

Latin America and the Global Cold War. Edited by Thomas C. Field Jr., Stella Krepp, and Vanni Pettinà. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2020. 437 pp. \$39.95

Latin America deserves to be considered in conjunction with Third World activities and struggles elsewhere during the Cold War. This sentiment comprises the *raison d'être* underpinning *Latin America and the Global Cold War*. As part of Odd Arne Westad's "The New Cold War History" series, the edited volume aims to capitalize on the increasing accessibility of source materials from myriad archives to gain improved insights into Latin America's linkages with the greater Cold War world. The essays contained in the book analyze these sources synthetically, merging scholarship on Latin America both in relation to the two dominant hegemonic blocs of the United States and the Soviet Union, and in relation to the "tricontinental" networks of Third World solidarity previously chronicled by historians such as Vijay Prashad, Robert Vitalis, and Jeffrey James Byrne. In this way, the collection serves as a nascent corrective to the overall dearth of work on Latin America incorporating extra-hemispheric archival information and perspectives, a phenomenon that scholars such as historian Michelle

Paranzino of the US Naval War College have recently noted.¹ *Latin America and the Global Cold War* thereby builds upon the expanding historiography that Westad's 2006 book, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, helped to inaugurate. Following an introduction by the editors, the book is divided into two sections, with Part I devoted to "Third World Nationalism" and Part II devoted to "Third World Internationalism," before concluding with a chapter authored by Westad. Part I contains research essays featuring case studies thematically relevant to "Third Worldism's potential gains for the nation-state" (7-8). Part II consists of research chapters with case studies involving "transnational conceptual patterns of solidarity, heterogeneity, and inclusion" (8).

Chapters that appear most obviously salient to the thematic concerns of Part I are those contributed by the individual editors themselves. For example, in the book's second chapter, Thomas Field analyzes the constraints on nationalist non-alignment in Latin America by examining the breakdown in Bolivia's ties to Cuba and Czechoslovakia as a result of dependence on Alliance for Progress aid from the United States during the period of 1960-64. While Field had

¹ Michelle Paranzino, "Latin America in the Russian Archives," *Wilson Center*, August 25, 2020,

<https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/latin-america-russian-archives>.

devoted fleeting attention to the same subject matter in his 2014 book *From Development to Dictatorship: Bolivia and the Alliance for Progress in the Kennedy Era*, it is illuminating to see the (deterioration of) extra-hemispheric linkages between Bolivia and the Soviet bloc examined in a more focused, thoroughgoing manner. Similarly, in the third chapter, Vanni Pettinà discusses Mexico's abortive efforts to counterbalance its relationship with the United States by forging ties with the Soviet Union during roughly the same timeframe (1959-64). The chapter's closing sentence ruminates on how "those years were crucial for the forging of a new Mexican Third Worldist identity, which with time became an important part of the country's hybrid imaginary as an international player" (95). With that in mind, it would have been interesting to see Pettinà explicitly showcase the lasting echoes of Mexico's relationship with the USSR up to the present day, such as by mentioning President Enrique Peña Nieto's 2017 "Position on Foreign Policy," or the assorted

literature concerning Mexico's contemporary extra-hemispheric outreach.²

Part II is concerned with the more amorphous intellectual milieu of Third World solidarity. Alan McPherson opens the section with his eighth chapter on pan-Africanist solidarity between anti-US occupation forces in the Caribbean and civil society organizations abroad in the United States, Europe and Africa, showing the antecedents of Cold War-era Third World consciousness; it helps set the tone for later contributions such as Eric Gettig's tenth chapter, which "focuses on a neglected side of Cuban internationalism: Cuba's diplomatic engagement in major conferences of Third World governments," contrasted against its militant sponsorship of revolutionary forces throughout the Third World (241). Eugenia Palieraki's eleventh chapter on the robust ties of intellectual exchange between left-wing parties and movements in Chile and Algeria from the 1950s through the 1970s ably demonstrates how multilaterally-articulated Third World ideologies found tangible bilateral

² "Statement by Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States: Position on Foreign Policy," *Consulado de México en el Exterior*, January 23, 2017, <https://consulmex.sre.gob.mx/kansascity/images/stories/PDF/PosicionamientoPoliticaExteriorIng.pdf>. For select examples of relevant research articles on recent iterations of Mexico's extra-hemispheric activities, see Günther Maihold, "Mexico: A Leader in Search

of Like-Minded Peers," *International Journal* 71, no. 4 (2016): 545-562; César Villanueva Rivas, "Mexico's Public Diplomacy Approach to the Indo-Pacific: A Thin Soft Power?" *Politics and Policy* 45, no. 5 (2017): 793-812; and Kenia Ramírez Meda and Nalia María Rochin Aguilar, "La Política Exterior de México Durante El Sexenio de Enrique Peña Nieto," *Comillas Journal of International Relations* 1, no. 8 (2017): 51-66.

expression both during and preceding respective revolutionary movements' ascendance to political power. However, if there is one curious omission common to the chapters in Part II, it is China's nearly total absence from the narrative, especially in light of the editors' reflection on "Chinese attempts to impose a racial or geographic definition of Third Worldism" (6). Given the contributions of previous scholars (including Matthew Rothwell's *Transpacific Revolutionaries: The Chinese Revolution in Latin America*), some of the chapters might have benefited from incorporating analysis of how Chinese ideological influences enhanced and/or limited Latin American participation in the Third World, not least Gettig's chapter.

Prior works such as Hal Brands's *Latin America's Cold War* (and Westad's *The Global Cold War*) have tended to foreground the violence inflicted upon Latin America and the Third World at large by external influences. By contrast, *Latin America and the Global Cold War* often refreshingly emphasize the ways in which Latin American states successfully asserted and expressed their interests as members of a collective Third World. Nevertheless, it remains mindful of the limitations imposed upon Latin American states by the structural forces of the Cold War world. At times, the placement of chapters in either of the book's

primary sections seems arbitrary or inadequately explained, potentially undercutting their relevance to the overall intentions of the book. For instance, Miriam Elizabeth Villanueva's thirteenth chapter on Panama does not always seem to establish rigorous connections between art presentations and Third World outreach efforts by Omar Torrijos's government, making it seem arguably better-organized as an example of "Third World Nationalism" than "Third World Internationalism." However, these flaws do not excessively detract from the book's value as a source of novel and interesting scholarship on Latin America's place in the broader Cold War context.

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