, and perhaps raise a few points for further consideration by H-Diplo readers.

I thought I'd use my space to respond to issues which were raised by all four reviewers, as well as to offer two observations/questions I still think about in relation to this project.

Common to all four responses is a wish that Southeast Asian voices had been more prominent and less mediated. I think if I were a reviewer of this work, I would have written that comment as well. It is an imbalance, caused in a prosaic way by my inability to read Southeast Asian languages, but more fundamentally related to the ways that colonial state archives preserve, and don't, Southeast Asian voices. Those voices have been recorded in various ways and places, however, as can be seen in the work of Mark Bradley and Rudolf Mrazek among others, and I hope that scholars will continue to seek the many different ways Southeast Asians knew and perceived the wider world, perhaps newly inspired by my book to look in some different places.¹

Geoff Wade suggests that this absence, along with my inattention to some key important developments of Southeast Asian history at the time, makes *Projections of Power* an incomplete work, which does not achieve its ambition of redrawing our picture of imperialism in Southeast Asia. His comment is inspiring and daunting, as I think about what a complete history of imperial Southeast Asia in the early twentieth century might look like. As he rightly notes, Southeast Asians drew political inspiration from Islam and pan-Asiatic ideas. I discussed the influence of Marxism and American political thought. Southeast Asians also read European Enlightenment figures, followed the Chinese Revolution, and evoked their own political traditions and prophecies. And that's just what was happening in the political realm. I made choices, one of which was to attempt to discuss aspects of political, economic and cultural change in one narrative; another was to attempt to look at issues of regional concern. The result provides a different angle from which to view imperialism in Southeast Asia, although not a full panorama.

All four reviewers in some way noted that my analysis fits within the Revisionist or Wisconsin School. Given the range of backgrounds of these reviewers, I found that intriguing. Indeed, I am interested in the relationship between domestic and international politics in the United States, and especially in the ways that Americans perceive and use their economic power. *Projections of Power* extends traditional revisionist analysis in at

¹ Mark P. Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America: The Making of Postcolonial Vietnam, 1919-1950* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000) and Rudolf Mrazek, *Engineers of Happy Land: Technology and Nationalism in a Colony* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002). See also Shawn F. McHale, *Print and Power: Confucianism, Communism, and Buddhism in the Making of Modern Vietnam* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).

least two ways, however. Most importantly, I emphasize that the United States was not merely an informal empire. U.S. officials were first and foremost interested in the ability of the United States to achieve its political and strategic goals. If doing so meant being a colonial power, that was fine with them. A second way that I extend revisionism is in exploring the ways in which the U.S. exercise of power was shaped in part by the interactions with other powers in other parts of the world. The sources of U.S. conduct were not merely found in the United States.

Reading and responding to reviews of one's book provides a great chance for reflection on the questions which prompted me to begin this project and those which I encountered along the way. One that I grappled with the whole time, and still do, concerns the nature of U.S. power and how that power is exerted in the world. I am intrigued by the way that the United States has used its soft power, to use a contemporary term, so effectively to promote U.S. interests but how "hard power" is so frequently at the core of that soft power. That observation is not particularly novel, but it is endlessly fascinating to explore the ramifications of the intertwined nature of hard and soft power, the ways in which the public reliance on soft power opens the United States, rightly so, to charges of hypocrisy and contradiction, and, pertinent as I write, the ways in which people in other countries seize on the American values and ideals which make up a large part of U.S. soft power and turn them to their own ends.

A second issue that I continue to reflect on from this project is more methodological: What are the ways in which we can write international or transnational histories? Scholars of foreign relations history adopted international history methodologies relatively quickly. Learn another language, deepen one's study of another country, spend some time in one or more "foreign" archives, and you can write a history from the perspective of both nation-states. Transnational histories also have become quite sophisticated, looking at histories of ideas (development, human rights) or organizations (typically what we now call NGOs) or sometimes movements (temperance) across national boundaries. But how do we "bring the state back in" (to quote Theda Skocpol)² while writing about people and events and movements which are not necessarily tied to those states? That is a difficult but necessary task.

Thanks again to the four reviewers for their thoughtful attention to my argument and sympathetic readings, and to the editors of H-Diplo for the chance to continue this conversation.

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² Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research," in [Peter B. Evans](#), [Dietrich Rueschemeyer](#), and [Theda Skocpol](#) (eds.), *Bringing the State Back In*, (Cambridge University Press, 1985).

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