

# H-Diplo ROUNDTABLE XXII-33

**Eric Zolov.** *The Last Good Neighbor: Mexico in the Global Sixties.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2020.  
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 INTRODUCTION BY VANNI PETTINÀ, EL COLEGIO DE MÉXICO
 

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Over the last twenty years Eric Zolov has become an important and respected voice in the fields of Mexican and Latin American contemporary history. Since the publication of his first monograph, *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), his work has given an important contribution to our understanding of the complex intertwining of Mexican politics and culture in the context of what his own work has helped to define as the long/global 1960s.<sup>1</sup> Among other contributions, Zolov's research has been particularly important in helping historians to recognize that the emergence of a Latin American New Left cannot be understood exclusively as a political phenomenon, mostly related to guerrilla movements popping up in the region during the 1960s. Instead, it has to be read against the broader backdrop of a generational break with traditional cultural canons, taking place on different levels between the end of the 1950s and the 1960s on a global, regional and national scale.

Readers will be pleased to find out that Zolov's long awaited new book, *The Last Good Neighbor: Mexico in the Global Sixties*, bridges the author's usual interest in the cultural implications of Mexican political processes with a new emphasis on the international dimension of such dynamics. *The Last Good Neighbor* focuses on the analysis of what the author defines as Mexico's 'global pivot' during the 1960s, a topic which, as Zolov's correctly argues, historiography has until very recently largely neglected. By global pivot, Zolov indicates the country's attempt to undertake a much more dynamic role on the international stage, pushing Mexico's foreign policy beyond the traditional boundaries of its bilateral relation with the United States. According to Zolov, during the presidency of Adolfo López Mateos (1958-1964), México sought to proactively join a global attempt undertaken by recently decolonized countries to redefine "the rules of global trade and development" (2). For Mexico, this mainly meant building new multilateral alliances and finding new partners to counterbalance "the preponderant influence of the United States" (3).

Trying to make sense of Mexico's internationalism during the 1960s, Zolov weaves a nuanced and cohesive narrative which draws on an analysis of the country's domestic factors - both political and cultural- but also of the international structures underlying such a strategy. In particular, Zolov's account identifies three 'arcs' as vectors for his explanations of the rationales motivating Mexico's international streak during the 1960s. On the one hand, the author focuses on López Mateos's interaction with the country's left as a first driver of his international outreach. Rather than a strategy of mere appeasement of the riotous Mexican left, Zolov, in what represents one of the most original parts of his work, convincingly argues that former president Lázaro Cárdenas was actually López Mateos' appreciated interlocutor and a respected source of inspiration for the forging of his own internationalist strategy. On the other hand, the book explores how Mexico's dependent relationship with the United States pushed the president to find in the international system a leverage to contain Washington's hegemonic projections. The fact that U.S. foreign policy towards Mexico was still infused with the spirit of Good Neighbor diplomacy, according to Zolov, allowed López Mateos to develop a more autonomous international strategy without suffering a backlash on its diplomatic relationship with Washington. Finally, Zolov explores the new opportunities which the consolidation of Third Worldism offered to Mexico, in terms of political and economic diversification, during the 1960s. Although *The Last Good Neighbor* concludes that Mexico's internationalism did not achieve relevant practical results, especially in terms of economic diversification, it represented an important foundation for the more aggressive globalist approach developed by the country during the 1970s.

Focusing on Mexico's global interactions, Zolov's book joins a new wave of revisionist historical inquiries into Mexican contemporary history, undertaken by authors like Renata Keller, Christy Thornton, Patrick Iber, Ariel Rodríguez Kuri and Soledad Loaeza, among others.<sup>2</sup> These historians have departed from the 'usual suspects' of Mexican post-World War II

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<sup>1</sup> Eric Zolov, *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

<sup>2</sup> Renata Keller, *Mexico's Cold War: Cuba, the United States, and the Legacy of the Mexican Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Christy Thornton, *Revolution in Development: Mexico and the Governance of the Global Economy* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2021); Patrick Iber, *Neither Peace nor Freedom: The Cultural Cold War in Latin America* (Cambridge,

history, such as the 1968 Tlatelolco massacre or the country's relationship with the United States, to explore new, uncharted spaces like Mexico's developmental strategies, the relationship with revolutionary Cuba, the geopolitics of the 1968 Olympic Games, Mexico's cultural Cold War or the history of the impact of international dynamics on Mexican presidentialism during the bipolar conflict. An important merit of the book is indeed its having taken seriously Mexico's attempt to diversify its political and economic relations during the 1960, against a historiographical backdrop which has usually interpreted such actions as mere tactical or rhetorical maneuvering that was undertaken by the post-revolutionary regime in order to coopt the domestic left or beef-up its nationalistic rhetoric for internal consumption<sup>3</sup>.

Acknowledging Zolov's originality and solid research, the reviewers find much to praise in his new book, although some also disagree with specific aspects of it. Eric Gettig argues that Zolov "succeeds" in offering a "revisionist interpretation" of the intertwining of Mexican political, cultural, and international dynamics during the 1960s. The book, for Gettig, helps connect Mexican history with the new historiography which has recently tried to explore the global dynamics defining the 1960s. According to Gettig, Zolov's book offers an original reinterpretation of the unfolding of Mexican "politics and foreign policy and of the international history of Latin America in the world." Gettig also positively highlights the eclectic methodology Zolov employs and which effectively and simultaneously uses political, cultural, and diplomatic history approaches. Against this backdrop, Gettig highlights some issues left uncovered by the book. Particularly, he points out the economic rationales underlying Mexico's global pivot, the need to address the role of the conservative actors in shaping Mexican politics and foreign policy and, finally, the impact of race in influencing the country's attempt to interact with former colonial areas of the world.

For Christy Thornton, Zolov's books "is a masterful example" of a new historiographical wave which, focusing on previously neglected topics, is expanding our historical understanding of contemporary Mexican history. Thornton is, like Gettig, particularly appreciative of Zolov's innovative methodology, which allows him to tackle international history topics while eschewing the traditional focus on "high diplomacy." By contrast, drawing on his previous expertise as a cultural historian, Zolov is able to address Mexico's strategy of international diversification during the 1960s according to a perspective which intertwines culture, politics, and international history. The variety of the topics addressed, which include Mexico's interaction with the Third World and the USSR, and the richness of the explanations offered, which mix domestic and international variables to make sense of Mexico's global outreach, are aspects Thornton finds particularly valuable in Zolov's work. On a more critical note, Thornton argues that the book could have benefitted from additional emphasis on political economy as a determinant of Mexico's domestic and international policies. According to Thornton, who has recently published an important book on this topic, Mexico might have not been so interested in economic diversification because, by the 1960, it was poised to become one of the main recipients of private and multilateral international investments.<sup>4</sup>

Alan McPherson's review, although generally positive, is probably the more critical among the three. According to McPherson, in shifting away from the inertial historiographical attention towards the 1968 Massacre, Zolov's narrative makes room for both new, rather neglected topics and for a convincing reassessment of the history of Adolfo López Mateos's presidency. In particular, McPherson positively evaluates Zolov's ability to show a less cynical president and one who was more truly committed to dialoguing with leftwing students and intellectuals, and to resisting Washington's hegemonic pressures. McPherson also appreciates Zolov's "global level of analysis," which shows that Mexico tried to give a

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Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2015). Ariel Rodríguez Kuri, "Ganar la sede. La política internacional de los Juegos Olímpicos de 1968", *Historia Mexicana* 64:1, (July-September) 2014: 243-289; Soledad Loaeza, *A la sombra de la superpotencia. Tres presidentes mexicanos en la Guerra Fría. 1945-1958* (Ciudad de México: El Colegio de México, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example: Mario Ojeda, *Alcances y límites de la política exterior de México* (México: El Colegio de México, 1976); Lorenzo Meyer, "La guerra fría en el mundo periférico: el caso del régimen autoritario mexicano. La utilidad del anticomunismo discreto," in Daniela Spenser ed., *Espejos de la Guerra Fría: México, América Central y el Caribe* (Ciudad de México, CIESAS, SRE, Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> Thornton, *Revolution in Development*.

substantial contribution to the forging of a fairer economic international system. However, McPherson also argues that both Zolov's methodology and general assumptions have some flaws. In particular, he points out that the book's narrative is too reliant on the analysis of official meetings and presidential visits, which do not disclose internal debates, negotiations, and the inner aspects of the Mexican decision-making process. McPherson is also skeptical about the use of the Good Neighbor adjective to define Mexican-U.S. relations during the 1960s, considering that experience to be more specifically rooted in the 1930s and one that definitively ended with "the Guatemala coup of 1954, the Bay of Pigs in 1961, and especially after the direct U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965".

In her review, Aileen Teague finds that Zolov's book is solidly researched and beautifully written, offering an historical analysis which allows Zolov to frame Mexico's domestic politics in truly global perspective while maintaining a balanced equilibrium between local, regional, and global levels of analysis. In her review, Teague analyses in depth the methodology and the contents of the book's seven chapters, finding them largely persuasive in their attempt to challenge "traditional U.S.-centered narratives of Mexican diplomacy." Given the centrality of Adolfo López Mateos for Zolov's narrative, Teague would have liked more information about "the man, his personality, and his background." She is also not fully persuaded by Zolov's use of the term "grand strategy" to define Mexico foreign policy during the 1960s given its lack of long-term strategic cohesiveness. Finally, Teague also questions the impact that Mexico's "global pivot" had in terms of long-lasting results achieved.

In spite of some critical remarks, all three reviewers agree that Zolov's book represents a crucial contribution to the historiographical field and a work which historians, even when disagreeing on specific aspects of it, will have to debate and consider for their own research on Mexico's contemporary history.

#### Participants:

**Eric Zolov** is Professor of History and Director of Undergraduate Studies at Stony Brook University. He received his PhD in History (1995) and MA degrees in International Relations and Latin American Studies (1990) from the University of Chicago. He is former Senior Editor of *The Americas* and former Director of Latin American & Caribbean Studies at Stony Brook University. The author of *The Last Good Neighbor: Mexico in the Global Sixties* (Duke University Press, 2020) and *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture* (University of California Press, 1999), he has published widely on popular culture, twentieth-century Mexico, and U.S.-Latin American relations. His forthcoming book, *The Walls of Santiago: Social Revolution and Political Aesthetics in Contemporary Chile*, co-edited with Terri Gordon-Zolov, is forthcoming from Berghahn Books.

**Vanni Pettinà** holds a Ph.D. in Contemporary History from the University Complutense of Madrid. He is Associate Professor of Latin American and Mexican Contemporary History at the Center for Historical Studies of El Colegio de México and was John W. Kluge Postdoctoral Fellow at the Library of Congress. He has published articles in the *Journal of Latin American Studies*, *International History Review*, *Cold War History* and *Historia Mexicana*. He is author of *Historia Mínima de la Guerra Fría*, which will be published in English with UNC Press in 2022 with support from Duke-UNC Latin America In Translation Series Grant. He is coeditor, with Stella Krepp and Thomas Field, of *Latin America and the Global Cold War* (UNC Press, 2021). He is currently working on a book project tentatively titled: From Bilateralism to globalism. Development and Foreign Policy during Mexico's Cold War.

**Eric Gettig** is an Adjunct Professor in Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, where he teaches global history in the Master's of Science in Foreign Service program. He earned his doctorate in Transregional History from Georgetown in 2017, specializing in the history of the Americas in the world. His most recent publication is "Cuba, the United States, and the Uses of the Third World Project, 1959-1967," in Thomas C. Field, Stella Krepp, and Vanni Pettinà, eds., *Latin America and the Global Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020).

**Alan McPherson** is Thomas J. Freaney Professor of History and Marvin Wachman Director of the Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy at Temple University. He is the author and editor of eleven books, almost all on U.S.-Latin American relations, including the prize-winning *Yankee No! Anti-Americanism in U.S.-Latin American Relations* and *The Invaded: How Latin Americans and their Allies Fought and Ended U.S. Occupations*. His latest is *Ghosts of Sheridan Circle: How a Washington Assassination Brought Pinochet's Terror State to Justice*.

**Aileen Teague** is an Assistant Professor of International Affairs at Texas A&M's Bush School of Government and Public Service. She previously held a postdoctoral fellowship at Brown University's Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs. Teague earned her Ph.D. in History from Vanderbilt University in 2018 and served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 2006 to 2014. Her work has been published in academic journals including *Diplomatic History* and the *Social History of Alcohol and Drugs*. She is currently drafting a book manuscript, which examines the effects of United States drug policies and policing efforts on 1970s and 1980s Mexican politics and society.

**Christy Thornton** is an assistant professor of sociology and Latin American studies at Johns Hopkins University. Her new book is *Revolution in Development: Mexico and the Governance of the Global Economy* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2021).

## REVIEW BY ERIC GETTIG, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Eric Zolov's goal in *The Last Good Neighbor* is "to offer a revisionist interpretation of Mexican political culture and international dynamics during a critical moment of the global sixties," and thereby to write the Mexican experience into the "collective cartographic project" that is the historiography of the 1960s around the world (20). Zolov succeeds in this endeavor, in a book that smoothly integrates a national story of Mexican domestic politics and political culture, on the one hand, with a rich and sophisticated analysis of Mexican foreign policy and an international history of Mexico's role in the global Cold War and the emergence and evolution of Third World internationalism, on the other. In doing so, Zolov's book suggests some important new interpretations of the evolution of Mexican politics and foreign policy and of the international history of Latin America in the world.

The preponderant focus of the book is the presidency of Adolfo López Mateos (1958-1964), who emerges in Zolov's account as an ambitious statesman and effective political operator both abroad and at home. Readers hoping for a more comprehensive account of a 'long' 1960s have to content themselves with some early scene-setting on Mexico's postwar years in the first chapter, with the eighth and final chapter, which addresses the *sexenio* of López Mateos's designated successor, Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964-1970), and with an Epilogue that briefly but fruitfully reinterprets the ambitious Third Worldism of Mexico's 1970s as being rooted in the 'global pivot' that López Mateos had initiated years before, a pivot that is analyzed during all or part of the first seven chapters.

The book's main arguments represent important contributions to our understanding of Mexico, U.S.-Mexican relations, and Mexico's place in the world. Surprisingly, but convincingly, Zolov chooses to de-emphasize two aspects that one might have expected to be central in a history of "Mexico in the Global Sixties." The first is the Cuban Revolution, which has long been the focus of other accounts of Mexican politics and foreign policy in this period, most notably Renata Keller's *Mexico's Cold War*, a book that Zolov does not so much refute as expand beyond.<sup>5</sup> The Mexican government's complicated and highly contentious responses to the Cuban Revolution, Zolov argues, were only one piece of a much larger global engagement after 1958 by López Mateos with the (at times critical) support of most of Mexico's political class and the politically engaged public. By moving beyond Cuba, Zolov adds depth and breadth to the recent pathbreaking work of Vanni Pettinà, who has traced López Mateos's outreach to the Non-Aligned Movement and the Soviet Union in several recent articles.<sup>6</sup>

Zolov demonstrates that López Mateos's defense of Cuba's sovereignty and of the right of Cubans to sort out their Revolution's course without outside interference was neither a token and cynical effort to co-opt the Mexican Left, nor an isolated instance of foreign-policy independence from an otherwise hegemonic United States. Rather, the Cuba policy was one aspect of López Mateos's much broader effort to craft an 'independent' foreign policy that positioned Mexico not only as a hemispheric but a global player, a champion of what the president called a Mexican 'thesis' of inviolable political and economic sovereignty, 'mature' revolutionary nationalism that blended electoral democracy and social justice, and capitalist economic development guided strategically by the state. This posture, Zolov shows, made Mexico a coveted middle-ranking power, courted by, among others, the Soviet Union's Anastas Mikoyan (on behalf of Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev), France's Charles De Gaulle, Yugoslavia's Josip Broz Tito, and India's Jawaharlal Nehru, along with U.S. President John F. Kennedy, all of whom visited Mexico during López Mateos's term, complementing the Mexican president's travels

<sup>5</sup> Renata Keller, *Mexico's Cold War: Cuba, the United States, and the Legacy of the Mexican Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015). See also Olga Pellicer de Brody, *México y la Revolución Cubana* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1972).

<sup>6</sup> Vanni Pettinà, "¡Bienvenido Mr. Mikoyan! Tacos y tractores a la sombra del acercamiento soviético-mexicano, 1958-1964" *Historia Mexicana* 66:2 (2016): 793-852; Pettinà, "Mexican-Soviet Encounters in the Early 1960s: Tractors of Discord," in Thomas C. Field, Stella Krepp, and Vanni Pettinà, eds., *Latin America and the Global Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020); Pettinà, "Global Horizons: Mexico, the Third World, and the Non-Aligned Movement at the Time of the 1961 Belgrade Conference," *International History Review* 38:4 (2016): 741-764.

throughout Latin America, Western Europe, and Asia. Mexico's Left – whose unifying figurehead in the years 1959-63 was former President Lázaro Cárdenas – supported López Mateos's foreign policy as a whole, even as it criticized the President and his Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) for suppressing dissent and pluralism at home.

The second de-centered aspect is the student movement and its horrific repression in the 1968 Tlatelolco Massacre, the event that non-Mexicanists (and, indeed, many Mexico specialists) are most likely to see as linking Mexico with a “global Sixties” narrative. Here, Zolov continues a historiographical effort to move “Beyond 1968” for both a broader and deeper view of Mexico's “long” 1960s.<sup>7</sup> Zolov focuses instead on ‘the question of origins’ of the movement for an assertive and globally engaged Mexico of which the students at Tlatelolco were but one aspect. More controversially for those inclined to emphasize the PRI's authoritarian aspects, Zolov prefers to see Mexico's 1960s and especially the López Mateos years as above all a time of ‘aspiration’ rather than merely repression, when the PRI leadership itself – not just the intellectual or insurgent Left – envisioned and acted upon a transformative agenda for Mexico abroad and, to a lesser extent, at home. It is this reframing where Zolov makes perhaps his strongest intervention. Keller – steeped in the archival records of Mexico's security and intelligence services – depicts Cárdenas, the *Movimiento de Liberación Nacional* (MLN), and the Latin American Peace Conference of 1961 as serious challenges to López Mateos's government; and there can be no doubt, based on her research, that Mexico's *Dirección Federal de Seguridad* and the rest of the security apparatus viewed them as such.

Zolov, however, shows convincingly that the MLN supported not only López Mateos's defense of Cuba, but his outreach to the non-aligned and socialist worlds more broadly, even as the movement continued to criticize the PRI regime's domestic policies. Moreover, he demonstrates, Cárdenas was a moderating, not a radicalizing, force for the Mexican Left until it began to fragment and his influence started to wane by the last year of the *sexenio*. Cárdenas, Zolov points out, told López Mateos that the MLN “is not the enemy of your administration,” but instead “will be useful to you” (137). In an inspired framing, Zolov analyzes how Mexico's emergent New Left differed not only from the Old Left of Cárdenas and the Mexican Communist Party – hierarchical, institutionalist, and rooted in organized industrial and agricultural labor – but also how this youthful New Left was itself divided between a ‘vanguardist’ tendency that embraced the severity, austerity and, often, revolutionary violence of the Guevarist New Man, and a humanistic, irreverent, ‘cosmopolitan’ New Left rooted in literary and intellectual circles. Both new currents, Zolov demonstrates, abandoned the deference to and cooperation with the PRI regime that had often marked Mexico's Old Left. Paradoxically, then, it was the fragmentation – not the strength – of the Mexican Left by the mid-1960s, after the eclipse of Cárdenas and the MLN, that made it seem more of a threat to the PRI regime, inviting the repression that would eventually explode at Tlatelolco and in the subsequent dirty war through the 1970s.

Putting Mexican politics and policymakers at the center of the frame, Zolov simultaneously provides a useful analysis of Mexico-United States relations. Despite misgivings in the White House and State Department, Zolov argues convincingly, Mexico's ‘global pivot’ toward collaboration with (though not yet full membership in) the Non-Aligned Movement, its opening toward the Soviet bloc and embrace of ‘national liberation’ in the Third World, did not weaken its good relations with Washington, but rather depended upon and indeed strengthened these bilateral ties. Zolov's argument that Mexico was Washington's ‘Last Good Neighbor’ in Cold War Latin America accordingly works in both directions. Trusting in the strength of the bilateral relationship and in Mexico's basic pro-Western and pro-U.S. orientation, Washington reconciled itself to allow its southern neighbor greater leeway on Cold War issues than it did, say, Cuba or the Dominican Republic in this period; meanwhile Mexican officials and the Mexican public as a whole remained notably more friendly to the Lyndon Johnson administration, despite its Dominican and Vietnamese interventions, than the rest of Latin America did. Mexico's oft-cited status as the only Latin American state to maintain uninterrupted relations with Fidel Castro's Cuba during the 1960s, Zolov shows, was but one aspect of a much more complex and important Mexican exceptionalism in the Latin American Cold War.

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<sup>7</sup> Jaime Pensado and Enrique C. Ochoa, eds., *México Beyond 1968: Revolutionaries, Radicals, and State Repression during the Global Sixties and Subversive Seventies* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2018).

This is an ambitious book that effectively combines the tools and methods of political and cultural history with those of diplomatic or international history.<sup>8</sup> Zolov incorporates analysis of the Mexican political press, and some nuanced readings of Mexican political cartoons and other cultural production, with deep grounding in the political and diplomatic collections of Mexico's *Archivo General de la Nación* and *Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores*, the State Department records in the U.S. National Archives, and several illuminating forays into the views of the British Embassy in Mexico from the Foreign Office records in the British National Archives. The papers of – and at times interviews with – important players such as the writer Carlos Fuentes and political scion and MLN figure Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas provide rich texture at important moments. Multi-archival work across sub-fields like this is not without its risks, but the errors are few and minor: the State Department's Bureau of American Republics Affairs (ARA), responsible for inter-American relations, is misidentified as the "Agency for Research Analysis" (145-6, 332), while its office for Regional Economic Affairs (REA) is misidentified in the notes as the "Rural Electrification Administration" (333). The historians H.W. Brands and Hal Brands are at one point conflated (110). More importantly, Zolov is honest about the limits of the multitude of sources he consulted and, crucially, those he could not; neither López Mateos nor his Secretary of Foreign Relations Manuel Tello left a diary or a memoir, but Zolov is judicious in his assertions where the available sources leave us to speculate on important questions. These include why Lázaro Cárdenas was conspicuously silent during Mikoyan's visit to Mexico in late 1959 (66) – as Zolov sees it, out of helpful deference to López Mateos – and whether López Mateos expected his designated successor Díaz Ordaz to preserve his foreign-policy stance (226), and whether Kennedy's assassination reinforced López Mateos's inclination not to rock the boat in U.S.-Mexico relations by upgrading Mexico's participation in the upcoming second Non-Aligned Movement conference from observer status to full membership (226).

This reader was left wanting more only on three questions of emphasis and analysis. Zolov's work is primarily one about politics and political culture; political economy is seldom remarked upon. But more attention to the economic context and to debates over Mexican political economy would have been welcome if, as Zolov suggests in the seventh chapter, one of the most important tangible outcomes of the Third World project in the 1960s was the creation, with Mexico's participation, of the United Nations Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and one of the primary goals of López Mateos's peregrinations in Europe and Asia was to diversify Mexico's export markets and sources of foreign investment. To what extent was domestic economic and social policy at issue in López Mateos's vision and those of his critics – especially given the president's high-profile nationalization of the country's electricity industry, an event discussed in only one paragraph (106)? To what extent did Mexico's robust economy during these years of the 'Mexican Miracle,' despite its dependence upon the U.S., enable López Mateos's global ambitions, just as the oil wealth of the 1970s would encourage a new bout of commodity-funded assertiveness? (On a related note: it is true that Mexico became a major oil exporter in the 1970s, but it is not true that it did so "for the first time" (291); the country had been a major exporter throughout the first decades of the twentieth century, but since the 1938 nationalization and the rise of domestic industrial consumption exports had gradually dwindled to small quantities of certain refined products, and by the time of López Mateos's presidency the country was, slightly, a net importer of petroleum products).

Second, I found myself wishing for deeper analysis of Mexican conservatism, both of centrist or rightist currents within the PRI 'family' and of conservative currents outside it, in the opposition Partido Acción Nacional and elsewhere. "The other side of the Sixties" (to borrow the title from one early work on the U.S. Right in this era)<sup>9</sup> is largely missing here, except for Zolov's discussion of how López Mateos brought conservative former president Miguel Alemán and his *Frente Cívico Mexicano de Afirmación Revolucionaria* into the fold. Scholarship on the long Sixties in the U.S. has for some time been taking the Right seriously, and scholarship on Mexico and Latin America has increasingly done so as well.<sup>10</sup> The

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<sup>8</sup> In this sense, Zolov's book pairs well with Patrick Iber's *Neither Peace nor Freedom: The Cultural Cold War in Latin America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> The phrase is from John A. Andrew III, "The Other Side of the Sixties: Young Americans for Freedom and the Rise of Conservative Politics" (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997).

<sup>10</sup> On conservatism in Mexico and Latin America in this period see, for example, Luís Herrán Ávila, "Anticommunism, the Extreme Right, and the Politics of Enmity in Argentina, Colombia, and Mexico, 1946-1972," Ph.D. diss., New School for Social Research,

overwhelming focus here is on the PRI incumbents' relationship to a restive Mexican Left, but what of developments on the other flank?

Finally, there is an interesting silence in Zolov's work on the question of race, and the role that race – and, potentially, racism – played in Mexico's opening to the post-Bandung Afro-Asian world. With a white and *mestizo* Mexican elite shaping a national imaginary of Mexico as a *mestizo* nation, embracing a mythologized pre-Contact Golden Age while rhetorically and systematically marginalizing contemporary Indigenous Mexicans and erasing the country's small minorities of African and East Asian descent, this ground seems potentially fertile for at least some analysis. Did Mexico's (overwhelmingly white and *mestizo*) political class never openly speak of racial questions when engaging in dialogue with or discussion about the decolonizing peoples of Africa and Asia and the Caribbean? With Revolutionary Cuba – Mexico's rival in this book as a younger, more radical revolutionary model – openly touting the island's historic and cultural connections to Africa as a factor making it a natural bridge between Latin America and the Caribbean and the Afro-Asian world, how did Mexico's elite view this issue in Mexico's potential embrace of Third World and Tri-Continental solidarities? In an unremarked-upon convergence with their counterparts in Washington, Mexico's policymakers preferred Third-World fora – the NAM and the United Nations' UNCTAD and Group of 77 – that were defined along developmental and geopolitical lines rather than racial ones, suggesting that attitudes toward race in international affairs, perhaps, were another, unspoken, pillar of the Good Neighbor relationship.

It is a sign of the richness of Zolov's analysis and the accessibility of his writing that, even after three hundred pages, this reviewer found himself wishing that Zolov had chosen to include the 1970s more fully in the body of the book in their own right. But even with its preponderant focus on the period 1958-1966, Zolov's book helps us envision a periodization of Mexican internationalism across the twentieth century. Other scholars have noted the resonance of the Mexican Revolution across the Americas and indeed the world in the 1920s and 1930s, as Mexico became both a destination and an example for those seeking progressive political, economic, and cultural change.<sup>11</sup> Following its role in the anti-fascist alliance in World War II, Mexican internationalism ebbed during the postwar period until López Mateos's global pivot, in Zolov's telling, “laid the groundwork” for Mexico's more radical embrace of Third Worldism in the 1970s (2). The relative conservatism of the Díaz Ordaz *sexenio*, Zolov shows, was due not only to the president's instincts and style, but also to a dearth of opportunities abroad due to a changing international climate and the drift in the Non-Aligned Movement between its 1964 and 1970 conferences. Recasting the Díaz Ordaz period as an interregnum rather than a reversal or rejection of López Mateos's global engagement, we are led to see a second stage of post-revolutionary Mexican internationalism from the late 1950s through the 1970s, until the final enervation of the Non-Aligned Movement and Mexico's turn to neoliberalism and full integration with the United States after the crises of the 1980s definitively closed this era. In this periodization, Zolov's book will join recent and forthcoming scholarship, including works by other participants in this roundtable, that will reframe Mexico's transnational 1970s.<sup>12</sup>

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2016, and Herrán Ávila, “The Other ‘New Man’: Conservative Nationalism and Right-Wing Youth in 1970s Monterrey,” in Pensado and Ochoa, eds., *México Beyond 1968*; Jaime Pensado, “‘To Assault with the Truth’: The Revitalization of Conservative Militancy in Mexico During the Global Sixties,” *The Americas* 70:3 (2014): 489-522.

<sup>11</sup> For notable examples see Helen Delpar, *The Enormous Vogue of Things Mexican: Cultural Relations Between the United States and Mexico, 1920-1935* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1992); Daniela Spenser, *The Impossible Triangle: Mexico, Soviet Russia, and the United States in the 1920s* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); Amelia M. Kiddle, *Mexico's Relations with Latin America During the Cárdenas Era* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2016).

<sup>12</sup> Pensado and Ochoa, eds., *México Beyond 1968*; Louise E. Walker, *Waking from the Dream: Mexico's Middle Classes after 1968* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013); Christy Thornton, *Revolution in Development: Mexico and the Governance of the Global Economy* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2021); Vanni Pettinà, *From Bilateralism to Globalism: Development and Foreign Policy in Mexico's Cold War* (forthcoming).

The implications of Zolov's reinterpretation of Mexican internationalism are potentially profound. We must ask ourselves whether, by centering the Cuban Revolution as *the* turning point in Latin America's Cold War, we have missed other ways to think about and periodize these years. Zolov's book joins other emerging works in exploring how Latin Americans, in myriad and often ambivalent and contested ways, came at times to see themselves as part of a Third World project.<sup>13</sup> Rather than "Latin America in the Era of the Cuban Revolution" (to borrow one representative title<sup>14</sup>), is the period from the late 1950s through the 1970s instead productively thought of as Latin America's "Bandung Moment?" Cuba's impact surely remains preponderant. But Zolov's work shows that, by reframing Latin America's 'long Sixties' in this way, we stand to gain a more sophisticated understanding of the relationship with the United States, for one, and a much broader and richer sense of the region's place in and connections with global currents during these decades of promise and conflict, for another.

Graduate students and other impatient readers will appreciate the care and clarity with which Zolov lays out the narrative and interpretive framework of each chapter and of the work as a whole in each introductory and concluding section. This is a book that could be 'mined' for a comps exam, but it is really one that merits and rewards careful reading and deep engagement. All historians of modern Mexico should engage deeply with this book; scholars of twentieth-century Latin America, of the global Cold War, and of Third World internationalism should also take note of it. Historians of U.S. relations with Mexico, Latin America, and the Third World will find it a useful complement to more Washington-centered works. This is, in sum, a formidable book that deserves a wide readership among historians of the Americas in the world.

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<sup>13</sup> Field, Krepp, and Pettinà, eds., *Latin America and the Global Cold War* is a gateway into this scholarship.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas C. Wright, *Latin America in the Era of the Cuban Revolution*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Westport: Praeger, 2010). Perhaps acknowledging the shift underway, the most recent edition of Wright's text is re-titled: Wright, *Latin America in the Era of the Cuban Revolution and Beyond* (Westport: Praeger, 2018).

## REVIEW BY ALAN MCPHERSON, TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

Eric Zolov's important, long-awaited book asks how Mexican political leaders navigated a tumultuous time in global politics that was driven by decolonization, the Cuban Revolution, and anti-communist reaction from the United States. He finds that, from 1958 to 1966 and especially during the *sexenio* of President Adolfo López Mateos (1958-1964), officials and intellectuals aspired not only to break free of U.S. strictures but also to lead Latin American and other developing nations in a more independent direction.

In eight largely chronological chapters, the author argues that López Mateos and his supporters pursued interrelated goals in three arenas. The first was domestic politics, where the President responded to the resurgence of revolutionary stalwart Lázaro Cárdenas by courting the Left, both Old and New, and both the radical *Movimiento de Liberación Nacional* and intellectuals such as Carlos Fuentes. He did so partly by standing up to the United States primarily vis-à-vis events in Cuba. The second arena featured bilateral relations with the northern neighbor, where the administration in Mexico City defended Cuba rhetorically while avoiding an open clash with the United States, for instance by encouraging the Non-Aligned Movement while not formally joining it. Washington largely acceded in this delicate dance—President John Kennedy was all smiles during his visit to Mexico and the Chamizal and Colorado River crises were resolved—but Ambassador Thomas Mann withheld aid in order to pressure compliance on nonalignment. The final arena is the global one. López Mateos not only sympathized with the “spirit of Bandung” during decolonization but also sought to help foster it, whether in hosting or sending delegations to conferences or advocating for a new international economic order. Zolov calls this strategy Mexico’s “global pivot” (3).

*The Last Good Neighbor* most directly counters the focus on repression and especially the 1968 crushing of the student movement that so often characterizes historiography on 1960s Mexico.<sup>15</sup> A wider frame allows for the consideration of hemispheric and global forces. But Zolov's more subtle historiographical contributions are with closer interlocutors such as Renata Keller and Patrick Iber, who published groundbreaking books respectively on Mexico's management of U.S.-Cuba tensions and on the state's relationship with intellectuals.<sup>16</sup> The author generally responds to Keller's criticism of López Mateos as hypocritical toward the United States and Machiavellian toward the Left by painting a more generous portrait of the Mexican president as one who allied with the students and the intellectuals and who understood that he could improve his leverage against the United States by cozying up to it, for instance through the Alliance for Progress.

The global level of analysis is where the book truly distinguishes itself and presents a framework for reimagining the domestic and international politics of any Latin American country that faces the world. Zolov convincingly shows that Mexicans were not only concerned with Cuba during the Sixties. On several occasions, the President, Foreign Minister Manuel Tello, and others exported their ideas of peace, national sovereignty, and economic justice to the rest of the world, from the Soviet Union to China, Western Europe, and Japan.

However laudable its contributions to Global Cold War literature, the book suffers from its main method and from the assumptions behind its title. First, Zolov portrays international politics largely as a series of conferences and diplomatic visits. To Mexico came not only presidents Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson but also Soviet First Deputy Premier Anastas Mikoyan, Cuban President Osvaldo Dorticós, Yugoslavian President Josip Broz Tito and French President Charles de

<sup>15</sup> Elena Poniatowska, *Massacre in Mexico* (New York: Viking Press, 1975); George Flaherty, *Hotel Mexico: Dwelling on the '68 Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016); Juan Rojo, *Revisiting the Mexican Student Movement of 1968* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Victoria Carpenter, *The Tlatelolco Massacre, Mexico 1968, and the Emotional Triangle of Anger, Grief, and Pain* (Cardiff: University Press of Wales, 2018).

<sup>16</sup> Renata Keller, *Mexico's Cold War: Cuba, the United States, and the Legacy of the Mexican Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Patrick Iber, *Neither Peace nor Freedom: The Cultural Cold War in Latin America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015).

Gaulle; López Mateos traveled throughout Latin America, Asia, and Europe. Every chapter contains at least a few of these episodes, which are related in detail. Such visits do provide readers with revealing interactions between leaders as well as their public rhetoric and imagery. But diplomatic visits do not equal international relations because they are, by nature, highly performative. Zolov's treatment of them is also largely devoid of the internal discussions and negotiations within and between nations that one can find, for instance, in U.S. archives.<sup>17</sup> Perhaps the lack of government documents from the Mexican side forced this focus on visits, and I would be interested to read in the author's response to this roundtable an assessment of the state of those archives. The sources we do get are overwhelmingly public—press articles, speeches, government propaganda—and therefore offer little in terms of behind-the-scenes Mexican motivations and evaluations. Finally, in emphasizing so extensively diplomatic visits the author argues for an aspirational Mexican foreign policy rather than explaining the failures of Mexican politics and economics that ended the 1960s.

Second, Zolov defines a "Good Neighbor" in U.S.-Latin American affairs as one who pursues harmonious relations, essentially by respecting national sovereignty. Adopting such a broad definition of the term dilutes its meaning. The prescriptions of the era of the Good Neighbor Policy were substantially more specific. In the early 1930s, these involved a U.S. pledge of non-intervention coupled with military withdrawals, the signing of trade agreements, and a collaboration with dictators who pursued the security aims of the United States. Later in the decade and during World War II, the Good Neighbor added the provision of collaborating against the Axis powers. After the Guatemala coup of 1954, the Bay of Pigs in 1961, and especially after the direct U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965, the era of the Good Neighbor was dead and gone. I am not convinced, therefore, that the good neighbor "sustained an afterlife in Mexico" until the 1960s (8). The decent relations that occurred were something else. The book's title thus distorts the epithet's original historical specificity. It is also not reflected in the sources: only twice in this book did I see any leader using the term "good neighbor," and those leaders were Kennedy and Johnson. It seems that Mexican officials rarely if ever used it. Why, then, argue that it was the basis of their foreign policy? Introducing to the title the concept of *independence* would have been more historically accurate in an era of decolonization and it would have better reflected Mexico's ambitions and rhetoric beyond U.S.-Mexican relations. "Good neighbor" is a bilateral term; "independence" can occur at several levels simultaneously.

Despite these flaws, *The Last Good Neighbor* is a stirring contribution to understanding Mexican foreign policy and especially that of the Left during the Cold War. It should be of interest to all Mexicanists and scholars of international relations. The next step is to apply the same multi-level analysis to the Latin American Right. After all, did it not win the Cold War.

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<sup>17</sup> I explore these shortcomings of diplomatic visits in Alan McPherson, "The Limits of Populist Diplomacy: Fidel Castro's April 1959 Trip to North America," *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 181 (March 2007): 237-268.

REVIEW BY AILEEN TEAGUE, BUSH SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC SERVICE,  
TEXAS A&M

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Studies on Mexican foreign relations usually focus exclusively on the United States or Cuba, especially as Mexico served as an important back channel to Cuba for its northern neighbor. In *The Last Good Neighbor*, Eric Zolov's interpretation of Mexican foreign relations is far more capacious. Constructing an analytical framework that encompasses social protest, political discourse, and international relations in the 'long 1960s' (1958–1973), Zolov sheds much-needed light on Mexico's role on the global stage, addressing and indeed transcending Mexico City's relations within the western hemisphere. In doing so, his ambitious study sets out to connect the development of a domestic 'New Left' with Mexico's role as an important contributor to Third World internationalism.

Impeccably researched and well-written, Zolov's account addresses local, regional, and global perspectives simultaneously. In an expansive introduction, *The Last Good Neighbor* establishes its primary historiographical contribution: to broaden 1960s Mexican political and cultural history into a global framework. For Zolov, this does not come at the expense of minimizing the significance of local and regional phenomena. Instead, he integrates them into a narrative consisting of three intersecting arcs.

The first arc details a national-level story that contextualizes the fluid relationship between the Mexican government and leftwing movements (3). Zolov makes the case for moving away from the student movement of 1968—and the centrality of political repression carried out by the country's ruling party, the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI), in a number of recent works in the historiography of modern Mexico—as a “historiographic focal point” (1).<sup>18</sup> Here, I think that Zolov was successful. He deftly illuminates the origins of the social and political forces that led to the 1968 student demonstrations rather than focusing entirely on the demonstrations themselves.

As a historian of U.S.-Latin America relations, I was particularly interested in the second arc, which focuses on the regional and international levels of diplomacy, specifically on how Mexican president Adolfo López Mateos (1958–1964) pursued an independent and activist foreign policy that extended beyond relations with the United States and Cuba (6). Through this lens, López Mateos emerges as an astute leader who sought to “leverage Mexico's strategic potential to prop up the forces of nonalignment” and “shape the dispute initiated by other peripheral actors to reform the rules of global capitalism” (4). Zolov's extensive research in diplomatic correspondence and domestic political journalism is especially notable in this area. U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy—established in 1933 to improve relations with Latin America and maintain stability by emphasizing cooperation and trade instead of military force—inspired the title of the book. But Zolov's conception of the Good Neighbor framework proves far more dynamic. It shows that Mexico could sustain its 'Good Neighborliness' with the north while also exercising its own, activist internationalism independent of and even sometimes contrary to U.S. strategic objectives within the hemisphere and throughout the world. (10).

The final arc of the book situates Mexican geopolitics within the framework of the global sixties. Zolov aims to connect discourses on Mexican political culture with those on Third World anticolonialism (10-11). By examining the global interactions of various Mexican politicians and intellectual and political and cultural institutions, Zolov argues that Mexico acted transnationally during a pivotal era of change in Cold War history.

*The Last Good Neighbor* also makes a number of smaller-scale historiographical contributions. For one, it reinterprets the role of former Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas (1934–1940) and the 'New Left' movement that coalesced around him.

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<sup>18</sup> See for example: Paul Gillingham and Benjamin T. Smith, eds., *Dictablanda: Politics, Work, and Culture in Mexico, 1938-1968* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014); Renata Keller, *Mexico's Cold War: Cuba, the United States, and the Legacy of the Mexican Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Thomas Rath, *Myths of Demilitarization in Postrevolutionary Mexico, 1920-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

Often depicted as a threat to the PRI-dominated system, Cárdenas emerges as the premier ‘elder statesman,’ a skilled diplomat and a stabilizing force to reign in leftwing fragmentation (5). Chapter 1 introduces Cárdenas’s internationalism, as well his reigning moral authority over the Left. Yet Zolov shows Cárdenas’s continued role in public life to be more supportive and less in opposition to López Mateos’s international and domestic agendas.

Chapter 2, an exploration of Mexican-Soviet relations in the midst of rising anti-Communism throughout the western hemisphere, is in an important contribution. Soviet economic and technological prowess—epitomized by the launch of Sputnik—fascinated a generation of Mexicans. Zolov points to one telling example of the rock group Los Sputniks, one of a number of cultural insights sprinkled throughout the text that remind readers of his first book, *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture*.<sup>19</sup> But though many Mexicans saw socialism as the wave of the future, fears of a Communist takeover were hardly a concern.

Chapters 3 and 4 turn to a more direct examination of Mexico on the global stage. Harnessing the domestic left and maintaining its role as Good Neighbor, Mexico expanded its activist, internationalist stance, even as the contemporaneous Cuban Revolution made its mark upon the western hemisphere. López Mateos’s ability to execute his agendas independently of Washington by continuing to speak to disparate factions in Mexican politics is most resonant in Zolov’s examination of the politics of nonalignment and the postcolonial movement.

Considering the United States’ questionable track record in Cuba and other parts of Latin America, by the early days of the John F. Kennedy administration (1961–1963) the United States needed Mexico more than Mexico needed the United States. Chapter 5 shows how Kennedy’s visit to Mexico helped solidify the Good Neighbor sentiments in the midst of Mexico’s positive relations with socialist powers, as well as the country’s anticolonialism and neutral stance on U.S. policies. Chapter 6, then, turns inward. As the Mexican Left began to splinter in the early 1960s, the chapter focuses on the novelist and public intellectual, Carlos Fuentes and the critical role he played as intermediary for the competing factions within the Left. This chapter is a bit more uneven in its contribution to the book. I found myself wondering if the role of intellectuals like Fuentes in the political shifts happening throughout the timeframe of the study could have been expanded. Was Fuentes a singular actor or was he connected to a larger web of intellectual practitioners influential in Mexican foreign relations? Did intellectuals have an enduring impact in Mexican internationalism in the years that followed?

Chapter 7 examines the final two years of the López Mateos administration, which Zolov regards as the height of Mexico’s activist foreign policy. This was a period when Third World solidarity began to crumble amidst diverging interests among developing nations. Here, Mexico reached a limit in terms of how independent it could be in its internationalist vision while still maintaining positive relations with the United States. The response to this dilemma, as detailed in Chapter 8, came with the incoming administration of President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz (1964–70). Under Díaz Ordaz, Mexico turned away from the activist, internationalist policies of López Mateos and took a less sympathetic stance toward the domestic Left. The shift in policy from López Mateos to Díaz Ordaz was a quick one, but it provides important context for the revitalization of internationalism embraced by Díaz Ordaz’s successor, Luis Echeverría (1970–1976), which Zolov reflects on in the epilogue.

*The Last Good Neighbor* is an important contribution that raises insightful questions about the impacts of decentering Mexico’s foreign relations from those of the United States. On the one hand, Zolov’s focus on López Mateos’s accomplishments and the comprehensive coverage he gives to Mexico’s ‘New Left’ is a welcome addition to the historiography. Mexico had a substantial international presence, and not solely in the realm of its relations with Cuba. This is significant. However, it does seem necessary for the reader to be grounded in the most recent literature on Mexican political and cultural history in order to fully appreciate Zolov’s contribution.

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<sup>19</sup> Eric Zolov, *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

Zolov's study adds richness to the historiography of the López Mateos presidency. Given López Mateos's impressive accomplishments on the global stage, however, I found myself wanting to know more about the man, his personality, and his background. What motivated Mexico's dynamic leader to have such strategic vision? I would have liked to see Zolov address this topic more thoroughly in the book.

Moreover, an aim of the book, as Zolov states in the introduction, is to illuminate Mexico's "grand strategy" of "counterbalancing—though not dislodging—the preponderant influence of the United States" (3). I found this choice of language interesting, as it reflects Zolov's desire to situate Mexico within a larger geopolitical debate. But what constitutes a grand strategy? Hal Brands—whom Zolov cites multiple times in his study—defines grand strategy as "...an integrated scheme of interests, threats, resources, and policies." It is "the intellectual architecture that lends structure to foreign policy" and "the logic that helps states navigate a complex and dangerous world."<sup>20</sup> Given the competing interests López Mateos so deftly managed—harnessing the domestic Left, being a Good Neighbor, and executing an impactful activist internationalist foreign policy—it is less convincing to me that his policies can be considered a grand strategy as the term is employed elsewhere in the academy and among policy practitioners.

Nevertheless, historians of modern Mexico and those looking for alternative frameworks to a well-trodden literature on the disparities in U.S.-Mexican relations will read *The Last Good Neighbor* with great interest. Yet the themes of diplomacy and policy execution in the book raised questions for me about the implications of Zolov's fine study on those outside of the academy who are interested in Mexican international relations. How do Mexico's activist, internationalist policies disrupt long held conceptions of the power disparities in bilateral relations that continue today?

For me, Zolov was most persuasive in showing readers that Mexico had sophisticated intentions for its foreign policy apparatus. I am less persuaded, however, of the actual, long-term impacts of Mexican internationalism during the Global Sixties. *The Last Good Neighbor* is remarkably successful at exploring the political and social discourse of the Left and its connections to López Mateos's diplomatic vision, but I would argue that it is less successful in the regional and international elements of the analysis. What measurable and concrete impacts did activist, internationalist policies of the 1960s have in the long run? Take Mexico's interests in European markets with the establishment of the European Community in 1957, for example (211). Did Mexican interests in the European Economic Community (EEC) result in sizeable gains in trading with Europe 10 to 20 years later?

Embracing Mexican internationalism challenges traditional U.S.-centered narratives of Mexican diplomacy. For me, this was the most exciting contribution of Zolov's study. That *The Last Good Neighbor* opens such far-reaching questions is a testament to its achievement.

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<sup>20</sup> Hal Brands, *What Good is Grand Strategy? Power and Purpose in American Statecraft from Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014), 3.

## REVIEW BY CHRISTY THORNTON, JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

Years ago, as a graduate student embarking on a new dissertation about the history of Mexican international economic relations, I was asked at a seminar by a senior scholar who read an early draft chapter: “What kind of history is this?” I was not totally sure what he meant, but clearly my chapter was somehow muddled. He explained: social, cultural, economic, diplomatic—these were subfields with established methodologies and at least somewhat agreed-upon boundaries. They were boundaries that should be transgressed, he implied, only at the burgeoning historian’s peril. “I think you have to decide,” he said, “what kind of history you want to do.”

How lucky we are, these years later, that the giver of that advice, Eric Zolov, seems to have decided to discard it himself—with the result being this wide-ranging and skillful analysis of the international aspects of Mexico’s politics and culture in an understudied period. Precisely by transgressing the boundaries of cultural, social, and diplomatic history, Zolov has given us a kaleidoscopic view into a tumultuous and decisive period in Mexican history, spanning the years before and after the presidency of Adolfo López Mateos (1958–1964). Skillfully weaving together the domestic political temporality of Mexico’s post-revolutionary idiosyncrasies with the global chronology of what Vijay Prashad called the “Third World project,” Zolov has situated Mexico in the world, and the world in Mexico, at the dawn of the long 1960s.<sup>21</sup>

In recent years, a flourishing field examining the transnational history of Mexico in the world has emerged, to which *The Last Good Neighbor* has made a crucial contribution. Work by historians in the United States and Canada such as Fredy González, Renata Keller, Amie Kiddle, Tore Olsson, and Karen Roseblatt, as well as those in Mexico such as Vanni Pettinà, Pablo Yankelevich, and Felipe Herrera Leon, among many others, has created a new opening for the study of Mexican international history as a viable subfield in a historiography that is dominated by social and cultural history of particular subnational *patrias chicas*.<sup>22</sup> While there has long been a robust historiography of U.S.-Mexico relations, these new works expand on that framework both geographically, covering relations with other parts of the world and/or analyzing the multidirectional flows of influence, and methodologically, looking beyond the practices of high diplomacy to reveal the complicated cultural, social, and economic history of how Mexicans defined the place of their country in the world.<sup>23</sup> Zolov’s work is a masterful example of this new work, bringing his skills as one of our foremost analysts of mid-century Mexican culture to bear on Mexican foreign relations.

<sup>21</sup> Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People’s History of the Third World* (New York: The New Press, 2008).

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, Fredy González, *Paisanos Chinos: Transpacific Politics among Chinese Immigrants in Mexico* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017); Renata Keller, *Mexico’s Cold War: Cuba, the United States, and the Legacy of the Mexican Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Amelia M. Kiddle, *Mexico’s Relations with Latin America During the Cárdenas Era* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2016); Tore C. Olsson, *Agrarian Crossings: Reformers and the Remaking of the US and Mexican Countryside* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017); Karin Alejandra Roseblatt, *The Science and Politics of Race in Mexico and the United States, 1910–1950* (Durham: University of North Carolina Press, 2018); Vanni Pettinà, “Global Horizons: Mexico, the Third World, and the Non-Aligned Movement at the Time of the 1961 Belgrade Conference,” *The International History Review* 38:4 (August 2016): 741–764; Pablo Yankelevich, *La Revolución Mexicana en América Latina: intereses políticos e itinerarios intelectuales* (México, D.F.: Instituto Mora, 2003); Fabián Herrera León, “México En La Sociedad de Naciones: Modernización y Consolidación de Una Política Exterior, 1931-1940” (PhD Dissertation, México, D.F., El Colegio de México, 2010).

<sup>23</sup> Classics in the tradition include, for example, Howard F. Cline, *The United States and Mexico* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967); Robert F. Smith, *The United States and Revolutionary Nationalism in Mexico, 1916-1932*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972); Josefina Zoraida Vázquez and Lorenzo Meyer, *The United States and Mexico* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); Alan Knight, *U.S.-Mexican Relations, 1910-1940: An Interpretation* (San Diego: University of California, San Diego, Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, 1987); and John M Hart, *Empire and Revolution: The Americans in Mexico since the Civil War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), among many others.

While some readers might expect a treatment of Mexico in the global sixties to focus on student activism and the repression of 1968—topics which have animated scholars for over a half a century now—this is not a book about Tlatelolco.<sup>24</sup> Zolov instead turns our attention to the pivotal years preceding that spectacular event, to ask more complicated questions about the role of Mexico in the Cold War. By focusing on the internationalist aspirations of a range of figures in government and outside it, he has given us a detailed map of the shifting terrain of Mexican Cold War international politics. Pushing beyond relations with the United States and Cuba, Zolov also details Mexican engagement with the Soviet Union and the various “post-Bandung” political formations that made up the nascent Third World (4). If during his campaign, López Mateos had promised to be “at the extreme left within the Constitution” (94), in the early 1960s, many models were on offer for what that might mean. Would the Mexican state under López Mateos align itself with the “peaceful coexistence” pushed by Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev; the Alliance for Progress offered by U.S. President John F. Kennedy; the guerilla insurgency of Cuba’s Fidel Castro, China’s Mao Zedong, and Vietnam’s Ho Chi Minh; or the ideology of non-alignment promoted by Yugoslavia’s Josip Tito, Ghana’s Kwame Nkrumah, Indonesia’s Sukarno, Egypt’s Gamal Abdel Nasser, and India’s Jawaharlal Nehru?

One crucial factor that determined Mexico’s path was the role of the domestic left, and Zolov details the intellectual and political struggles that marked the period, paying close attention to representations in the literary magazines and political cartoons of the day. The popular-front strategy pursued by the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN) under the leadership of former president Lázaro Cárdenas briefly brought the Mexican left together in opposition to state repression of striking workers and communist artists—thereby laying bare the state’s betrayal of Mexico’s democratic and revolutionary principles. But if for some scholars Cárdenas represented the destabilizing threat of consolidated left opposition, Zolov argues instead that the internationalist program outlined by Cárdenas—at the 1961 hemisphere-wide conference on National Sovereignty, Economic Emancipation, and Peace, for example—was largely congruent with the foreign policy pursued by López Mateos.<sup>25</sup> If Cárdenas was the most visible and important representative of the left opposition, Zolov argues, his vision of Mexico’s place in the world did not depart radically from that pursued by the state.

In fact, when López Mateos gave his annual speech to the Mexican congress later in 1961—which happened to coincide with the first day of the Belgrade Non-Aligned conference—he declared that Mexico was not “neutral” but was rather “independent” (134), a characterization Cárdenas had also used. This was the path that López Mateos would chart through the internecine tangle of the international left in the Cold War, professing Mexico’s independence in its foreign policy while simultaneously maintaining, as the book’s title has it, the country’s status as a “good neighbor” to the United States. The tension engendered between independence and good-neighborliness is the central contradiction in this history, and Zolov’s careful reconstruction of the Mexican stance toward the USSR, the Non-Aligned Movement, the People’s Republic of China, and the tricontinental Organization in Solidarity with the Peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (OSPAAAL) details how Mexican officials maintained plausible distance from the United States without seeking open confrontation. Combining the archives of diplomacy with the cultural and intellectual output of novelists and writers, Zolov convincingly

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<sup>24</sup> On Tlatelolco, see, for example, Elena Poniatowska, *Massacre in Mexico* (New York: Viking Press, 1975), and Elaine Carey, *Plaza of Sacrifices: Gender, Power, and Terror in 1968 Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005). On student activism in the long 1960s, see, for example, Jaime Pensado, *Rebel Mexico: Student Unrest and Authoritarian Political Culture During the Long Sixties* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013); Fernando Herrera Calderon and Adela Cedillo, eds., *Challenging Authoritarianism in Mexico: Revolutionary Struggles and the Dirty War, 1964-1982* (New York: Routledge, 2012). For a recent call to move Mexican historiography “beyond 1968,” see Jaime M. Pensado and Enrique C. Ochoa, eds., *México Beyond 1968: Revolutionaries, Radicals, and Repression During the Global Sixties and Subversive Seventies* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2018).

<sup>25</sup> On Cárdenas and the MLN, Zolov positions himself as challenging the interpretations of Patrick Iber, *Neither Peace nor Freedom: The Cultural Cold War in Latin America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015) and Renata Keller, *Mexico’s Cold War: Cuba, the United States, and the Legacy of the Mexican Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), especially.

reconstructs a raucous debate about Mexico's place in the world, one that would persist through the decidedly less-internationalist presidency of Gustavo Díaz Ordaz and be reenergized by president Luis Echeverría after 1970.

Mexico's "global pivot" under López Mateos, Zolov argues, therefore meant that "by the mid-1960s Mexico was widely regarded as have acquired a level of global stature that elevated it into a being a nation of consequence" (3). He shows how statesmen like Yugoslavia's Tito and France's President Charles de Gaulle courted Mexican favor for their own international political projects, seeking the legitimacy of Latin American participation. Contrary a conventional wisdom that overlooks Mexico's role in global processes, the country had become "a coveted player in the world drama that was unfolding" (296). Mexico mattered in the world, and the world mattered in Mexico.

But while Mexico had certainly become a crucial participant in debates over the shape of the Third World, Zolov also notes that López Mateos's turn toward the rest of the world largely failed to diversify Mexico's economic and financial ties beyond the United States. The French contract to build the Mexico City metro system notwithstanding, Mexico's global pivot brought little in the way of new markets or investors beyond the United States. Why was that? This may be where the traditional historiographic silos reemerge, even in a boundary-breaking history such as this one: there is relatively little emphasis in the book on the importance of Mexican political economy to complement Zolov's analysis of Mexican political culture. Indeed, the Mexican state's guiding economic strategy of *desarrollo estabilizador* (stabilizing development) under Finance Minister Antonio Ortiz Mena goes unmentioned, as does the huge increase in U.S. and multilateral lending that poured into Mexico during the period. As I detail in my forthcoming book, after having been cut off from international financial markets while negotiating defaulted debt in the decades after the revolution, Mexico began to receive billions in foreign loans and foreign direct investment in 1950s and 1960s, both from U.S. banks and investors and from institutions like the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the Export-Import Bank, in which U.S. government approval was a necessary precondition for capital flow.<sup>26</sup> By 1970, Mexico received more than 14% of the World Bank's *global* total of lending. Securing foreign capital had been a goal of Mexican developmentalism for the entire post-revolutionary period, and in the 1950s and 1960s that goal came to spectacular fruition.

While they fall outside of the framework of the cultural history that so capably guides Zolov's important book, these political economic developments are a crucial context for the politics of the 'good neighbor' as the countervailing force of Mexico's pivot to the rest of the world. As a result, I argue in my own work that Mexican leaders during the 1950s and 1960s actually *retreated* from an overlooked earlier radical internationalism, to become *followers* of global reform efforts, rather than leaders. A case could be made that, as his country's economy became ever more intertwined with that of its northern neighbor, López Mateos used his global pivot to stake out a plausible distance from the United States, while being careful not to transgress boundaries that might affect Mexico's creditworthiness. Such a strategy was necessary not only for the president's domestic legitimacy, but also to demonstrate the importance of Mexico to the U.S. hegemonic project, and therefore the need to keep Mexico in the fold. Though the analysis in Zolov's book takes a different angle of vision on this moment, by allowing us to bring this rich cultural history into conversation with a new history of political economy, and thereby by forcing us to transgress our own boundaries, *The Last Good Neighbor* has already opened up exciting new avenues for future research in the historiography of Mexico in the world.

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<sup>26</sup> Christy Thornton, *Revolution in Development: Mexico and the Governance of the Global Economy* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2021).

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 RESPONSE BY ERIC ZOLOV, STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY
 

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Let me start by stating my sincere appreciation to the four reviewers who took the time to read *The Last Good Neighbor* and to H-Diplo for facilitating this roundtable. These discussions provide an exceptionally fruitful opportunity to interrogate a new work while opening a unique space for dialogue and conversation.

This is a book many years in the making, and one that diverged significantly from my first monograph on the Mexican counterculture.<sup>27</sup> In a fundamental sense, fascination with unraveling the ‘long 1960s’ has stayed with me over the years. But in *The Last Good Neighbor*, my epistemological emphasis shifted to that of political culture, diplomatic history, and the ways in which these fields are interpreted through the conceptual framework of a “Global Sixties.”<sup>28</sup> Initially, my assumption was that this would be a book about the impact of the Cuban revolution on Mexican domestic politics and the U.S.-Mexican relationship during this period of the Cold War. That turned out to be the book Renata Keller wrote, a situation that forced me to re-envision the project and simultaneously liberated me to think more broadly.<sup>29</sup> In returning to the documents, I became intrigued at how they kept highlighting elements that no one was talking about or that, at best, had been glossed over in the historiography. In particular, I was struck by the fact that virtually nothing had been written on the state visits by Yugoslavian leader Josip Broz Tito and France’s President Charles de Gaulle, two ‘non-traditional’ (from a Latin Americanist perspective) yet powerful geopolitical players in this period, or of Mexican President Adolfo López Mateos’s extensive global travels—the most significant for any Mexican (or Latin America) president. There was also a recurring concern expressed in the U.S. documents regarding Mexican ‘neutralism,’ a phrase that clearly transcended the traditional framework of U.S.-Latin American relations. In short, I came to recognize how a narrow focus on the Cuban revolution had overshadowed a larger dynamic at play.

The field, indeed, remained largely blinded by what Tanya Harmer so aptly described as an “historiographic Monroe Doctrine”—our own inability to see beyond the relevancy of the U.S.-Latin American power dynamic.<sup>30</sup> I came to understand that a more exciting set of questions required me to grapple with the logic of Mexico’s internationalism, a logic directly linked to the ‘Spirit of Bandung,’ the emergence of networks of solidarity within a newly constituted Global South, the complexities of the Sino-Soviet split, and the distinctive set of relations Mexico shared with the United States. Perhaps the biggest challenge in that respect was assimilating a narrative with so many interwoven strands. The story itself was incredibly fascinating, and weaving these multiple story lines into a coherent analytical framework, one defined by a set of transcendent arguments, proved especially difficult. I am heartened thus that the readers found the book both enjoyable to read and relevant to multiple audiences.

The readers all raise important questions and criticisms for consideration. While I cannot address every point, what follows is an effort to engage the more salient aspects of these reviews. The first critique, suggested by several of the readers, concerns the lack of a stronger incorporation of political economy in the book. To be sure, I underscore the key role that trade diversification played in driving Mexico’s ‘global pivot,’ and the book includes two graphs detailing trade relations with non-U.S. economies over the period. I also discuss at length the ways in which breaking free of traditional trade and

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<sup>27</sup> Eric Zolov, *Refried Elvis: The Rise of the Mexican Counterculture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

<sup>28</sup> I first articulated this shift in direction in my Introduction to the Special Issue, “Latin America in the Global Sixties,” *The Americas* 70:3 (January 2014): 349-62.

<sup>29</sup> Renata Keller, *Mexico’s Cold War: Cuba, the United States, and the Legacy of the Mexican Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

<sup>30</sup> Tanya Harmer, “Review of *The Ideological Origins of the Dirty War* by Federico Finchelstein,” *Cold War History* 15:3 (2015): 419. See also Harmer, *Allende’s Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

financial dependence on the United States was a guiding force behind President López Mateos's international diplomacy, culminating in Mexico's participation at the founding of UNCTAD in 1964. But ultimately, the book focuses more on political culture than political economy per se. Thus, I somewhat understated the point made by Eric Gettig that the strength of Mexico's economy during this period—encapsulated by the phrase, "Mexican Miracle"—undergirded López Mateos's geopolitical gamble, much as the oil boom of the 1970s propelled what Gettig nicely describes as a "new bout of commodity-funded assertiveness."

Relatedly, Aileen Teague wishes to know more about the medium- and long-term outcome of these efforts at trade diversification. Of course, at a fundamental level the debt crisis of the 1980s and Mexico's decision to enter NAFTA spelled an end to the nation's strategic 'global pivot.' Still, the trajectory of these earlier trade initiatives is an important consideration to explore. Political economy is not my area of expertise, and I was aware that both Vanni Pettinà and Christy Thornton were diligently working on that side of the equation. Indeed, I find very intriguing Thornton's argument, sketched out in her response here, that Mexico needed to keep its "independence" in check precisely to avoid "transgress[ing] boundaries that might affect Mexico's creditworthiness." I am eager to read her new book as well as Pettinà's forthcoming work, and to see how others place their arguments about political economy in dialogue with my own interpretations of the era.

A second critique, expressed mainly by Alan McPherson, concerns methodology and my approach to international relations. There are a few different components here, so let me address each in turn. McPherson suggests that I conflate diplomatic meetings and conferences with international politics, thereby substituting the 'performative' aspect of international relations for the nitty-gritty, internal political considerations that constitute the real nexus of geopolitical strategizing. Much of my focus does indeed center on interactions between political leaders, alongside a close, cultural reading of how those interactions were received by various publics. I would argue, however, that these 'performative' elements in fact played an outsized role in how Mexican policy, both domestic and foreign, was produced, communicated, and held in judgement by the nation's citizenry. Moreover, from a multitude of documents examined in the book, I show how the Kennedy and Johnson administrations were exceptionally cognizant of the political and geopolitical implications of such symbolic aspects, ranging from whether or not to place a wreath at the Monument to the Revolution to the (years-long) discussions tied to the donation of a statue of President Abraham Lincoln. Thus, I examine these and numerous other instances of public diplomacy as portals for interpreting the relationship between foreign policy making, political discourse, and public opinion.

Regrettably, Mexico's foreign relations archives are no match for the U.S. and British sources. In contrast to the extensive paper trail, across multiple agencies found in the US and British archives, the Mexican records are often scattershot and full of absent correspondence. I felt fortunate to have discovered detailed, behind-the-scenes conversations between figures such as Tito and de Gaulle during their interactions with López Mateos, as well as scattered directives concerning Mexico's position with respect to various aspects of the Non-Alignment Movement and participation in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). No other work thus far has used these source materials, and while they fall short of what one comes to expect from the U.S. or British archives, they nevertheless reveal key insights into Mexican foreign policy aspirations, motives, and strategy. By turning as well to consular and embassy-level correspondence from Mexican posts abroad I was able to consider how the foreign ministry was keeping close tabs on developments within the emergent 'global south,' starting with the conference at Bandung in 1955 and coursing through other elements of the post-Bandung trajectories. At the same time, I thoroughly mine the U.S. and British foreign archives. These records allow me to build upon, expand outward from, and at times critique the analyses of Keller, Pettinà and others, in large part by incorporating previously unrevealed documents, such as proceedings from a secret NATO "Expert Working Group" detailing the Western powers' concerns with Latin American "neutralism." To be sure, Mexico's archival silences can be frustrating. But silences also produce opportunities for creative interpretation. These absences will no doubt push future investigations toward approaching the problem of Latin American statecraft from still more innovative research angles.

A somewhat related critique from Teague takes issue with my use of the phrase ‘grand strategy.’ She references the work of Hal Brands, yet the framework he deploys centers upon the United States and traditional European states.<sup>31</sup> What does grand strategy look like from peripheral or, in this case, mid-power states? The extent to which these states succeeded or failed merits equal discussion and it seems clear to me that various nations, including Mexico, adopted, to use Brand’s terms, a geopolitical logic designed to “navigate a complex and dangerous world.”<sup>32</sup> Indeed, as I argue in the book, Mexico’s reluctance to fully embrace the Non-Aligned Movement contributed to the failure of Tito’s own grand strategy. Perhaps we need to establish different criteria for what constitutes grand strategy from the periphery, but the assumption that only dominant states pursue such strategies at moments of geopolitical fluidity—as was characteristic of the early 1960s and early 1970s—seems mistaken. Grand strategy—even when, or especially so when this is more aspirational than realized—should not be the prerogative of the large powers alone.

A third consideration, raised by Gettig, is the relative absence of a discussion on race. This is a fascinating critique and one that introduces a very interesting set of questions for thinking about linkages between geopolitics and political culture in this period. There are already various works in this direction, and the racial politics of Tricontinentalism is a burgeoning area of investigation.<sup>33</sup> In the case of Mexico, racial constructs were not overtly central to political discourse but precisely through absences one can no doubt find important entry points for analysis. Gettig’s point about how López Mateos largely avoided the racialized, post-Bandung trajectory that embodied in the Afro-Asian Peoples’ Solidarity Organization (AAPSO) and which culminated in the Tricontinental Conference certainly rings true. I analyze this on somewhat different terms in the book, suggesting that while López Mateos engaged this ‘racialized solidarity’ trajectory he nevertheless placed more emphasis on ‘statist’ channels, namely those that turned to the United Nations for international legitimacy. But Gettig’s comment opens up an important line for future research into the ways that racialized discourse—its absence as much as presence—reflected Mexican policymakers’ strategic paternalism toward the country’s indigenous population and the ways in which “race” and indigeneity constituted a radicalized subjectivity by the 1970s that directly intersected with President Luis Echeverría’s own geopolitical strategy.<sup>34</sup>

Both Gettig and McPherson raise an additional critique that is well taken, namely the book’s primary focus on leftwing political discourse at the expense of Mexican conservatism. In part, my decision was based on a similar rationale as the lack of focus on political economy. Namely, I was aware that others are deeply engaged in research on this topic and any serious effort to disentangle the currents of Catholic conservatism lays somewhat outside of my own area of expertise. At the same time, I was especially interested in understanding the ways in which the left simultaneously coalesced and fragmented, and I aspired to link those left-wing formulations to local, regional, and global levels of analysis.<sup>35</sup> I fully concur that studying the ‘other side of the sixties,’ especially for Latin America, needs to enter our discussion; a focus on the left and with

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<sup>31</sup> Hal Brands, *What Good is Grand Strategy: Power and Purpose in American Statecraft from Harry S. Truman to George W. Bush* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014).

<sup>32</sup> Brands, *What Good is Grand Strategy*, 1.

<sup>33</sup> See for example, Anne Garland Mahler, *From the Tricontinental to the Global South: Race, Radicalism, and Transnational Solidarity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018); see also selections in Chen Jian, Martin Klimpke, et. al., eds., *The Routledge Handbook of the Global Sixties: Between Protest and Nation-Building* (New York: Routledge, 2020); and chapters in Thomas Field, Stella Krepp and Vanni Pettinà, eds., *Latin America and the Global Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020).

<sup>34</sup> See A. S. Dillingham, “Indigenismo Occupied: Indigenous Youth and Mexico’s Democratic Opening (1968-1975),” *The Americas* 72:4 (October 2015): 549-582.

<sup>35</sup> For a useful discussion see Nicolás Dip, coord., “La nueva izquierda en la historia reciente de América Latina: Un diálogo entre Eric Zolov, Rafael Rojas, Elisa Servín, María Cristina Tortti y Aldo Marchesi,” *Escripita: Revista de Historia* 2:4 (July-December 2020): 290-323.

revolutionary mobilization and repression more generally has monopolized too much of our attention. Fortunately, there are excellent studies now seeing the light and with the promise of more to come.<sup>36</sup>

A final critique, raised by McPherson, concerns his skepticism over my use of the term ‘Good Neighbor’ itself. Here, I would simply disagree. While there is no question that the Good Neighbor as a formal policy strategy transpired specifically in the context of the 1930s and 1940s, I found plenty of evidence to support my argument that the Good Neighbor, as a strategic discourse, uniquely sustained U.S.-Mexican relations throughout the 1960s. While it may be true that the term itself was used more by U.S. actors than Mexicans, multiple discursive and symbolic associations to the phrase are amply found from the Mexican perspective. For instance, I chart the repeated references to President Franklin Roosevelt made by Mexican intellectuals, statesmen, and others, from President Lázaro Cárdenas publicly quoting Roosevelt in 1959 to language pronounced during the unveiling ceremony for the Abraham Lincoln statue in Mexico City in 1966. Both sides embraced this strategic discourse to mutual advantage. It was the glue that held the U.S.-Mexican relationship together, and that which allowed for maximum elasticity.

Let me end by referencing Eric Gettig’s generous comment that he “wish[ed] that Zolov had chosen to include the 1970s more fully in the body of the book in their own right.” In fact, my early conceptualization of this project took me into the mid 1970s. Although the Mexican archival record drops off precipitously under Echeverría, I had plenty of material from the U.S. and British side of things. Moreover, I thought it was essential to complete the narrative arc of the Global Sixties which I had originally set out to accomplish. Yet five chapters in, I still found myself in the early 1960s. At the same time, my decision to end the book earlier than initially planned led to an epiphany about periodization and a clearer understanding of how and why 1966 represents an important dividing point for the Global Sixties. One of Duke’s external reviewers for the manuscript was insistent that I carry the narrative forward (as I had originally promised in my book proposal) and that became the epilogue. There is honestly so much to be done on the 1970s, so many new angles to explore and so much terrific work being written on the period, that I feel completely at peace with the decision to end the book where I did, and thus to leave it to the next generation of researchers to take up the baton.

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<sup>36</sup> Jaime Pensado, “‘To Assault with the Truth’: The Revitalization of Conservative Militancy in Mexico During the Global Sixties,” *The Americas* 70:3 (2014): 489-521; Luis Herrán Ávila, “The Other ‘New Man’: Conservative Nationalism and Right-Wing Youth in 1970s Monterrey,” in Jaime Pensado and Enrique Ochoa, eds., *México Beyond 1968: Revolutionaries, Radicals, and Repression During the Global Sixties and Subversive Seventies* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2018); Ernesto Bohoslavsky, et. al., “Juventudes conservadoras en los años sesenta en Argentina, Chile y Uruguay,” in Fabio Kolar and Ulrich Mücke, eds., *El pensamiento conservador en América Latina, España y Portugal. Siglos XIX y XX* (Madrid and Frankfurt: Iberoamericana-Vervuert, 2018): 289-311.