

Civil Aviation and the Globalization of the Cold War. By Peter Svik. (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2020. Pp. vii, 225. \$101.15)

In recent years, historical study of the Cold War has expanded beyond the confines of state-to-state relationships and discussions of power in a traditionally diplomatic sense. Following this trend of the expanding nature of diplomatic history, Peter Svik's *Civil Aviation and the Globalization of the Cold War* blends analyses of technological change and superpower competition and incorporates a variety of approaches and a wide range of archival materials to explore the role of civil aviation in the intense competition between the Western capitalist world and the Soviet Bloc. In an engaging and well-researched account, Svik seeks to assert the importance of technological change with respect to civil aviation and the civilian world in the globalization of the Cold War and the eventual downfall of the Soviet Bloc.

Svik looks at the ways in which the East-West rivalry shaped and transformed civil aviation during the Cold War, which he identifies as underexplored. In analyzing the civilian aspect of Cold War conflict, specifically as it relates to civilian air development, Svik illustrates that Soviet aviation, which rivaled that of the Western world in the early decades of the Cold War, stagnated in a way similar to that of other areas of technological development. Meanwhile, the Western focus on pursuing more sophisticated civilian air processes led to great improvements which outpaced their eastern rivals.

He argues that "from the birth of the global route structure, through the development of engines to the design of aircraft, it was primarily Cold War security concerns as well as prestige and economic considerations that stimulated these processes" (4). This enabled the rapid globalization of the 1990s, but the Cold War geopolitical conflict was the essential first step needed for this enhanced globalization to take place. By "mapping and reconstructing the cross-Curtain contacts and interlinkages in the in the civil aviation sector," Svik shows that civil

aviation served as a tool of both “hard” and “soft” power and was considered by policymakers and the general public alike as an important Cold War instrument (6-7). The importance of civil aviation and transport therein was brought about by Cold War conflict and followed deeper trends in Cold War policymaking.

Svik structures his book chronologically, beginning with the early Cold War. Starting his analysis with a 1944 conference in Chicago at which the Americans and British began developing a plan for civil aviation as result of multilateral agreements, Svik illustrates how the Coordinating Committee for the Multilateral Export Control was set up to monitor exports to the Soviet Bloc. Meanwhile, the British and Americans partnered with the French to stop Czechoslovak Airlines from moving traffic westward, exercising civil aviation as a Cold War tool (13, 42). Svik then moves into the 1950s and 1960s, tracing the rivalry between Franco-Anglo-American aviation and Soviet aviation up to, during, and in the immediate aftermath of the 1955 Geneva Summit before discussing aviation as it relates to American policies of containment by the early 1960s. By the 1970s, as the second half of Svik’s book illustrates, the lack of aviation fuel supply in the Soviet Bloc resulted in a crisis of aircraft production and caused the Soviet Union to lag behind their Western counterparts in nearly all technical areas. Contrarily, the western development of turbo-propulsion allowed for western advancement and economic success amidst the backdrop of globalization in the 1990s, dealing “a deadly blow” to the Eastern bloc (12).

Svik approaches his work in an attempt to bridge different strands of Cold War historiography that he sees as approaching a crossroads. On the one hand, certain currently active historians lean toward traditional interpretations of the Cold War as a bipolar conflict based on security rivalries or projection of ideological or socioeconomic models. On the other hand, some

have attempted to decenter the Euro-Atlantic focus in favor of a global emphasis. Utilizing both Western and Eastern sources as well as examples in which he integrates superpower relations with the Global South, Svik attempts to bridge this gap and illustrate how bipolar competition had a profound effect on globalization and the spread of technological importance in the globalizing world of the 1990s and beyond.

In terms of historiographical importance, Svik's work eloquently brings the role of civil aviation and bridges the East-West gap in a way that has not yet been done. Historians such as Jeff Engel, James Gormly, and Jennifer Van Vleck have studied either military or civil aviation from a Western perspective, while historians such as Stefan Albrecht and Philip Muehlenbeck have studied Eastern perspectives on aviation (3). Svik's *Civil Aviation and the Globalization of the Cold War* is the first to do so from a wider East-West perspective and is the first to approach the subject from a transnational viewpoint. He also builds upon historians of technology who focus on the evolution of tech-based societies and the role of such technologies in globalization, while also following in the "longue-durée" methodological footsteps of Annales School historians such as Fernand Braudel.

In all, students of the Cold War, of the history of technology, and of aviation and globalization can all derive value from Peter Svik's work. He skillfully turns his expansive research into a far-reaching, elaborate account that complicates the history of interaction between the East and the West in the second half of the twentieth century.

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