H-Diplo ROUNDTABLE XXIV-35


26 June 2023 | https://hdiplo.org/to/RT24-35

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It is a testament to the richness of Vanni Pettinà’s concise new book that, despite its brevity, it inspired the lively debate featured in this roundtable. The reviewers agree that it is a landmark contribution and that its translation into English provides an indispensable tool for teaching at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Further, as Paulo Drinot notes, while scholars in Europe and the United States still too frequently neglect work published in Latin America in Spanish (and Portuguese), as this book was in 2018, the English translation stakes out historiographic space for a Latin American perspective within the broader world of Cold War studies. For this, the reviewers agree, Pettinà is to be commended.

The reviewers point out a number of contributions made by the book: its transcendence of both the US-focused perspective on the Cold War, on the one hand, and the predominance of single case-study national histories of the period, on the other; its integration of the early postwar period, before the Cuban Revolution, as well as the later era, focusing on the Central American wars of the 1980s, into the Cold War chronology; and its attention to both domestic and international axes of conflict: what Pettinà calls internal and external “fractures.” By constructing a sophisticated yet succinct interpretative frame, Pettinà has “set the bar high,” as Eugenia Palieraki puts it, for future studies of Cold War Latin America.

Perhaps as is to be expected with a synthetic book of this length, the reviewers felt that a number of themes could have received more attention, drawing from recent work in and on the region. Drinot notes that the “social and cultural dimensions” of the conflict are largely overlooked, in favor of high politics and political economy. This contributes to a “top-down” framing, some reviewers note—what Eric Zolov calls a “structuralist” orientation—rather than the “bottom-up” emphasis on social struggle, cultural production, and everyday life that has marked the historiography of the region in recent decades. Further, Bohoslavsky and others argue that the book perhaps pays insufficient attention to the crucial role of the Catholic Church during the period, and Drinot notes that the rise of Protestant activism is overlooked as well. Zolov and others also point to a neglect of the place of the emergent middle classes in the region, and he additionally notes the overlooked role of music and aesthetics in Cold War struggles. Palieraki argues that the book might put too strong an interpretive emphasis on crisis, instability, and democratic failures, which could possibly reproduce the “Third World’s black legend,” as she puts it. But the reviewers agree in the main that these other branches of flourishing historiography—on culture, religion, the middle class, etc.—only serve to complement, rather than undermine, Pettinà’s emphasis on the political and economic dimensions of the Cold War.

In sum, the reviewers argue that while the inclusion of these other threads of historiography might have made a more complete historiographic survey, such a project would produce what Drinot calls a “historia máxima,” rather than the “compact” version on offer here. It is precisely this concision and clarity of focus that makes this such a remarkable contribution, sure to be a touchstone reference within the historiography of the Cold War in the United States, Europe, and Latin America for years to come.

Participants:

Vanni Pettinà is Associate Professor of History of the Americas at Ca’ Foscari University of Venice and was Associate Professor of Latin American History at El Colegio de México for ten years. He holds a PhD in Contemporary History from the University Complutense of Madrid and has been John W. Kluge Postdoctoral Fellow at the Library of Congress and Edmundo O’Gorman Fellow at ILAS-Columbia University. He has published articles in the Journal of Latin American Studies, International History Review, Cold War History and Historia Mexicana. He is author of A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War (UNC Press, 2022)
and the co-editor, with Stella Krepp and Thomas Field, of the volume *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*.

**Christy Thornton** is an Assistant Professor of Sociology and the co-chair of the Program in Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Studies at Johns Hopkins University. She is the author of *Revolution in Development: Mexico and the Governance of the Global Economy* (University of California Press, 2021).

**Ernesto Bohoslavsky** teaches Latin American History at Universidad Nacional de General Sarmiento. His main research interest is the history of anti-Communism and other extreme-right ideologies in South America. In the last years he has reconstructed some of the Asian and Latin American anti-Communist networks during the Cold War. He has recently co-edited, with Olga Echeverría and Martin Vicente, the two volumes of *Las derechas argentinas en el siglo XX* (Tandil: Universidad Nacional del Centro de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, 2021).

**Paulo Drinot** is a Professor of Latin American History at University College London. He is the author of *The Allure of Labor: Workers, Race and the Making of the Peruvian State* (Duke University Press, 2011) and *The Sexual Question: A History of Prostitution in Peru, 1850s-1950s* (Cambridge University Press, 2020). He is working on a biography of José Carlos Mariátegui, a Peruvian Marxist intellectual.

**Eugenia Palieraki** is a tenured Associate Professor in Latin American Studies at the Cergy Paris University (CY) and an affiliated researcher to the French School at Athens (École Française d’Athènes). She was a visiting scholar at Princeton University, at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile (PUC) and at the École Normale Supérieure (ENS) in Paris. Her research interests focus on the Latin American “New Left” during the 1960s and the 1970s, and more recently, on Latin America and the Third World in the Cold War era.

**Eric Zolov** is a Professor at Stony Brook University, the State University of New York. His research and teaching interests focus on the interplay between culture, politics, and international relations in twentieth-century Latin America, with a particular emphasis on the Cold War period. These ideas are expressed in his most recent monograph, *The Last Good Neighbor: Mexico in the Global Sixties* (Duke University Press), which explores the implications of Mexico’s efforts to fashion itself as a Cold War interlocutor. With Terri Gordon-Zolov, he also recently published *The Walls of Santiago: Social Revolution and Political Graphics in Contemporary Chile* (Berghahn, 2022), a project which explores the significance of the 2019 social uprising in Chile viewed through the lens of protest street graphics.
Some years ago, El Colegio de México launched an enormously ambitious and ongoing book series called “Historias mínimas.” It was an institutional bet to reach a non-specialized readership with synthetic books written by some of the most outstanding scholars of very different fields: the history of Japan, of Mexican education, of soccer, of yoga, of Catalonia, of railways, of the Catholic Inquisition, or of mythology, among other very different topics. Interestingly, a few of books in this series were translated to English and published by presses in the United States. This was the case of the Historia mínima de México and now of Vanni Pettinà’s Historia mínima de la Guerra fría en América Latina, which originally appeared in 2018. The translation of Pettinà’s volume to English is a great tool for those who are interested in comprehending and teaching the second half of the twentieth century in Latin America.

The book aims to offer a synthetic view of the 45 years after the end of the Second World War in Latin America. By the very nature of the series, A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War includes almost no quotations from primary sources, but it engages in an intense and critical dialogue with US, European, and Latin American literature. The book offers a solid combination of historical data, historiographical awareness, and productive analytical proposals that are worth commenting upon here. One of the author’s most interesting and productive ideas is that the Cold War is better understood as the intertwining of two simultaneous phases. The first is described as an “external fracture” which was stimulated by the international realm: here, the main conflict emerged from Washington’s concerns over potential moves by Moscow in Latin America (19-24). This red scare, which increased after the Cuban Revolution, fed conservative and repressive measures and contributed to the maintenance in power of local elites, who were unable to respond to social demands: this is what the author calls the “internal fracture” (24-32), or phase two. Thus the complex intertwining between both fractures in every Latin American country is the cornerstone of the book: in this way, the historical narrative of the period resorts the same to external actors (the superpowers, as incarnated in the State Department and in the Kremlin) and domestic ones (political parties, armed forces, guerrilla movements, Foreign Affairs ministries, death squads, etc.). Interestingly, the author shows the numerous interactions and contacts between the two ‘fractures’ in many geographical spaces: Cuban support for Salvadorian guerrillas; Brazilian involvement in the coup against Chilean president Salvador Allende in 1973; Mexico’s grandiose foreign policy in Central America in the seventies; Argentina intelligence officers being sent to train their Guatemalan colleagues in counter-subversive techniques; Washington’s covert backing of the Contra-Sandinista troops with weapons which were clandestinely sold to Iran, etc.

Pettinà proposes to describe the Cold War as seen from the Global South. This epistemological point of view implies that we should deal with a periodization which is in many aspects different to the one which is usually employed to explain Cold War when seen from the center of the world. The Latin American Cold War has four different periods: 1946-1954 (or 1959), when the local conflicts did not reflect the unfolding of the Cold War impact in Europe and in Asia; the sixties, a paradoxical time that combined the appeasement and détente policies in the Western world with a sudden revolutionary climate in Latin America following the emergence of the bearded men in Havana; the long seventies, or the dictatorships’ counter-revolutionary repression, which began early in Brazil in 1964 and continued immediately in almost all the South American countries in the following years. The final phase of the Cold War in Latin America was undoubtedly the cruelest, since it included civil wars, guerrilla warfare, and unlimited open and clandestine repression that led to horrific bloodbaths, mainly in Central America. The collapse of the USSR and the end of the Cold War (1989-1991) created an opportunity for Latin American countries to continue their political struggles without the suffocating

1 The list of almost 80 books is available at https://libros.colmex.mx/categoria-producto/historias-minimas/
surveillance from Washington. The disappearance of the Communist horizon led to the ideological and financial emptying of anti-Communist domestic and transnational activities and initiatives. This is to say that the extenuation and then end of the Cold War in the early nineties softened “the external fracture,” and allowed the conclusion of peace treatments in Central America and in South America that definitively closed down the political room for new armed forces’ interventions and pressures.

The Cold War, as perceived by Pettinà, contributed to the failure of the development of autonomous Latin American political and economic paths all along the second half of the twentieth century. The post-World War Two democratic promise and the largely requested demands for social changes (land reform, a larger welfare state, political democratization, progressive wealth distribution) were rapidly abandoned because of Washington’s anti-USSR obsessive agenda and its search for conservative allies in South and Central America. Pettinà argues that “the Cold War in Latin America was notable for strengthening the hand of the more conservative political and economic elements of societies in the subcontinent […] drastically impairing the progress of political and social reforms in the region” (18). The reluctance of the traditional elites to accept social progressive changes has been discussed by other scholars, and also by contemporary political leaders, unionists, and activists, who argue that the system could not have been changed from within. It is certainly impossible to know what would have occurred if the political and social autonomous processes within the sub-continent had been respected or supported by the US administrations instead of resisted (as President John F. Kennedy briefly and ambiguously did in the early sixties). While the book does not answer this counterfactual question, the author does argue that the actual impacts of the Cold War were negative in terms of lack of democracy, unfair wealth and resources distribution, massive political violence (even genocide-like repression as in Guatemala), and the retarding of cultural and social modernization. In that sense, the long-lasting impact of the Cold War was a particular political freezing of the sub-continent, or, in some cases, a particular and drastic regression to pre-1930s oligarchical regimes.

A feature of the book that is worth noting is the great number of national histories that the author outlines in the book. Unsurprisingly, the biggest countries (Mexico, Argentina, Brazil) receive attention, not just because of their demographic and economic weight within the continent, but also because of their comparatively greater historiographical production. But minor countries, such as Cuba—whose importance after 1959 cannot be neglected—or Chile and its particular ‘path to socialism’ (1970-1973), as well as Central American countries such as El Salvador or Nicaragua, whose history in the seventies and eighties is thoroughly commented in the fifth chapter, are scrutinized in a detailed and sensitive way,

What is missing is a more accurate explanation of the role played by the Catholic Church along the Cold War Era in Latin America. This is not an irrelevant issue, since during those years the Latin American countries and their political authorities were still overwhelmingly Catholic, but another reason exists as well. The Catholic world (the Church, the priest, the congregations, their intellectuals) underwent a radical transformation during the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). This process led to hitherto unknown attrition—and sometimes bitter distances—between the socio-economic elites and the Catholic Church. As Jean Meyer has showed, in the 1960s, for the first time since the Conquest, the ruling classes felt they were not automatically backed by the bishops and the priests. The Catholic Church switched from being an outstanding stronghold of status quo to an institution that pushed for land reform, encouraged a dialogue with Leftist organizations, and participated in the indoctrination of many guerrilla leaders in different countries such as Colombia, Argentina, and Brazil. The sudden ideological displacement of the Catholic

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Church contributed to the heightened perception of the political authorities, the establishment, and the armed forces that Communism had infiltrated in the parishes and the cathedrals, and that the situation had become more threatening than ever to their privileges. The situation is perfectly illustrated by the paradigmatical case of the Colombian Jesuit priest Camilo Torres, who exchanged his cassock for a rifle when he joined the Ejército de Liberación Nacional. The defection of the Church from the hegemonic bloc can be considered as an ideological and symbolic element that fueled the elites to adopt more radical points of view about the ‘red threat.’

As Pettinà suggest in the first chapter of his book, and as Marcelo Casals has recently stated, European and US-based scholars frequently resort to Washington-centered approaches when explaining the Cold War era in Latin America. Those approaches show not much interest in the capacity of the Latin American governments or their autonomous pursuit of international goals, which were usually compatible with but differentiated from those of the White House. Hopefully, A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War will move the interpretative pendulum toward a more nuanced position and to a much more cooperative intellectual task between North and South scholars. If, as Tanya Harmer said in 2014, Latin America’s Cold War History is still waiting to be written, with Pettinà’s book we definitively have a first version of that history.

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The publication of an English translation of Vanni Pettinà’s *Historia mínima de la Guerra Fría en América Latina*, which was first published by Mexico’s Fondo de Cultura Económica in 2018, is welcome. First, and most obviously, it makes the book available to an English-reading audience and, beyond, to a non-Latin Americanist audience. Most scholars of Latin America, including many Portuguese speakers, will have read the original Spanish version (or can do so). The translation makes the book available, deservedly, to a much broader community of scholars of the Cold War. Second, and just as important, the English translation should make it harder for those scholars to ignore the book, Pettinà’s contributions to the field of Cold War history, and the contributions of other scholars—particularly those from Latin America—that Pettinà, an Italian scholar of Latin America who obtained his PhD in Spain and teaches at the Colegio de México, skilfully weaves into his account.

It is news to no one that Anglo academia tends to ignore scholarship produced in Latin America (and indeed elsewhere in the global south and, for that matter, large parts of the global north – in my field of Latin American studies, Anglo scholars make very little effort to read the work of historians writing in French, German, or other European languages). I am often struck when PhD students at US universities tweet photographs of the books they are required to read for their comprehensive exams. Curiously, in these images, the books are often stacked to look like New York skyscrapers; perhaps to convey the monumental effort of the task undertaken. Yet, with some exceptions, you rarely find a book in Spanish or Portuguese (or French, German…) among the rising towers. Little wonder then that all too many articles in English-language journals fail to discuss (or acknowledge) the relevant scholarship in languages other than English. In short, the issue is not mere neglect – it is designed (and needs to be unlearned).

Recently, Pettinà, together with co-author Rafael Ioris, brought attention to this neglect, and urged Anglo scholars to integrate Latin American contributions into their accounts. In an article published in 2020, Chilean historian Marcelo Casals took to task one of the major figures in Latin American Cold War historiography for writing a review of recent scholarship on the Cold War in Latin America which largely ignored scholarship written in Spanish and Portuguese. In this book, Pettinà makes the same point less overtly, integrating scholarship produced in Latin America (though in some cases by Latin American scholars who studied in US universities, as is the case of Casals himself) to correct another historiographical trend: the tendency to study the Cold War in Latin America from the perspective of the United States. Hence, perhaps,

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1 For an example of work on Latin America’s Cold War published in French history and area study journals, see the ‘dossier’ on the Latin American Right and the Cold War, edited by Ernesto Bohoslavsky and Stéphanie Boisard in *Cahiers des Amériques Latines* no 79, (2015): 17-133.


4 Incidentally, much, though by no means all, of the new scholarship on the Cold War is produced by Latin American scholars who undertook their PhDs in the United States (less often Europe). Some have returned to Latin America, but often publish their work in English as well as Spanish. See, for example, Aldo Marchesi, Valeria Manzano, Sebastian Carassai, Fernando Purell, Marcelo Casals, among others. See Aldo Marchesi, *Latin America’s Radical Left: Rebellion and Cold War in the Global 1960s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Valeria Manzano, *The Age of...
the importance of the small change in the title of the book, from “the Cold War in Latin America” in the Spanish version to “Latin America’s Cold War” in the English one.

Pettinà does not reflect on the changed title (this may have been a decision made by the translator or even the publisher), but the book works in the direction suggested by the change. Like much current scholarship on the Cold War, it takes Odd Arne Westad’s work as the foundational moment for a new Cold War history, with the Third World becoming “an integral part of studies of the Cold War period.” An earlier generation of scholars of the Cold War may have considered Latin America peripheral to the Cold War, compared to Europe or even Asia, but few Latin American lives were untouched by the conflict. As we know, in much of Latin America, this was a hot rather than a cold war. While the Cold War in Latin America may share certain characteristics with the Cold War in Europe, Asia, or Africa, it was distinct: Latin America’s Cold War had its own chronology and it generated distinct economic, social, political, and cultural processes that were specific to the region (or, for that matter, to sub-regions with the continent).

Pettinà rejects the still influential idea of a “long” Cold War in Latin America, dating back to Mexican Revolution if not earlier, and instead opt for a more conventional chronology which dates the start of the Cold War to the immediate post-Second World War period. The chapters therefore are organised both chronologically and thematically (“Latin America in the early Cold War period 1946-1954”; “The Cuban Revolution”; “The Decade of Terror”; “The Central American Political and Military Conflict”). The structure works well given the top-down and ‘high politics’ narrative that dominates (with occasional, and welcome, attention to the economic history of the period), and Pettinà’s book provides a clear account that, as intended, integrates effectively the scholarship produced in Latin America with Anglo scholarship. It is at once authoritative and accessible, and pays close attention not only to national experiences, but also to regional and transnational processes: what Tanya Harmer refers to as the inter-American Cold War, including, to a limited extent, those connecting Latin America to other parts of the world.

It is unfair to ask an author to write a different book than the one they set out to write. Pettinà’s initial brief was, after all, a ‘historia mínima’. Still, the book’s focus on high politics leaves out much new work that focuses on the social and cultural dimensions of the Cold War. Key concepts that inform how historians approach the Cold War are absent from the analysis. For example, there is no index entry for ethnicity or race. But how to understand the Guatemalan conflict which is surveyed in chapter five without attention to the Cold War? Pettinà rejects the still influential idea of a “long” Cold War in Latin America, dating back to Mexican Revolution if not earlier, and instead opt for a more conventional chronology which dates the start of the Cold War to the immediate post-Second World War period.

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sexualised nature of military repression. Youth, or generational processes, are evidently central to exploring radicalisation in the region, but Pettinà’s narrative has very little to say about this. The role of the Catholic Church is mentioned briefly, but Protestantism gets no mention despite its key role, again, in places like Guatemala. More broadly, the role of religion and ideology in the Cold War merited more attention. Pettinà does not discuss memory, collective or otherwise, and yet so much of the most interesting work on the experience of ‘The Decade of Terror’ is being conducted through the prism of this concept.

Beyond these general analytical categories or concepts, recent studies on medical professionals or itinerant experts have pointed to the analytical opportunities that arise from shifting the focus to groups other than soldiers or guerrilleros, or economists and politicians, in making sense of the Cold War. The non-human, too, some historians have shown, offer new insight into Latin America’s Cold War. Other studies shed light on how sources which are not usually considered by political historians, such as comics, may open new vistas on the conflict. The class experience of the Cold War, particularly of the previously neglected middle class, is also receiving attention. In terms of genres, recent biographies, notably of revolutionary women and labour leaders, have opened new ground for historical enquiry, connecting the personal and the political in more overt manners.

In short, while the book does a good job of providing a concise and readable account of the Latin America’s Cold War from a broadly top-down and political (and to some extent economic) perspective, it does not reflect the growing trend of exploring the Cold War from the bottom-up and from social and cultural angles. To be sure, many of the studies mentioned here were published after the Spanish version of the book reviewed. Having successfully integrated scholarship produced in Latin America with scholarship produced in the Global North to produce an account of the Cold War in Latin America from the region’s perspective, Pettinà has opened the door to future work that will bring together the political/economic and the social/cultural approaches to this field in a “historia máxima” of Latin America’s Cold War.

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10 This is a very large field, but see, for example, Eugenia Allier Montaño and Crenzel, eds., *Las luchas por la memoria en América Latina: historia reciente y violencia política* (México DF: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2016).


Vanni Pettinà’s *A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War* offers not only a succinct and comprehensive study of one of the most critical periods in the region’s modern history, but also an original approach to the Latin American Cold War. Specifically, the author adopts a regional and transnational scope, in contrast with the existing literature’s traditional national-level framework. Since its original publication in 2018, this book has been an important reference for Spanish-speaking scholars who specialize in twentieth-century Latin America, and it is now available to the English-speaking public as well.

Every ambitious work of historical synthesis faces a two-fold challenge. The author must offer both an overarching view of the topic by summarizing the extant literature on the topic, and a novel approach to the subject. Pettinà succeeds admirably at both. *A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War* is a rich, nuanced, accessible, and complete historical review of the Latin American Cold War. At the same time, the book proposes a revised view of this period, which, until now, has largely been examined through nation-centric case studies. In contrast, Pettinà convincingly rethinks the Latin American twentieth century as a regional history defined by specific processes common to all Latin American countries, such as the challenge of political and socioeconomic democratization and efforts to break external dependency. The book’s regional, inter-American, and global scope, combined with case studies on the national or sub-regional levels, allows Pettinà to demonstrate that the Cold War in Latin America was clearly distinct from both the interwar and post-1991 periods, and merits systematic study in its own right.

This focus on the Cold War years provides a welcome historicization of US-Latin American relations. The author does not idealize the US role in Latin America, and shows that it was often detrimental to democracy and disrespectful of national sovereignty. Nevertheless, Pettinà also highlights how radically the Cold War policy of the United States toward Latin America broke from the Good Neighbor policy of the 1930s and 1940s. In doing so, he shows that US interventionism in Latin America was not as constant and unvaried as it has sometimes been depicted. Instead, Pettinà argues that the history of US hegemonic policy in Latin America is one of discontinuities and variations.

Pettinà’s book consists of an introduction, five substantive chapters, and an epilogue. The first chapter offers a historiographical and theoretical discussion that defines the Cold War and explains why it is a crucial period in contemporary Latin American history. The remaining four chapters are chronological, and each one corresponds to a sub-period into which Pettinà divides the Latin American Cold War: the initial years of the Cold War until the Cuban Revolution (chapter 2); the Cuban Revolution and its inter-American repercussions (chapter 3); political and ideological polarization and the decisive role of the military in the 1970s (chapter 4); and the Central American civil wars of the 1970s and 1980s (chapter 5).

In the first chapter’s thorough historiographical discussion, Pettinà notes that his view of the Latin American Cold War is informed by Odd Arne Westad’s interpretation of the period. Thus, the author’s overarching definition of the Cold War draws on Westad’s, which views the period primarily as an ideological confrontation between the US and the USSR. This interpretation departs from the earlier historiography.

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1 The national-level framework has been predominant in Latin American historiography since the nineteenth century. This historiographic tendency cannot be reduced to a few titles. On Latin America’s “uneasy position” in global history, see Diego Olstein, “Latin America in Global History: An Historiographic Overview,” *Estudios Históricos*, 30:60 (2017): 253-272.


which saw the conflict as geopolitical above all. This global opposition between two models of political, socioeconomic, and technological modernity is not defined solely by the superpowers’ actions, but also by other actors traditionally regarded as ‘peripheral,’ including Latin Americans. However, Pettinà sees the agency of Latin American actors more as the capacity to react against and defend themselves from US—and to a lesser extent, Soviet—interventionism, and less as the ability to form original political, economic, and/or intellectual paths amidst the competition between the two superpowers. This view might have been more nuanced had Pettinà included Latin American historiographical production more systematically in his analyses. While it is true that Anglo-Saxon scholarship and Latin American scholars trained in Anglo-Saxon academic institutions have framed their studies of the post-war as “Cold War studies,” there is a rich Latin American historiographical discussion of the period that—despite or because of its national scope—would have allowed for highlighting the novelty, creativity, and autonomy of several national experiences (including the Central American revolutions and counterrevolutions and the Allende years in Chile) that a macro-level analysis like Pettinà’s captures only partially.

Also following Westad, Pettinà affirms that Latin America formed part of the Third World and, as such, was one of the regions that directly experienced the Cold War’s hot episodes and crises. There, the two superpowers vehemently competed with each other, causing political crises or deepening pre-existing ones. In so doing, they disrupted interwar socioeconomic and political democratization processes, divided trans-ideological progressive alliances, and radicalized political actors (both revolutionary and, especially, counterrevolutionary stances) to the detriment of more moderate positions.

Here, a more direct dialogue with authors who have recently discussed Westad’s approach by recognizing its major contributions, but also adding nuance to some of his conclusions and hypotheses, would have enhanced the chapter. For instance, both Lorenz Lüthi and Tony Smith (through his concept of pericentrism) have pointed out the active and relevant roles of junior players in the global dynamics of international politics. Other historians such as Gerard McCann and David Engerman have drawn attention to the fact that analyzing the Third World during the Cold War primarily as a theatre of “hot episodes” (wars, military coups and authoritarianism, revolutions) can be problematic because of the tendency to overemphasize crisis, democratic failure, and instability, thereby reproducing the Third World’s black legend. Even though Pettinà is mindful of this shortcoming in Westad’s approach, as he states himself in the introduction, writing, “here we seek to help readers understand not only the region’s crises but also its broader evolution during the era in question” (2), political crises remain at the center of his historical narrative. Because of the book’s focus on


5 Latin American scholarship has been particularly prolific on the 1960s and the 1970s and the revolutionary left. For a historiographical synthesis, see Verónica Oikión Solano, Eduardo Rey Tristán, Martín López Ávalos, eds., *El estudio de las luchas revolucionarias en América Latina (1959-1996): estado de la cuestión* (Michoacán; Santiago de Compostela: El Colegio de Michoacán; Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, 2014). For the Latin American state-of-the-art work on right-wing parties and social organisations, see Ernesto Bohoslavsky, Rodrigo Pato Sá Motta and Stéphane Boisard, eds., *Pensar as direitas na América Latina* (Sao Paulo: Alameda, 2019).


conflict and crisis, it tends to overstate the fragility or failure of Latin American democratization processes, instead of viewing democracy as a constant challenge in Latin America and everywhere else.

In Chapter 2, Pettinà focuses on the early Latin American Cold War (1946–1954). He argues that this period represents a radical change from the interwar period in two primary respects. First, the interwar period’s socioeconomic democratization and diversification through developmentalist policies and industrialization entered into crisis when the US and its regional economic allies started promoting free trade and opposing protectionism and economic nationalism. Second, the rejection of developmentism among US and Latin American economic actors went hand in hand with the promotion of post-war anti-Communism. This shift was detrimental to the political democratization processes that had begun in Latin America during the interwar period with the formation of broad progressive alliances among populists, left-wing nationalists, socialists and, sometimes, Communists. In the 1930s and early 1940s, those trans-ideological alliances had democratized the political system and promoted mass political participation, as well as socioeconomic policies that protected the lower social strata.

In this chapter, Pettinà offers a nuanced and ambitious historical synthesis of the early Latin American Cold War, which has received limited historiographical attention. The author enriches and nuances his overview of this period with case studies. For instance, he argues that Mexico’s exceptional political stability served to shield the country from Cold War dynamics. The author also offers a fascinating analysis of one of the early Cold War’s most dramatic episodes: Guatemala’s revolution and the 1954 reactionary coup against it, which the CIA supported and organized. Pettinà situates the US overreaction to Guatemala’s agrarian reform and expropriations within its global context. He argues that US decisionmakers associated the Guatemalan nationalizations with Iran’s oil nationalization in the early 1950s and responded to what seemed to be the emergence of nationalist economic policies for the Global South. Thus, Pettinà illustrates a major shift that differentiates the interwar period from the Cold War: while the US had been a major player in Latin American history since the early nineteenth century, after 1945 the country was also a global player and superpower. He contends that US involvement in Latin America thereafter must be read as a key component of its global strategy, not merely as part of the US tradition of interventionism in the Americas.

In Chapter 3, Pettinà offers a detailed overview of the Cuban Revolution, which represented a turning point in Latin America’s Cold War. The chapter also offers the author the opportunity to analyze the USSR’s policies toward Latin America and the Third World, as well as to examine informal and non-state actors, such as Latin American guerrilla movements, although states and governments remain the primary focus of this book. Notably, Pettinà reminds us that Latin American reactions to the Cuban Revolution were not uniformly positive. They included admiration, solidarity, and emulation, as well as criticism and even condemnation. Pettinà provides a complete discussion of the Cuban Revolution’s reception in Latin America and the ways in which it radicalized both the Left, including Latin America’s progressive but anti-revolutionary middle classes, and the Right. Thus, the author adds nuance to the idea of a generally positive response to the Cuban Revolution in Latin America. That view stems from the historiographical discussion of the 1959 Revolution’s regional repercussions, which has focused in large part on Latin American guerrillas.8

This history also necessarily includes the US reaction to the Cuban Revolution, which made Latin America a priority in US global policy once again. This chapter includes an up-to-date historiographical discussion of the early 1960s modernization policies promoted by President John F. Kennedy’s Alliance for Progress Program. Pettinà underscores the fact that the Alliance for Progress, which was based on Walt W. Rostow’s

modernization theory, not only included the economic and social development policies on which most historians have centered their analysis, but also counterinsurgency measures and financial and technical aid for the armed forces.

Chapter 4 focuses on “the Decade of Terror,” which Pettinà begins by masterfully contextualizing 1970s state authoritarianism. This chapter offers the author the occasion to accomplish one of the book’s key objectives: identifying Latin American Cold War’s specificities as compared to other regions. While the 1970s were a period of détente in Europe, in Latin America they were a decade in which the National Security Doctrine (NSD) was applied aggressively. The NSD was widely adopted by the armed forces and different social sectors alike, and turned political adversaries into mortal enemies to be annihilated. Pettinà’s contextualization explains the meaning, importance, and development of the period’s national political experiences, which are discussed in the second part of the chapter, and include Mexico under Gustavo Díaz Ordaz and Luis Echeverría, Allende’s Chile, and the 1976-1983 military dictatorship in Argentina. But the discussion of the NSD may also reflect some of the broader limitations of the overarching Cold War analytical framework: its focus on the ideological conflict between the two superpowers seems to lead to an overemphasis on the US role in promoting the NSD in Latin America, and an underestimation of the key roles of both Latin American ultranationalists and French counterinsurgency theory in spreading the doctrine throughout the region. However, recent research has demonstrated the key role of both Latin American ultranationalists and French counterinsurgency theory in the regional success of the NSD.

Chapter 5 focuses on the 1980s and the Central American theatre, which is often neglected in comprehensive histories of Latin America. Here, too, the author provides a well-done contextualization of the Reagan years and the rise of neconservatism in the Americas, followed by analysis of revolutions, military authoritarianism, and civil wars in Central America. Both in this chapter and elsewhere, the book’s privileged focus on regional crises and conflicts—justified by Pettinà’s (and Westad’s) definition of the Latin American Cold War as part of the Third World Cold/Hot War—tends to overshadow the richness, scope, and political relevance of democratic processes such as Allende’s Popular Unity and the revolutions in Guatemala, Bolivia, and Nicaragua. However, the book’s focus on El Salvador, Guatemala, and Panama—as well as Latin American governments’ new leading role in helping to resolve the Central American crisis—is a novel and welcome contribution. In addition, the section on the Sandinistas and their international policy between non-alignment and alliance with socialist countries allows the author to underscore one of the Cold War’s unique dilemmas: whether and how small countries could implement a non-aligned policy.

The book’s epilogue synthesizes the end of the period, including a discussion of the debt crisis, the increasing social discontent, and the gradual dismantling of the military dictatorships. Breaking away from the neoliberal optimism of the 1990s, Pettinà highlights the contradictory effects of the end of the Latin American Cold War. On the one hand, it reduced foreign interventions and triggered political democratization. On the other hand, the socialist model disappeared, leading to an “acritical shift toward a neoliberal economic model” (167), which accentuated pre-existing social and economic inequalities and weakened the region’s recently restored democracies.

The occasional specific reservations expressed here reflect the fascinating questions and rich debate that a book as ambitious, comprehensive, and masterful as this one necessarily generates. The masterful and accessible narrative of A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War makes it ideal reading for social-science graduate students interested in contemporary history. The volume’s historiographical contribution and

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overarching scope make it essential reading for all scholars who are interested in modern and contemporary Latin American history. In view of this tome’s wide scope, it would have been impossible to cover everything, and what the author does cover, he does well. Pettinà’s achievements certainly set the bar high for future comprehensive histories of modern and contemporary Latin American history.
This “compact history” of the Cold War is a welcome English-language translation of Pettinà’s 2018 contribution to the Colegio de México’s long-standing Historia Mínima series. Rendered in a beautiful edition by University of North Carolina Press, which is now very much in the publishing vanguard of Cold War Latin American historiography, A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War is an important text that will prove invaluable to graduate students who are preparing for their oral exams as well as advanced undergraduates who are embarking upon research projects. Pettinà’s precise, analytical prose and his insights and interpretations have much to offer scholars of the region, and should stimulate further discussion, as this forum will no doubt attest. Similar to other works in the Historia Mínima collection, Pettinà’s book simultaneously takes stock of the ‘state of the field’ while presenting a conceptual framework for approaching the topic. Given Pettinà’s status as a rising scholar whose research has already made a significant impact on the direction of Latin American Cold War scholarship, the book offers far more than the sum of its many, compact parts.

Pettinà’s central point, which he highlights in a brief introduction and develops in greater length throughout Chapter 1 (“Historiographical Approaches to Latin America’s Cold War”), is that the field lacks broad interpretations that transcend individual country studies. With few exceptions, he notes, we have mostly accumulated an “episodic historiography” (8), one far too rooted in an outdated paradigm that reduces Cold War dynamics as largely the by-product of US hegemony. “Over and above the dominance of the United States,” he asks, “can we find a common thread that can coherently explain the period while also considering the region’s internal dynamics and local actors’ agency?” (8). His answer to this question builds upon a recent wave of scholarship that emerged in the wake of Odd Arne Westad’s game-changer, The Global Cold War (2005).1 Westad’s central proposition is that the Cold War was more than a geopolitical battle for military and economic supremacy between the superpowers. Rather, the Cold War was truly “global” and reflected, in Pettinà’s succinct encapsulation, an all-out “competition between two competing ideological visions of modernity, one socialist and the other capitalist” (16). Moreover, rather than being “exported” to the emergent Third World, as early scholarship held, the content and direction of the Cold War was openly shaped and contested by Third World actors.

Pettinà synthesizes a vast amount of literature in English, Spanish, and Portuguese to support an analytical interpretation that views the Cold War as a new “international system,” one which “condition[ed] the room for maneuver” of a global range of actors including many in Latin America, and “despite [the region’s] geographical distance from the initial centers of the conflict” (17). While allowing for the agency of individual actors, Pettinà’s argument is at heart a structuralist one. To summarize his conceptual framework, momentum from progressive (i.e., nationalist reformist) social movements and actors in Latin America initiated during the 1930s-1940s ran headlong into a set of twin obstacles, or “fractures” (18), as he puts it, in the post-war period. These fractures, one external and the other internal, conditioned and ultimately determined Latin America’s Cold War trajectory. While these fractures were directly intertwined, in a sense their conjuncture was simply bad timing. Indeed, as he notes in a brief epilogue, tolerance by the United States of left-wing regimes across Latin America beginning in the 2000s “offers us one [of] the strongest counterfactual pieces of evidence to gauge the extent to which the international bipolar conflict distorted politics in Latin America” (167).

The first, “external fracture” was fundamentally ideological (19-24). Beginning in the late 1940s, US-backed anti-Communist measures led to local proscriptions on Communist parties, and broadly subsumed all left-wing social forces under the pejorative (and thus politically expedient) rubric of ‘subversive.’ This about-face from Popular Front, coalition-based politics dramatically reduced the “capacity for dialogue” (23) between

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the Left (broadly defined) and governments throughout the region. The exclusion from politics, on one hand, and the demonization of left-wing forces, on the other, enhanced the appeal of revolutionary proposals emanating from Cuba and abroad after 1959, and thus “contributed to the polarization of local societies” (45). Anti-Communism and repression against left-wing political thought was certainly not new. Yet Pettinà skillfully argues that whereas ideological conflicts of the 1920s-1930s largely reflected “internal Cold War” (15) disputes within and between Marxists and nationalists, the advent of a bipolar confrontation transformed what were essentially nation-level conflicts into wider regional ones.

The second, “internal fracture” was rooted in the region’s political economy (24-32). To sustain strategies of Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI)—that is, state support for local industries to replace dependency on imported finished goods—in the face of postwar (re)industrialization in the capitalist North required not only increased transfers of capital and technology, but the political support of agricultural elites for policies of state interventionism that disproportionately favored industry and the working classes. In the postwar era, Pettinà argues, a newly emergent “liberal concept of the global economic order” empowered these agricultural elites to challenge domestic reformist agendas, and thus “helped align them with the anti-developmentalist foreign policy of the United States” (28). The intensified language of anti-Communism was newly weaponized by groups who were openly hostile to the developmentalist agenda of the state, which in turn allowed for “the most conservative forces to reclaim their leadership and strength” (28). Military coups throughout the 1960s and 1970s no longer aimed to ‘reset the clock’ as with earlier instances of intervention. Instead, military-led regimes ushered in programs of “sweeping reorganization” (31) that heralded a new political economy, one of “industrialization without developmentalism” (29). Pettinà notes important exceptions to this general trend, such as Mexico, and dedicates a separate chapter to Central America, where ISI never took hold, but these twin axes of ideology and political economy, and their intersection with perceptions of shifts in geopolitical power dynamics, constitute a consistent set of themes throughout the book.

In the spirit of critical engagement, let me raise the following reflections for our conversation on this text and the broader question of how to interpret the Cold War in Latin America. Pettinà’s argument, which is grounded in a structuralist set of interpretations concerning political economy and ideological conjuncture, presents a certain inevitability about Cold War polarization and the collapse of the developmentalist model. Although the game of ‘replaying history’ can be endless, two counterfactuals in particular strike me as worthy of consideration, if only to play forward alternative trajectories that might have transpired. One is the Cuban Revolution’s collision course with pre-1959 Soviet strategy towards Latin America. On the eve of the barbudos’ triumph, the Soviet Union was already achieving notable success in establishing new economic and diplomatic relations with major powers in the region. Indeed, Soviet analysts were optimistic regarding the strategic importance of Latin America, and highlighted the fact that the region’s developmentalist goals were symbiotic with Soviet statist ideology. Soviet Vice Deputy Anastas Mikoyan, who was second-in-command to Premier Nikita Khrushchev, led a highly successful state visit to Mexico in the fall of 1959, and various industrializing countries in the region were eager for the potential trade and diplomatic opportunities portended by Soviet ‘Peaceful Coexistence.’ Khrushchev, while excited by the possibilities of having an outright ally in Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro, was by no means eager to upend an otherwise conservative strategy of enticing the region’s major economies to regard the Soviet Union as a viable counterforce to the United States. Thus a central question is, to what extent the Cuban Revolution (and Castro in particular) derailed Soviet strategy in Latin America and single-handedly contributed to a New Left radicalization that might otherwise have received less traction? Had early US efforts to eliminate Castro and/or moderate the revolutionary fervor emanating out of Cuba succeeded, might the Soviet Union have avoided becoming openly embroiled in the radicalization of politics disseminated by Cuba? Might a strategy of Peaceful Coexistence, one that enjoyed broad appeal in Latin America in 1959, have made more significant inroads to the region?
A second counterfactual concerns the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. As Pettinà rightly points out, there were numerous political impediments to the success of the Alliance for Progress (AFP), both in Latin America and in the US Congress. Still, the Alliance was Kennedy’s signature program for the region, and one in which he had invested considerable political capital. When Kennedy was killed, President Lyndon B. Johnson immediately elevated Thomas Mann, who had been hostile to the AFP from the start, to oversee the program, and by 1964 it was clear that Alliance-led development was no longer a policy priority. Had Kennedy not been assassinated, might he have kept Latin American development central to his foreign policy agenda? Might his considerable political clout in the region have worked to counter the trend toward polarization and militarism?

Another issue for consideration concerns the question of why a ‘balancing’ strategy of collectivized, regional counter-hegemony failed to materialize. In the early 1970s, three key regional actors were all in alignment on a tercермундиста developmentalist agenda: President Juan Velasco Alvarado in Peru, President Salvador Allende in Chile, and President Luis Echeverría in Mexico. While each leader faced a somewhat different set of sticks and carrots vis-à-vis the United States, collectively this group of Latin American nations arguably reflected the strongest anti-hegemonic coalition in the region’s history up to that point. And yet, balancing failed. Perhaps it was simply too small a window, and with too many bullets to dodge—certainly in the case of Chile. Pettinà only briefly references the 1972 United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD-III) conference, a climatic moment for the tercермундиста position, and surprisingly, given his focus on political economy, refers not once to the 1964 founding conference (widely attended by Latin America) nor UNCTAD-II in 1968. What was the extent of diplomatic and economic leverage conferred by these international meetings, with their wide-reaching potential for alternative coalition building? Did the United States regard UNCTAD as a genuine threat to the global rules of trade, a bothersome yet ultimately inconsequential distraction, or perhaps an opportunity to consolidate bilateral ties and thus thwart collective balancing options?2

A third point for engagement concerns the role of the middle classes, a theme generally left out of A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War. The need for increasing flows of capital, technology, and know-how to deepen ISI presents, in Pettinà’s argument, somewhat of a picture of Latin America in the 1960s mired in a downward economic spiral. Yet for the middle classes, the period introduced an economic boom, matched by varying degrees of social mobility and newfound opportunities for domestic and foreign goods consumption. As with middle classes everywhere, Latin American middle classes trended conservative with respect to political instability and social values. But they were by no means a homogeneous class, and consideration of their role during this period constitutes an important angle for historians to take into account. What constituted middle-class positions with respect to developmentalist strategies? To what extent was middle-class support crucial to the ascent of military regimes? How, in short, did the middle classes contribute to the polarization of politics?3

There is a related question of middle-class youth culture and the impact of countercultural rebellion. If, in following Westad, the Global Cold War corresponded to a competition between competing ideological

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positions regarding development, these positions were refracted through consumptive practices. Musical tastes, fashion choices, and political aesthetics both reflected and shaped the direction of local and regional politics.\(^4\) Political conservatives and military-led regimes conflated youth counterculture with Marxist atheism and the “collapse” of Catholic-based social values.\(^5\) Meanwhile, the Left generally denounced countercultural practices as portals of “cultural imperialism” which were designed to sap revolutionary discipline and corrupt an allegedly autochthonous spiritual identity.\(^6\) Culture, in short, was also an important axis of Cold War dynamics, one deeply imbricated in transnational economic and ideological factors.

A final consideration concerns the question of where the field is headed, and therefore what questions or other aspects of Latin America’s Cold War remain to be explored. In the short time since the book’s publication, new, innovative works are already coming to light on subjects such as the ideological influences of the Catholic Church, the role of conservative youth, and the weaponizing of protest song.\(^7\) The historiography is rapidly evolving and thus far from being a “closed case,” the field remains vibrant. Without question, taking a global perspective into consideration is now required, one that breaks free of both a strict nation-state interpretation and disrupts what Tanya Harmer so aptly named an “Historiographic Monroe Doctrine.”\(^8\) The region has never been defined solely or perhaps even principally by US dominance and interventionism, despite an historic tendency to view events through that one-dimensional prism. A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War encapsulates the importance of breaking free of earlier paradigms and the value of establishing new interpretations that are regional and even global in scope, while not losing sight of local nuance.

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\(^8\) See for example her path-breaking work: Tanya Harmer, *Allende’s Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

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In thanking all the four reviewers, Ernesto Bohoslavsky, Paulo Drinot, Eugenia Palieraki, Eric Zolov, and the author of the introduction, Christy Thornton, for the time and effort they devoted to my book, I want to seize this opportunity to address some of the issues they raise in their comments on my book. While the four reviews of *A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War* are all quite positive, many of their remarks offer a fruitful occasion to deepen the historiographical discussion over the region’s trajectory during the Cold War.

The first point all the reviews make is the urgent need for a stronger integration between historiographies on Latin America that are written in the region—but also in Europe—with those belonging to the historiographical anglosphere. *A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War* enjoyed the immense benefit of being a book that was conceived and written while its author lived and taught in a Latin American academic institution. Being an Italian scholar, with a PhD from Spain and with academic experiences both in the UK and the US, made me inevitably used to a certain degree of epistemological flexibility. It was at El Colegio de México, however, where I spent ten years teaching and researching, that such a malleability was decisively shaped. The challenging interactions with colleagues constantly forced me to ask myself questions and forge answers drawing on a local, solid historiographical tradition, one which is quite often neglected by more traditional historical narratives on Latin America’s Cold War. But it was also the need to teach students a history of the region focused on its problems and peculiarities, rather than on the history of US foreign policy, which helped me to frame my book. In underlining as a positive aspect my book’s attempt to recover a Latin American perspective on a process largely studied from the United States’ point of view, the reviewers also highlight the urge for more studies drawing on such an epistemological and historiographical approach.

Indeed, the second issue that most reviews emphasize is that while my book probably points in the right direction, my endeavor is still not sufficient enough to account for the richness of the topics covered by Latin American historians who are working on the history of the Cold War in the region. To be fair, as Paulo Drinot acknowledges in his review of my book, many of those works were actually published after *A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War* was released. At a minimum, they appeared after my book’s framework was conceived and intellectually assembled, a process which of course took place much earlier than the actual 2018 date of publication. This gap is also a consequence of my book’s point of view, which is mainly a political/economic one, with a top-down perspective. For both reasons, important works produced by Latin American historians that focus on gender, class, intellectual history, or the history of religion, as Bohoslavsky correctly points out in his review, as well as those that analyze the non-human as a political factor, were not included in my work. As Drinot argues, and I myself claim in the introduction, however, the structures, turning points, and political/economic processes that *A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War* retraces offer a frame to further integrate new research, leaving room also for the incorporation of a social bottom-up historiographical perspective. Until the publication of *A Compact History of Latin America’s Cold War*, there had been few attempts to synthesize the period, whilst also trying to conceptualize it from a problematic and chronological Latin American point of view. My hope is that what was conceived as a compact history can now give place to broader, thematically richer attempts to study the region’s Cold War, moving from a more solid historiographical base.

The third point which the reviews, and especially Palieraki’s, raise is the tension between offering a history of Latin America’s Cold War based on an account of its multiple crises, such as military coups, revolutionary processes, and US interventions, which mark the region during the period, and providing a narrative that escapes this type of episodic account of the era. My book seeks to overcome a reductionist approach, based

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1 With Rafael Ioris we have recently sought to give some order to this expanding scholarly body of work: Rafael R. Ioris and Vanni Pettina, “Debating Latin America’s Cold War: A Vision from the South,” *History Compass* 21: 2, (February 2023), e12759. I have made a more comprehensive attempt in this direction in the book: Vanni Pettinà, ed., *La Guerra Fría en América Latina y sus historiografías*, AHILA-UAM, forthcoming.

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exclusively on an historical assessment of such events. I try to do so by offering, in the first part of the book, a thorough reflection on the long-term processes which defined what we call Latin America’s Cold War. Identifying two fractures, which both internationally and domestically affected the evolution of political, economic, and social processes in the region, allowed me to offer a solid contribution that paves the way for scholars to think in a less episodic way about the decades between 1947 and 1989/1991. However, I agree with Palieraki that the narrative that unfolds in the chapters of my book is still too reliant on connecting that theoretical framework with a crisis-based analysis. This limit, I think, is a direct consequence of the lack of a sufficiently developed historiographical corpus retracing the trajectories of Latin American countries during the Cold War, in a way that is autonomous from the study of the crisis which marked those decades.

In his review, Zolov offers a very promising example of a direction where a less episodical narrative on the history of the Cold War in Latin America could lead, namely, the history of Latin American developmentalism during the years of the bipolar conflict. The intellectual history of desarrollismo is the subject of an excellent book written by Margarita Fajardo. Zolov’s comment, however, calls for a political history of Latin American countries’ developmentalist policies, one which takes into account the connection with a broader international scenario marked, for example, by the impact Soviet foreign policies had in the region, especially before the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959. In any case, not conflating the history of Latin America’s Cold War with that of coups, revolutionary processes, and interventions by the US is a challenge that I hope the analytical framework developed in the first part of my book will help other historians to overcome.

One last issue which Zolov’s review in particular calls attention to is the need for more studies on Latin America’s Cold War that draw on a global perspective. Although Thomas Field, Stella Krepp, and myself have sought to give a substantial contribution to that field, as Zolov notes we are still far away from a satisfactory historiographical development of a global perspective on Latin America’s Cold War. Indeed, the history of the connections and interactions between Latin America and the Third World is, in my opinion, one of the most promising fields for the further advancement of our understanding of Latin America’s Cold War.

What it is most important is that this roundtable shows the vitality of the field, and the progress made by historians who in recent years have worked on the history of Latin America during the Cold War. Hopefully, the discussion triggered by my book will contribute to the further growth of this vibrant field.

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