

H-Diplo ROUNDTABLE XXIV-15

Jeremy Friedman. *Ripe for Revolution: Building Socialism in the Third World*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2021. ISBN 9780674244313

2 January 2023 | <https://hdiplo.org/to/RT24-15>

Editor: Diane Labrosse | Commissioning Editor: Thomas Maddux | Production Editor: Christopher Ball

Contents

Introduction by David Engerman, Yale University.....	2
Review by Jeffrey James Byrne, University of British Columbia.....	5
Review by Yakov Feygin, Berggruen Institute.....	7
Review by Tanya Harmer, London School of Economics and Political Science.....	11
Review by Kristy Ironside, McGill University.....	16
Review by Yasmina Martin, Yale University.....	21
Response by Jeremy Friedman, Harvard University.....	25

Introduction by David Engerman, Yale University

Only six years after publishing the innovative and wide-ranging *The Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Split and the Third World*, Jeremy Friedman has expanded his horizons in an impressive new book, *Ripe for Revolution: Building Socialism in the Third World* (Harvard University Press, 2021).¹ The two books, of course, share more than just an author. Both works look at the relationship between the two major socialist superpowers and their relations with what was then called the Third World. As this last term implies and the new book's subtitle suggests, the focus is on the Cold War. Unlike other recent accounts that call into question the dynamics, chronologies, and geographies of the Cold War, in both books Friedman recounts key aspects of the history of global socialism rather than challenging the basic parameters of the global American-Soviet conflict.²

Our four reviewers agree that Friedman succeeds admirably at both expanding and deepening historical knowledge of socialism in the latter half of the twentieth century. They are unanimous in praising the geographic scope of *Ripe for Revolution*, especially the five case studies of Angola, Chile, Indonesia, Iran, and Tanzania. They also laud the fruits of Friedman's stunning efforts to accumulate an extraordinary base of primary sources—from fourteen different countries.³ They also appreciate the efforts to establish connections between the different cases. Many of the reviewers question Friedman's case selection, noting that the book does not volunteer the criteria for case selection; the issue is not just that one or another case—for instance Cuba—is missing from Friedman's account, but there is only a brief discussion of the author's selection of these five countries as opposed to any others. Friedman defends his selection briefly in the book's introduction: the five countries were all “held up both as models for their regions and as ways to solve broader questions of socialist development” all while “resist[ing] formal adherence to the Soviet bloc.” (13). Yet this may allow the criticism that he chose the cases because of the argument he wished to make—what social scientists call “selecting on the dependent variable.”⁴ Friedman's generous reply to his reviewers offers a fuller explanation. Beyond the choice of cases is the sequencing; since the cases overlap substantially in time, even organizing them is a challenge. But Yakov Feygin cleverly discerns an underlying logic for the sequence that starts with Indonesia in the 1960s and ends with Iran in the 1980s. Taken in this order, Feygin sees the chapters tracking first the apotheosis of the Soviet notion of a “non-socialist path of development” in Indonesia, then Soviet efforts to learn from that failure in Chile and Tanzania, and finally the internal contradictions in Angola and Iran that resulted in a non-Marxist outcome.

Feygin's effort is thoughtful but also brings to mind Kristy Ironside's comment that *Ripe for Revolution* underplays its own argument. The individual cases are very impressive, revealing the intersection of global factors—including the influence of Soviet and Chinese revolutionary thought—and local contexts. Jeffrey

¹ Jeremy Scott Friedman, *The Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Split and the Third World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

² Heonik Kwon, *The Other Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); Lorenz M. Lüthi, *Cold Wars: Asia, the Middle East, Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020); Hajimu Masuda, *Cold War Crucible: The Korean Conflict and the Postwar World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).

³ Friedman worked in a total of 24 archives in 14 countries. Dividing into the “three worlds” of the Cold War: four from the West (Portugal, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States); six from socialist powers (Bulgaria, China, Germany, Romania, Russia, Serbia), and four from the Third World (Chile, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia).

⁴ Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), chap. 4.

Byrne and Tanya Harmer raise the broader concern that the cases are brought together more through Moscow and Beijing than through direct contacts between the Third World socialists themselves. And specialists like Harmer (for Chile) and Yasmina Martin (for Tanzania) call into question some elements of those cases.

Questions like this get to the core of writing global history. Histories without these kinds of connections tend towards comparative history that treat individual cases as relatively autonomous from one another. On the other hand, global histories that rely on one or two globalizing forces to link the cases tend to recount global histories through the eyes or the actions of major powers—the British and French empires, Cold War superpowers, etc. Friedman’s *Ripe for Revolution* takes a different tack: it is surely significant, as he notes, that a number of different countries, each with their own reasons and inflected by their own circumstances, established economic and political systems based on socialist principles (264-265). And even as each tried to find its own path to socialism, there was no way to discuss socialism without discussing actually existing socialist states, the largest and most influential of which were the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China; a meaningful global history of late twentieth-century socialism could not omit them. And yet it is hardly surprising that scholars with expertise in Asia, Africa, or Latin America wish to see their region featured more prominently.

Friedman’s *Ripe for Revolution* differs from *Shadow Cold War* by shifting the balance between Moscow/Beijing and other socialist states substantially to the latter. The result, all four reviewers agree, is a significant achievement, one that offers insights in each of the cases, and gains from their juxtaposition in a single book. Thus it is not a surprise, as Friedman observes in providing the last word for this roundtable, that even as the reviewers mention the length and density of the actually existing prose, they still call for more.

Participants:

Jeremy Friedman is the Marvin Bower Associate Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School. Before that he was the Associate Director of the Brady-Johnson Program in Grand Strategy at Yale University. He received his Ph.D. in History from Princeton University in 2011. His books include *Shadow Cold War* (UNC Press, 2015) and *Ripe for Revolution* (Harvard University Press, 2021). His current projects include a book project on the New Left in the West from the 1960s to the end of the Cold War, and a project on the role of firms as geopolitical actors.

David C. Engerman is Leitner Professor in the History Department and the Jackson School for Global Affairs at Yale University. His most recent book is *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India* (Harvard University Press, 2018), and he is currently completing a history of international development.

Jeffrey James Byrne is Associate Professor of History at the University of British Columbia. He writes on anticolonialism, revolutions, and the international history of the Global South. He is the author of the award-winning *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (Oxford, 2016).

Yakov Feygin is Associate Director at the Berggruen Institute's Future of Capitalism Program. He holds a Ph.D. in Russian and Economic History from the University of Pennsylvania and has held a fellowship at the

Harvard Kennedy School of Government. His work on Soviet economic reform is forthcoming with Harvard University Press.

Tanya Harmer is an Associate Professor in International History at the London School of Economics and Political Science. She is the author of *Allende's Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* (University of North Carolina Press, 2011), which won LASA's Luciano Tomassini Prize, and *Beatriz Allende: A Revolutionary Life in Cold War Latin America* (University of North Carolina Press, 2020).

Kristy Ironside is an Assistant Professor of Russian history at McGill University and the author of *A Full-Value Ruble: The Promise of Prosperity in the Postwar Soviet Union* (Harvard, 2021). She is currently at work on two monographs related to the Soviet Union's international engagements: the first, on Soviet commercialized soft power efforts under Joseph Stalin, and the second on McDonald's entry and exit from the Soviet/Russian market.

Yasmina Martin is a Ph.D. candidate in history at Yale University. Her dissertation is an intellectual and social history of South African political exiles in socialist Tanzania, and her broader research interests include histories of southern African liberation movements, decolonization-era projects of African unity, and Third World internationalism.

Jeremy Friedman's *Ripe for Revolution: Building Socialism in the Third World* is a natural follow-up to his first monograph, which examined Sino-Soviet competition for influence in the Third World.⁵ Building socialism was, of course, the purported goal of that competition. Indeed, the germ of *Ripe for Revolution* can be found in the country-specific chapters that featured as appendices to Friedman's doctoral thesis (which was an invaluable asset to me as I prepared my own monograph on the Cold War in Algeria).⁶ *Ripe for Revolution* therefore consists of five distinct case-study chapters which treat Cold War diplomacy surrounding the socialist experiments in Indonesia, Chile, Tanzania, Angola, and Iran. One would like to see a convincing evidentiary base for such an ambitious, globe-spanning study, and Friedman does not disappoint. While the original dissertation featured a rather staggering quantity of archival research across numerous countries, he has since added significantly more in refining his analysis. I think it fair to say that *Ripe for Revolution* solidifies Friedman's reputation as a paragon of works of multinational, archivally-layered international history.

Interpretively and stylistically, the book clearly belongs to the 'Cold War in the Third World' international history literature, of which Odd Arne Westad's *Global Cold War* is the paradigm-defining work.⁷ With its focus on Sino-Soviet perceptions of Third World development models, *Ripe for Revolution* also constitutes an important new contribution to the history of what David Engerman has called "the Second World's Third World."⁸ The contemporaneous Soviet, Chinese, and East German observers that serve as the primary protagonists in this tale plainly suffered from a host of cultural and ideological blinders, which the book vividly conveys. To the degree that postcolonial socialism was dependent on the Communist world's guidance—a dubious contention, to be sure—*Ripe for Revolution* goes some way toward explaining the dismal failure of such guidance in these five cases. While it is often assumed that the popularity of postcolonial socialism was a product of the Cold War context, Friedman's consecutive narratives of failed Communist guidance raise the intriguing notion that postcolonial socialism might instead have thrived without the contentions of the Cold War and the heavy-handed ineptitude of Communist assistance.

This is important subject matter. Rhetorical obeisance to socialism was almost universal across the developing world for much of the Cold War era. Consequently, socialism has undoubtedly shaped the contemporary world to an extent that is surely still underappreciated, and this book makes impressive strides to redress that gap. Each of Friedman's case studies exhibits marked peculiarities and distinctive traits. One of the obvious strengths of his study is its meticulous revelation of how heterogeneous 'socialism' was in practice.

That said, Friedman does not provide a convincing rationale for how he chose these particular five countries (Chile, Indonesia, Tanzania, Angola, and Iran), and we do not get much sense for how representative,

⁵ Jeremy Friedman, *Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Competition for the Third World* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

⁶ Jeffrey James Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

⁷ Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁸ David C. Engerman, "The Second World's Third World," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 12, no. 1 (2011): 183–211.

influential, or iconoclastic each of these distinct socialist experiments were. The five countries are treated separately, albeit from a very multinational diplomatic perspective. Methodologically, then, *Ripe for Revolution* is comparative history rather than global history, and this approach makes it difficult for the author to draw clear conclusions. The implicit narrative emphasizes variety and complexity. In spite of the richly international quality of the material, I found myself regretting the lack of a chapter that ties the story together, perhaps by tracing socialism's intellectual lineages in a more global or transnational fashion.

But it is somewhat unfair to ask of an already ambitious and accomplished work that it strive to achieve even more. *Ripe for Revolution* is essential reading for scholars of the Cold War and/or the Third World. I have no doubt that I will consult and cite this impressive tome just as regularly as I have the author's previous work.

Jeremy Friedman's *Ripe for Revolution: Building Socialism in the Third World* attempts to address how one can document the history of the socialist project in the twentieth century. This, at first glance, is well-trod ground. There are a plethora of intellectual histories of the socialist project, some of them defining socialism as a broad movement including social democracy, others simply following the Leninist tradition, and some landing somewhere in between.⁹ Friedman takes a different path. His project is a political history of the attempt to organize socialism in the so-called 'third world' as an intellectual project seen from Moscow. *Ripe for Revolution* documents the history of socialism in the late twentieth century through the Moscow-based project of figuring out how a socialist economy and political system could be installed in a context very different from 'the second world.'

Friedman's book engages with the Soviet project of the 'non-socialist path of development' outlined in his first book *Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Split and the Struggle for the Third World*.¹⁰ As the Third World became a battlefield for competing ideologies, Soviet intellectuals grappled with the problem of how to transpose Marxism into the post-colonial conditions where an industrial working class was barely existent. By the late 1950s, Soviet intellectuals developed a doctrine that placed local Communist Parties into coalitions with nationalist bourgeoisie parties in order to advance rapid industrial development through internal resources rather than multinational capitalist trade. This modernization policy was intended to create a modernized social stratum and thus the establishment of a working-class politics. Unlike Chinese Maoists, the Soviets began to hope that their client parties would gradually and increasingly peacefully take power. *Ripe for Revolution* uses case studies of Indonesia, Chile, Tanzania, Angola, and Iran to chart how the reality of socialist development challenged this doctrine and eventually caused it to mutate into strange new forms. Though not formally organized along these lines, I believe the book has three sections. It shows the non-capitalist path to development at its height in Indonesia and its failure. It then examines how that experience created new lessons to preserve the model in Chile and Tanzania. Finally, it concludes with how Angola and Iran showed that the model's internal contradictions caused it to fail but at the same time produced something un-Marxist that lives with us to this day.

Friedman begins his project in Indonesia. The Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) was a well-established political group in Indonesian politics and, at its peak, was the world's third-largest Communist Party. Its size and influence made Indonesia an important site for testing the theory of non-capitalist development. Sukarno's seeming sympathy toward Communism doubled its weight. But the local politics of Indonesia created a dilemma. Despite its large size, the PKI was not close to the largest party in Indonesian politics. As such, the USSR backed its participation in the 'guided democracy' project under Sukarno, guaranteeing a seat at the table of power. Indonesia was the test of the non-capitalist path. The USSR worked hard to influence Sukarno to pursue a rapid industrialization strategy to bring the PKI to the forefront of politics. However, they found that he was primarily interested in military aid, and the PKI was continuing to be vehemently opposed by large Islamic parties. Frustration with increasing powerlessness under Sukarno led many in the PKI to look to Beijing and its more militant line of people's war. The USSR and PKI increasingly found

⁹ Geoff Eley, *Forging Democracy: The History of the Left in Europe, 1850-2000* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2002); David Priestland, *The Red Flag: A History of Communism* (Grove Press, 2010); Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism: The Founders - The Golden Age - The Breakdown* (W. W. Norton & Company, 2008).

¹⁰ Jeremy Friedman, *Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Competition for the Third World* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

themselves at loggerheads, the former still trying to steer Indonesia toward the right economic and thus political path and the latter beginning to take on a more militant position. These tensions culminated with the anti-Communist massacres of 1965, which killed as many as half a million Indonesians. Friedman does not write a history of Indonesian politics but instead explains what this experience taught the USSR about the fate of socialism in the global south. The PKI's increasing militarism did not suit the goals of Moscow, and thus the Party was cut lose while the USSR continued to build ties with the Suharto government. However, they did force a critical reevaluation of doctrine that Friedman uses as a building block for his subsequent case studies. The result was first, a new appreciation of parliamentary democracy to protect Communist Parties in the Third World, a move away from shock industrialization as the only economic path, and a re-evaluation of the role of religion in Communist politics. Friedman's subsequent case studies each grapple with these issues.

Friedman explores the next stage of Soviet involvement in socialist movements in the Third World through a study of policy toward Chile's President, Salvador Allende and Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere's. Each offered an alternative to the political and economic dilemmas that the USSR encountered with Indonesia.

Allende's experiment offered the USSR a chance to support a peaceful transition towards socialism under a parliamentary system. Following the experience of Indonesia, the idea of a parliamentary transition to socialism became increasingly compelling. If Communism in the Third World was a game of coalition politics, parliamentary paths to power could eliminate the need for a nationalist bourgeois strongman who would eventually turn on the Communists. Yet Allende led a fragile coalition of left-wing parties which increasingly found itself at odds over the use of arms, economic policy, and the role of Chile's peasantry as a revolutionary force. These splits left it vulnerable to General Augusto Pinochet's 1973 coup and Allende's ultimate demise. Again, Friedman guides us through lessons that the USSR learned from the experience. It was the anti-lesson of Indonesia. Communists could not rely on democracy to protect them, and some version of armed struggle was necessary.

The experience of Tanzania plays the same role in Friedman's narrative for the topic of the problem of the economy. If it was difficult to implement shock industrialization, Nyerere's African socialism and its focus on development through agriculture might have offered an alternative path to revolution in the Third World. Nyerere's villagization policy seemed to have some potential, and his openness to Soviet technical advice was welcome. Starting from the 1967 the Arusha Declaration which outlined Nyerere's vision of African socialism, Tanzania began pursuing a policy of collectivizing agricultural production in village communes. Unlike Soviet-style collectivization, this was to be a voluntary multiclass effort bound by African values. Unlike the Soviet experience, the mechanization of agriculture did not take priority. The effects were not particularly impressive. Local disinterest meant that Tanzania moved from voluntary to forced villagization. Communal production failed to improve agriculture, and by 1976 Tanzania found itself in a food crisis. The Soviet conclusion from this economic experiment was that creating heavy industry overnight was impossible. There would still be the need for increased efficiency through technological imports. But where could they come from? Friedman answers this question in his subsequent case study.

Ripe for Revolution reaches its crescendo in Iran and Angola, where the contradictions of the socialist project in the global south weighed it down to the extent that it became nearly unrecognizable. In a very evocative chapter title, Friedman labels the Angolan experience "Lenin Without Marx." In Angola, the USSR found a formula that "worked" with the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). The MPLA was strongly Leninist in its political approach. It came to power through the force of arms as part of an independence struggle and built a Leninist democratic-centralist structure. Yet as Friedman puts it "that

radical approach, however, was tilted more toward the ideological side of things than the economy” (169). In Angola, the economic problems of building ‘Third World Communism’ were solved neither by shock industrialization as in the original non-capitalist path to development, nor the agricultural development strategy. Rather, the MPLA and its Soviet backers’ lessons from previous experiments was to accept and even encourage a role for the private sector—domestic and multinational as part of a development strategy. Thus, Angola witnessed the strange phenomenon of Cuban and MPLA troops guarding oilfields belonging to Western companies against US and Chinese-backed opposition groups. The economic project of building socialism in the Third World ended with an oligarchical Leninist elite working hand-in-hand with Western energy corporations.

The fate of Iranian socialism serves as the flip side of the MPLA study. Friedman documents how the Soviet Union helped guide the Iranian Tudeh Party into a disastrous alliance with Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Iran was a test case for the USSR’s new thinking about the role of religion in the revolution. After the failures of the PKI due to hostility from a hostile population, Soviet scholars and Communist Party leaders began to rethink the role of Islam in revolutionary movements. Indeed, some scholars argued that Islam’s emphasis on communal social responsibility could be easily reconciled with socialist principles. The experience of Chile also weighed heavy. After witnessing Allende’s demise, the USSR’s foreign policy establishment also became wary of entanglements with center-right bourgeoisie parties. With the previous political binds of Indonesia and Argentina in mind, Friedman argues that Soviet leaders thought that a Tudeh alliance with Khomeini’s Islamists made sense. Friedman argues that the hesitancy of the USSR to make an alliance against Khomeini allowed for the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Not only that, but the Communist legacy of an attempted alliance with Islamism created a conjuncture in which the Communist critique of imperialism was passed onto Islamism and still lives on in that political legacy.

Ripe for Revolution is a novel and imaginative book for several reasons. First, it provides valuable insight into the connections between Soviet socialist thought and global socialism. Doing so sheds light on Soviet socialism as a living tradition instead of a hidebound, unimaginative ideology. Reading through the book one sees an iterative process of creatively reinventing the ways in which the Leninists approach revolution. With that said, the book is not without faults. The case study method which drives it is also a major drawback. To use this method successfully the author needs to establish a narrative argument and then use the case studies to illustrate it. This means that the author should include an open and systemic explanation of why one chooses one and not another case. This is somewhat missing from the book, and one feels that working had the author worked through other examples that are often brought up in passing a somewhat different story might have emerged. Moreover, the broader argument being made often becomes lost in the details of the case studies. One has to have some previous knowledge of the literatures Friedman is engaging to get the most out of the book.

Finally, I am not ultimately convinced that the book is actually a history of socialism as an idea or even a movement. Rather, what I think it has accomplished is to offer a remarkable international and political history of Soviet social thought. This could set it up to provide real insights into the afterlives of these ideologies in contemporary Russia. The small field of Soviet intellectual and political history tends to lose focus on the deep global entanglement of late-Soviet thinking and the revolutionary movement in the Third World. It would be fascinating to see what Friedman’s story can tell us if put into conversation with Georgi

Derluquian's sociologies of post-Soviet intellectual trajectories.¹¹ Nonetheless, it is an incredibly impressive effort to document a complex, multilayered history.

¹¹ Georgi M. Derluquian, *Bourdieu's Secret Admirer in the Caucasus: A World-System Biography* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Georgi Derluquian, "A Tale of Two Cities," *New Left Review*, no. 3 (June 1, 2000): 47–71.

Jeremy Friedman has written an impressive new book charting socialist projects in the Third World during the Cold War. *Ripe for Revolution: Building Socialism in the Third World* is primarily a history of experimental and sequential socialist projects in Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East. It mostly draws from Soviet, East German, and Chinese archives, though the book remarkably cites documents from eleven other countries as well. It reveals much that we did not know—and have been desperate to learn—about Soviet involvement in, and evaluations of, the Third World. There are fascinating details and disclosures regarding what the Soviets heard and what they knew as well as what they did (and did not do) to help construct socialism around the globe. We gain further understanding of Soviet policymakers' paranoia and exaggerated concern regarding Chinese influence. And after reading the book, one appreciates in fine-grained detail the long, arduous learning curve that those constructing socialism—and their backers in Moscow—travelled as they dealt with challenge after setback after hurdle after defeat.

Indeed, the five case studies *Ripe for Revolution* chooses to explore—Indonesia, Chile, Tanzania, Angola, and Iran—were all, in one way or another, failed efforts to build socialism. The book moves from the murder of over a million Indonesians in 1965, to the Chilean coup in 1973; from the economic failures of forced villagization in Tanzania, to the triumph of kleptocracy and capitalism in Angola; and concludes with the imprisonment of 6,000 Tudeh Party members amidst theocratic control in Iran. The book's portrayal of non-capitalist roads to development is therefore particularly bleak.

This is unsurprising in some respects. We know which forces ultimately triumphed in the Cold War. What is less well understood and significant about this book's contribution is how each of these cases differed. The book does a good job of exploring how projects to build socialism throughout the Third World contended with and navigated questions of democracy, race, religion, agrarian development, divided left-wing scenes, and post-colonialism. As Friedman argues, negotiating such questions had profound implications for the type of revolutionary transformation they pursued. In short, he asks at the start of the book: "Revolutionary transformation was on the agenda of many in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, but what sort of revolution?" (1).

As it turned out, contrary to ideas circulating in the mid-1960s of inevitable sweeping revolutionary shockwaves on the horizon, the picture of revolution that emerges is one of trial and error, utilitarianism, pragmatism, doubt, compromise, frustration, disdain, and discomfort. On the latter points, in fact, it was striking how condescending the East Germans, Soviets, and Chinese were of Indonesians, Chileans, Tanzanians, Angolans, and Iranians. Those in the so-called Second World seeking to build socialism around the globe more often than not bemoaned the societies they came into contact with: chastising Third World leaders' lack of ideological preparation, divisions, naiveté, criticising them for being too confrontational, not confrontational enough, ultraleft, rightist, dogmatic, flexible. I also noticed Friedman included condescending reports on Third World leaders' private lives. To be sure, they spice up the narrative. But I found myself asking why Third World leaders' promiscuity deserves mention in the book while the womanising and misogyny of leaders in the First and Second Worlds receives little in comparison. Were mentions of Third World leaders' private lives related to how the Soviets viewed their capacity for building socialism? Or were they simply incidental details Soviet bloc intelligence collected?

Reading *Ripe for Revolution* long after the collapse of the USSR and the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Soviet and East German self-proclaimed superiority and know-how—which is replicated to some degree in Friedman’s narrating of events—at times rang a bit hollow. Reading the history of socialist projects through Soviet and East German reports and prescriptions, I was reminded of the colonial overtones that pepper Che Guevara’s *Africa Diary*.¹² And I was struck by the way these case studies help to support Odd Arne Westad’s idea that the Cold War can be best understood as an extension of nineteenth century European colonial projects.¹³

Colonial or not, one of the most significant contributions *Ripe for Revolution* makes is to persuasively argue for thinking globally and comparatively about efforts to build socialism in the Third World. Crucially, the Soviet Union’s project to support these socialist projects was not only global but it was also interconnected. When it came to the lessons the Soviets drew from different case studies and the way these informed subsequent efforts to build socialism in the Third World, *Ripe for Revolution* maps the way the Partai Komunis Indonesia’s (Indonesian Communist Party or PKI) abandonment of parliamentary democracy in Indonesia led to a renewed commitment to it in Chile. It also suggests that the drive for a Leninist Party structure in Angola cannot be understood without appreciating Soviet leaders’ criticism of President Julius Nyerere’s refusal to impose party discipline in Tanzania and their reading of his socialist project as a failure. Similarly, Friedman provides fascinating insight into the way Chile’s experience of a counter-revolutionary coup informed the Tudeh Party’s dismissal of the Fedaiyan and its undue reliance on supporting Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (238). For the Soviets, the lesson from Chile was to avoid the so-called “ultraleft” at all costs, regardless of its strength (238). (Though, of course, it is worth asking whether this was the *right* lesson to draw from Chile and what others might have existed.)

Because it is the case I know the best, I found myself wanting to hear even more about the Tanzanian, Angolan, and Iranian interpretations of Chilean events. I also wondered to what extent comparisons of the Via Chilena and Tanzanian *ujamaa* were encouraged, facilitated and prompted by other processes and institutions beyond the socialist world. The fact that the third United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD III) met in Santiago, Chile in April 1972 and that Chilean diplomats had expended considerable efforts to engage Nyerere ahead of the meeting suggests that there were channels through which global influence and interactions flowed that did not necessarily pass through Moscow, China, or Berlin and that deserve further attention. With regards to lessons learnt from Indonesia and applied to Chile, I was struck reading *Ripe for Revolution* that there is a very real possibility the warnings of “Remember Jakarta” painted across Santiago in the days leading up the Chilean coup may have come from Soviet sources, which were keen to impress on the Socialist Party and the Movimiento Izquierda Revolucionaria (Revolutionary Left Movement or MIR) the cost of pre-emptive confrontation and a lack of commitment to parliamentary democracy. We have always assumed this threat came from the Right, but is there also a possibility it served Moscow’s interests in striving to avoid Jakarta II in Santiago?

Staying with Chile, let me turn more concretely to the chapter titled “Democratic Communism” (though I wondered why Friedman chose “Democratic Communism” here and not “Democratic Socialism” as it is more commonly referred to). There is a lot in the chapter that we already knew: for example, the cost of left-wing divisions, the Chilean Communist Party’s (PCCH) longstanding commitment to parliamentary

¹² Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara, *The African Dream: the Diaries of the Revolutionary War in the Congo* (London: Harvill Panther, 2001)

¹³ Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 5.

democracy, the Socialist Party's heterogeneity and radicalisation, the shifting fortunes of the Popular Unity after an initial year, the Soviet Union's criticism of the Chileans' mishandling of the economy. For those who have studied what happened after 1973 it is also unsurprising to learn that the Soviets and the PCCH blamed 'ultraleftists' for undermining the Chilean Road to socialism, that they ardently believed aligning somehow with the Christian Democrats (had they been interested in such a possibility, which remains hypothetical) might have saved Salvador Allende's presidency and Chilean democracy.

What we *do* learn, however, in more detail than before, is the way the Chilean Communist Party reported this situation to Moscow, how the Soviets viewed Chilean developments and with what consequences. There are tantalising insights. The news that General Juan Velasco Alvarado told a PCCH representative in mid-1970 that Peru would defend Chile's new Popular Unity government militarily is intriguing and surprising given the traditional Chilean-Peruvian animosity and the gradual development of interactions between Allende and President Juan Velasco Alvarado that happened subsequently (88). We learn that Allende secretly explored Soviet military support far more extensively than we knew before, even if the fact that Soviet military sales ultimately favoured Peru in 1973 is left out. Indeed, the discussion of the Soviets' decision to send weapons to Chile in the summer of 1973 (and then recall them) omits the detail that the USSR concurrently shipped arms to Peru at precisely the same time, presumably understanding this would cause significant concern within Chile's own armed forces and put further pressure on Allende.¹⁴

Mostly, though, it is the depth of disarray within the Chilean government that is clearer from new archival records Friedman cites, including the reports that Allende threatened to resign at least four times (103). For the most part, in fact, the Soviet archives make for depressing reading, detailing PCCH leaders' derision of Allende, complaints about the Socialist Party, the MIR and the Cubans (110). There are times when Friedman takes PCCH leaders, Luis Corvalán and Volodia Teitelboim's disdain of other political forces in Chile at face value. The idea conveyed to the Soviet embassy as late as 1972 that the MIR was blackmailing Allende because his daughter Beatriz had told its leaders that her father was having an affair was exaggerated gossip (Allende's relationship with Miria Contreras 'La Paya' was an open secret and she was active collaborator with the MIR before Allende was even elected let alone two years into his administration) (104). The book laments the fact that Luis Corvalán, General Secretary of the PCCH was not chosen as a presidential candidate but there is no discussion of why the poet and PCCH militant, Pablo Nerúda, was the Party's choice. The Soviet leaders' obsession with Chinese influence also probably means the chapter affords far more attention to the policy and influence of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in Chile than it actually had at the time. Ultimately, however, based on Soviet and German reporting of events Friedman argues compellingly that "in the final moments of fighting for its [the UP's] very existence, its constituent parts spent more time undermining each other than trying to fight their enemies" which "made it impossible for the Via Chilena to succeed." (118, 122).

All good books spark questions and, besides specific ones on Chile, I had many others after reading *Ripe for Revolution*. Let me raise those that I consider most important for stimulating a conversation. Some of them are questions relating to parts of the story that I wanted to hear more about, while others relate to more conceptual questions of how historians approach global, transnational, and comparative histories.

¹⁴ See Tanya Harmer, *Allende's Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 221.

Turning to the points for elaboration and clarification first, perhaps the most significant question I had related to what was happening *in* the PRC and the USSR at the same time as “this process of learning an adaptation took place” (3) vis-à-vis socialist construction Third World. There are brief mentions of the ‘Cultural Revolution’ and the ‘Great Leap Forward’ but less about Sino-American reproachment in the early 1970s and, barring some discussion of Beijing’s relationship with the Frente de Libertação de Angola (National Front for the Liberation of Angola or FNLA), no real discussion of how this might have affected Chinese policies toward the Third World. I was particularly intrigued by the extent to which it affected the PRC’s role in Chile and its decision not to break diplomatic ties after the Chilean coup. On this crucial decision, and without any allusion to China’s shifting international position within the Cold War, Friedman simply writes “Chile, under Allende or Pinochet, was just another anti-imperialist, underdeveloped Third World country in the eyes of Beijing, and there would be no breaking of relations, no abrogation of agreements, and no condemnations in the international sphere” (121). As well as wanting to know more about the evolution of Chinese politics and strategy, I also found myself asking what effect Glasnost and Perestroika, or indeed the invasion of Afghanistan, had on the effort to build socialism in the Third World, particularly in relation to Angola and Iran. It may have been a question of space but the 1980s struck me as deserving far more attention in relation to the history of non-socialist projects around the world, at least in relation to their demise.

Perhaps unsurprisingly given my own research interests, I also wondered whether the book’s dismissal of Cuba as a serious actor, particularly in Chile and Angola, is exaggerated. The book’s argument that “the Soviet Union was by far the dominant player...due to the resources in deployed, its international superpower status, and the dedication of its leadership to the cause of world revolution” (4) is compelling. But the offhand comment that because Cuban leader Fidel Castro urged Allende to be cautious in Chile, this confirmed East German leaders’ view that he had “become a much more faithful servant to Moscow” (91) or that “all roads ultimately led back to Moscow” in the case of Angola (180), appeared overly simplistic. It also clashes with other revelations in *Ripe for Revolution* of the Cubans’ autonomy in supporting the Socialist Party and the MIR, funnelling small arms (illegally) to Communist Party members in Chile (113) or blocking a Soviet-backed leadership coup in Angola (206). Certainly, the suggestion that Cuba “briefly” became a “new aid player” in Angola in the mid-1960s and then “lagged” behind the Soviets, arriving late, is an interesting challenge to Piero Gleijeses’ seminal study, *Conflicting Missions*. Friedman dismisses this interpretation without engaging with it, explaining why he is sure that Gleijeses is wrong, and detailing the evolution and longevity of Cuban involvement.¹⁵

Which brings me onto a more conceptual issue: in any global comparative study, the case studies historians choose are significant. Understandably, one book cannot cover all countries and peoples, or even all non-capitalist development projects. To achieve depth and detail, selection is necessary. But the sample Friedman chose also has implications for the overall story that is told and the argument that emerges. In the introduction, Friedman explains he chose the cases he did due to their “paradigmatic” quality, their experience with “experimentation” and their “sequential” relationship, “illustrating a process of evolution in the socialist project over the course of the Cold War.” By contrast, he notes he decided not to study Cuba or Vietnam because these were cases where Communist parties were “able to claim a monopoly on power.” (13). But when they are excluded, is the story of building socialism in the Third World not very different from a history that might have included them? I wondered whether the five cases in this book matched the attention

¹⁵ Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

and concerns that Soviet leaders had when it came to building socialism. Were there others that historians have tended to ignore and which deserve more attention? When Soviet, East German, and Chinese officials were discussing these five cases, were there other comparative cases that absorbed policymakers, theorists, and ideologues? Although not mentioned as a possibility, Velasco Alvarado's revolutionary development project in Peru would have been an interesting contrast to Nyerere's Tanzania. As alluded to above, it also appears as if the Soviets (and Cubans) placed far more faith in his chances of success in building an anti-imperialist and non-capitalist future by 1972 than Allende's Chile.

It is well-known that global history to date has a tendency to privilege the archives of imperial metropolises or at the very least to create new "panoramas of centres and peripheries."¹⁶ Friedman has done an impressive job of visiting archives in 14 countries. But ultimately, this is a global history told through Soviet (and to a lesser extent East German and Chinese) eyes. Is this therefore a global history of socialism or a Soviet one or even a Sino-Soviet one looking out to the periphery this centre created? Is it possible to capture a global history of efforts to construct socialism in the Third World as experienced by those in Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East or will global approaches unavoidably always be top-down histories told primary from the global North? The story that Friedman tells is of the "institutional reality" of World Revolution (4) but in this reality, alternative perspectives as well as the millions of people involved on the ground sometimes got lost and forgotten, while the cost of such experiments on everyday life were left unexamined and relegated to statistics of those who were killed, imprisoned, repressed, or forced into villages. The challenge of writing global comparative history simultaneously from above and from below is by no means a problem that Friedman encounters alone, but reading *Ripe for Revolution* raised questions as to whether there might be alternative methods that could offer a greater array of entangled perspectives.

¹⁶ Richard Drayton and David Motadel, "Discussion: The Futures of Global History," *Journal of Global History* 13, no. 1 (2018): 14–15.

When they successfully overthrew the Provisional Government in October 1917, the Bolsheviks expected their revolution to be the first spark, igniting unrest that toppled bourgeois governments around the globe. When that did not happen, they focused on defending what had already been achieved in the former Russian Empire, but they never gave up on the Marxist goal of spreading Communism beyond their own borders.¹⁷ Communist regimes were installed in Central and Eastern Europe after World War Two, and, with the advent of decolonization, the onset of the Cold War, and the death of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin (who was never as convinced as his successor, Nikita Khrushchev, that recently colonized and economically ‘backward’ territories were ready for revolution), newly independent countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America were seen as the next frontier.¹⁸ These countries became a battlefield not only in the contest between Communism and capitalism, but in the contest between different visions of how revolutions should unfold and what needed to be done to build socialism there. Indeed, how could there be a socialist revolution in a country that did not, strictly speaking, have a proletariat, to say nothing of a ‘conscious’ one? How could one foster scientific, rational values in a country that was still deeply religious? Could one work with, and nudge in the right direction, ‘bourgeois’ nationalists who espoused leftwing ideas but were far from avowed Communists?

These are some of the questions the actors in Jeremy Friedman’s deeply insightful book attempted to answer. In it, he charts the “extended, international process of trial and error in pursuit of a model of socialist development for the Third World” (1). The book is organized around a series of case studies, by no means exhaustive but nevertheless paradigmatic, which show how “local experiments shaped evolving conceptions of building socialism elsewhere” (1). This is not the story of what that process looked like in those countries from the perspective of those responsible for the ‘building’ per se, although the views of the leaders of newly independent states are explored at length here and the leaders are assigned enormous agency even as they were being manipulated for others’ ends. Rather, it is the story of how Soviet bureaucrats, experts, academics, and others who were responsible for devising policy tried—and often failed—to identify signs and support developments that purportedly proved that socialism could take root in countries that ostensibly did not meet Marxist preconditions. The Soviets were not, Friedman emphasizes, the only players in this game, but were joined by Marxists from other countries in trying to influence developments on the ground, notably the Chinese but also smaller players like East Germany, to whom Chile, in particular, reached out for guidance and aid (100). Nor was this assistance merely the product of the bipolar confrontation between East and West or between Communism and capitalism (4). Indeed, many of the economies of the countries discussed in the

¹⁷ As Jon Jacobson writes, by around 1923 when the revolution failed in Germany, “Soviet Russia no longer depended on ‘world revolution’; ‘world revolution’ depended on the Soviet Union... at least until the victory of the Chinese Revolution in 1949, the defeat of revolutionary socialism everywhere was assured if it were extinguished in the USSR.” See: Jon Jacobson, *When the Soviet Union Entered World Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 36.

¹⁸ Stalin’s rise to power, as Alessandro Iandolo argues, “cut short any possibility for the intellectual debate [regarding Communism in the colonized world] to sharpen or for Soviet policy to become more active in supporting liberation movements in the Third World... Similarly to other Marxist thinkers, he linked success in the revolutionary struggle with economic development.” In other words, given that those countries were economically underdeveloped as a result of colonial exploitation, the prospects for revolution, to say nothing of building sustainable socialist political and economic systems, were weak in his view. See Alessandro Iandolo, “De-Stalinizing Growth: Decolonization and the Development of Development Economics in the Soviet Union,” in Stephen Macekura and Erez Manela, eds., *The Development Century: A Global History*, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 200-204.

book, as well as the various experiments these leaders tried and which the Soviets supported, cannot be neatly slotted into either category.

The first of Friedman's studies is Indonesia, one of the first states to achieve independence after World War Two and a country with a large, strong, and powerful Communist Party (*Partai Komunis Indonesia*, PKI) (19). Indonesia also represented a particular challenge faced by Communists across Asia and Africa, that is, the challenge of "embrac[ing] a nationalist narrative while maintaining their class identity and international commitments" (21). With its bombastic president Sukarno, it possessed an "archetype of what would prove to be a troublesome figure throughout the postcolonial world: the left-leaning radical nationalist demagogue who often paid more attention to geopolitics than economics, paid only lip service to socialism, and regarded communist parties with something between suspicion and outright hostility" (22). Though they wanted to spread Communism to this large and strategically important country, the Soviets saw in Sukarno a fierce and thus useful critic of Western imperialism, whom they believed they could influence in a positive direction through the provision of economic aid. The Soviets chose to support Sukarno, who spoke about the need for large-scale socialist-sounding economic reforms but who was otherwise ideologically 'heterodox,' over their more natural ally in the PKI. However, rather than focusing on developing the economy, Sukarno focused more on addressing national grievances and on military confrontations with Indonesia's neighbors, with disastrous economic effects. By 1965, the PKI was frustrated with its lack of progress and turned to the Chinese for help. It also turned its back on parliamentary democracy and attempted a coup, which failed and led to its destruction. The Soviets, Friedman emphasizes, took a number of lessons from their failures in Indonesia, including reevaluating the role of Islam in the process of socialist revolution (71); acknowledging the pitfalls of "trying to engineer a transition to a socialist economy under a radical petit bourgeois nationalist like Sukarno," someone who would always be ideologically untrustworthy (72); and recognizing the difficulties involved in working with Communist parties that asserted their independence and right to chart their own theoretical and political paths (73).

From Indonesia, Friedman moves on to post-revolutionary Chile under the democratically elected Salvador Allende. Chile was seen by the Soviets as a "shining example of... peaceful transition," a central element of Soviet foreign policy after the Twentieth Party Congress and a major point of contention between the USSR and Maoist China (75-76). Chilean Marxists' electoral success presented a "path forward for revolution in capitalist countries... disproving the Chinese argument that revolution could only be made by force of arms" (80). Allende, however, faced a number of challenges: he was elected by a narrow margin, his Unidad Popular (UP) coalition was composed of fractious and heterogeneous figures, he was constrained by Chile's constitution, and he had only a minority government (88). This, along with his Party's courting of China, made the Soviets cautious about Chile's chances for success, but they nevertheless invested heavily in building up avenues of cooperation (89-90). Allende initially enjoyed a number of economic successes based on Soviet-style methods of nationalization and centralization; however, these were short-lived and, as the economy faltered, his political coalition crumbled. Chile turned to the Soviet Union, China, and East Germany for help (106-109). Against the background of the flailing economy, the UP was wracked by infighting, which ultimately led to the 1973 coup that put an end to Chile's democratic socialist experiment. Even if Chile did not remain socialist, "the symbolism of Chile was far more important than the reality of country itself," Friedman emphasizes (122). It allowed the Soviets to defend their concept of "peaceful transition" against the Chinese counterargument; it was also the "high point of Moscow's embrace of bourgeois democracy" (122-123). If in Indonesia, the Soviets had concluded that the PKI's abandonment of parliamentary democracy was a mistake, in Chile parliamentary democracy had led to the UP's demise. Thus, going forward, the Soviets would once again understand "bourgeois democracy" as a "cover for imperialist machinations" (123). More

importantly, Chile's aggressive economic reforms had also demonstrated the value of a more gradual approach (123).

Tanzania under Prime Minister Julius Nyerere forms the third case study, building upon the lesson of slowing things down. By the mid-1960s, Africa had thus far been the site of several Soviet-backed failures to spur socialist revolution by building up a heavy industrial base and thus creating the missing working class.¹⁹ Soviet leaders were intrigued by Nyerere's explicitly non-Marxist but seemingly socialist agenda of *ujamaa* or cooperative economic policies. Nyerere reached out to Moscow and Beijing for aid soon after announcing the policy; yet, as Friedman emphasizes, "he wanted to develop the country along socialist lines [without causing] dependence on foreign aid providers that could demand political favors in return (139)." Nyerere's major reforms distinguished *ujamaa* from socialism as practiced elsewhere, namely he prioritized agriculture over industrialization and sought to develop self-reliance, especially when it came to the food supply (140). Though Nyerere's policies were believed to be premised upon an insufficient grasp of class struggle, the Soviets were nevertheless enthusiastic, sensing that these policies presented an opening for Soviet involvement in Tanzania (143-146). This did not occur, and Soviet leaders struggled to gain a foothold there (147-148). Nyerere's reforms, moreover, did not work, and he soon grew frustrated with the slow pace of change. This led him to backtrack on the voluntarism that underpinned *ujamaa*, proceeding with an unpopular policy of forced villagization in 1973 that in some ways resembled collectivization. The project was a failure, merely exacerbating food-supply issues, leading to vocal critiques in both the capitalist and Communist worlds. Nyerere's attempt to build socialism while becoming a client neither of Moscow nor of China was unsuccessful, but "Tanzania was only a bump on the road to the ultimate success of socialism in Africa," from the Soviet perspective. Indeed, it would heavily influence the Soviet approach to advising another budding socialist country, which is Friedman's fourth case study: Angola.

By the mid-1970s, Angola had declared itself the "first socialist country in Africa" explicitly modeled on the Soviet example of a centrally planned industrial economy run by a vanguard Communist Party (*Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola*, MPLA) that came to power through force of arms (167-168). If the Soviets encouraged Angola to emulate the USSR politically, they did not encourage it to emulate it economically, instead arguing for a continued role for private capital, both foreign and domestic, in order to enable the country's development without the Soviets having to foot the bill (169). Beyond financing issues, Angola's revolution presented another challenge: its Communists were largely drawn from white and mixed-raced peoples who were associated with colonial oppression and thus "the very viability of Marxism-Leninism as a tool of liberation in the struggle against imperialism depended upon finding a compelling way to deal with race" (169-170). This helps explain why Angostinho Neto, who was Black but shared the Soviet position that "revolutions needed to be about issues of class and economics rather than race," took over the MPLA with Soviet support (178). However, Neto's refusal to account for issues of racial and tribal identity harmed the MPLA's position as it headed into the Angolan civil war. After the civil war and Neto's election of independent Angola's first prime minister, socialist aid poured into the country (199). Neto, in turn, cracked down on so-called "left-extremist influences," brought trade unions to heel much as had occurred in the Soviet Union in the 1920s, and created a strong party-state (199-201). Private trade was not eliminated but brought under state control, and, following a failed coup by Neto's rival Nito Alves, thousands fell victim to purges (205-206). Angola's government remained formally committed to Marxism-Leninism only until 1990,

¹⁹ Some of these experiments are the subject of Alessandro Iandolo's forthcoming book, *Arrested Development: The Soviet Union in Ghana, Guinea, and Mali, 1955–1968* (Ithaca: Cornell, 2022).

but many of the structures established in that period have remained intact to the present day, namely, the MPLA's monopoly on the economy (208-209).

Friedman's final case study is Iran. If race presented perhaps the most important challenge in Angola, religion was the stumbling block in Iran. As Friedman puts it, in the aftermath of decolonization, Marxists had to figure out "how to relate to religious institutions and religious political parties and how to interact with a religious population in order to promote progress toward the building of socialism" (214). Despite the USSR's official atheism, some Soviet experts argued that religion could play a progressive role in the developing world (216). Moreover, by the 1960s, Islam was undeniably playing a growing role in world politics. Moscow came to believe that "it had little choice but to accept both religious allies and religious doctrine as part of progressive politics in the developing world" (219). By then, Iran had a long engagement with Marxist ideas, some of them brought there by Russian revolutionaries after 1905, and it had its own Communist Tudeh Party. The idea that religion could be a progressive force led the Soviets and the Tudeh Party to strategically support Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini during the Iranian revolution. Khomeini launched seemingly egalitarian economic reforms, such as nationalizing banks and land reform, which made Soviet leaders believe that he was taking popular demands for socioeconomic change seriously. They believed that Khomeini and the Islamists would only enjoy temporary support, especially among progressives, but they had underestimated him and the appeal of Islam. Following the repression of the Tudeh Party and the failures of economic reforms in Iran, the Soviets reevaluated their idea that there could be an Islamic path to socialism. As Friedman provocatively argues, "the Islamic Republic of Iran would have been unthinkable without the existence of the Soviet Union... the Soviet Union's larger project of finding a road to socialist revolution in the developing world, and the practical and theoretical compromises that that entailed, made possible the very conception of something like a modernizing, anti-imperialist theocracy" (261). Instrumentalizing religion and nationalism to accelerate the developing world's ascent to socialism "opened a portal for those pursuing the opposite objective: the employment of socialist and anti-capitalist rhetoric by religious and nationalist forces seeking to take control of their societies from what they viewed as the forces of secularization, Westernization, and globalization (262).

In the conclusion, Friedman argues that socialist ideology was never as rigid as it is commonly assumed to have been, allowing for the various ideological compromises detailed throughout the book; yet, if it was flexible, it was not "infinitely malleable" (265). The goal was always to create a working class that would be the agents of revolution. Yet, the Soviet model of state-led industrialization failed to produce desired economic and political results in the developing world, and it was economically and politically costly. It also contained the roots of what would come after socialism, that is, capitalist neoliberalism, just as it did in Central and Eastern Europe.²⁰ Even more so, these socialist experiments produced ruling parties with strangleholds on power to the present day, even where multiparty elections are formally allowed (271). The Leninist model, it turned out, "proved useful for maintaining centralized rule, controlling personnel, and keeping policy decisions out of the hands of troublesome legislatures, regardless of the ideological nature of the regime" (272). The project of building socialism was thus "more persuasive and influential" than is normally assumed to be the case, in Friedman's view (274).

²⁰ Here, Friedman points to the growing literature on neoliberal ideas under socialism, the paradigmatic text of which is Johanna Bockman, *Markets in the Name of Socialism: The Left-Wing Origins of Neoliberalism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).

As an economic historian who is constantly banging the drum that the economy should be central to understanding the Soviet government's worldview, anxieties, and policymaking, I found it very refreshing to see it foregrounded here, even as the book touched on issues related to race, nationalism, and religion. In drawing no clean-cut distinctions between these categories of analysis, Friedman productively highlights the materialism that drove Soviet conceptions of development, and which blinded them to other competing narratives. The book is not, to be perfectly honest, an easy read: the various inter and intra-Party conflicts are overwhelming at times, especially for non-specialists of international relations and of those countries, and the links between the chapters become gradually, but are not immediately, apparent. But this also points to the trickiness of the subject matter at hand, of identifying how paradigms emerged, how they moved, and how policy was shaped in response to them, which was not always in a linear manner. Friedman has done an incredible job of drawing together the necessary political, economic, and cultural strands to explain how socialism came to exist, and what is left of it, in the developing world.

Speaking in March 1973, Julius Nyerere, the first president of Tanzania, insisted that “all Tanzanians... must be conversant with the policy of socialism, for only then can they consolidate and defend it.”²¹ Tanzania was “trying to build a socialist society,” and this task was “a difficult one.”²² Nyerere’s speech built on his 1967 Arusha Declaration, which outlined the socialist policy for Tanzania. The Declaration launched a process of nationalizing major sectors of the economy as Soviet and East German observers wondered how socialist development would proceed. Nyerere was walking a thin line: how would the nation foster development without giving up its ideological independence in a Cold War world, or relying heavily on foreign aid? The task would indeed be a monumental one, and the project to build socialism would be taken up not just in Tanzania but in varied ways across the Third World, from Chile to Iran, Indonesia to Angola. This story constitutes the heart of Jeremy Friedman’s masterful new work, *Ripe for Revolution: Building Socialism in the Third World*.

With its transnational breadth, *Ripe for Revolution* represents a major contribution to Third World diplomatic histories, international histories of socialism, and work that centers alternative visions of international order.²³ Rather than viewing Global South happenings through the lens of Cold War bipolarity, Friedman explores how political leaders at the helm of socialist parties in Indonesia, Chile, Tanzania, Angola, and Iran forged their own socialist paths. These varied projects towards socialism are not represented as static and ideologically cohesive, but instead as constantly adapting to changing political circumstances. After a brief summary of the monograph, I turn to the Tanzanian case in particular in order to illuminate Friedman’s contributions to scholarship on ‘African socialism.’

Friedman has strategically chosen five countries as offering sequential “episodes” meant to showcase “a process of evolution in the socialist project over the course of the Cold War” (13-14). None of these nations fully aligned itself with the Soviet bloc, and each of them created a form of socialism that was not under a Communist party (13). He tracks the development of socialism in each site along with how Soviet observers responded to, critiqued, and advised budding socialist governments. The book proceeds in five chapters, beginning in Indonesia, where both the prominent Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) and Soviet leaders wavered on whether to back Sukarno’s dictatorship. Once the PKI backed Sukarno, his “anti-imperialist saber-rattling” convinced the Soviets to cut their ties with the dictator (14). The subsequent fall of the PKI raised a multitude of questions for global Communists on how socialist revolution was meant to happen (25). Chile, the subject of chapter two, represented an experiment in finding a peaceful path to socialist leadership, through a coalition of the Chilean left. Friedman’s third chapter on Tanzania describes Julius Nyerere and the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) in their attempt to build a ‘socialism without classes’ while

²¹ “Understand and Defend Socialism,” *Daily News*, 14 March 1973.

²² “Understand and Defend Socialism,” *Daily News*.

²³ See for example, Jeffrey James Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking After Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019); Matteo Grilli and Frank Gerits, eds., *Visions of African Unity: New Perspectives on the History of Pan-Africanism and African Unification Projects* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020); Tanya Harmer, *Allende’s Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Nana Osei-Opare, “Uneasy Comrades: Postcolonial Statecraft, Race, and Citizenship, Ghana-Soviet Relations, 1957-1966,” *Journal of West African History* 5:2, (Fall 2019): 85-111; Odd Arne Westad, *The Cold War: A World History* (New York: Basic Books, 2017).

navigating the Cold War landscape. While mainstream Tanzanian politics did not welcome ideas of class consciousness, Marxism-Leninism found fertile ground further south in the Lusophone territory of Angola, the subject of Friedman's fourth chapter. There, Agostinho Neto constructed a socialism that was pointedly not African but more rooted in Marxism-Leninism. Friedman ends in Iran, where Islam became the basis of a utopian socialist vision. Throughout, Friedman employs rich examples culled from a multi-sited, multilingual archive.

Friedman's study allows for generative and surprising overlap between sites, both for local actors and for Soviet observers. One example is how the 'vía chilena' and the trajectory of the Chilean coup gained prominence within the socialist imaginary in Tanzania, Angola, and Iran. In 1972, one of the major English dailies in Tanzania, the *Daily News*, reprinted a speech by Salvador Allende under the title "Our Ujamaa in Chile" (157). In 1976 Angola, leaders of the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) had "taken the lessons from the events in Chile, especially in relation to the activities of the left-extremist groups," which for them, "paved the way for Pinochet" (200). And in Iran, Soviet observers and members of the Tudeh party alike drew from the Chilean coup to speak to the dangers of "a military dictatorship" and the potential fate of a revolutionary coalition that "failed to hold together" (236, 238). This story is as interested in Soviet observations and reactions to Third World socialism as much as it is invested in the resonance between socialist projects, and it is this resonance which reveal the strength of a global socialist history.

With its chapters on Tanzania and Angola, the book is a valuable addition to the existing scholarship on African socialism. The Tanzanian story is rooted in postcolonial Tanzanian state politics in the 1960s and 1970s, and is intricately tied to conversations happening among Soviets and East Germans about the viability of *ujamaa*, TANU's agrarian socialist project of collectivized agriculture. Friedman traces the shifting meanings of Tanzanian 'self-reliance' (*kujitegemea*), a core aspect of the *ujamaa* philosophy that was elaborated in the 1967 Arusha Declaration, for Tanzanians, and Soviet and Chinese leaders. He outlines the decisions made by TANU leadership as they balanced receiving aid for the factories, transportation infrastructure, and farming equipment that the post-colonial state required to become fully self-sufficient, without foregoing the critical political independence that Nyerere stressed.

Friedman argues that TANU grew closer to the Chinese than the Soviets, whose development aid came with expectations of aligning to Soviet ideology. He shows how Chinese progress on the Tanzania-Zambia railway (TAZARA) encouraged the Soviets to shift from choosing not to "compete with the Chinese in Tanzania," to conducting their own studies of the railway path (146). But as Tanzania requested greater amounts of Soviet aid to develop large-scale projects, its leaders were rebuffed, and Friedman observes, "what the Tanzanians saw as self-reliance struck the Soviets as unreasonable" (146). Putting the Arusha Declaration into practice required staying true to the core ideals of *ujamaa* while maintaining political sovereignty. This was made difficult when those core ideals—like self-reliance—meant different things to different parties.

TANU's decision to begin forced villagization in 1973 was the result of the party reaching a difficult crossroads: implementing forced villagization, or relying on large-scale aid from a foreign body and abandon self-reliance, and thus losing political legitimacy by halting *ujamaa* (160). Villagization led to low agricultural production, causing Tanzania to import food at enormous rates. As Soviet observers began to see the socialist project as a failure, Nyerere continued to speak globally on the importance of a non-capitalist path through the mid-1980s—refusing to accept structural adjustment—and continued to stress Third World self-reliance as a building block of socialist development. It was indeed the integrity and strength of his ideals which

established Nyerere's position in the Tanzanian national and Pan-African imaginary, even if his socialist project was not successful.²⁴

Even as Friedman's scope often manages to keep the particularities of each site in view, in the Tanzanian case, certain aspects are left underexplored. The chapter on *ujamaa* raised some questions for me as to the role of Chinese aid in Tanzania. It seems unlikely that the Chinese "put so little emphasis on attempting to influence Tanzania's ideology or policy," even as they constructed their largest development project in the Third World, the TAZARA railway, in Tanzania (164-165). Priya Lal has discussed the "material and ideological connections" that the Chinese and Tanzanians developed in the 1960s, connections which went beyond financial aid, signaling the mutual commitments of both nations to anti-imperialism.²⁵ Indeed, a major goal of the TAZARA railway, linking Tanzania and Zambia, was to provide critical infrastructure to aid southern African liberation struggles and solidify China as an anti-imperial power.²⁶ Providing some background on Chinese motivations for socialist development in Tanzania could further draw out the intimacies of Cold War socialist development in Tanzania. Even with this qualm, however, the *ujamaa* chapter represents a wonderful addition to scholarship on 'African socialism.'

The Tanzania chapter fits neatly into recent work on the ideological foundations of *ujamaa* and its role as a nation-building project in postcolonial Tanzania.²⁷ Like Priya Lal and George Roberts, Friedman successfully demonstrates that Tanzanians were critical intellectual and political participants in Cold War geopolitics even as they negotiated their unique socialist path.²⁸ He argues that, for Nyerere, "ideological independence and political independence were necessarily connected" (129). This stress on independence was core to how Nyerere and TANU negotiated development aid in the Cold War world, and how Nyerere continued to emphasize economic independence until stepping down in 1985.

As an international history of Third World socialism, *Ripe for Revolution* will be of great use to students and scholars of the 'global Cold War,' African socialisms, and socialist development.

The fragmented pasts illuminated by Friedman are closer than some may think. In February 2022, the Julius Nyerere Leadership School was inaugurated by several southern African political parties, many of which were formerly in Tanzanian exile as liberation movements. The School's aim is to encourage political leadership

²⁴ The fate of *ujamaa* and Marxist intellectual debates in 1970s Tanzania have relevance for the contemporary Tanzanian left. See Joachim Abunuwasi Lugansya Mwami, "Analysis: Liberation, Self-reliance and Marxism – the Tanzanian Way of Socialism," Rosa Luxemburg Sfitung: East African Regional Office (blog), 23 January 2018, <https://www.rosalux.or.tz/analysis-liberation-self-reliance-and-marxism-the-tanzanian-way-of-socialism/>.

²⁵ Priya Lal, "Maoism in Tanzania: Material connections and shared imaginaries," in ed. Alexander C. Cook, *Mao's Little Red Book: A Global History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 101.

²⁶ Lal, "Maoism in Tanzania: Material connections and shared imaginaries," 105.

²⁷ See for example the recent multi-authored biography of Julius Nyerere, *Development as Rebellion*, particularly volume three, *Rebellion Without Rebels*, by Issa Shivji. Shivji examines the intellectual and theological underpinnings of *ujamaa*, charting the course of Julius Nyerere's socialist project along with the many "social struggles that underlay his socialist project." Issa Shivji, *Development as Rebellion: A Biography of Julius Nyerere, Rebellion Without Rebels* (Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota Press, 2020) 93. See also Monique Bedasse, "The Philosopher King," *Africa is a Country*, 27 October 2020, <https://africasacountry.com/2020/10/the-philosopher-king>.

²⁸ See Lal, *African Socialism in Post-Colonial Tanzania: Between the Village and the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) and George Roberts, *Revolutionary State-Making in Dar es Salaam: African Liberation and the Global Cold War, 1961-1974* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

among youth, and train them to “develop their countries from within their liberation parties.”²⁹ These parties, which include that of the host country, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (formerly TANU), and the MPLA of Angola, were joined by China, which was recognized as an ally in a peculiar overlapping of development past and present. Without a doubt, relations between China and Africa have shifted significantly since TANU juggled development opportunities in a Cold War world. But the presence of China as an ‘ally’ shows in part that far from fleeting instances, these past projects of socialist development across Africa, Asia and Latin America have helped shape the contemporary global order.

²⁹ Jacob Mosenda, “Africa’s leadership academy inaugurated in Tanzania,” 24 February 2022, <https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/tanzania/news/national/africa-s-leadership-academy-inaugurated-in-tanzania-3727716>

Response by Jeremy Friedman, Harvard University

I want to thank David Engerman and the reviewers for their excellent, and thorough, reviews of a book that is, in Kristy Ironside's words, "not an easy read." The complexity and level of detail to which she refers is a product of the book's ambition. My goal in writing this book was not only to write an international history of the project to construct a viable model of socialism for the Global South during the Cold War, but to build that history out of individual chapters that could stand on their own as contributions to the historiographies of each of the specific countries discussed. There are a number of excellent works that helped greatly with parts of this story—Ragna Boden's work on Indonesia and Tanya Harmer's on Chile being exemplary ones³⁰—but telling the stories of Indonesia, Chile, Tanzania, Angola, and Iran in a multilateral Cold War context required reconstructing large parts of the story directly from archival sources. This was essential because, as Yakov Feygin writes, *Ripe for Revolution* is meant to be a story about the evolution of socialism through trial and error in practice, rather than an intellectual history. The complexity and level of detail in telling that story of trial and error is part and parcel, as Ironside remarks, of blending the economic, political, and ideological, rather than treating them as separate and distinct avenues of action and analysis.

A project of this scope both benefitted from, and was limited by, the availability of archival evidence in a number of places, and some of these limitations have been noted by the reviewers. I was lucky enough to be able to spend much of early 2019 in Moscow conducting research at a time when the Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (RGANI) had been re-opened in a new location with a wealth of newly declassified documents extending into the late 1970s, which was certainly helpful for the Angola chapter, though not really for Iran. I was also fortunate to be able to gather materials in the Chinese Foreign Ministry Archive in 2008-2009, before the subsequent changes that have led to the re-classification of all the Chinese documents I cite. At the time, though files had only been declassified through 1965, there was talk of the declassification of a new tranche of documents through 1978, which would have been a goldmine for this book (and many others), but which unfortunately never came to fruition. The East German archives were invaluable for filling in many holes because of the level of cooperation and communication between Berlin and Moscow, especially in the latter stages of the Cold War. Romanian, Yugoslav, and Bulgarian archives offered alternative perspectives, though they were not always as central in terms of aid as they were in terms of analysis. I tried to gather as much material as I could in the countries of the Global South that constitute the chapters of the book in order to avoid too much reliance on the 'imperial' perspectives of Moscow and Beijing, with some success in Chile, Tanzania, South Africa, and Zambia, though political conditions in Tanzania have made archival research increasingly difficult over the last decade, and I found myself closed off from the most valuable archive, the one that is attached to the Tanzanian parliament in Dodoma, after only two days of work. In Angola, where the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA) archive is still essentially closed for researchers, as well as in Iran and Indonesia, it was nearly impossible to collect primary archival materials on the periods in question. I employed published primary and secondary materials, but it certainly would have been better had I been able to have archival access in Tehran, Jakarta, Dodoma, and Luanda as in Moscow, Beijing, and Berlin.

Though these archival limitations inevitably lent more weight to the Soviet perspective in particular, this is not a book simply about the Soviet project of building socialism in the Global South, as Feygin contends. In a certain sense, the story of the development and evolution of both socialism as an ideology and as political

³⁰ Ragna Boden, *Die Grenzen der Weltmacht: Sowjetische Indonesienpolitik von Stalin bis Breznev* [Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2006]; Tanya Harmer, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

practice can be analogized to the development of Christianity on a global scale. Though Christianity exists in many forms and denominations, a global history of Christianity would have to accord a central role to the story of the Roman Catholic Church due not only to its power and reach as an institution, but also to the fact that most other Christian denominations have had to define themselves in many respects in terms of their relation to Rome. The 1960s can then be analogized to the period of the Protestant Reformation, as many challengers sought to promote themselves as revolutionary leaders and authors of alternative models of socialism, including Mao, Fidel Castro, Tito, Nasser, Nkrumah, and many others. Though Moscow, like Rome, never managed to reunite the socialist world under its leadership, it remained until the end of the Cold War the dominant player due its economic and military capabilities, and its institutional reach. The story of global socialism in the twentieth century is then largely a story of Soviet outreach, itself constantly evolving, and others' attempts to both react to Moscow's approaches as well as find their own paths. *Ripe for Revolution* treats these at length as well, examining not only Tanzanian Julius Nyerere's *Ujamaa* or Salvador Allende's *Via Chilena* in Chile on their own terms, but also tracing the relationships that did not center Moscow, including the Tanzanian leadership's own observations about previous attempts to build socialism in Africa, the Partai Komunis Indonesia's (PKI) interactions with the Chinese Communist Party, and the MPLA's reaction to *Ujamaa*, among others. As Yasmina Martin notes, in this way the book fits into a burgeoning literature on how Tanzanian leaders in particular were "critical intellectual and political participants" in the Cold War who were fiercely protective of their ideological as well as political independence.

Of course the book is still only a history of the development of socialism during the Cold War, not *the* history of socialism during the Cold War—no book could claim to be a comprehensive history of such a vast subject. As the reviewers note, and as I wrote in the introduction, there are many other countries that could have been chosen for chapter-length treatment, and I hope that many monographs will be written using a multi-archival base to treat those countries in a global context as well. Nicaragua would be an excellent choice, as one referee of the manuscript suggested. Similarly, the case of Peru, which Tanya Harmer mentions several times, would be a fascinating study because of the way it weaves together various strands of the story, from the left-leaning military regime of General Juan Velasco Alvarado, a new version of an archetype familiar from the military regimes of Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt and Ne Win in Burma, to the Sendero Luminoso, the bloodiest Maoist insurgency in Latin America, which Julia Lovell chronicles in her work on Maoism.³¹

Nevertheless, I selected the countries chosen for their unique significance and the amount of international attention they attracted, and the threads of evolution that weave through the chapters lead to conclusions that I think would fit the global history of socialism even if other countries had been picked. Ironside and Feygin both do tremendous jobs in their reviews of tracing these threads, and Feygin even offers a periodization of the book that perhaps I should have offered myself in the introduction. These conclusions fit because, as the book aims to show, the story of socialism is not simply the story of individual countries trying to find their way to socialism, but a global conversation happening amidst common conditions. Those conditions included the compounding difficulties of the model of a centrally-planned economy based on state investment in heavy industry, the rise of ethno-racial-religious anti-imperialism in the Global South, and the de-radicalization of the working class in much of the industrialized West. As a consequence, the adaptations of socialist countries during this period were not just specific to national conditions, but responses to a common global predicament. For example, the standing of the relationship between economics and politics on its head—from a Marxist one where politics reflects economic realities to a Leninist one where political structures could precede and create new economic realities, was a widespread shift in the approach of many socialist parties

³¹ Julia Lovell, *Maoism: A Global History* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2019).

and countries. Similarly, the reintroduction of market forces under state, party, or party-state guidance, and the consistent appeals to identities and narratives of oppression and liberation that were not centered on class became broadly characteristic of the approach of socialists the world over, and would likely be evident in many other examples as well. These conclusions derive from the connected nature of the book's narrative, in which the country-centered chapters are sequential episodes, rather than parallel cases, which together cover the Cold War from the early Comintern days to the post-Cold War period, as Feygin notes with regard to Angola and Iran, with a particular emphasis on the 1960s through 1980s.

I hope that other researchers will expand on this work, writing the stories of more countries' experiences with building socialism in a global context, and perhaps challenge its conclusions in the process. That is an essential part of building the history of socialism into a field that can parallel the burgeoning field of the history of capitalism, and much more work remains to be done to make that a reality. Perhaps it is not a bad thing, though, that for all the difficulty of reading this particular work, the reviewers seem unanimous in their desire for it to be longer.