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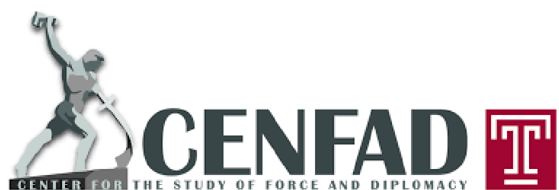

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News from the Director

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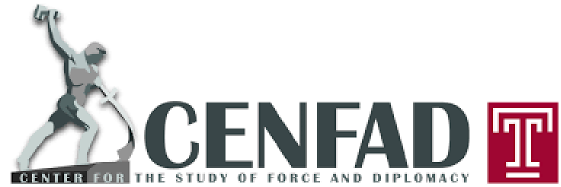
Just as the globe is emerging from the long, dark tunnel of COVID-19, so is the CENFAD community. After a brief return to Zoom because of the Omicron wave, CENFAD re-returned to in-person speakers this semester. Equally important, our graduate students are finding archives slowly reopening, and they are making progress toward researching and writing their dissertations.

Please catch up on how the CENFAD community is doing in our "News from the Community" section in this issue!



Spring 2022 Colloquium

Our first guest speaker of the Spring semester joined us online because of a brief return to online teaching early in the semester. But as students and faculty returned to campus in February, so did our speakers. CENFAD hosted six regular speakers. Videos of all the events below are now embedded in CENFAD's lecture series page.

Please know that, from now on, we will be broadcasting CENFAD talks simultaneously on Zoom, and the link will be on the posters advertising the talks.

Our first guest, and our only guest online, was Allen Guelzo, senior research scholar at the Council for the Humanities at Princeton University. On January 20, Guelzo discussed his new book, *Robert E. Lee: A Life*, addressing the differences in appreciation of Lee's personal conduct versus his skills as a commander, and he answered questions about the recent controversies about Lee's statue removal.

Once we were back on campus, our next guest, on February 8, was Bob Vitalis, professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania. His newest book, *Oilcraft: The Myths of Scarcity and Security that Haunt U.S. Energy Policy*, makes the argument that U.S. foreign policy has created the myth that petroleum is rare to facilitate the U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia, among other things. CENFAD also interviewed him here.

On February 24, Elizabeth Varon, who used to teach at Temple but now is a professor of American history at the University of Virginia, came to campus to see old friends and discuss her book, *Armies of Deliverance: A New History of the Cold War*. As Varon argues in her interview with CENFAD and her ambitious re-telling of the entire war, Northerners who fought in or supported the war were particularly motivated by the desire to "deliver" poor white Southerners, imagining them to be the grip of elite Southern power, only to be met with massive resistance from those same so-called victims. Varon was interviewed by CENFAD here.

On March 15, Matthew Specter, senior fellow at the Institute for European Studies at the University of California at Berkeley, discussed his new book, *The Atlantic Realists: Empire and International Political Thought between Germany and the United States*. He sees realism as emerging as an Atlantic intellectual dialogue between Germans and Americans, for instance Hans Morgenthau and George Kennan, in the early twentieth century. CENFAD interviewed him here.

Six days later, on March 21, Miguel La Serna, professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, discussed his new book, *With Masses and Arms: Peru's Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement*. Written as a thrilling narrative, the book unearths the little-known story of a guerrilla movement of the 1980s and 1990s that was outshined by the more violent Shining Path but that deserves to be remembered for its ideals and how the movement lost sight of them. CENFAD also interviewed him here.

Finally, on April 4, Paul Adler, assistant professor of history at Colorado College, gave a talk on *No Globalization without Representation: U.S. NGOs and Global Inequality*. His new book looks at how U.S. based activists from the 1970s to the 1990s sought an alternative form of globalization not so beholden to neoliberalism. It is based on deep research and interviews with activists, some with whom Adler himself had worked before joining the academy. Adler was likewise interviewed by CENFAD here.

Columnist Trudy Rubin at CENFAD

In response to Russian President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine in late February, CENFAD invited a special guest to discuss these tragic events as they occurred. Trudy Rubin, a longtime journalist and the Worldview Columnist at the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, returned from Ukraine just before the fighting began. During her visit to campus on March 14—seen by many more online than in person—Rubin made a passionate appeal for more arms from the West for Ukraine and spoke of the uncertain fate that awaited many that she had met while there.

Spring 2022 Prizes

In March, the following four graduate students won CENFAD research awards:

- **Ethan Cohen** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship in Force and Diplomacy in the amount of $3,000 to attend the Arabic Language Institute in Fez, Morocco, in summer 2022.

- **Graydon Dennison** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship in Force and Diplomacy in the amount of $1,000 in support of dissertation research in Panama.

- **Brandon Kinney** was named the Richard Immerman Fellow for 2022-2023, with $1,500 going toward his dissertation research in the National Archives in College Park, Maryland.

- **Ryan Langton** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship in Force and Diplomacy in the amount of $3,000 for dissertation research in the Clements Library.

- **Casey VanSise** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship in Force and Diplomacy in the amount of $3,000 for dissertation research in California, Arizona, and Rhode Island.

The following students received CENFAD funds to present their work at academic conferences:

- **Duncan Knox**, at the conference of the Society for Military History in Fort Worth.

- **Ryan Langton**, at the conference of the Seven Year's War at Fort Ticonderoga.

- **Ariel Natalo-Lifton**, at the conference of the Society for Military History in Fort Worth.

- **Stanley Schwartz**, at the conference of the Society for Military History in Fort Worth.

First CENFAD Emerging Scholar

This year, thanks to the generosity of Temple History PhD Todd Davis, CENFAD established the CENFAD Emerging Scholar Graduate Award. The award aims to recruit and support MA-level students interested in diplomatic and military history and to do so especially among underrepresented candidates, including women.

I am delighted to announce that the inaugural CENFAD Emerging Scholar is Andrew Coletti, who will be joining the Master's History program in Fall 2022. Welcome to the CENFAD community, Drew!

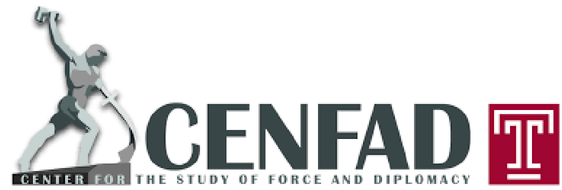
Thanks to the Davis Fellow

Finally, I want to heartily thank Davis Fellow Casey VanSise, who administered CENFAD during an unpredictable year. In the fall, I was on sabbatical, so Casey had to manage in-person *and* online talks co-hosted by five Temple faculty members (thanks to all of them!). In the spring, we first returned to Zoom, then to campus. Our two-year experiment with Zoom lectures has now prompted CENFAD to broadcast all speakers' talks simultaneously online while also recording them with a camera and posting them on our website.

Next year's Davis Fellow will be Ryan Langton, whose interests center on diplomatic relations between European and Indigenous Americans in the 18th century trans-Appalachian frontier. Welcome to CENFAD, Ryan!

News from the CENFAD Community

Co-founder and former CENFAD director **Dr. Richard H. Immerman** took time out from retirement in Fall 2021 to serve as the Stanley Kaplan Distinguished Visiting Professor of American Foreign Policy at William College. With the political scientist James McAllister, he co-taught a course on the Cold War, and he revised and updated "The CIA and US Foreign Policy," the last class he taught at Temple before retiring. He enjoyed the experience tremendously, although not so much that he regretted his decision to retire. Also keeping Immerman busy are projects that honor two of his mentors who recently passed away. Along with Marc Trachtenberg and H-Diplo/ISSF managing editor Diane Labrosse, he organized, co-chaired, and introduced a forum that pays tribute to the life, scholarship, and legacy of Robert Jervis. More than thirty distinguished scholars contributed, and there will be a second forum this summer. That Diane invited two historians to co-chair this forum speaks volumes as to what made Bob Jervis so special. Immerman will also co-edit a *festschrift* celebrating Walter LaFeber, which Cornell University Press will publish. He is currently raising funds to hold a conference in New York City prior to the volume's publication. Each chapter will be co-authored to accommodate the number of Walt's students who wanted to contribute. Moreover, the conference will include a roundtable of his students who made their mark in the policymaking world. Immerman wants to thank all of those who have generously donated to the Richard Immerman Research Award. There is no better way to acknowledge what makes CENFAD so special than to give back to it by supporting student research!



In 2021, current CENFAD director **Dr. Alan McPherson** published two peer-reviewed articles: "Strange Bedfellows at the End of the Cold War: The Letelier Assassination, Human Rights, and National Sovereignty," in *Cold War History*, and "Counterterrorism in U.S. Civil Courts: The Role of *Letelier v. Republic of Chile*," in *Law and History Review*. He also participated in a workshop to publish a third article, on the Chilean security state, and a second workshop for advanced graduate students in inter-American relations. Additionally, he published four book reviews. He continues as Associate Editor of *Diplomatic History*, edited at Temple, and on the Editorial Board of the *Journal of American History*. Mostly, however, while on sabbatical in Fall 2021, he finished the research on his next book about the Iran-Contra scandal of the 1980s.

Dr. Jay Lockenour still cannot get away from Erich Ludendorff, but is starting a new project on sports and the military. Beginning with Germany, the project asks why military and civilian leaders so often view sports as the key to both future military victory and national regeneration in the wake of defeat. A research trip to Germany this summer will provide a first opportunity to examine relevant archives, though Dr. Lockenour has already begun to give presentations on the topic at the Philadelphia-area Modern Germany Workshop and the upcoming Humanities Seminar—AfterWars—at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. He also advises community members that, if you have not yet read his recent

book *Dragonslayer: The Legend of Erich Ludendorff in the Weimar Republic and Third Reich*, you should be sure to check it out.

Dr. Gregory J.W. Urwin published "'How Am I Going . . . to Show My Rank': What George Armstrong Custer Actually Wore at Gettysburg" in the July 2021 issue of *Gettysburg Magazine*, a juried journal published by University of Nebraska Press. Urwin caused wide-ranging reaction in cyberspace with "The Yorktown Tragedy: Washington's Slave Roundup," which appeared in the online *Journal of the American Revolution* on October 19, 2021, the 240th anniversary of that event. Urwin's Black-Lives-Matter take on the War of Independence resulted in his appearance on three podcasts: *Point of the Spear with Robert Child*; *Dispatches: Podcast of the Journal of the American Revolution with Barry Crytzer*; and *KYW InDepth*. Finally, Urwin guested on *Based on a True Story: The Podcast That Compares Hollywood with History* to discuss *They Died with Their Boots On*, the 1941 Warner Brothers biopic starring Errol Flynn as George Armstrong Custer.

Dr. Lee-Ann Chae's paper "What is the Aim of a Just War?" won the American Philosophical Association's Frank Chapman Sharp Memorial Prize, awarded biennially, for best unpublished essay or monograph on the philosophy of war and peace.

In July 2021, former Davis Fellow **Dr. Silke Zoller** (PhD, Temple, 2018) published *To Deter and Punish: Global Collaboration Against Terrorism in the 1970s* with Columbia University Press. The book is based on the dissertation that Dr. Zoller completed under Dr. Richard Immerman with the support of CENFAD. She was previously interviewed about this publication in an article for the December 2021 issue of *Strategic Visions*.

Another former Davis Fellow advised by Dr. Immerman, **Dr. David B. Zierler** (PhD, Temple, 2008), became Director of the Caltech Heritage Project in July 2021, having previously served as an oral historian for the American Institute of Physics from 2019-21. Dr. Zierler was previously interviewed about his work in an article for the December 2021 issue of *Strategic Visions*.

Congratulations to **Dr. Tyler R. Bamford** (PhD, Temple, 2019), Dr. Urwin's nineteenth PhD advisee and a historian with the Naval History and Heritage Command. University Press of Kansas has just announced the impending release of Tyler's first book. *Forging the Anglo-American Alliance: The British and American Armies, 1917-1941*, which should be available for sale by June. The book is a revised version of Tyler's 2019 dissertation, "'Hands across the Sea': American and British Military Attachés and the Anglo-American Military Relationship, 1919-1941." Tyler is the ninth of the twenty PhDs that Dr. Urwin has turned out to publish their dissertations thus far. There will be more — he guarantees it. This is another great day for the Temple mafia in military history!

Dr. David J. Ulbrich, one of Dr. Urwin's first doctoral students (PhD, Temple, 2007), is making a big career move. He has been appointed Chair of the Division of Graduate Studies at Norwich University. Dave's new position will entail working with different fields and disciplines, alongside several other Program Directors who supervise hundreds of adjunct instructors and 1,000 graduate students each year. Dave is also charged with implementing a five-year

strategic plan that will double the size of Norwich's graduate student population. Dave will continue to direct Norwich's History and Military History M.A. programs, but with additional assistance from his subordinates.

Congratulations to **Dr. Matthew S. Muehlbauer** (PhD, Temple, 2008), another one-time advisee of Dr. Urwin who recently left an associate professor's position at the School for Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to become the Chief Military Historian of the Pritzker Military Museum & Library (PMML). One of the major stakeholders in the world of military history, the PMML is dedicated to increasing public understanding of military history, military affairs, and national security by providing a forum for the study of the American military with a specific focus on the stories, sacrifices, and values of the country's servicemen and women. As the PMML mission statement puts it, "We believe that military history is human history and defines our collective experience." Pritzker is a non-government, non-partisan organization that features diverse collections, scholarly initiatives, and public programs from its flagship in downtown Chicago. Muehlbauer's move to PMML marks a high point in the history of the Temple mafia in military history indeed!

Dr. Kelly J. Shannon (PhD, Temple, 2010), a former Davis Fellow, was appointed the Executive Director of the Center for Peace, Justice, and Human Rights (PJHR) in July 2020 at Florida Atlantic University, where she has been a faculty member since 2014. In November 2021, her chapter "The Shuster Mission of 1911 and American Perceptions of Iran's First Revolution" was published by Bloomsbury in the book *American-Iranian Dialogues: From Constitution to White Revolution, c. 1890s to 1960s*, edited by Matthew Shannon. She has also given several public lectures in Fall 2021 on US policy and women's rights in Afghanistan.

PhD student and incumbent Davis Fellow **Casey VanSise**, and PhD candidates **Graydon Dennison** and former Davis Fellow **Joshua Stern**, alongside London School of Economics and Political Science PhD student **Fionntán O'Hara**, published research articles in the December 2021 edition of *The Latin Americanist* resulting from a CENFAD workshop for graduate students on inter-American relations supervised by Dr. Alan McPherson. These included VanSise's "Reaganites and *Rosa-golpistas*: Omar Torrijos, Panama-United States Relations, and the Rise of the Reagan Doctrine"; Dennison's "Army of the Alliance: Non-State Actors of the Alliance for Progress in Brazil"; Stern's "US Labor Intervention in Latin America: The Politics of Class Harmony and the American Institute for Free Labor Development"; and O'Hara's "Mixed Motives: The Politics of U.S. Interest in Refugees in Honduras During the 1980s." Dennison, Stern, and VanSise will also be participating as part of a recently-accepted panel ("Do Non-State Actors Matter?: Rethinking Inter-American Affairs Across the Twentieth Century") at the 2023 American Historical Association (AHA) Meeting in Philadelphia, chaired by Dr. McPherson, and also featuring Dr. Margarita Fajardo of Sarah Lawrence College as commentator, and Dr. Hilary Francis of Northumbria University Newcastle as a fellow panelist.

At the 2022 Barnes Conference from March 18-19, PhD students **Duncan Knox**, **Laura Grace Waters**, **Madison Ingram**, **Ethan Cohen**, **Joseph Eanett**, **Grace Anne Parker**, and incoming Davis Fellow **Ryan Langton**, alongside PhD candidates

Brandon Kinney (former Davis Fellow), **Joshua Stern**, **Stephen Kostes**, **Stanley Schwartz**, **Cory Hollon**, and **Ariel Natalo-Lifton** variously participated as panelists, commentators, and/or chairs in sessions addressing aspects of military history and international relations history. Papers presented included Waters's "'Unwilling to be Guided or Ruled': Tolkien, Gender, and the Great War" and Kostes's "Peace Turns to War: The Creation and Use of Pennsylvania's Provincial Soldiers during the Seven Years' War." Waters and Kostes also served as commentators for a single panel each, as did Knox, Stern, Kostes, Cohen, Hollon, Kinney, Parker, Langton (commentator/chair), and Ingram (commentator/chair), with Eanett serving as chair of a single panel. Meanwhile, Schwartz served as commentator/chair for no less than *two* separate panels, as did Natalo-Lifton (one of which was military history-relevant). CENFAD faculty members serving as chairs included Dr. Alan McPherson, Dr. Gregory J.W. Urwin, Dr. Eileen Ryan, and Dr. Bryant Simon. Congratulations to all of those participants for making this year's Barnes Conference a great success!

Brandon Kinney's journal article, "'The Rifle is the Symbol': The AK-47 in Global South Iconography," is forthcoming in the *Journal of World History* in 2022. His research article "Imagining a New *Volk*: German-American Nationalism in the Age of the Revolution" was also published in the *Journal of Early American History* in August 2021.

Note from the Davis Fellow

Dear CENFAD Community,

It is hard to believe that another academic year has now passed and that my time as the incumbent Thomas J. Davis Fellow for 2021-22 is drawing to a close this summer! Unfortunate though such recent events themselves are in several obvious respects, this semester in particular was quite a serendipitously intriguing time for me to find myself in the Davis Fellow position, as the world enters a new geopolitically-tumultuous era given Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine that began on February 24 and continues at the time of me writing this note. Whatever the long-term outcome of the Russian invasion and the world's varied responses thereto ultimately ends up being, you can be sure that it will only further emphasize the importance of studying dynamics of force and diplomacy on a global scale. This happens to be a purpose that lies at the very heart of CENFAD's existence, and something that it is already well-positioned to do as a product of the intellectual and topical diversity that it routinely promotes and gives voice to!

Such intellectual and topical diversity is certainly in evidence in CENFAD's regular lineup of speakers. This semester, with the exception of our first lecture on January 20 featuring Dr. Allen C. Guelzo (which was Zoom-exclusive in keeping with Temple University's efforts to stymie an expected COVID-19 wave at the time), CENFAD persisted with the tradition of hybrid lectures that was inaugurated last semester. Following Dr. Guelzo's January lecture, CENFAD also hosted Dr. Robert "Bob" Vitalis (February 8), Dr. Elizabeth R. Varon (February 24), Dr. Matthew Specter (March 15), Dr. Miguel La Serna (March 21), and Dr. Paul Adler (April 4). Additionally, on March 14, CENFAD held a special event featuring *The Philadelphia Inquirer* columnist Trudy Rubin, scheduled in response to the aforementioned Russian invasion of Ukraine. Unlike last semester, though, I got to work directly with CENFAD director Dr. Alan McPherson, who had returned from sabbatical, to coordinate these events. I am exceedingly grateful to have received his guidance in helping to successfully see this semester's CENFAD colloquium schedule through to fruition!

Regarding the contents of this issue of *Strategic Visions*, readers will find five separate interviews that I conducted in both print and video format with several of our guest lecturers on their respective books and research contributions: Dr. Vitalis, Dr. Varon, Dr. Specter, Dr. La Serna, and Dr. Adler. Thereafter, readers will also encounter "The Stable Republic of Brazil," a short essay by retired Temple Associate

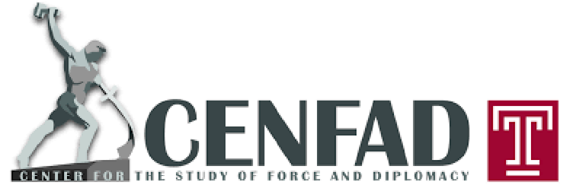
Professor Emeritus of History, Dr. Philip Evanson, regarding the economic policies and political circumstances of Brazil under the current administration of President Jair Bolsonaro. Finally, two book reviews by Temple History PhD candidates are featured in this issue: Ariel Natalo-Lifton's review of Tanya Roth's *Her Cold War: Women in the U.S. Military, 1945-1980*, and Graydon Dennison's review of Ian Tyrrell's *American Exceptionalism: A New History of an Old Idea*.

With that, I wish all the best to Ryan Langton when he succeeds me as the Thomas J. Davis Fellow for the 2022-23 academic year!

Sincerely,

Casey VanSise

Interview with Dr. Robert "Bob" Vitalis



CV: My name is Casey VanSise. I am the current Thomas J. Davis Fellow at the Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy (CENFAD) for the 2021-22 academic year. We are joined by Dr. Robert Vitalis, who is presenting for CENFAD on his book *Oilcraft: The Myths of Scarcity and Security That Haunt U.S. Energy Policy*, which was published by Stanford University Press in 2020, so we will be talking a bit about that here. So I guess just to start off with, on behalf of our audience, I was curious about the premise of the book. What is your thesis and what is the overall subject matter that you are examining?

RV: You know, it is pretty straightforward. And it is a short book – that is one of the other good things about it. It is punchy! And the basic argument is that most of what we believe about the geopolitics of oil is wrong. It cannot be supported empirically, and is based on accumulating factitious evidence that, if one looks even a little deeply, one finds makes no sense.

CV: Well, very fascinating, and it is great to hear that you are making these sort-of novel inroads into that scholarship. I think many of us are overall familiar with, for instance, the Carter Doctrine and the ramifications of that, which I understand your book examines in detail, and just looking at how US energy policy reflects our geopolitical order, despite arguably being flawed in its premises. To follow from that, what do you think different disciplines will gain from your work? For instance, you are from the Political Science department at the University of Pennsylvania, and here at CENFAD, we like to do a lot of multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary work – between historians, political scientists, IR theorists, and everything in-between and beyond! So, for example, how can historians gain from your work, and how can political scientists gain from it as well?

RV: So, a couple of things about that. One is that it does not read nor should it be taken as an academic or scholarly book, because I have been taken to task by scholars—young assistant professors also writing on the subject—who will argue that the book is just too bold in its set of claims. I think a better way to think about it is as a polemic targeted at various cohorts and segments of intellectuals who presume to understand and advance theories or claims about the role of oil in US foreign policy generally. This includes everyone from those who argue that the United States delivers a public good to the world at large by being in the Persian

Gulf, contending that if it were not in the Persian Gulf, chaos would reign in oil markets, to others holding views contrasting with people who believe that the United States is supplying a beneficent public good. This includes those on both the right and left who understand the United States as exercising some kind of hegemony or using its so-called "control" of the oil in the Persian Gulf in order to support its hegemony, with folks disagreeing on what that hegemony is about, and whether or not it is a good thing. What the book tries to say is that you have to think harder if you believe that, because there is not really a great deal of evidence to support any of that, other than what you have already come to believe.

CV: Sure, yeah. Very interesting! Obviously, you have an extensive body of work dealing with the Middle East. For instance, you wrote two books dealing with that region before this one – one specifically about Saudi Arabia, as I recall, and then you also had the book––

RV: *White World Order, Black Power Politics*?

CV: That is right, yes! And so you have this very extensive repertoire of work looking at the geopolitical order, and how a lot of our assumptions about the geopolitical order that undergird it are faulty, in many ways, or do have endemic flaws. So despite them being very different works, do you see insights from works like *White World Order, Black Power Politics*, and then also your earlier body of work on the Middle East, connecting to what you outline in *Oilcraft*?

RV: Okay. That is a great question. I think I did not realize this, save in retrospect, that you could analytically look at the four books I have written together – the first one on business conflict in interwar Egypt leading up to the [Gamal Abdel] Nasser period [*When Capitalists Collide: Business Conflict and the End of Empire in Egypt*]; the second being about the world that American oil companies in eastern Saudi Arabia built there in the era of oil exploration [*America's Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier*]; the third book on how American international relations as a discipline understands itself and its past [*White World Order, Black Power Politics*]; and then this new book *Oilcraft*. It turns out that all four of them were about myth-busting, in varieties of ways – from the first book, which was challenging [divergent] myths that had come to be [respectively] believed by Marxists and Egyptian nationalists writing about the Egyptian political economy, up to *Oilcraft*, which is really about challenging what I see as myths in multiple domains in how we talk about oil. That has been the project! It was more scholarly in earlier iterations, as I needed to secure tenure and get promoted, and this [most recent book] which meant to be much more, as I said, polemical. But it is also me trying to come to grips with what I once believed about US imperialism, oil in geopolitics, the United States-Saudi Arabia relationship, and so forth. So it is me working through ideas that I once held and advanced, and now realize are wrong.

CV: Sure. Stemming from that, I am interested in the ways that people of different ideological tendencies and persuasions have shifted as being either proponents or opponents of US entanglement in purportedly oil-related geopolitics. I recall that, in the introduction of your book, you stated that a lot of ideas about oil scarcity have been assimilated more by the academic left, and just the left in general, whereas before, conservatives were often greater proponents of those ideas,

if I am not mistaken. So it is interesting to see this reversal of different ideological tendencies over time. I am curious about how you have seen the politics of "oilcraft," as it were, evolving over time.

RV: Okay. There are many ways one could answer that, or I can geek out on this subject for days, but let us just take one example that I am struck by these days: I interviewed Douglas Feith for my book. Now, Feith was a key official involved in the 2003 Iraq War [as Undersecretary of Defense for Policy]. But Feith, to his credit, was someone who had long since abandoned what he called the "risk-gain" view of geopolitics in the world – that the world was running out of oil, states must struggle to control what was left of it, and that you needed to use state power to secure access to oil. Early on, he was taken under the wing of a kind-of iconoclastic economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Morris Adelman, who I embrace in my book. And, however else we remember him—as a neoconservative, as an advocate for US foreign intervention—Feith's argument went that the United States did not have to do anything to secure access to oil, or that any other state has to do anything in particular to secure access to oil, because the market will deliver it. According to him, the various threats that we imagined would stymie us are either not true, or not amenable to intervention, in the case of incidents like refinery fires or revolutions, and so forth, that might disrupt oil supply. There was no particular kind of action one had to take, so that "risk-gain" view of the world, which was a kind of geopolitics game from the Cold War, has been [mutually] embraced by two otherwise contending factions. Let me put it this way: you evoked the Carter Doctrine, which was formulated in the era of Zbigniew Brzezinski as Jimmy Carter's National Security Advisor, and Sam Huntington, the Harvard professor [who was] one of Carter's main advisors. And, ostensibly, their view—Huntington, in particular—was that after the USSR invaded Afghanistan, it was clear evidence for them of the Soviets seeking to control Middle Eastern oil. [These policymakers] assumed that [the Soviets] were going to enter the Persian Gulf; take the Gulf over – though they never exactly explained how; and—this was what Huntington's fear was—somehow the Soviets, by gaining control of that oil, would be able to wreck the alliance between the United States and Western Europe. So sitting behind that idea is that, somehow, the United States in the Persian Gulf is there to guarantee oil flows to its allies in the Cold War. But then you think about it a little bit more, and it is a kind of coercion in the last instance. The United States has this ability to influence or shape the policies of its allies via its so-called "control of oil." The left loves that idea, because it argues, "Aha! This is the way that the United States exerts its hegemony over its capitalist allies, in Western Europe and Japan!" And what my book kind of says is, "Well, how do you know that, and can you show me any proof of this amazing weapon being used?" The reality is that there is zero proof of it. So it is something that you have to believe and almost see as commonsensical, that as a tool or a weapon, [oil's] power—I call it "capillary power"—is that it simply exists, so that allies come into line knowing that the United States is holding that weapon in reserve in its exercise of power. Now how people know this, I have no idea! For me, it is conjured out of whole cloth, basically.

CV: I see. And I guess one final question following up from all of this is, to the extent that the insights in your book get assimilated into popular discourse, which it is certainly always hard to guarantee—

RV: No, it is easy to guarantee that does *not* happen is what I would say, but go ahead.

CV: —but to the extent that you do perhaps see trendlines evolving along some of the lines that you have articulated in your book, what ramifications can you perhaps see moving forward – for example, in the US-Saudi relationship, or in the geopolitical order in general?

RV: Great question! So the argument and takeaway would be this: if what your fear is, or if why you support the continuous militarization by the United States of the Persian Gulf from the 1970s through the 1991 war to liberate Kuwait and on through the "forever wars" in the 2000s—if your belief is that it is necessary in order to secure the flow of oil, or oil at reasonable prices, and however else it is framed—guess what? You can relax, because it is absolutely not necessary. So you can feel good about calling for the demilitarization of that region. I am not guaranteeing you that you will succeed in doing that, because there are always a surfeit of rationales for military intervention. But the one that has been strongest for longest, especially among those who oppose intervention, is the belief that this is always about, as President Obama put it and many other presidents have put it, "guaranteeing the continuous access of Middle Eastern oil at reasonable prices." Well, the US military buildup there has no role to play in that.

CV: Very good. So, once again for your audience, that book by Dr. Robert Vitalis is *Oilcraft: The Myths of Scarcity and Security That Haunt U.S. Energy Policy*, and I would encourage everyone and anyone who is interested in this topic, and just anyone in general, to pick up a copy of that. Dr. Vitalis, thank you so much for your time!

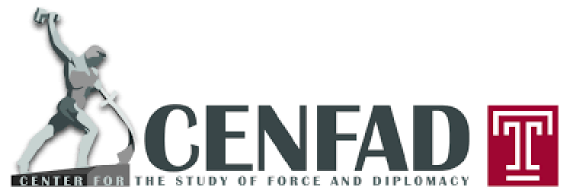
RV: Thank you so much too, Casey!

Interview with Dr. Elizabeth R. Varon

CV: This is Casey VanSise, the current Thomas J. Davis Fellow at the Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy (CENFAD) for the 2021-22 academic year. And we have with us today Dr. Elizabeth R. Varon, who is presenting for CENFAD on her book *Armies of Deliverance: A New History of the Civil War*, which was published by Oxford University Press a couple of years ago now?

EV: Yeah. It was published in 2019.

CV: Perfect! So I guess I will open by asking you, Dr. Varon: what is the overall thesis of the book, and what is the subject matter that you are looking at? Obviously, the book is focused on the US Civil War, but what is your overall contribution to the field by, for instance, looking at the Union and the Confederacy, and this "politics of deliverance" on the Union side, as I understand it? Could you explain a bit to our audience a bit more about what the "politics of deliverance" was, what the Confederate



response to that was, and how that informs your work?

EV: Sure. So, I was commissioned to write a textbook about the Civil War, and the idea was that it would be suitable for college students. There are some wonderful textbooks on the Civil War out there, such as James McPherson's famous *Ordeal by Fire* and *Battle Cry of Freedom* volumes. And so I went into this project without a thesis, *per se*, or even a provisional thesis. I just had a sort of research design, and that was to write a book that integrated military and political history with social and cultural history, and was a sort-of holistic narrative of the Civil War, in which the experiences of noncombatants, the story of the process of emancipation, and all of these things would be throughlines rather than chapters that were set aside. And there is so much recent scholarship that is so good that I wanted to bring to bear, and update our standard narrative.

By training, I am a historian first and foremost of the American South, and so I had studied Southern places and figures in a lot of detail. I wrote a book about a Union spy named Elizabeth Van Lew, who lived in Richmond, and I had written a book about [Robert E.] Lee's surrender to [Ulysses S.] Grant at Appomattox in Virginia, so I knew as I started writing this textbook that I had a bit of a learning curve with regard to Northern politics and the Union side of the war. So as well as wanting to apply this method of really wanting to integrate military and political history with social and cultural history, I also wanted to answer for

myself and for my readers some key questions about the Union war effort. Again, if I were to ask you or anyone here in your circle about why the South fought the Civil War, people would have strong opinions. Hopefully, they would say that it was to preserve and extend slavery, which is at the core of secession and the Southern war effort. If you were to ask people why the Union men enlisted—why the professor in Maine, or the factory worker in Philadelphia, or the farmer in Connecticut, and so on would sign up and march hundreds of miles to go fight this long and bloody war in the South—the answer there is a little tougher and more elusive.

So I wanted to answer that question about what motivated Union soldiers, and I wanted to also get a better sense of [Abraham] Lincoln and his coalition-building. A major premise of the book is that neither the North or the South are monoliths. They are societies with various kinds of fault-lines and divisions, so the Union and the Confederacy as political constructs required coalition-building on both sides to mount a war effort. And I was interested in the nature of the Union coalition. To make a long story short, I discovered that, though I had not been as keen to this when I started, as I got into the sources—soldiers' letters and diaries, and also public discourse of all kinds, such as speeches, proclamations, and so on—I kept finding this pledge that Northerners were making, both in private and public, to "deliver" the South, to save the Southern masses from the leaders of the secession movement.

And I was surprised that this theme was so prominent, and mostly at how persistent it was. It is not surprising that, early in the war, Northerners might have thought, "well, secession sentiment is shallow, so maybe a show of force will bring Southerners to their senses," and so on. But what I found is that, deep into the war, even after tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of people died on the battlefield, Northerners clung to this idea that secession was the work of a small band of conspirators, and that if they could "break the spell" that those conspirators had cast, they could change Southern hearts and minds, rekindle Southern allegiance to the Union, and deliver the Southern masses from the slaveholding elite.

CV: Well, very fascinating! I am sure readers will find it very illuminating to look more into this, since that is not often a theme that is explored, so I appreciate your book bringing that to the field.

EV: Thank you!

CV: I guess one follow-up question from that is that, obviously at the Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy, we host many Civil War historians. We have already hosted, for instance, Dr. Judkin Browning last semester—

EV: Sure, yeah! His work has influenced mine a lot.

CV: Very good. And we just had Dr. Allen Guelzo here presenting on his new book about Robert E. Lee. So it is great to have so many Civil War historians here. And what I wanted to ask is that, since CENFAD looks at a vast range of historical periods and contexts inasmuch as it is exploring history subject matter, I am curious what insights your book might have about our politics in the United States or just in general today, despite looking at the Civil War?

EV: Sure. Yeah, so there is definitely a diplomatic history angle to this book in the sense that part of what is at stake for the

North—for the Union and the Lincoln administration—is denying the legitimacy of the rebellion, in part because they were afraid of the potential for European powers coming in on the Confederate side, something that the Confederates were very keen on and hoped would happen. [Instead, they would] say, "this is not a legitimate democratic revolution," as the slaveholders claimed it was – an odd definition of democracy they had. [Union policymaker said,] "this is the insurgency of a small band of rebels, and therefore illegitimate, and it is a project that should not inspire the support of 'great powers' and so on." And that was one of the things that was at stake.

I think, in a way, that this project is fundamentally about the power of propaganda and ideology, and the power of ideology to shape the way that people see the world and perceive reality. So folks on the Union side clung to this idea of "saving the South from itself" even in the face of massive evidence that Confederates did not want to be saved. They clung to that idea in part because their sense was that America was a political project that depended on the affection of citizens for each other, and a consensual rather than coercive society. So they had to imagine that, if they could somehow "cut the head off the secessionist snake," they could restore that kind of consensual Union. The Confederates had their own powerful ideology that they used to counter these "deliverance" appeals, and Confederate ideology posited that "North and South" could never again be countrymen and brethren, and the Confederates claimed that the "Yankees" were intent on creating a war of "merciless subjugation, extermination, and annihilation" – those were the kinds of phrases that you see in Confederate propaganda. The Confederates began saying this before the first shots were fired, creating a propaganda frame for everything that was to transpire.

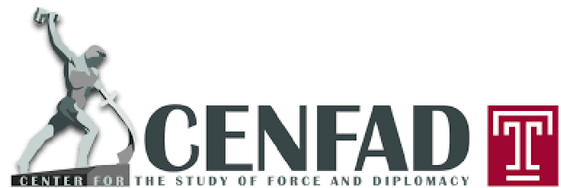
So the two sides were very much driven by ideas that are starkly opposed, and to me, one of the takeaways in terms of our modern politics is to avoid the pitfall of "false equivalency." The war was a brutal one on both sides, but the Union and the Confederacy really did represent, at their core, very different projects. The Confederates were the avowed enemies of change who wanted to prolong the power of slaveholders in the American government. The Union side had a range of views on the issue of slavery and emancipation, but there was a consensus that slaveholders should no longer rule the United States, and that slaveholders, particularly elite, wealthy ones, who were a small minority, should not exercise this undemocratic sway over the population.

Alas, another big message relevant to your CENFAD themes is that Lincoln builds this coalition around "deliverance" during the war, but once the war is over, the fault-lines within that coalition come to the fore. The coalition loses some of its momentum, and ex-Confederates are able to assert and promote their own view of what the war had meant and what defeat had meant – the "Lost Cause" propaganda that we still live in the shadow of. And so these political battles, and this discourse and ideology, persists long after the war.

CV: Absolutely. Well, I think our time is limited, so this is the extent of our interview, but I just want to thank Dr. Varon for appearing here, and remind readers and viewers of this interview that her book is *Armies of Deliverance: A New History of the Civil War*, published in 2019. So thank you so much, Dr. Varon, for presenting and for your interview!

EV: Thank you so much!

Interview with Dr. Matthew Specter



CV: I want to welcome our readership and audience, for anyone who may be viewing the video recording as well. For those who do not know me at this time, my name is Casey VanSise. I am the 2021-22 Thomas J. Davis Fellow for CENFAD this academic year. And I would like to welcome our guest today, Dr. Matthew Specter, who is joining us from California. We are going to be interviewing him about his book, *The Atlantic Realists*, which was just published this year (2022) by Stanford University Press.

MS: Thank you! Good to be here, Casey. And thank you to CENFAD and to Alan McPherson for the original invitation and the lecture, which I really enjoyed giving at Temple University a few weeks back!

CV: Very good. Thank you! I will proceed with questions from there. So, to give a basic summary, your book examines the overall intellectual interchange between US and German realist policymakers – "realist," quote-unquote, because a major point of your book is deconstructing what realism means, and where it originated. So that is a very important component of your book. But could you just introduce, in general, the subject-matter that you examine and the overall thesis of your book to our audience and readership? For instance, maybe introduce some of the main figures that your book examines, and what inspired you to write this?

MS: So this was a project with deep roots in my own personal biography. As a freshman at Harvard University in the 1980s, I took a class with Joseph Nye on "Ethics and Foreign Policy," and I was introduced to the concept of the "national interest," as the kind of lodestar of any state's foreign policymaking. And the essential premise of the course was that ethics was something that needed to be negotiated—that ethical concerns had to be negotiated—*vis-à-vis* the "national interest." And yet I found in our readings, many of which were authored by classical realists, that the "national interest" was never clearly defined. It never really was clear to me who got to decide what the "national interest" was. Why was it that, say, with the Carter Doctrine, that Persian Gulf oil was a vital "national interest?" Well, you can see that was very much a political decision, and yet simply by framing it as *the* "national interest"—as something more objective than the supposedly "softer" or "more emotional" ethical concerns—I felt that it stacked the deck in favor of a certain kind of strategic logic.

So, that was thirty-five years ago. I did not start working on the book until about ten

years ago. I wanted to understand the tenacity of certain fixed ideas in not only US foreign policy thought, but in Western foreign policy thought more generally. And because of my training in German intellectual history, I had discovered a number of different things. You know, I have taught about and studied the Holocaust and its ideological discourses of *lebensraum* and space. At the same time, I also teach world history, and think about the rise of the "American Century" and the debates over American empire. So I was looking for a project that would bring my concerns as a citizen about American empire, and its pathologies and shortcomings, into dialogue with my expertise as a Germanist, and without making any kind of facile comparisons between America and Nazi Germany, but to link the two histories through the figures of German *émigrés* who fled Nazism and who migrated to the United States. And the most famous of those was Hans Morgenthau, a German-Jewish *émigré*, who became the author of the bestselling textbook in academic international relations, and sort-of singlehandedly promoted the prestige of the realist paradigm, both in academia and in Washington DC, through his friendship with George Kennan and others.

So the book began as, really, an intellectual biography of Morgenthau – I went into his papers at the Library of Congress. And, at that time, I was most interested in the influence of Carl Schmitt, an authoritarian conservative legal and political theorist who elected to go with the Nazis and to rationalize their empire-building – especially in a famous text from 1939, in which he takes the Monroe Doctrine as a model for a German imperium in Central Europe. So I got very interested and sort-of convinced that there was something specific about the US-German Transatlantic dialogue that was constitutive of the American realist sensibility. Other historians had already pointed this out – that Morgenthau in America brought with him many ideas, whether it was [Friedrich] Nietzsche or [Max] Weber or [Sigmund] Freud or Schmitt. So this was not entirely original to me. What was original was that, rather than beginning the story of realism with the Germanization of American thought in the 1930s and 1940s through the emigration, I instead decided to move the story all the way back to the 1880s and 1890s, because I became convinced that the dialogue was much more longstanding, and that there was a sense of affinity between German and American historical experiences as young and rising empires. They possessed similar challenges, and had a similar sense of "frontiers." In the United States, they had the sense of a "closing frontier," which led them to pursue overseas opportunities, and there was a similar turn in Germany from continental empire to overseas, naval empire.

So it was a project that began trying to look at Schmitt, Morgenthau, and a third figure, Wilhelm Grewe, who was the West German ambassador to the United States during the Kennedy administration. And Grewe, I like to joke, was the "German Kissinger," and of course, Kissinger himself was *the* "German Kissinger" also, but because he was from Bavaria, we can perhaps instead call him the "Franconian Kissinger," and reserve the label "German Kissinger" for Wilhelm Grewe. So the project began trying to understand Wilhelm Grewe – someone who had a long and distinguished career in West German diplomacy in the 1960s and 1970s, but had begun his career in the Nazi Foreign Office writing legal opinions justifying Nazi empire in Europe that were deeply influenced by Carl Schmitt. Those were my main three protagonists in the beginning—

Schmitt, Morgenthau, and Grewe—and I think of them as a triangle, with Schmitt at the top, and Morgenthau and Grewe in the other corners of the triangle.

But then, as I said, I decided to go back to the 1880s and 1890s, and brought in a whole other cast of characters, including Friedrich Ratzel, the coiner of the phrase "*lebensraum*"; Alfred Mahan, the theorist of "sea power"; and, in the interwar period, Karl Haushofer, the dean of German geopoliticians. And then I trace a whole story about the American ambivalence about "geopolitics," initially denouncing it as a German science that was inherently evil, and then pivoting very rapidly and deciding that an "American geopolitics" was necessary, and people like Father [Edmund A.] Walsh, the founder of the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, exemplified this geopolitical turn. So it is really a genealogical history of a concept and a practice – both the concept of "realism" and some of its practical applications in foreign policy, in Germany and the United States, from the 1880s to the 1980s. It examines a very long time period—longer than most historians are comfortable with—but I felt like I was able to do justice both to the diachronic story of change over a longer period of time, but also with a great deal of depth and contextualization in each of the moments.

CV: Well, very good, and thank you so much for that great, very extensive overview of the contents of your book! That is very helpful to our readership and to our audience. So proceeding from the intellectual history that you were used to doing before, I should let our audience know that you previously authored a book on the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, and that was eponymously entitled *Habermas: An Intellectual Biography*. That was published by Cambridge University Press in 2010. So I guess I am curious what it was like making that shift from analyzing a single figure in a lot of depth, to doing this project of much greater scope? In what ways, perhaps, does *The Atlantic Realists* compare and contrast with your previous scholarship, including *Habermas: An Intellectual Biography*?

MS: Yeah, that is a nice question. I have not reflected very much on it, so it is a nice opportunity to do that. I mean, one sort of continuity between my two books is the nature of the sort-of "national context of thought" and the "transnational context of thought." What I was trying to do in the first book [on Habermas] was to argue [against the grain about] a thinker who, in Germany, is seen as somewhat Americanized, and who has had a very successful career in American critical theory, philosophy, and political science, and thus could be depicted as a strongly "Transatlantic" figure, someone who took onboard a great deal of insights from John Dewey and [the philosophical tradition of] "American Pragmatism." I argued the opposite: that Habermas needed to be seen, first and foremost, as a German thinker, and not only that, but a *West German* thinker. And the premise there was methodological – that there was a kind of organic connection between the abstract, systematic philosopher and sociologist who writes very challenging theoretical treatises, and the West German intellectual who wrote hundreds of pieces for the newspapers on the issues of the day, from book reviews; to interventions in political debates; to debates on West German foreign policy, the student movement, and university reform. And, in the end, I wanted to show how one thinker navigated what [Pierre] Bourdieu would call an "intellectual field" – that is, when a thinker begins to do their creative work, they

have certain resources available to them, and they also are contending with certain "force-fields," or the stakes and symbolic coordinates of certain positions, from left to right.

And what I tried to argue was that, as creative an intellectual as Habermas was, he could only create with the materials at hand, just as other great thinkers wove their syntheses from the materials at hand, whether it was Freud in Vienna, or Karl Marx bringing together British, French, and German strands of thought. And so I guess I would say that there was a kind of huge, somewhat obsessive effort on my part to reimagine Habermas from the inside-out, and to understand him as well as I possibly could. And my book was supplemented by some interviews with him, and I was immensely gratified by his reaction to the book, which he felt did represent the connection between his theoretical and political work in a convincing way. So, if the Habermas book took a Transatlantic thinker and put him back in a German context, what I have done with realism is to take a concept that is often seen as foreign and German—*realpolitik* and its alleged descendants—and to show that the story is not just of a movement of ideas from Germany to America, but that many of those original, so-called "German ideas" were actually Transatlantic in nature. For example, *lebensraum*, the idea of "space for living" that became so important in the Third Reich, was coined by a thinker and geographer who had spent a great deal of time in the United States, and saw the great expanse of the American continent as a model for what empires should try to achieve.

So you are right, Casey, that I paint on a much bigger canvas. The first book was really just about one thinker in West Germany, though I do go past reunification [in 1989-90], from the 1950s to the 1990s. And I think what I was trying to do in [my most recent] book was to expand my range by taking on another national historiography, which is, of course, a risky thing to do, but that is how we grow.

CV: Yeah, absolutely. Thank you for that comparison between what you have done, and what you did in this project! I thought that was a fascinating component of your book – realism and *realpolitik*, terminologies that I often conflated before, having an arguably fairly facile understanding of realism. Still, I think that is very common for even international relations (IR) scholars who are actual realists to make realism and *realpolitik* synonymous, as it were. So your critiques of that are a fascinating aspect of your book. To pivot to another question, I am curious – how does the theme of "empire" figure into your work, because that is a major part of the subtitle of your book—"Empire and International Political [Thought]"—so how does that figure into what you are examining regarding the Transatlantic relationship between Germany and the United States, and thinkers in both of those respective places?

MS: Right. Well, there has been kind of a robust historiography on the connections between "liberalism [as an IR theory] and empire," but I think what I was trying to do in this book was to bring out the relationship between "realism and empire" to a greater extent than has been the case. And in a nutshell, I would say, with some risk of oversimplification, that realism has empire in its DNA, and that the mainstream of realism has a huge imperial blind-spot. It has a tendency to naturalize empire under the rubric of "great power" prerogatives, or the inevitability of "power politics," or the

inevitability of *realpolitik*. And postcolonial scholars have shown us how international relations has really been dominated by Western paradigms, whether it is the universality of the nation-state or the "naturalness" of realism. What I was trying to do in the book was to provincialize realism in the same way that postcolonial scholars [e.g., Dipesh Chakrabarty] have tried to provincialize the European historical experience, and to show the imperial dimensions of traditions that have been approached as transcendentally valid. So, in other words, the "history of realism" is usually approached as "the perennial truths of a Western tradition from Thucydides to Morgenthau and [Kenneth] Waltz," right? And that kind of evacuates the tradition of any kind of historical specificity, let alone the fact that it also does not address that the modern, industrial nation-state is not the same as the [ancient] Greek *polis*, right?

So you have to wonder where do these ideas of these abstractions come from – that the "international system is always anarchic, always has spheres of influence, always has imperial poles," and so on. Is it possible that that common sense, that transcendental idea that we have, actually emerges in a specific time and place that is more recent, and has less of a universal pedigree than we imagine? And my argument is that late-nineteenth century imperial competition is the [temporal] place where many of our founding concepts that are assembled into the realist paradigm are first tested, deployed, and coined. I think there is a strong case to be made than Mahan is the first theorist of "vital national interests," and I argue that the way he describes empire as "being in the nature of things," which is a phrase he actually takes from George Washington, is one of the founding gestures of a whole thought-style and sensibility that we have internalized, encouraging our students and practitioners to internalize this as the "common sense" of the world. And, like historians of science and other kinds of intellectual history, I am trying to defamiliarize this "common sense" by saying it is not just "free-floating truths" that are as available to the ancient Chinese as they are to the twentieth-century Americans, but rather, that there is something provincial about the North Atlantic imperial experience that became a kind of "hot-house" of these ideas, which then were transmitted through the German emigration, and were taken up into the "American Century" and universalized through the power of American empire, which disseminated "international relations" as a new discipline all over the globe.

CV: Very good. Thank you for that! We are probably running a little bit low on time as far as the interview goes, so I guess my final question is how might the subject matter explored in your book relate to current or recent events, or alternately, what might be of relevance to specialists in multiple disciplines, given CENFAD being very interdisciplinary, and your book having a lot of interdisciplinary insights as well? How might it be valuable to historians, but also IR scholars, political scientists, and so on, which you were already starting to allude to with the answer to your last question?

MS: I mean, I got into history because I was interested in intellectual history, and I was interested in intellectual history because I was looking for a space in which I could think about philosophy and political thought, not *sub specie aeternitatis*, but rather in the moments when it mattered, and in dialectic with actual historical experience. So my method has always been intellectual history, but what I have done in this book is take a major paradigm in international relations theory, which has strong overlaps with the

realist tradition in political theory (albeit slightly different than the realist tradition in international relations theory), and I have tried to give a genealogical account that will enable self-reflection on these paradigms. Now that is not to say that IR theorists have not been self-reflective before, but I think that there is a certain amount of exhaustion with "camps" and "-isms" in IR theory itself. And therefore, my genealogy may help people.

What I am trying to do in the book is not to tar "realism" so that we all become "liberal internationalists." I am looking for something beyond "realism" and "liberal internationalism." I think my account will speak to "constructivists," because I have a great deal to say about the imagination of what it means to be a "great power," and what it means to be a "power of the first rank." That is an imaginary, a kind of idea or image. That is a construction of "power politics," as a famous constructivist [Alexander Wendt] put it, that "anarchy is what states make of it." So "power politics" is not natural, but a construct. Of course, there is "hard power," but power is not a constant in history – it changes. And both the "nature of power" and the "nature of the prerogatives of power" are ideas. How we think about international affairs shapes our practice, so I think intellectual history is not just relevant, but vital for shaping practice.

Now, with regard to current events, and I will just be quick, what we see today in Ukraine is Russian imperialism, and I think those who wanted to believe that Russia is simply a rational actor with legitimate security interests and a legitimate "sphere of influence" – I think I have been sorely disappointed by the strongly ideological nature of this imperial invasion. So not all realism can be tarred with the brush of being "soft on imperialism." That would be a great mistake, and John Mearsheimer has unfortunately been calumnied very unfairly and slandered for being some kind of apologist. He is not – he is trying to explain Russia, not to justify it. And yet, I do think that realism has a normative deficit. It does not allow us to proclaim self-determination and the pursuit of anti-imperialism as vigorously as I would like. So I am looking for a philosophy that can critique the imperialism of realists, but also the imperialism of liberal internationalists.

CV: Well, thank you for answering all of those questions and agreeing to this interview! So, for our audience, that was Dr. Matthew Specter, discussing his book *The Atlantic Realists*, published this year, which I would encourage anyone and everyone to acquire a copy of. It makes for great reading —

MS: — In paperback! —

CV: — Yes, available in paperback as well!

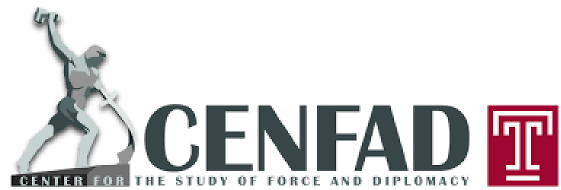
Interview with Dr. Miguel La Serna

CV: For those who do not know me, I am Casey VanSise, Thomas J. Davis Fellow at the Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy (CENFAD) for the 2021-22 academic year, and I would like to welcome Dr. Miguel La Serna, who will be presenting on his book *With Masses and Arms: Peru's Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement*, which was published in 2020 by UNC Press, if I am not mistaken.

ML: Correct.

CV: I have also had the pleasure of encountering some of Dr. La Serna's other scholarship, so I would also love to bring that into the conversation inasmuch as we can today, but Dr. La Serna, thank you for joining us!

ML: Thanks so much! I am happy to be here!



CV: Wonderful! While I guess my first question would be one that I normally ask authors or presenters that are coming to CENFAD, which is just to give the audience and readership of the newsletter an overall impression of what the main thesis of your book is, the argument, and the subject matter in general. Obviously, I mentioned the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA), but could you just give people some context about what that is and how it fit into Peruvian history, and the importance of your book with regard to that?

ML: Alright, thanks. The book is really a look at the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, or MRTA, as you say, which was a guerilla insurgency that was active in the 1980s and 1990s in Peru. It was one of two guerilla insurgencies there that were active at the time – there was the MRTA, and the Shining Path. So I have done previous work on the Shining Path, and the Shining Path is an insurgency that has actually gotten a lot of attention from scholars, journalists, and human rights groups in Peru. But as I worked on those other projects, I realized that there was not so much on the MRTA, with some pretty notable exceptions, but for the most part, there was not a comprehensive book that really just told the story and political history of the MRTA. So my prime objective was to just tell this story of this group that, in normal circumstances within a Cold War Latin American framework, probably would have received a lot more scholarly attention, but because the Shining Path was so destructive, unique, and had its own dogma,

that has kind of gotten a lot of the scholarly attention.

So I wanted to talk about this other group that otherwise was actually quite significant. One of the things I did in the book was just to tell that story, devoting effort to actually capturing the major players, episodes, and key moments in this history. But in doing so, I also tried to put forward some scholarly arguments as well, that engage in our understanding of war, the Cold War, the left, and the revolutionary left in particular. So what I did was tried to look at the symbolic realm, and how symbolism—symbolic acts that are sometimes invoking a shared sense of collective history, Peruvian history or what it means to be Peruvian—was part and parcel of this war. Therefore, rather than just looking at the military fighting, I was also looking at the way that they use symbols and they appropriated names like Tupac Amaru [II] himself, who was an eighteenth-century Amerindian rebel. So I looked at that, and that is kind of one of the main things I tried to do, and along the way, I look at other things about internal dynamics and everyday experiences of the insurgency, and how factors like race, gender, and other kinds of attitudes also impacted the trajectory of this insurgency.

CV: Right. Well, very fascinating. And obviously, as you were pointing out and I believe as you point out in the introduction of your book as well, the field of studying late-twentieth and early-twenty-first century political violence in Peru is classed under this catchall term, "senderology" [referring to the Shining Path, or *Sendero Luminoso* in Spanish], so it is great to see your work branch out and examine the MRTA in closer detail! And I mean going off of this theme that you are looking at regarding how a lot of indigenous culture was wedded to these Marxist insurgencies—both the MRTA and the Shining Path—and being familiar with, for instance, Jaymie Heilman's work [e.g., *Before the Shining Path*], and Orin Starn, with whom you co-authored another book [*The Shining Path: Love, Madness, and Revolution in the Andes*] actually the year before you published your most recent book – those scholars and authors, and yourself, have examined the ways that indigenous culture was sometimes uncomfortably wedded to this Marxist insurgency, unfortunately. So I was curious if you could, perhaps, elaborate more on the dynamics of that? I know that is sort of a broad question.

ML: No, but it is an important one too. And I am glad that you mentioned the other scholarship of people who have been really looking at the way that indigenous histories have been in dialogue and forming a dialectic with the leftist, Marxist insurgencies in the Cold War era. You mentioned the book by Jaymie Heilman, *Before the Shining Path*, and Orin Starn has done a number of works on that too, regarding the peasant counter-insurgency militias [*rondas campesinas*], as well as a scholar in Peru, Ponciano del Pino, who has written about the prehistory in Quechua-speaking communities and how that kind-of bled into the violence itself.

So, one of the things that is interesting with the MRTA is that they kind of appropriated this figure, Tupac Amaru II [José Gabriel Condorcanqui], who led a rebellion against local Spanish officials in the 1780s, and this was a figure who was really popularized, particularly in Peru in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the military regime [there at that time]. But it was a figure that was really seen as a nationalist sort of figure, and even almost a proto-nationalist figure in some ways, because he was seen as one of the precursors for [Peruvian] independence [from the Spanish Empire], which would

happen about forty years later. And so the MRTA kind of seizes on this figure, almost stating that they are finishing the rebellion that this indigenous leader started. [Tupac Amaru II] was, of course, killed and martyred, and did not succeed. But the MRTA saw themselves as embodying this kind of figure, and finishing this kind of anti-colonial movement that he engaged in.

Andean indigenous history was really at the forefront of what the MRTA was doing with the rebellion, but many of their leaders and members were *mestizo*, or even white, and they were not people who were indigenous Andeans themselves. And so one of the interesting stories not just about Peru, but with leftist insurgencies of this period in general, as you said, is this kind of inherent contradiction between wanting to, in some ways, fight for the indigenous populations—who tended to still be incredibly marginalized, and that has been the colonial legacy—but also at the same time not really having a clear sense of how to form meaningful relationships and be in dialogue with indigenous people. So the MRTA was a group that tried to appropriate symbols, and tried to fight for something they believed would be for improving indigenous lives, but at the same time, they are mostly *mestizo*, they actually do not really have a stronghold in a lot of indigenous communities, and when they do come into contact with indigenous groups, a lot of times they still harbor these colonial attitudes that manifest themselves in the way that the violence plays out.

CV: Yeah. And I mean, obviously, with the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) back in 2000, their breakdown of wartime casualties was that fifty-four percent of these were attributed to the Shining Path originally—though these figures have been challenged a little bit by some later scholarship, such as Silvio Rendon's paper—and then the government was attributed with thirty-seven percent of the casualties by the TRC. If I am not mistaken, the MRTA was held responsible for around 1.5 percent of the casualties. So I am curious, how does your account illuminate how the MRTA played into this picture of political violence, and to what extent your book perhaps holds them responsible for human rights violations or not? What does your research have to say about that?

ML: Yeah. First of all, incredible job on the figures! You are accurate. So that is exactly right. You got all of the statistics from the Truth Commission correct. They published their final report in 2003. This was kind of a transitional justice moment for Peru, because the previous president, who was an autocrat, [Alberto] Fujimori, had left after a scandal and a trail of human rights abuses from the government side, so he ended up fleeing the country to Japan, which is the country of his parents' origin. And so this created a kind of moment where the real impact of the violence could finally be explored. The government commissioned this Truth and Reconciliation Commission that ends up investigating the extent of the atrocities there.

In 2003, they published their final report, which was incredibly extensive. It was nine volumes, about ten thousand pages of reporting that they had collected about 17,000 testimonies, so it was a very, very comprehensive report. And they found that the death toll was much higher—tens of thousands higher, actually—than originally estimated. It was upwards of 70,000 people that had died throughout this conflict, and the majority were Quechua-speaking indigenous peoples who lived in areas like Ayacucho, which was the wellspring of the

violence. And in a departure from the other Truth Commissions [throughout Latin America] but also in a departure from the histories of other Latin American insurgencies at that time, the Truth Commission found, as you said, that the Shining Path was responsible for more than half of the casualties, about fifty-four percent. So this kind of made the Peruvian situation unique, because in other cases, it is usually the government forces that are responsible for upwards of ninety percent [of casualties]. This was a dramatic turn, and it has been disputed by some, but it does seem to be probably the most accurate estimate that we have right now.

So "what is the role of political violence from these different actors?" is something that I have been kind of interested in throughout my work. But yet at the same time, as you said, the MRTA was responsible for only 1.5 percent of the total deaths. So despite being a pretty significant group, because it focused on symbolic wars and struggles like that, it tended not to engage in the same types—or the degree, I should say—of brutality that, say, the Shining Path or the forces of the government had engaged in at the time. But, yeah, they still did engage in human rights abuses. One of the stories that I tell in this book is about how the MRTA started from these kind of noble intentions, in terms of trying to correct some of the many injustices that persisted in Peru in the 1980s and had never been addressed even during the return to democracy in 1980, but then as they do this, they find themselves enveloped in this political conflict and civil war, and increasingly taking decisions that are more authoritarian and become more dismissive of human rights protections. And it puts them in a situation where they are, in some ways, indistinguishable from the Shining Path, at least in the public imagination, when in reality they are very different in terms of how they conducted themselves and the kinds of violations that they did. So it is really a story of a group that started trying to distinguish itself as more respectful of human rights [than the Shining Path], and then at the end, it is really almost indistinguishable from the Shining Path in the public imagination. And that is why the MRTA is not able to be more successful, because it can never really quite delink itself from the legacy of atrocity by the Shining Path.

CV: Yeah. Well, thank you for those insights into that! Earlier, you were mentioning the Peruvian military government—that being the Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces (GRFA) under Juan Velasco Alvarado (1968-75) and then Francisco Morales-Bermúdez (1975-80)—which is very relevant to what I am researching in my prospective dissertation. In the case of Velasco, he was sort of a more left-leaning military leader than was typical in Latin America at the time, and I am curious to what extent was the MRTA formed as a result of disappointments resulting from either Velasco's government itself or the subsequent period of more right-leaning, Operation Condor-aligned governance under Morales-Bermúdez?

ML: Yeah. So that is a very great question, because it is important to understand the context in which these groups emerge. And so in the 1960s, and throughout Latin America, as you know, this is a period where guerilla insurgencies start to really become more common. There are a number of reasons for this. One of them is the success of the Cuban Revolution, which showed that the armed path to revolutionary change was actually something that was viable, or at least appeared to be. And so you have other groups saying "well, we have

similar conditions, and government structures, in some cases, in our countries – why can we not have similar kinds of movements that will bring about real, meaningful change?"

So the 1960s is a period where you start to see that, and it is also a period where this Revolutionary Government of the Armed Forces (GRFA) under Juan Velasco Alvarado takes power in a coup in 1968. But unlike the other Latin American countries in the late 1960s and early 1970s, as you said, this is a left-leaning military government, which is very different. This is a government that tries to carry out some of the social reforms that several people on the left were clamoring for. In 1969, the government carries out an extensive agrarian reform—the most extensive one in Peruvian history—and it does other things like mandating the learning of Quechua in public education. Yet many people on the left saw this as insufficient, and they also saw this as still happening within the context of a military dictatorship. Some people were initially attracted to the promise of the GRFA, but others saw this as not the right way to go about [reform]—that it was not truly liberating—and some on the left even accused the government of really being a fascist regime.

So this experience with the military government really sets up people like Víctor Polay Campos, who actually protested the government and was arrested for it, to end up becoming the founders and leaders of the MRTA. This is the context that really helps explain why that was insufficient, but then in 1980, when the military government returns to their barracks and allows for democratic elections, some people on the left also said, "well, this is not really sufficient – just because we are turning to democracy, the structures and systemic problems that we have in this country are so persistent, and any kind of democratically-elected government is not really addressing this." So this is where you see groups like the Shining Path and the MRTA, as well as others that are starting to say "the armed path is really the only viable one."

CV: I guess we do not have a lot more time with the interview, but I did want to ask you one final question, and that is, just in general, with the subject matter that you are examining, what lessons does it hold for historians, international relations scholars, political scientists, and people in different disciplines, who are examining subject matter outside Peru? In general, what insights can you take away regardless of your discipline, which I realize is a pretty big question?

ML: Right, but I think it is one all historians should be asking themselves. Like, "if I do not study twentieth century Peru, why should I care about this, or how is this meaningful for me and my scholarship?" And I would say we should all, of course, be scholars of twentieth century Peru if I had my way, but I know that is not going to happen. But I try to do a couple of things.

One is to show the everyday experience of civil war during the Cold War period. My book really tries to show what daily life was like on all sides of the conflict. So not just people in the MRTA—though I do give insight into the lived experiences of people who were involved in that movement—but I also show the stories of folks who were on the counterinsurgency side, as well as people like civilians, who were kind of caught in-between. And so it is really a story of the lived experience of the Cold War in the Global South. If the Cold War was "cold" for the Soviet Union and the United States, it was "boiling hot" in the Global

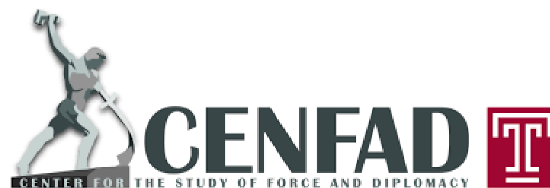
South, as other scholars have pointed out. And so this is kind of an analysis of what that looks like on the ground, and in doing so, I show that the experiences of discrimination and injustice are things that, on the one hand, compel people to join these movements, but on the other hand, these movements are insufficient in addressing them. Therefore, I show the contradictions with respect to race, gender, and similar factors that seep into these movements that, on the surface, are trying to create a more just society. So that is one of the kind of things I do.

And then I also think that the MRTA really tells us about both the promise of these revolutionary movements during this period, but then also the limitations of those promises, and how those dreams were left somewhat unfulfilled. I really question about whether or not they ended up getting the kind of meaningful change that they wanted in the end, or did they actually contribute to exacerbating the problem? This is one of the questions that we all grapple with, and it is one that I try to illuminate in the book.

CV: Well, very good, and thank you for your time! So I just want to mention to our audience once again that the book is by Dr. Miguel La Serna, and that is *With Masses and Arms: Peru's Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement*, published by UNC Press in 2020. I would encourage everyone and anyone to go acquire a copy of that. Thank you, Dr. La Serna, for agreeing to this interview!

ML: My pleasure, and thank you!

Interview with Dr. Paul Adler



CV: This is Casey VanSise, the 2021-22 Thomas J. Davis Fellow for the Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy (CENFAD), for those who are unaware of me at this point. We are joined today by Dr. Paul Adler, who is presenting for CENFAD about his book *No Globalization Without Representation*, which was published, I believe, by University of Pennsylvania Press in 2021?

PA: Yes. It is almost one year old!

CV: Well, this is great! Almost the one-year anniversary! So I guess I thought I would just start out by asking you a little bit about the basic premise of the book. What is the argument that you are making, and the subject matter that you are examining? You are looking predominantly at US activists, correct?

PA: Correct. Yeah, it is a multi-part argument. The post-1970s narrative about the left is that it is in decline and neoliberalism has been ascendant ever since, and that it is a fairly simple story – that with part of the liberal-left in the United States, the decline involved the loss of radical social movements, and the decline in numbers and strength of the labor movement. I am not overturning that story, but there is more to that story. So the argument I am making is that, yes, there was a liberal-left that had some real political swing and cachet, and that yes, those movements did decline, but what that led to was liberal advocacy organizations, especially those started in the 1960s, taking on a new kind of political burden beyond what they had initially been conceived to do. So they were not mass-membership, politically strong organizations, but insider [lobby] organizations, and they suddenly became the lead actors at the same time that global neoliberalism was arising. They found that combatting on the terms of global free trade and the rise of neoliberal global governance was a promising and necessary field to fight on. So that is what the book is about.

CV: Well, very fascinating. I should mention to our readership and audience that you actually worked for some time in the mid-2000s for Public Citizen, which was one of these organizations featured in your book.

PA: Yes, I did.

CV: Very good. So I guess I am curious about what from that experience you might have brought to the book, and that perhaps inspired you when you were writing the book?

PA: Sure. The most basic thing is that I was allowed access to records that were not, as of that time, in any formal archives. So I just could not have written it [without that]. But more conceptually-speaking, I think I brought an empathy and a specificity in some of the questions that I was asking to the research. So I had ideas about how some of these coalitions worked and these politics worked, which was more than nothing because it is not a story that has really been told [before] as comprehensively as [in my book]. So the way I would put it: if you are writing a new book on the US Civil War, you can read a book that tells you what happened in the Civil War. I was having to construct that, but because I had worked in those fields, I had some of that basic narrative down. That might be a somewhat surface answer, though, so I am happy to try to go deeper if you want.

CV: Well, that is great! I would love to venture a little bit more into perhaps what from your experience specifically informed that if we have time, but I guess moving onto the next question in the meantime – obviously, you were mentioning US activists operating on a global stage, and that is a very important aspect of your book. With the period you are examining, it is sort of fascinating that you parallel these increasingly prominent organizations with the rise of neoliberalism, and that is different from the standard narrative of neoliberalism always being triumphant in the post-1970s period. So, in a roundabout way getting back to the question I was trying to ask, with US actors operation on a global stage, does your book examine other international activists that they coordinated with? For instance, I think of José Bové in the late 1990s with the farmers protests in France, and obviously with the "Battle in Seattle" [surrounding the 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference] and later conferences, you had a lot of transnational organizing.

PA: Yes, I do. And the book is about a few different campaigns. But in each case, I do talk particularly about different Global South actors, depending on the campaign. So with NAFTA, it is Mexican organizations. With the formation of the World Trade Organization, for example, there is no specific country that that is most affecting, so what I particularly talk about—and this has not been written about that much, at least in US circles—is Penang, Malaysia, and I give some background on why that has become sort of a hub of progressive activism. But Penang has been a disproportionately important place because of the organizations that have started and are based there, especially those involving Afro-Asian coordination. And with a lot of the groups that I write about, the reason that they get along well with the US groups is that they occupy fairly similar types of social, educational, and class parameters. We are talking about lawyers and PhD economists who, in Malaysia, have been to Cambridge University, and in the United States, went to Georgetown or Harvard Law Schools. This is similar to global corporate elites, where there is an extensive literature suggesting that an Indian CEO and a US CEO of multinational corporations often have a lot more in common [with each other] than they might have with the janitor in their same office. That was one reason among others that these transnational activists were often able to work fairly well together.

CV: Well, very interesting! I guess getting into the talk that you are doing for CENFAD, what other scholarship by some CENFAD faculty might have informed your work at any point? Obviously, our director Dr. Alan McPherson has written a book,

Ghosts of Sheridan Circle, about the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), and that figures into your book as one of the organizations that you examine.

PA: Alan's work on US-Latin American relations has been very helpful for me. [His work] also [motivated my] thinking about these transnational solidarities, as well as his showing how these opposition stories are not just inexorably tales of defeat. [In *The Invaded*,] he writes about how transnational alliances helped end the [early-twentieth century] occupations in Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. So I think that scholarship was very helpful for me.

CV: In keeping with this theme of you speaking to CENFAD, which aspires to be interdisciplinary, I always ask our different authors who are presenting on different subjects—for instance, when people were presenting on the Civil War—what can historians gather from your work, and what can other disciplines gain from your work, whether international relations (IR) scholars, political scientists, or otherwise?

PA: The contribution that I am making historically is partly just being in that position where you are one of the scholars who writes about the very edge where the [extant] historical scholarship has hit chronologically. I actually look forward to seeing my scholarship ripped to shreds, and know at least one graduate student [who appears poised to do so]. I am excited about that because I was one of the early ones, so the early scholarship always gets complicated, nuanced, and critiqued!

For other disciplines, I think I write about something where there are already a lot of political science and sociology books about NGOs. I find a lot of them exist in chapters and edited volume format rather than as full books, so I think my case-studies just get to be more expansive, and that I pulled out some notes where there can be political science and sociology scholarship making many of the same arguments, but at a minimum, I give a lot more of the background and the detail to really firm that up. Because I also find that with a lot of that scholarship, you spend a lot of time going through the theories of IR and sociology, and you then have sort of the case-studies [being supplementary] – which, to be fair, makes sense for the discipline. Conversely, though, I am just in the archives going for it!

CV: Our time is perhaps a little bit limited, but circling back to the question that I asked you earlier about your work for Public Citizen, you do bring that up in the introduction of your work as well, if I am not mistaken.

PA: I do.

CV: So perhaps you could elaborate a little more on what you were doing while you were there.

PA: Oh, sure. While I will say that, first of all, I tell the story at the beginning of the book about how working at Public Citizen partly led me to get a PhD, because I just wanted to get a much deeper understanding of the work that I had been doing previously. Another reason that I put it at the beginning was to honestly to signal to the reader, "here is where I am coming from – I am not going to say I am biased, because it is pretty clear that I have my political commitments and whatnot, so you know where I am coming from and I am not hiding anything."

But anyway, regarding the work I was doing, I was a legislative assistant, so I would be doing everything from

photocopies to helping do research for a report to bringing stuff to Congress. I wore a rat costume once at a protest and handed out fake bills to members of Congress that we did not like. I helped assemble a research project about contributions and votes on different free trade measures. So, yeah, it was a real mix of the kind of grunt work that needs to get done for an organization like that, combined with some more "brain work," so to speak. It was quite an experience!

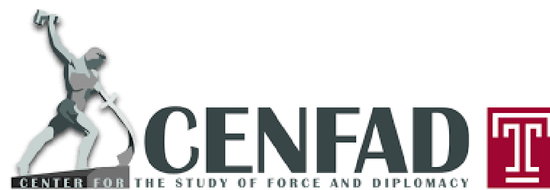
CV: Well, very good! So I think we have to wrap things up now, but I just wanted to remind our readers and viewers that we are interviewing Dr. Paul Adler about his book *No Globalization Without Representation*, so for anyone who will be reading or viewing this retrospectively, I would encourage anyone to go and grab a copy. So thank you for your time, Dr. Adler!

PA: Thank you!

THE STABLE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL

By Dr. Philip Evanson
Associate Professor Emeritus of History, Temple University (1967-2005)

Rio de Janeiro – February 28, 2022



In Brazilian history, stability is a stronger feature than disruptive change. For our purposes, Aristotle, who was interested in stability and how to achieve it, rather than Marx, who saw disruptive change as the driving force of modern civilization, is used to provide categories for a discussion. Aristotle offers *aristocracy*, *oligarchy*, and *democracy*, while Marx offers *bourgeoisie* and *proletariat*. Stability in Brazil has meant governance by oligarchy. It can be argued that Brazil has the most entrenched (*enraisada*) governing class in Latin America, and perhaps of anywhere in the world. It is also true that Brazil has an aristocracy of wealth, and that Brazil is one of the world's most unequal societies. In 2021, Oxfam International stated 5% of the Brazilian population controlled 95% of the national wealth. The other 95% of Brazilian citizens had only 5%. They are the citizens of Brazil's democracy. Oxfam concluded axiomatically "…extreme inequality breeds conflict, violence and instability," though also noting that twenty-eight million Brazilians were lifted out of poverty in fifteen years (2001-2015), and less than 10% were still in poverty. Despite the continuing "extreme inequality," Brazil remains a peaceful country, not a country of "conflict, violence and instability." The World Justice Project report of 2021 noted that, while there is much crime in Brazil (homicides, burglary, and extortions), and while Brazilians often resort to violence to redress grievances as do people in the US and many other countries, there is an absence of armed civil conflict, meaning that Brazilians are effectively protected from armed violence and terrorism.

Brazilian democracy includes regular elections, and is alive and well. All citizens between age eighteen and seventy are required to vote, and elections are highly competitive. In federal elections, voters choose deputies, senators, the president, and vice-president. They have the power to elect or reject the candidates placed before them. Probably few Brazilians would say that retired army captain and now president Jair Bolsonaro is an oligarch, but he is, having been continuously elected to the Chamber of Deputies from the state of Rio de Janeiro since 1990, before winning the presidential election in 2018. Also, in the 2018 elections, his son Flavio was elected to the senate, another son Eduardo became a federal deputy, and a third son Carlos has been a Rio de Janeiro city councilman since 2001. A feature of Brazilian oligarchy is family members run for elective office. In running for president, and governing as president, Bolsonaro never regarded himself as an outsider unfamiliar with the use of political power, nor imagined he did not have the right to use it. People in politically-polarized Brazil profoundly disagree about what the Bolsonaro government is doing, or trying to do, and whether his is a good or bad government, but nobody argues Bolsonaro has failed to wield the powers of his office with authority, or that he has not been a strong president.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND COVID-19 PANDEMIC RELIEF

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic struck Brazil, bringing both severe public health and economic consequences. Among those most threatened were informal sector workers not eligible for unemployment relief available to workers in the formal sector who had in effect contracts to work, paid taxes, contributed to retirement accounts, and were eligible for benefits defined in labor law. Informal workers, on the other hand, were members of a shadow, or "invisible," economy who paid neither taxes nor received labor law employment benefits. But of Brazil's 104 million workers, they were the largest group, numbering an estimated 76 million. In large cities, they can be seen as vendors on the streets selling food, often partly or entirely homemade from a cart or small portable stand; soft drinks; perhaps popsicles at soccer stadiums; or various items for home or personal use including electronics laid out for display on sidewalks, on small stands, even on push carts, or carried through the streets for sale, such as brooms. They generally earned less, often much less, than the minimum wage. The government did not know who they were having never been registered (*cadastrado*). In a marathon process during March and April 2020, the federal government oversaw the digital registration of this mass of workers, bringing them out of the shadows and invisibility. This was possible because technology-savvy Brazilians are among the most digitalized people in the world, and ahead of both the US and Canada. The government, really the nation of Brazil, won a World Bank prize in 2021 for this rapid registration of millions of workers that made them eligible to receive the federal government *auxilio emergencial* (emergency aid) established in March 2020. Men received 600 *reais* (about one-third of the minimum wage) a month, and women heads of household 1200 *reais*. This aid was indispensable for the economic survival of millions of individuals, and the infusion of money stimulated local economies. Also continued was the separate *Bolsa familia* (family grant) program established during the Lula presidency (2003-2010) that covered 14.5 million families. In late 2021, *Bolsa familia* was replaced by the more generous and far reaching *Auxilio Brasil* (Brazilian Aid) program, which registered 17 million families. Although emergency aid ended in late 2021, people who lost it were urged to apply for *Auxilio Brasil* through the *Caixa Economica Federal* (Federal Loan Bank), the only bank present in one form or another in all of Brazil's 5,570 municipalities. The bank's home page included a succinct, easy-to-understand series of statements—notably different in style from bureaucratic legalese—identifying who is qualified to receive aid.

Making so much money available required amending the constitution to allow deficit financing previously forbidden as part of a program to control inflation. Economy minister Paulo Guedes, an investment banker trained at the University of Chicago, oversaw these policies, his presence a guarantee that the large program of emergency relief and expanded family grants met reasonably high standards of fiscal and monetary responsibility. Altogether, the economic aid response to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency showed the federal government at its best, and Brazil won a place among the countries that responded most successfully to economic disruption of the pandemic.

GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC POLICY BEYOND COVID-19 RELIEF

Responding with alacrity to economic disruption caused by COVID-19 most likely represents the government's finest hour, but there are economic policy actions other than relief. How should they be viewed? Bolsonaro, with his minister of infrastructure Tarcisio Gomes de Freitas, focused on identifying unfinished infrastructure projects which may date as far back as the José Sarney administration (1985-1990). The goal was to finish them, in the process giving Bolsonaro a chance to do inaugurations, a longstanding privilege of presidents, governors, and mayors. These inaugurations began early in Bolsonaro's administration, and at first the president remembered he was completing work started by a predecessor. Later, more at ease and given to improvisational speech, he might make a fuller case for his government's contributions. Bolsonaro effectively uses these events to connect with audiences that are usually large and enthusiastic. The inaugurations with greatest national impact have been opening several stations of canals and locks in what is the largest infrastructure project ever undertaken in Brazil, the transposition of water from the São Francisco river, Brazil's river of national unity, to four states in the Northeast in an effort to mitigate cycles of drought. An old idea, transposition dated to the 1840s, initiated under the government of Emperor Pedro II (1840-1889), and was repeatedly endorsed by subsequent governments. It was finally set in motion by president Lula in 2007, who selected 2012 as the date for completion. Though planning and construction proceeded, there were years of delays, and the inaugurations have been left to Bolsonaro, who uses them to attack Lula, his main opponent in the upcoming 2022 presidential election. Bolsonaro condemns Lula for the delays, referencing loans extended by Brazil's national development bank to several countries for their infrastructure projects, including to communist Cuba to build the Mariel port, and to Venezuela under Chávez and now Maduro, which he calls a communist dictatorship, in order to build a hydroelectric dam. They were being completed (though the loans never repaid) while transposition of the São Francisco was delayed. Lula's government and Brazil's leading construction companies completed large projects outside of Brazil, but were unable to complete the most important Brazilian infrastructure project. Depending on his mood at the moment, Bolsonaro might or might not call Lula a *presidiario* or ex-convict, a reference to two years of incarceration following conviction for corruption, even though the Supreme Court would overturn it on appeal because of due process violations by the presiding judge.

Completing unfinished infrastructure projects of previous administrations and showcasing them as a main economic policy is surely a novelty, and remains to be evaluated. For many Brazilians, however, they represent correct policy, and make Bolsonaro the right president in the time of COVID-19, when big new infrastructure initiatives are inappropriate. Among other things, Brazilians by culture are detail-oriented, dislike *bagunça* (meaning messy disorganization), and are also highly visual. The image of a hitherto unfinished and barely passable section of road being completed can be very pleasing to see, certainly to Bolsonaro supporters.

RESETTING FEDERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY

In what is surely the most remarkable resetting of Brazilian economic development

policy in recent Brazilian history, Bolsonaro and economy minister Guedes, with infrastructure minister Tarcisio de Freitas as the principal spokesperson, have committed Brazil's federal government to a "no" investment policy, except for what can largely be done by foreign investors. That is, foreign investors are being invited to submit bids to construct ports, roads, subways, railroads, and airports that are part of a program of building infrastructure and extensive privatization. The marketing of these policies occurs in a series of "road shows", one recently before representatives of the São Paulo's Federation of Industrial Firms (FIESP). Bolsonaro attended, and was warmly applauded upon rising to introduce Tarcisio, who laid out the policy. Tarcisio had good news, clinching his argument by stating several foreign investors, more than anticipated, were now expected to join the bidding for contracts to build railroads. It is a remarkable outcome of thirty years of neo-liberal proselytizing with which the Brazilian entrepreneurial elite seems fully sympathetic, and also a consequence of nearly a decade without significant economic growth in Brazil, a lost decade of stagnation. In Bolsonaro's government, the lost decade will not be overcome with an ambitious new program of government led investment. Guedes, as minister of the economy, also holds the portfolio of what used to be the minister of development, and insists the program of bidding for infrastructure contracts as defined by the government is working, affirming in a recent interview that Brazilian investment for 2022 will be 20% of Gross Domestic Product. The investment capital is largely foreign, and it is private. For older economists from the era of the military dictatorship (1964-1985), with its many years of high growth rates and an independent ministry of development with projects identified and given priority budgeting, this minimalist federal government investment program and outreach to foreign capital threatens to put Brazil in a permanently low- or no-growth economy, continuing the situation of stagnation which has existed since 2013, of accepting it as a norm by relying on what private foreign investment might achieve in a process of bidding for the right to construct projects preselected by the government. In fact, the Guedes-Tarcisio program consolidates and puts in place long developing tendencies and ideas about economic growth and development in Brazil that downplay the role of state as an economic *gestor* (administrator), passing it off to private capital, especially foreign capital, which incidentally represents an almost complete renunciation by Bolsonaro of his own past. As a federal deputy, he voted eighty percent of the time with the Lula government of 2003 to 2010.

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NOTE ON THE BRAZILIAN OLIGARCHIES

Perhaps the most notorious examples of family oligarchies are those in northeastern states such as Maranhão, Alagoas, and Pará:

Maranhão: Former President José Sarney (1985-l990) was governor of his home state of Maranhão (1966-1970), before becoming president, and also served as a senator (1970-1985; 1990-2014). His daughter Roseana served two terms as governor of Maranhão (1995-2002; 2009-2014), while his son José Sarney Filho was elected to the Chamber of Deputies, became leader of the Green party in the Chamber, and served as Minister of the Environment (1999) during President's Fernando Henrique Cardoso's administration. The wealthy Sarney family owns Maranhão's main television station, and many other properties. Sarney family

policy is always to be on the side of power in national politics. Hence, Sarney's son as Minister of Environment in the Fernando Henrique Cardoso administration supported the election of Workers Party candidate Lula in 2002, the enemy of Cardoso's PSDB (Brazilian Social Democratic Party).

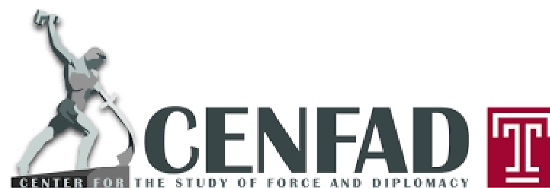
Alagoas: Smooth-talking, agreeable Renan Calheiros has been a leading and frequently-investigated senator from Alagoas since 1995. His son Renan Calheiros Filho has been the governor of Alagoas since 2015. Calheiros Filho was preceded by Teotonio Vilela Filho, the son of Teotonio Vilela (1917-1983), who served prominently as a senator representing Alagoas (1966-1983). Teotonio Vilela's brother, Cardinal Avelar Brandão Vilela (1912-1986), was archbishop of Salvador Bahia (1973-1986), and also president of CELAM, the Latin American Episcopal Council of Roman Catholic bishops, from 1966 to 1972. Unlike other rich oligarchs—the Vilelas owned sugar plantations—members of the Brandão Vilela family exceptionally have not been tainted with charges of corruption.

Pará: Senator Jader Barbalho has dominated politics in the large, mineral-rich Amazonian state of Pará since the 1970s. He opposed the military dictatorship (1964-1985), and since 1975, has twice been elected governor, four times as federal deputy, and three times as senator from Pará, a position he still holds in 2022. His wife Elcione Barbalho has served as a federal deputy off and on since 1995. Their son Helder Barbalho was elected governor of Pará in 2019. Jader Barbalho has been continually investigated in large-scale fraud and corruption scandals. Charges developed by public prosecutors against both Barbalho and Renan Calheiros were only set aside by the Supreme Court in February 2022.

Roth, Tanya L. *Her Cold War: Women in the U.S. Military, 1945-1980*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021.

Tanya Roth's *Her Cold War: Women in the US Military, 1945-1980* covers an often neglected period in women's military history: the post-WWII years through the creation of the All-Volunteer Force and the effects of 1970s-era social movements. Roth effectively traces ways in which ideas of intra-military gender equality were conceptualized, defined, and implemented. In highlighting "womanpower" during the Cold War, Roth demonstrates ways in which the U.S. military evolved due to servicemembers' own efforts, examining individual actions and experiences as catalysts of change.

Roth begins with the creation of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act, which codified "gender difference [as] the hallmark of defining equality in the Cold War defense system" (38). She examines how the military allowed for women's



participation in the military auxiliary corps, while reaffirming existing gender ideologies. Roth explores how servicewomen were made into "ladies," and white, middle-class, heterosexual femininity was reinforced in recruitment and training programs. While this argument is not new, Roth's in-depth look at the 1952 Miss America pageant as a recruitment campaign is a new means of examining the military's deployment of gender. This exemplifies Roth's argument that the military "[emphasized] womanpower as feminine and ladylike" to construct it as acceptable to the American public (53). In examining how the military created a public image of servicewomen using femininity and glamor, Roth uses oft-overlooked sources to reinforce arguments made by previous scholars about the military's emphasis on

femininity and moral character through the 1950s and 60s.[1] Most notably, Roth's analysis of military-produced training videos and Hollywood films add to the plethora of sources exploring expectations of, and standards placed on, servicewomen. While prior scholars have often focused on printed training material and advertisements, she demonstrates how "connecting womanpower with being a lady was a careful construction" in an innovative manner (76).

In part two, Roth examines servicewomen's actual experiences. In analyzing changes concerning gender equality definitions in the U.S. military, Roth explores how individual servicewomen experienced limitations imposed by the military institution, and how each of these women attempted to mediate their effects. Concerning policies about rank limits, pregnancy regulations, and quotas, Roth argues that, despite promises of equality, servicewomen were limited in jobs they could hold, and ranks they could reach. This included benefits and supplementary pay structures that were unavailable to women. In a 1970 statement on the military's utilization of women, Major General Jeanne Holm stated that the military excluded women from certain jobs for legal, cultural, and physiological reasons. Roth argues that these distinctions were "related more to assumptions rather than fact: beliefs about what women could or should do," not physical ability (99). The Cold War military's policies, Roth argues, limited its utilization of women, forcing them to negotiate their own meaning of equality. Servicewomen challenged policies regarding motherhood, ability, sex, and sexuality, fighting regulations that the military put into

[1] For example, Beth Bailey, *American's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009, and Kara Dixon Vuic, *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Corps in the Vietnam War*. Baltimore, Maryland: The John Hopkins Press, 2010.

place in postwar years "to enforce their vision of equality, maintaining its foundation in gender difference philosophy that relied on heterosexuality," that reinforced ideas of a mother's place in the home (138). Roth's use of individual stories adds strength to her analysis of how military policies concerning women played affected their experiences. In combining her own interviews with previously-recorded oral histories and secondary sources, Roth creates snapshots of actual effects of military regulations.

Roth's last section is her strongest, analyzing how servicewomen created ideas of equality that diverged from policymakers' definitions. This section does a fantastic job using interviews, archival documents, and secondary sources to explore changing circumstances for servicewomen. She examines the influence of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) as an advocacy group bridging the military-civilian gap, that changed the Department of Defense (DOD) and the military institution internally throughout the Cold War, though "DACOWITS members never questioned the overarching femininity framework that shaped women's military experiences" (158). Those questions, she argues, came from servicewomen themselves, as well as shifting gender ideology in American society. As an example, Roth examines Frontiero v. Richardson, a 1973 Supreme Court case challenging military regulations that prevented women from claiming spouses or children as dependents, except in rare circumstances. This landmark case challenged the provision of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act that "simultaneously prevented women from becoming heads of households while ensuring women's military service would not emasculate their husbands" (38). In agreeing that this policy violated the Fifth

Amendment, the Supreme Court and litigant Lieutenant Sharon Frontiero, became agents for intra-military change. While Frontiero was not the first woman to argue against this provision of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act, her legal victory amended a policy reinforcing traditional gender ideology. A major element in Frontiero's success was the context in which her case was heard. Roth notes three factors: the end of the Selective Service Act, expanding influence of the feminist movement, and progression of the Equal Rights Act (ERA). Despite the care to which the directors of the women's auxiliary corps took to distance themselves from the women's movement, Roth argues it became one of the most influential external forces on servicewomen's lives in the 1970s.

Roth explores other effects of feminism and the ERA on the military, arguing that expected passage of the amendment forced the military to conduct their own assessments to address regulations and policies before the ERA was enacted. The military made changes permitting increased promotion opportunities, expansion of Military Occupational Specialties women could hold, and entrance of women into service academies and Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs, leading the way for women's reserve units' disbandment and integration into the standing military. In one notable example of these changes, Roth looks at Section 6015 of the Women's Armed Services Act of 1948 which stated that women could not be assigned to combat aircraft nor naval ships besides hospital and transport vessels. In 1978, Judge John Sirica ruled in Owen v. Brown that this was unconstitutional, allowing for the navy to further utilize womanpower. Roth argues that "equality, particularly in terms of equal opportunity, had become the watchword of the U.S. military as a result of both

servicewomen's pushes for internal change and the external influences of feminist activists" (192).

Roth points out that "removing the institutional structure of a segregated component system that functioned within the main military organization was one way to force male military leaders to pay attention to their policies on female utilization" (198). However, this was not entirely successful. Roth's book draws to a close in 1980, one year after women were allowed on Navy ships, with the USS Norton Sound and the investigation of nineteen women accused of homosexuality. Ultimately, charges against fifteen women were dropped, two were found not guilty, and two were discharged. While memory of the investigation faded from the media by 1981 and commanders argued for more women on board, Roth argues that the legacy of Section 6015 stood: "the navy was moving conservatively, as was the rest of the military" (214).

While Roth's overarching project ends on a less promising note concerning the future of women in the military, her conclusion points to the advancements made since 1980. She argues that in the early 1980s, a "new definition of equality centered […] on recognizing individual capability, regardless of sex" (217). While it mostly skips over the 1980s, Roth's conclusion recognizes expanding roles of servicewomen in the last thirty years. Nevertheless, she states, "gender and sexuality continue to be central elements of women's military experiences, affecting how servicemen and male superiors perceive them, their assignments, and their career opportunities" (220). Therefore, Roth reinforces an important point made in her introduction: servicemembers "continue to face the legacies of Cold War efforts to

integrate women into the military" (17).

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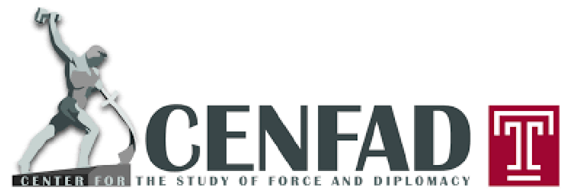
Tyrrell, Ian. *American Exceptionalism: A New History of an Old Idea*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2022. 288 pp. $35.00 (paperback).



Belief in American exceptionalism is very much alive in the country's institutions. Through denial of U.S. similarity to other Great Powers or via sheer ignorance of the nation's imperial character, many Americans still consider the United States to be a "city upon a hill." Ian Tyrrell's book *American Exceptionalism: A New History of an Old Idea* provides an incisive breakdown of this well trodden concept. In cogent prose, Tyrrell not only reconstructs foundations upon which American exceptionalism rests, but also leads the reader through themes and episodes of U.S. history that prove it flawed. Tyrrell, therefore, has produced one of the most complete volumes on this captivating idea.

Tyrrell begins his study with an explanation of exceptionalism, in terms of its origins and evolution. Early European settlers in North America created the intellectual antecedents of exceptionalism from the material abundance of their new homeland (4). As these settlers established collective identities and founded the United States, the "American people" became the "bearer of exceptionalism," using the concept to frame their understanding of how American wealth and liberal institutions differed from the Old World (5). Foreign visitors to the republic, chiefly Alexander de Tocqueville, built this idea into a myth of U.S. difference—a myth that prescribed "America" as an experiment to replicate abroad (7). As the nation expanded, in size and power, exceptionalism came to underpin such growth in the minds of many, Americans or otherwise. Where Tyrrell is most original, however, is not in his rundown of how people constructed the

myth, but rather in his assertion that the myth bears its greatest expression in how the American nation-state is assessed against others. Tyrrell shows how exceptionalism is not one myth, but rather a "cluster of myths that reflect and refract historical experience" (17). Grounded in pillars of material, religious, and political conditions, Americans have largely coalesced around a national ideology that frames their nation-state as positively different from others. Tyrrell then leads the reader through historical episodes that contradict exceptionalism. Predating the Revolutionary era, Americans, as Tyrrell writes, developed a sense of religious chosenness that drove their collective sensibilities as a unique people. This concept, best defined under the mid-nineteenth century moniker "Manifest Destiny," imbued Americans with the confidence to expand their colonial settlements and separate themselves from the other peoples they encountered—much like other foreign settler populations. Memory of the American Revolution brought a U.S. cultural nationalism centered on its exceptionality as the first republic of its kind. Yet Tyrrell notes how, like all periods of upheaval, the Revolutionary and Founding era was fraught with uncertainties and divisiveness, a memory often buried to preserve the thrust of exceptionalism. Tyrrell treats Frederick Jackson Turner's myth of the frontier for what it was—a reductive concept used to mask state intervention and aggressive imperialism with a cloak of American individualism. Americans considered their political institutions to be more liberal than Europe's, and more civilized than those of the Indigenous, within this constantly shifting "western" frontier. However, realities of U.S. expansion show that it was not a story of individual heroism, but rather one where the rapidly growing U.S. state shored up settlers with the capital and protection

necessary to spread institutions that were neither liberal nor exceptional. Likewise, Tyrrell addresses Samuel Flagg Bemis's claim that 1898 marks a historical aberration for the United States. Long used by proponents of American exceptionalism to explain the nation's plunge into overseas empire, this characterization misrepresents the truth. The end of the nineteenth century was, by no means, a brief or irregular period of American empire. Americans had been expanding their trans-continental "chosen empire" since before 1776, even acquiring overseas territory as early as the 1850s. As the nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth, U.S. military and economic primacy did not fade, but soared.

American Exceptionalism does well to break down the eponymous concept, explaining how and why Americans considered themselves an exceptional people. It also exposes exceptionalism as a flawed idea in myriad ways. That said, Tyrrell leaves this reviewer wanting in small measure. Only cursory attention is given to international aspects of the Founding era of the United States. This was a time when American settlers felt boxed in by powerful European empires and their Indigenous allies. The inability to cross geographical boundaries and take land at whim proved an obstacle for Americans who believed they were destined to expand. Though Tyrrell does mention imperialist impulses that drove many to take up arms against the British, more on this revolutionary impetus would further expose the flaws of exceptionalist narratives. Once independent, the early republic was mired in fear of these empires—the Spanish, French, and British—and such fears factored into the calculus of U.S. foreign and domestic policy. Though the United States would emerge as hegemon of the Western Hemisphere, it rested on shaky ground in these early years when, as

Tyrrell notes, Americans found a cultural nationalism in the legacy of their revolution.

Furthermore, the mechanisms of U.S. empire are relatively untouched in Tyrrell's narrative. American settler colonialism operated similarly to that of other expansionary powers. Settlers took land and called upon their state for protection and recognition in ways that mirror the British conquests of Australia and Canada, or the Japanese settlement of Hokkaido and Manchuria. Likewise, the United States acted much like other Great Powers when it came to seizing overseas territory and exerting influence. U.S. colonization of the Philippines, its interference in many Latin American nations' sovereignty, and its global network of military bases all testify to this fact. Tyrrell does state how denial of U.S. settler colonialism forms the bedrock of American exceptionalism—and covers, to a degree, the extent of contemporary U.S. power—but more analysis of U.S. imperial history would help close the door on exceptionalists. Those interested in these approaches to American exceptionalism should read this book alongside Julian Go's *Patterns of Empire* and Daniel Immerwahr's *How to Hide an Empire*.

Lastly, Tyrrell misses an opportunity to discuss contemporary American exceptionalism from a standpoint of where the United States, despite its title as "leader of free nations," falls short in some areas when compared to peers. Though perhaps beyond the scope of this study, this outlook could stimulate more conversation on how the United States appears exceptional in its resistance to universal healthcare and criminal justice reform, all while seeking to maintain armed global supremacy. Quibbles aside, *American Exceptionalism* is a valuable addition to the historiography of its titular subject. Well-written and didactic, it is of interest to any scholar of U.S. cultural

history or anyone focused on the history of

U.S. foreign policy.

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