

## [H-Diplo Essay 119- "Cold War Latin America: The State of the Field" \(An H-Diplo State of the Field Essay\)](#)

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**"Cold War Latin America: The State of the Field."**

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Essay by **Andrew J. Kirkendall**, Texas A&M University

Alan McPherson recently wrote, "The paradox holds that the more historians find out about the Cold War in the hemisphere, the more that Cold War itself fades to the background."<sup>1</sup> His argument is provocative and may yet carry the day, but I do not believe that it is borne out by the literature of the past few years. It is based, in part, on the supposition that the Cold War is external to the region, as exemplified as well in the subtitle of Stephen Rabe's recent book, "The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America."<sup>2</sup> And while I would agree that the Cold War was primarily defined by the struggle between the Soviet Union and the United States, which often left the region at the margins, I don't think that there is any reason to doubt that many Latin Americans themselves felt deeply implicated in the struggle. If one defines the Cold War primarily in terms of the struggle against communism, certainly anti-communism itself predated the Cold War in Latin America by several decades. Moreover, one has to take into account what Tanya Harmer has called the process of the "Latin Americanization" of the Cold War.<sup>3</sup> It certainly became evident in the years of detente that many Latin American leaders thought that they would have to carry on the Cold War alone if necessary. Building on Harmer's argument, one might argue that the Cold War only truly became fully Latin Americanized with the Cuban Revolution when there was finally a perception among Latin Americans of particular social classes, allegiances, and professions, of an internal threat, as opposed to frequently imaginary or just plain cynically deployed external ones. And, of course, for others, as a result of the revolution, there was a sense of hope and opportunity.<sup>4</sup>

Recent years have seen a rich body of historical literature on Cold War Latin America, which I will examine in this essay. It may be true, as McPherson suggests, that historians have yet to address many of their most fundamental assumptions about how or even whether the Cold War fits in Latin America. I would argue that one needs to separate those parts of Latin America in which the United States long had an exaggerated interest or influence from those where it did not. So far, at least, it seems to me that recent scholarship demonstrates not only that the Cold War had more players than we previously imagined and that the hemispheric dynamics were more complex, but also that most of

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the most important players thought that they were fighting the same fight. And the battlegrounds on which they were fighting the Cold War were also more diverse than is generally recognized.

To some degree, the scholarship is still wrestling with what now seems the rather long-in-the-tooth debate over agency. Early historians of the Cold War often viewed Latin Americans as victims of the Cold War. Some might argue that this is the flaw in Rabe's otherwise admirable survey of Latin America's Cold War. I have praised Rabe's book on H-Diplo before,<sup>1</sup> and I see no reason to modify my opinion now. Rabe has been working on these issues for decades and he can draw on research in many presidential libraries and the National Archives and on the well-regarded monographs he has written to back up his more general arguments in *The Killing Zone*. And while I agree with much in this book, I fear that this is in large part because I, like Rabe, lived through too many years in the Cold War to have the historical perspective that future generations will have. Hal Brands's *Latin America's Cold War* may benefit from the perspective of a member of a younger generation, but, for my part, I find it to be more suggestive than conclusive and suspect that its primary role will be to inspire others in their own monographic efforts.<sup>2</sup>

The book that really brought Latin American agency to the fore in the study of U.S.-Latin American relations was Kyle Longley's *The Sparrow and the Hawk*. Longley demonstrated that Costa Rica was more effective than most Latin American countries in forging its own agenda in the postwar period. This was in large part due to the fact that Costa Rica had long been perceived as being (and probably was) more similar to the United States in terms of their shared histories of democratic governance which (in both cases) evolved over a long period of time. U.S. leaders gave reformist if cautious leaders some latitude because of their anti-communist credentials. Costa Rican leaders adeptly forged alliances and friendships with influential U.S. officials and politicians. Longley's argument would have been strengthened if he had compared the country with other Latin American countries with traditions of stability and constitutional government like Uruguay and Chile and examined what happened to them during the Cold War.<sup>3</sup>

Recent articles I have reviewed for H-Diplo which stress the agency of Latin Americans include two on agenda-setting, and while I was impressed and intrigued in both cases, one was left wondering why it was possible for Latin Americans to set agendas in the creation of the Alliance for Progress and the move towards a new Panama Canal treaty and not in other cases.<sup>4</sup> I have often thought that the problem with so many studies of agency is that they don't address the fundamental question of how much agency people have and how influential the actions of subaltern peoples is. In the end these studies don't, for me, address the fundamental question of power and the influence of powerful people and countries. U.S. influence was never greater or more widespread in Latin America than it was during the Cold War. Granting Latin Americans agency does not absolve the United States of its responsibility for much that occurred. More importantly, it does not really address the question of causality. One wants to see more weighing of the factors involved in most studies of agency. To a large degree, this kind of balanced historical analysis remains to be done.

I will return to the question of agency from a different angle toward the end of this essay but let me first turn to two of the most important topics in recent scholarly work, development and human rights.

The age of development is increasingly being recognized as a distinct period in the history of the Cold

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War, even if it originated, to some degree, in the crisis of the Great Depression and the subsequent partial rethinking of appropriate economic models for Latin America and other parts of the 'Third World.' The focus on development was a critical component in the Cold War battleground as countries to a greater degree than ever before competed to prove that their own socioeconomic model was superior.

Although not often recognized as such, development and modernization are analytically distinct. Development, I would argue, is a more internal process, driven by Latin American aspirations and a deep awareness of the problems caused by a failure to create economies that satisfied people's needs.<sup>119</sup> Modernization, on the other hand, was a schematic framework imposed from outside, which assumed a very narrow model of economic process and an even narrower definition of economic success. Appropriately enough, modernization has found its historians in the field of U.S. foreign relations; in much of this work, emphasis has often been on U.S. officials' hubris. Many believed that "the United States could fundamentally direct and accelerate the historical course of the postcolonial world," as well as Latin America. As Michael Latham has shown, the modernization paradigm provided opportunities for social scientists to have a more active role in trying to change the world, particularly in the John F. Kennedy administration.<sup>120</sup> The work on modernization and development so far has been fairly narrow, sometimes sharing an idea of development which was as limited as those of the technocrats that are its focus. I remain puzzled that historians of development have, for example, largely ignored critical issues of the era such as illiteracy.<sup>121</sup>

Perhaps no country was more committed to economic transformation during this time period than Brazil. Rafael Ioris, in a book based on his 2009 Emory University doctoral dissertation, demonstrates that Juscelino Kubitschek, the Brazilian president from 1956 to 1961 who promised "fifty years' development in five" and built the new capital of Brasília, used a combination of state planning and foreign investment to achieve high rates of economic growth that benefitted a small minority while exacerbating inflation that had a negative impact on much of the population.<sup>122</sup> Brazil remained at the end of his time in office a country overly dependent upon the export of coffee for much of its export revenue. Ioris deepens our understanding of the widespread societal debate over the meaning of development. He examines correspondence from Brazilian citizens to various governmental agencies (although it seems that he could have done much more with this rich body of evidence). He shows how in a more organized way, industrial workers pressed their own vision, particularly as the cost of living rose from 1957 on. He makes clear that there was no consensus on how to define development, and he also shows that it was those elites, including businessmen and technocrats, who sought a more narrow definition who won out. At the same time, and particularly following Vice-President Richard Nixon's disastrous visit to the region in 1958, President Kubitschek promoted a hemispheric program of development called Operation Pan-America, while attempting to build on Cold War fears by portraying Latin American poverty as a security threat.

The most visible development program launched by the United States, John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress (inspired in part by Kubitschek's proposal), has sometimes been examined separately from the enhanced military aid and training programs of the same administration. Thomas C. Field Jr., in a book based on his London School of Economics doctoral dissertation, argues convincingly that, in certain cases, the distinction is artificial.<sup>123</sup> Generally, aid was used to convince Bolivian leaders to move against those the United States perceived as obstacles to development or, in other ways, threatening. Aid was also used by the United States to try to discover who its friends were (gradually

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convincing Víctor Paz Estenssoro himself to lessen his neutralist tendencies). Aid was conditional, in Bolivia's case, on specific actions being taken to lay-off and rein in mineworkers. The United States provided arms to put down protests and strikes, and repression escalated. And Field shows how U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) funding was employed to arm peasant militias against militant miners, all in the name of development. Field's book is well-researched and his work benefits from a deep engagement with Bolivia. Besides extensive archival work, he also has conducted many oral history interviews with key historical figures.

Field tends to draw upon examples from other parts of the world to prove his point about particular Bolivian developments and how they typify the administration's Latin America policy.<sup>[1]</sup> I would argue that Bolivia's case was an exception rather than the rule, in that Kennedy administration officials, for the most part, preferred military-supported rather than military-led development in most of Latin America and did not prefer authoritarian solutions. There is no doubt that Field is right that administration officials considered the Bolivian situation to be particularly dangerous, and did look to the military to solve the development and security issues simultaneously in that country. Quechua-speaking General (and future President) René Barrientos enhanced his popularity in the countryside through his participation in rural development programs. As Paz's policies led to opposition from all sides of the political spectrum in the year following Kennedy's assassination, the military seized power (though not because of direct instigation by U.S. officials; Field seems rather uncertain on this point).

Many Latin American countries had their own ideas regarding how best to transform their own economies. And U.S. officials, often with only a modest understanding of U.S. economic history, were quite willing to share their advice and reject all but the most orthodox policy decisions. And if the United States had been willing to accept economic nationalism in the late 1930s and early 1940s to some degree (consider the U.S. support for the creation of a state-owned steel company in Brazil), that was rarely the case during the Cold War. In a recent article in *Diplomatic History*, for example, Dustin Walcher, examines the U.S. response to Argentina's cancellation of multi-national petroleum's contracts in 1963. Although Argentina was not a major player in fossil fuels, its economic nationalist policies in principle had to be discouraged as a challenge to the presumed benefits of free trade and foreign investment which the United States had been promoting since the 1890s. (Walcher's analysis is heavily influenced by William Appleman Williams.) U.S. warnings that the cancellation would damage the Alliance for Progress proved counter-productive and reinforced anti-American attitudes in Argentina. Walcher, nevertheless, provides ample evidence that, despite these deep continuities in U.S. policy, many liberal Democrats were ambivalent about defensive knee-jerk responses to challenges to U.S. economic interests and recognized that they were themselves in their own way undermining the Alliance.<sup>[2]</sup>

Much work needs to be done on multi-national corporations during the Cold War. A recent book chapter by Julio Moreno on Coca-Cola suggests the rich possibilities awaiting the careful historian.<sup>[3]</sup> Whether U.S. multi-nationals will open their records to researchers may be as big a question as whether Russia will commit itself to making more of its records available.

I can imagine future research which could be done on official and unofficial thinking in Latin America regarding the applicability of the Soviet model of development to Latin America, which would, to some degree, parallel, David Engerman's *Modernization from the Other Shore*.<sup>[4]</sup>

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No subject is attracting the attention of historians at this particular moment more than the history of human rights, and I am somewhat reluctant to try to say anything definitive about this subject because so much good work is in the pipeline. U.S. support for military governments which tortured, 'disappeared,' and murdered their own citizens became problematic at a particular moment in history when it had not been before, and this timing is largely what historians have sought to explain. (This is analogous to David Brion Davis's life's work on how slavery became a "problem" in Western culture<sup>[1]</sup>). The answer, as provided by the two best books on the subject, is the 1970s. As Barbara Keys notes, "Too often it is explained as a natural recalibration of American moral standards after the aberrational Realpolitik of the Nixon and Ford administrations and the weakening of Cold War anticommunism in the wake of the Vietnam War."<sup>[2]</sup> Keys argues instead that embracing human rights was a means of "reclaiming American virtue" after Vietnam.<sup>[3]</sup> Keys takes a somewhat more bipartisan U.S. approach to the issue than many previous authors, examining both conservative and liberal approaches to the issue (although demonstrating how 'conservatives' and 'liberals' also agreed on important points). Unlike other authors, she has little interest in the development of human rights organizations themselves. But she recognizes, if at times only implicitly, that the politicians who took on the cause (even as the Vietnam War was on-going) were trying to address the problematic discourse of the Free World as it related to foreign aid and regain the moral high ground in the Cold War. If liberal Democratic Congressman Donald Fraser of Minnesota had thought in the 1960s that it would be possible to promote democracy along with development, by the 1970s he hoped only to make some improvements in the behavior of dictatorships. This was a more modest vision than that proposed by Samuel Moyn, who sees human rights as "the last utopia," adopted following "the collapse of prior universalistic schemes."<sup>[4]</sup> Moyn rightly notes, however, that in Latin America, the human rights paradigm began to take hold primarily after the overthrow of Socialist President Salvador Allende on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September in 1973.<sup>[5]</sup>

Some of the richest works of scholarship on the subject so far have been those which examine U.S. bilateral relations with particular countries. We need books on Chile and Uruguay which compare to those available so far on Argentina and Brazil by William Michael Schmidli and James N. Green.<sup>[6]</sup> Green's *We Cannot Remain Silent* examines a somewhat earlier turning point when Brazil became the focus of human rights activism and congressional investigation during the Nixon years. (Keys also addresses the parallel role of Greece.) Although liberal Democrats had largely been comfortable with the Brazilian military government that was established in 1964, a new and more brutal phase of military rule began at the end of 1968, weeks before President Lyndon Johnson left office. Richard Nixon's first term coincided with the onset of what Brazilians called the 'years of lead,' with widespread torture and disappearances. This made it possible for liberal Democrats and longtime foes of foreign aid for military governments like Idaho's Frank Church to make U.S. support for Brazil's military government, the South American pillar of the Nixon Doctrine, more of a partisan issue. Work on Brazil by activists and congressmen laid the groundwork for the far more significant actions taken following the 1973 coup in Chile. Green's book benefits from significant discussion of non-state actors and from interviews with many of the participants, both from the United States and from Brazil, who helped bring the human rights situation in Brazil to the attention of U.S. politicians and citizens. (Green's work, it must be noted, benefits as well from decades of personal experience in the country; Schmidli's focus in a book based on his Cornell University doctoral dissertation is primarily on the U.S. side of the equation.) Keys shrewdly notes the emotional tug provided by human rights activists who tried to convince people to identify with foreigners who were like their own sons

and daughters, perhaps a bit rebellious (although why she seems to assume that most of those who were tortured were guerrillas she does not explain).<sup>[4]</sup>

Both Green and Schmidli in his *The Fate of Freedom Elsewhere* provide a more heroic approach to human rights as an issue in U.S. -Latin American relations. Green was inspired, in part, by an interest in countering the misconceptions of many young Brazilian academics that “Brazilianists” in the United States were not active in opposing the dictatorship. And while Keys is convincing that human rights became a cornerstone of Jimmy Carter’s foreign policy almost accidentally and certainly is correct that the Carter administration had trouble understanding how to implement it, it might also be argued that his policy was at odds with a significant non-interventionist streak that made it impossible for human rights to be a vigorous policy intent on changing regimes themselves rather than merely changing their behavior. Schmidli makes clear that there were as many people acting against human rights policies, including U.S. business leaders and State Department officials, as were acting in favor of them, and that the opponents tended to gain influence over time. Even though Carter moved away from the human rights focus even in Latin America, nevertheless, as the renowned Argentine historian Tulio Halperín Donghi wrote decades ago, “A considerable number of Latin Americans probably owe their lives to his efforts – something that cannot be said of any other U.S. president....”<sup>[5]</sup>

A rather counter-intuitive approach to human rights is that offered by John R. Bawden in his examination of arms sales to the Pinochet regime.<sup>[6]</sup> Bawden argues that the Congressional arms embargo, inspired by the regime’s human rights record and a sense of guilt over perceived U.S. complicity in these practices, led Chile to feel more in danger because of the greater military capabilities of its neighbors. Furthermore, this encouraged Chile to try to become less dependent on the United States over time and, ironically, lessened U.S. leverage when the Reagan administration (rather belatedly, it must be said) decided that it was time for General Augusto Pinochet to move towards a return to civilian rule. Congressional efforts to promote human rights, Bawden concludes, had inadvertently consolidated the military dictatorship. Massive Nixon/Gerald Ford support for the Pinochet regime, one might think, may have meant more than Senator Ted Kennedy’s opposition to it. And certainly the regime created its own issues by its willingness to kill its enemies on the streets of Washington, DC. If I remain somewhat unconvinced by Bawden’s argument, I recognize that, as a general rule, I try to take seriously any idea which makes me feel uncomfortable.

Finally, there are the international approaches. The political scientist Ariel Armony was one of the first to demonstrate how active Latin American countries were in pursuing their own interests in the Western Hemisphere during the Cold War.<sup>[7]</sup> In his case, he shows how the military government of Argentina, convinced that the Carter administration was no longer committed to fighting the Cold War, began to export its Dirty War to Central America. Argentina provided aid for the “contras” even before the United States did. For a time during the Reagan years, the Argentine military government and the United States worked together, until the U.S. decision to support Great Britain in the Malvinas/Falkland Islands War ended that.<sup>[8]</sup>

Ironically, the best books about the foreign policy of any Latin American country during the Cold War era are Piero Gleijeses’s books on Cuba.<sup>[9]</sup> And they, of course, primarily focus on Cuban actions in Africa and not in the Western Hemisphere. No other scholar has enjoyed the access Gleijeses has had to official documents related to foreign policy during the Castro years. His conclusions regarding

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what the Cubans accomplished through their massive and long-term intervention in Africa, including not only the maintenance of a one-party state in Angola, but also the creation of an independent Namibia and the undermining of apartheid in South Africa, may not be shared by all, but his pioneering work should have proved to open-minded readers that the Cubans played an extremely active role in shaping Cold War history and had an impact unmatched by any other country of its size. "During the Cold War," as Gleijeses notes, "extracontinental military interventions were the preserve of the two superpowers, a few West European countries and Cuba."<sup>100</sup> Future historians may want to compare the impact of Cuba in Africa with its overall impact on the dynamics of Latin American history.

Tanya Harmer was not granted the same access to Cuban sources as was Gleijeses, but her work on Chilean/Cuban/U.S./Brazilian relations during the Allende era is the best example we have so far of a multi-archival approach to and a dynamic and interactive model of inter-American relations during the Cold War.<sup>101</sup> Moreover, she illustrates how distinctive Salvador Allende's approach to international relations was, spurred in part by his perception that détente created opportunities for small countries that wanted to chart independent courses of action in the 1970s. He was wrong about that, of course, but Allende nevertheless in the short time allotted to him was able to make an impression on a 'Third World' which was asserting itself. The Soviet Union was less supportive of his dreams than he anticipated, and he had to rely from the beginning on Cuba, which welcomed a new ally in the hemisphere. Cuba provided some security help and promised to protect the Chilean revolution, but Castro's month-long presence in late 1971 and the perception (and reality) of a greater Cuban presence in the country further polarized the internal political situation. In the end, Allende could not countenance a civil war, let alone one fought with the aid of internationalists from Cuba.

But Harmer also highlights the surprising actions of other political players. While the Nixon administration remained committed to Allende not lasting through his elected term in office, it was surprisingly tentative at particular moments and more subtle and effective at other times. And when the coup actually took place, the evidence Harmer provides shows that Brazil, following its perception of its own security interests, was actively involved while the United States, lacking confidence in the Chilean military, was not (although soon enough the Nixon administration would provide large-scale economic aid for the military government).

Harmer's work suggests that there is more waiting to be discovered about Brazil's foreign policy engagement during the military years. James Hershberg, for his part, shows in his characteristically detailed pair of articles that even in the democratic period and even during the much-studied Cuban Missile Crisis, there is more to be learned about Latin American involvement.<sup>102</sup> Under a series of presidents, Brazil had tried to improve relations between the United States and Castro's Cuba. The Brazilian leaders viewed the U.S.-Cuba conflict as a distraction from larger hemispheric concerns and needs. They thought that they could convince Cuba to adopt a neutral stance on international issues and that the United States, for its part, would agree to accept this. Even before the missile crisis, members of the Kennedy administration had shown some intermittent interest in Brazil serving as an intermediary between the United States and Cuba. The administration distrusted President João Goulart, but the Brazilian leader initially gave strong support for the United States in the crisis. Brazil sought on its own to encourage action that would enable the United Nations to inspect the island while supporting U.S. actions in the Organization of American States. But Brazilian public and

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private statements regarding Cuban sovereignty and non-intervention caused some concern in U.S. circles. Brazil continued to work in the United Nations to convince Cuba to allow inspectors and to create a nuclear weapon-free zone in Latin America (as it had been arguing for prior to the crisis). This, perhaps surprisingly, inspired a new interest in using Brazil's help to create some distance between the Soviet Union and Cuba. Although not acted on immediately, on 27 October, U.S. ambassador to Brazil Lincoln Gordon spoke with Brazilian officials and suggested that Brazil talk with Castro about allowing a UN inspection team in as a short-term solution while maintaining its political system and distancing itself from the Soviet Union (as Yugoslavia had done) in the longer term. Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's agreement the next morning did not end the plans for a meeting. Castro was, of course, furious at Soviet actions. Cuban officials were complimentary in their comments regarding Brazilian efforts. Even as the Brazilian president praised Kennedy's "victory," Ambassador Gordon was concerned that Brazil had sent an inappropriate envoy to deliver the message. In any case, Cuban demands that the United States leave Guatánamo guaranteed that an improvement in U.S.-Cuba relations was out of the question. Brazil proceeded to work toward a nuclear-free zone in the UN, but its efforts soon came to naught. As before, ungenerous interpretations of Brazil's actions during the crisis only needlessly deepened antagonisms between the United States and Brazil.

Renata Keller's forthcoming *Diplomatic History* article on "the Latin American missile crisis" emphasizes the diversity of opinion in Latin America regarding the crisis.<sup>133</sup> Countries like Venezuela and Argentina sought to improve their ties to the United States as the crisis was on-going. Nicaragua hoped that the United States would seize an opportunity to remove Castro. But other Latin American leaders had to take into account public opinion in their countries and sought both to shape it and accommodate themselves to it. Some hoped that Soviet missiles in Cuba would weaken support for the left in their countries. Caribbean and Central American leaders, as well as Argentina, offered help with the blockade. Others sought to avoid identifying too closely with the United States and creating opportunities for their domestic critics. Mexico called for a peaceful solution while cracking down on Mexican supporters of Cuba, and was privately more supportive of the United States than it found convenient to be publicly. Although most Latin American leaders were pleased with the outcome, Venezuela and Nicaragua, which were on rather different points of the political spectrum, were disappointed with the no-invasion pledge that the United States made. Those who had opposed U.S. actions during the crisis were disappointed that the United States did not temper its actions or lessen its involvement in the region in the years that followed.

Christopher Hull's new book on Anglo/U.S./Cuban relations covers the period from the Spanish-American War to the mid-1960s.<sup>134</sup> Great Britain assumed and accepted U.S. hegemony in Cuba while trying to protect its own, largely economic interests. But following Castro's rise to power, Great Britain was reluctant to cut off economic ties with the island. Pressured by the United States, the British government agreed not to sell military planes to Cuba in 1959, but Britain refused to back down in early 1964 over a plan to sell buses to Cuba with government credit guarantees, thereby undercutting the U.S. trade embargo. Given that Great Britain's influence in most Latin American countries had been much greater than in Cuba, one would have to think that there were many other similar projects which could be undertaken. I would suggest that considering the longstanding British influence in Argentina, an excellent doctoral dissertation or book could be written on relations between the United States, Great Britain, and Argentina. (I have never been convinced that U.S.

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influence ever became hegemonic in Argentina.)

The 800-lb. gorilla in the room (rather than a rather immobile 800-lb guerrilla) may seem to be the Soviet Union. Archival access may not be sufficient to warrant any conclusions about Soviet activities in Latin America during the Cold War (which scholars, as opposed to U.S. officials, have tended to see as being fairly limited).<sup>119</sup> I have tended to encourage young scholars to focus on learning Polish, Czech, or German on the assumption that it would be much easier to learn more about Soviet activities somewhat indirectly in countries which would be quite happy to share what they know about what the Soviet Union was up to during the time they were, as some used to say, 'captive nations.'

One of those nations which has already begun to find its historians as far as relations with Latin America are concerned is Czechoslovakia. Some of the articles and books by those historians have appeared in Czech, so I have not been able to read them. Not surprisingly, there has been some interest in the Czech supply of arms for the Jacobo Arbenz government in Guatemala but, regrettably, this still has not been elucidated sufficiently. Lukáš Perutka examines how the Arbenz government reestablished relations between the two countries in 1953.<sup>120</sup> Even at the time it was obvious that the post-Stalin Soviet government had to give its approval to the sale, given the length of time the Guatemalans were kept waiting. The old German weapons that the Czech government sold them were not all that useful and, indeed, they ended up helping the Eisenhower administration more than Arbenz, "proving" a Soviet interest that still seems to have been virtually non-existent.

Michael Zourek's exhaustive work on cultural, diplomatic, and economic relations with Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay has appeared in both Spanish and English.<sup>121</sup> He has to recognize, of course, that Czechoslovakia was not an independent actor in terms of its foreign policy after 1947 (unlike, to a large degree, Cuba), and so he focuses on Soviet as much as Czech policy Czechoslovakia did have diplomatic relations with more Latin American countries than any other state in the Soviet bloc, although Chile broke off relations with Czechoslovakia beginning in the late 1940s and did not reestablish them until well into the 1960s. Czech interest in Latin America generally, and not surprisingly, increased with the Cuban Revolution, but given his focus on the Southern Cone, it is hardly surprising that Zourek's work is most worth consulting on the 1970s and 1980s. It is interesting to note that it was only during the Allende years that the Czech Ministry of Foreign Relations established a separate department for Latin America. Allende's Chile was a political ally of the Soviet bloc, even if the Soviet Union did not provide it with sufficient economic aid, and, in the end, Allende was more useful to the Soviet Union following the coup as a martyr than he had been as an ally. Zourek shows that Moscow emphasized the suffering of Chilean Communist Party leader Luis Corvalán (imprisoned for three years) in its own criticisms of human rights under Pinochet. The Czech scholar shows that following the coup, Soviet-bloc countries (not including Romania) suspended diplomatic relations with Chile, which they had not done when similar governments had been established in Brazil and Uruguay. When the military returned to power in Argentina in 1976, the Soviet Union did not break off relations because the targets of the Dirty War were largely members of left-wing groups with which the Soviet Union did not have any sympathy. (Zourek notes that the Argentine government was the only one of its kind recognized by Cuba.) Czechoslovakia generally followed suit, of course. The country maintained strong economic ties with Argentina and Brazil during the military years while trade with Uruguay even increased. The government spoke out internationally in opposition to human rights abuses in Chile, but only granted asylum to a limited

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number of Chilean exiles. Chilean socialists were less welcome in Czechoslovakia than Chilean communists, because the Socialist Party had supported the Prague Spring and opposed the Soviet invasion in 1968. Czechoslovakia supported Argentina in its war with Great Britain over the Falkland/Malvinas Islands.<sup>[3]</sup>

Scholars in western as well as in eastern Europe will undoubtedly be providing insights in coming years. The Italian scholar Raffaele Nocera has demonstrated that although previous scholars have focused almost exclusively on the United States, the Italian Christian Democratic party played a significant role in supporting the Chilean Christian Democratic Party in its victory over Salvador Allende in 1964.<sup>[4]</sup> Frei's election made it possible for Italian relations with Chile to grow stronger than they had ever been before (Italy had primarily focused on relations with Latin American countries with larger populations of Italian descent). Alessandro Santoni, for his part, has examined the impact of Allende's Popular Unity experiment on the evolution of the Italian Communist Party (an issue that was of concern to Henry Kissinger himself).<sup>[5]</sup> The party had a vision of a poly-centric Communist world with different understandings of paths to socialism and the kind of socialism which would be constructed, as well as the need (following Allende's overthrow) to guarantee a political consensus in Italy which would prevent the establishment of an authoritarian government.

Given the recent trend in Latin American history to emphasize Pacific connections, one can imagine that more work will be done on the impact of Communist China on Latin America. A monograph on the influence of the Cultural Revolution in Latin America could be written which would be comparable to Richard Wolin's work on its influence on French intellectuals.<sup>[6]</sup>

More transnational work is just beginning to be done. The Uruguayan scholar Aldo Marchesi is doing some important work on the transnational links between leftists, both academics and militants, who experienced exile in Chile during the Allende years.<sup>[7]</sup> Victoria Langland and others who have written about student politics during this time period have shown how transnational influences left people open to the charge of inauthenticity.<sup>[8]</sup> James Jenkins's work on the relationship between the American Indian Movement and the Miskitu Indians during the years in which the Sandinistas were in power wonderfully complicates our understanding of who was on whose side during that troubled decade.<sup>[9]</sup> Matt Loayza's recent article about government-sponsored visits by Latin American citizens during the Dwight Eisenhower years suggests the rich potential of studying student and other exchange programs.<sup>[10]</sup> Although primarily focused on the U.S. side of the equation, Roger Peace's work on the "anti-contra war campaign" suggests the potential for more work to be done on solidarity campaigns and protest movements surrounding Latin American issues.<sup>[11]</sup>

I must note that I have ignored some books which, to my mind, at this point do not represent larger trends. Lillian Guerra's brilliant book on the Cuban Revolution provides the most complex and sophisticated understanding of the internal dynamics of "the internal radicalization of citizens' expectations . . . as a result of interactions with the Cuban state."<sup>[12]</sup> She analyzes the construction of a "grand narrative" of the revolution and the ways in which "collective empowerment not only depended on but also legitimated the repression of dissent as necessary to obtaining and maintaining revolutionary change, whether in the form of greater equality, material security, or national sovereignty." She shows how "citizens' support and participation create[d] a state that strictly limited the nature of their participation and policed the expression of their support," and memorably characterizes this state as a "grassroots dictatorship." I hope that this book represents a break in the

dam, after which we may expect a flood of work representing more sophisticated approaches to a topic so far largely examined by scholars who fit too easily into pro- or anti-Cuban Revolution camps.<sup>[1]</sup>

The books and articles that have appeared in recent years do not convince me that the Cold War was irrelevant, but rather that our understanding of the Cold War has been too narrow. We certainly need to know more about what the Cold War meant to Latin Americans. Was the Cold War the first “war” in which the home front was everywhere? Was the Cold War a war of mentalities as much as ideologies? Certainly more is being done all the time on the cultural history of the Cold War that will presumably be of less interest to H-Diplo readers. One can assume that good work will be done on sports and the Cold War in Latin America. (An undergraduate student of mine recently tried to do this with Cuban boxing.)

As noted above, U.S. influence had long been greater in Mexico, the Caribbean and Central America than it had been in South America, where the Cold War seems to have been more of a distinct period in history. The ‘War on Drugs’ notwithstanding, the overall decline of U.S. influence in South America (and the rise of the influence of China) in recent years may help us understand the dynamics which were peculiar to the Cold War.

We need to distinguish between dynamics that were unique to the period and those which are constants in U.S.-Latin American relations. An awareness of pre-existing conditions can help us with our diagnosis. And we need to be aware of other factors like the process of rapid urbanization during these years which may be more critical than the Cold War itself. We need to be sensitive to shifting internal dynamics in particular countries. In a paper at a recent Latin American Studies Association conference, Jennifer Adair made clear how internally the Cold War was ending in Argentina (and, I would argue, other South American countries) before it ended elsewhere in the world.<sup>[2]</sup>

We also need to be more aware of how important (or how tangential) Latin America was at particular moments in the history of U.S. foreign relations. Keeping this in mind will help U.S. properly assess how decisions were being made and at what level and with what resources and why different approaches were being deployed to handle particular challenges. We need to recognize the (in)attention span of officials who serve a global power. It would help, I am convinced, for us to be more engaged with our fellow historians of U.S. foreign relations in the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. It would help if others who work on the history of U.S. foreign relations would pay attention to the region every now and then, but surely we can make a choice on our own not to isolate ourselves in an area of SHAFR reserved for historians of U.S.-Latin American relations.

Historians of U.S.-Latin American relations also should engage more with the burgeoning literature on the history of the Third World. My colleague Jason Parker, for example, in his forthcoming book intends to shed some light on how and when Latin America became part of the Third World.<sup>[3]</sup> (It certainly was not at the time of the Bandung conference.) And reading important books by scholars like Philip Muehlenbeck and Robert B. Rakove can help U.S. keep things in perspective.<sup>[4]</sup> The former notes, for example, that John F. Kennedy “hosted twenty-eight African heads of state but only eight Latin American leaders.”<sup>[5]</sup> This needs to be taken into account in our analysis of Cold War U.S. -Latin American relations, as does the increasing acceptance of the ‘Third World’ label by many Latin American leaders, intellectuals, and peoples. And the Vietnam War itself, with its varied implications

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for U.S. relations (and ability to engage) with the Third World, as well as its role as a metaphor for the critique of U.S. power in the world, needs to be factored into our analysis as well.

The current state of the field of Cold War Latin American history is sound, but much remains to be done, both in terms of uncovering basic facts and understanding the interactions between countries better, but also in reconceptualizing the historical period itself. There is much room for big and little books on the subject, and that's good news for graduate students and other scholars.

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[1] Alan McPherson, "The Paradox of Latin American Cold War Studies," in Virginia Garrard-Burnett, Mark Atwood Lawrence, and Julio E. Moreno (eds.), *Beyond the Eagle's Shadow: New Histories of Latin America's Cold War* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2013), 307

[2] Stephen G. Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University press, 2012).

[3] On Latin Americanization, see Tanya Harmer, "Fractious Allies: Chile, the United States, and the Cold War, 1973-1976." *Diplomatic History* 37:1 (January 2013): 109-143.

[4] On the history of anti-communism in Latin America, see, for example, John D. French, *The Brazilian Workers' ABC: Class Conflict and Alliances in Modern São Paulo* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 48, 50, 54, and 67. For a discussion of Latin American engagement with the Cold War, and to anti-communism before the Cold War, see the discussion of political police activities in Fernando Aparicio y Roberto García Ferreira, "Pablo Neruda y una Estadía Signada por la Vigilancia Policial," in Tanya Harmer and Alfredo Riquelme Segovia, *Chile y la Guerra Fría Global* (Santiago: RiL editores, 2014), 45-69. See also Thomas C. Wright, *Latin America in the Era of the Cuban Revolution Second Edition* (New York: Praeger, 2000).

[5] <http://h-diplo.org/roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XIII-21.pdf>

[6] Hal Brands, *Latin America's Cold War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

[7] Kyle Longley, *The Sparrow and the Hawk: Costa Rica and the United States during the Rise of José Figueres* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1997).

[8] Christopher Darnton, "Asymmetry and Agenda-Setting in US-Latin American Relations: Rethinking the Origins of the Alliance for Progress," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 14: 4 (Fall 2012) 55-92, review available at <http://h-diplo.org/reviews/PDF/AR407.pdf>; Tom Long, "Putting the Canal on the Map: Panamanian Agenda-Setting and the 1973 Security Council Meetings," *Diplomatic History* 38: 2 (April 2014): 431-455, review available at: <http://h-diplo.org/reviews/PDF/AR490.pdf>.

[9] I disagree fundamentally with Arturo Escobar in this regard. See his *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995.

[10] Michael E. Latham, *American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and US Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 2. See also Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore; Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013).

[11] I address this in *Paulo Freire and the Cold War Politics of Literacy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

[12] Rafael R. Ioris, *Transforming Brazil: A History of National Development in the Postwar Era* (New York: Routledge, 2014).

[13] Thomas C. Field Jr., *From Development to Dictatorship: Bolivia and the Alliance for Progress in the Kennedy Era* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014).

[14] Generally, Field cites but does not engage with the literature on the Alliance for Progress. He would have found reinforcement for his argument in Latham's discussion of Guatemala, in *The Right Kind of Revolution*, 124-133.

[15] Dustin Walcher, "Petroleum Pitfalls: The United States, Argentine Nationalism, and the 1963 Oil Crisis," *Diplomatic History* 37: 1 (January 2013): 24-57. See also Ted Widmer, *Listening In: The Secret White House Recordings of John F. Kennedy* (New York: Hyperion, 2012), 248 and 285-286. The transcript of the latter recording is incorrect, as even a casual listening to the recording itself will confirm.

[16] See Julio Moreno, "Coca-Cola, Diplomacy, and the Cold War in America's Backyard," in Garrard-Burnett, Lawrence, and Moreno, *Beyond the Eagle's Shadow*, 21-50.

[17] David C. Engerman, *Modernization from the Other Shore: American Intellectuals and the Romance of Russian Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).

[18] David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966); *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1975); *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Emancipation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014).

[19] Barbara Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue: The Human Rights Revolution of the 1970s* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 2

[20] Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue*, 10.

[21] Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 7.

[22] Moyn, *The Last Utopia*, 144.

[23] James N. Green, *We Cannot Remain Silent: Opposition to the Brazilian Military Dictatorship in the United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); William Michael Schmidli, *The Fate of Freedom Elsewhere: Human Rights and US Cold War Policy toward Argentina*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013.

[24] Keys, *Reclaiming American Virtue*, 100.

[25] The best treatment of overall relations between the United States and Brazil during the Nixon/Ford years, which emphasizes Kissinger's efforts to maintain good relations with the country he considered the most important in South America, is Matias Spektor, *Kissinger e o Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editora, 2009). An article which correctly emphasizes the critical importance of the 11 September 1973 coup and the global response to it, is Patrick William Kelly, "The 1973 Chilean Coup and the Origins of Transnational Rights Activism," *Journal of Global History* 8:1 (March 2013): 165-186. Kelly makes clear how the massive and dispersed Chilean exile community built on antipathy toward the regime of Augusto Pinochet. He might consider in particular the role of Chilean musicians abroad. Regarding the difficulties the Carter administration had in influencing foreign countries' behavior, see, for example, Vanessa Walker, "At the End of Influence: The Letelier Assassination, Human Rights, and Rethinking Intervention in US-Latin American Relations," *Journal of Contemporary History* 46: 1 (January 2011): 109-135. Tulio Halperín Donghi, *The Contemporary History of Latin America*, Edited and Translated by John Charles Chasteen (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 342.

[26] John R. Bawden, "Cutting Off the Dictator: The United States Arms Embargo of the Pinochet Regime, 1974-1988," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 45: 3 (August 2013): 513-543.

[27] Ariel C. Armony, *Argentina, the United States, and the Anti-Communist Crusade in Central America, 1977-1984* (Athens: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1997).

[28] See also Richard Aldous, *Reagan and Thatcher: The Difficult Relationship* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012) for a fuller picture of U.S. relations with Great Britain during the latter's war with Argentina.

[29] Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Cuba, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Piero Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom: Havana, Washington, Pretoria, and the Struggle for Southern Africa, 1976-1991* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

[30] Piero Gleijeses, *Visions of Freedom*, 10.

[31] Tanya Harmer, *Allende's Chile and the Inter-American Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

[32] See James G. Hershberg, "The United States, Brazil, and the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 (Part I)," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 6:2 (Spring 2004): 3-20 and "(Part II)," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 6:3 (Summer 2004): 5-67.

[33] Renata Keller, "The Latin American Missile Crisis," in *Diplomatic History*, forthcoming. The author kindly allowed me to read a copy of this article. See also her "A Foreign Policy for Domestic Consumption: Mexico's Lukewarm Defense of Castro, 1959-1969," *Latin American Research Review* 47: 2 (2012): 100-119.

[34] Christopher Hull, *British Diplomacy and US Hegemony in Cuba, 1898-1964* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). Hull's book would have benefitted from an engagement with Jeffrey A. Engel, *Cold War at 30,000 Feet: The Anglo-American Fight for Aviation Supremacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[35] The best I have encountered remains Daniela Spenser, "The Caribbean Crisis: Catalyst for Soviet Projection in Latin America," in Gilbert M. Joseph and Spenser (eds.), *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 77-111.

[36] Lukáš Perutka, "Arms for Arbenz: Czechoslovakia's Involvement in the Cold War in Latin America," *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies* 7:3 (September 2013): 59-76.

[37] My knowledge of scholarship by historians from Eastern Europe is limited, and I thank Tanya Harmer for making me aware of the work of Michael Zourek, which led me to the other authors I cite here. See his *Checoslovaquia y El Cono Sur 1945-1989: Relaciones Políticas y Culturales Durante la Guerra Fría* (Prague: Ibero-American Pragensia Supplementum, 2013). See also Michael Zourek, "Political and Economic Relations between Czechoslovakia and the Military Regimes of the Southern Cone in the 1970s and 1980s," *Central European Journal of International and Security Studies* 7:3 (September 2013): 118-141.

[38] Czechoslovakia's economic relations with Brazil improved dramatically during the 1970s while the military was still in power. See Matyáš Pelant, "Czechoslovakia and Brazil, 1945-1989: Diplomats, Businessmen, Spies and Guerrilheiros," in the same issue, 96-117.

[39] See Raffaele Nocera, "La 'Relación Triangular': Estados Unidos-Italia-Chile y la Elección de Eduardo Frei Montalva," in Harmer and Riquelme Segovia, *Chile y la Guerra Fría Global*, 113-132.

[40] Alessandro Santoni, "El Partido Comunista Italiano, La Lección de Chile y la Lógica de los Bloques," in Harmer and Riquelme Segovia, *Chile y la Guerra Fría Global*, 133-153.

[41] Richard Wolin, *The Wind from the East: French Intellectuals, The Cultural Revolution, and the Legacy of the 1960s* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

[42] Aldo Marchesi, "Dependencia o revolución. Exilados y militantes en el Chile de la Unidad Popular, 1970-1973," Paper presented at the Latin American Studies Association, conference, May 2014, Chicago.

[43] Victoria Langland, *Speaking of Flowers: Student Movements and the Making and Remembering of 1968 in Military Brazil* (Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press. 2013); Jaime M. Pensado, *Rebel Mexico: Student Unrest and Authoritarian Political Culture During the Long Sixties* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press. 2013.).

[44] James Jenkins, "The Indian Wing: Nicaraguan Indians, Native American Activists, and US Foreign Policy, 1979-1990," in Garrard-Burnett, Lawrence, and Moreno, *Beyond the Eagle's Shadow*, pp. 175-199.

[45] Matt Loayza, "'A Curative and Creative Force': The Exchange of Persons Program and Eisenhower's Inter-American Policies, 1953-1961," *Diplomatic History* 37: 5 (November 2013): 946-970.

[46] Roger Peace, *A Call to Conscience: The Anti-Contra War Campaign* (Amherst: University of

Massachusetts Press, 2012). See the discussion of Swedish solidarity campaigns following the overthrow of Allende in Fernando Camacho Padilla, "El Movimiento de Solidaridad Sueco con Chile durante la Guerra Fría," in Tanya Harmer and Alfredo Riquelme Segovia, *Chile y la Guerra Fría Global* (Santiago: RiL editores, 2014), 225-255.

[47] Lillian Guerra, *Visions of Power in Cuba: Revolution, Redemption, and Resistance, 1959-1971* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 3-5.

[48] Guerra, *Visions of Power in Cuba*, 13. I also have high hopes for the work of Michelle Chase and Jennifer Chase, both of whom I heard present at the Chicago 2014 meeting of the Latin American Studies Association.

[49] Jennifer Adair, "Querido Presidente: The Argentine Transition to Democracy through Letters, 1983-1989," Latin American Studies Association, May 2014, Chicago.

[50] Jason C. Parker, *The Contest: Hearts, Minds, U.S. Public Diplomacy, and the Creation of the Third World* (manuscript in preparation).

[51] Robert B. Rakove, *Kennedy, Johnson, and the Nonaligned World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[52] Philip E. Muehlenbeck, *Betting on the Africans: John F. Kennedy's Courting of African Nationalist Leaders* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), xv.