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News from the Director

By Alan McPherson

- **Fall 2022 Lecture Series**
- **Fall 2022 Prizes**
- **CENFAD co-sponsorships**
- **Emerging Scholar Award**
- **Join us at the AHA!**

This semester, CENFAD was back to almost fully normal levels of functioning after the COVID pandemic. Our lecture series featured only one speaker on Zoom—and only because he was too busy to come to campus! Our grad students made big plans for research in archives that now appeared fully open. And the AHA is on its way to Philly in January, with CENFAD and the rest of the Department hosting a reception. The entire CENFAD community is invited!

Fall 2022 Lecture Series

CENFAD's talks are now broadcast simultaneously on Zoom, from which audiences can ask questions, and the link is on the posters advertising the talks. Videos of all the events below are now embedded in CENFAD's lecture series page. This semester, six of our seven speakers gave their presentations in person.

Our first guest was Sarah Robey, a Temple History Department PhD and assistant professor of history at Idaho State University who presented on her first book, *Atomic Americans: Citizens in a Nuclear State*. On September 7, Robey argued that Americans did more than duck and cover when they entered the nuclear age; they engaged in a range of civic involvement groups.

Our next guest, assistant professor of criminology, law, and society at the University of California-Irvine, was Ana Muñiz. Visiting campus as part of the College of Liberal Arts's Hispanic Heritage Month on September 19, the author of *Borderland Circuitry: Immigration Surveillance in the United States and Beyond* discussed the bureaucratic system in which migrants across the southern border get redefined as criminal and stripped of rights and agency.

Next up was Alessandro Iandolo, a Marie Sklodowska-Curie Fellow at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University and a historian of Soviet foreign policy. On October 3, Iandolo presented on his book *Arrested Development: The Soviet Union in Ghana, Guinea, and Mali, 1955-1968*, showing how Soviet partnerships with these African countries in the Nikita Khrushchev era were ambitious and far-ranging but also generally doomed to failure.

On October 12, another Harvard historian, Serhii Plokhii, the Mykhailo Hrushevsky Professor of Ukrainian History and Director of the Ukrainian Research Institute, gave a Zoom CENFAD audience his historical take on the current war in Ukraine, noting especially Vladimir Putin's misuse of history.

On October 26, Silke Zoller, another Temple History PhD, visited the Weigley Room to discuss her new book, *To Deter and Punish: Global Collaboration against Terrorism in the 1970s*. Focusing on aviation during that decade, Zoller discussed how the United States and its allies worked together to define terrorism to respond more effectively to it.

Finally, the week of November 14 brought two speakers to CENFAD's audience. The first was Fernanda Magnotta, a professor of international relations at the Armando Alvares Penteado Foundation in Brazil and a Fulbright fellow currently in the United States. She predicted the implications for the United States of the return of Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva to the presidency of the largest nation in Latin America.

Two days later, on November 16, University of Virginia Professor of History and American Studies Penny Von Eschen came to campus to promote her new book, *Paradoxes of Nostalgia: Cold War Triumphalism and Global Disorder since 1989*. She provided several examples from public opinion and popular culture of the post-Cold War wishes for the "stability" of the East-West struggle.

Fall 2022 prizes

In October, the following three graduate students won CENFAD research awards:

- **Graydon Dennison** won a John Votaw Endowed Research Grant of $3,000 for research in Maryland, Florida, and Panama.
- **Anthony Guerrero** won a Jeffrey Bower Endowed Research Fellowship of $1,660 for research at the 82nd Airborne Division Museum and the U.S. Army Airborne & Special Operations Museum at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.
- **Brian McNamara** won a Marvin Wachman Fellowship of $3,000 for research in California and Washington, D.C.

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

- **Graydon Dennison**, at the American Historical Association conference in Philadelphia.
- **Ryan Langton**, at the New Diplomatic History Network's conference in Turku, Finland.
- **Josh Stern**, at the American Historical Association conference in Philadelphia.
- **Casey VanSise**, at the American Historical Association conference in Philadelphia.

CENFAD co-sponsorships

CENFAD provided funds to other Temple faculty to help with the following events:

- Max Weiss, Princeton History, on his book, *Revolutions Aesthetic: A Cultural History of Ba'athist Syria*, CHAT meeting room, Temple University, November 10.
- Women and War: Feminist Approaches to War and Violence conference, Charles Library, Temple University, November 11-12.

Emerging Scholar Award

Thanks to the generosity of Todd Davis (Temple History PHD), CENFAD funds a yearly Emerging Scholar Graduate Award, a scholarship for applicants to the Temple University MA Program in History. The purposes of the award are to recruit and support MA-level students interested in

diplomatic and military history and to do so especially among underrepresented candidates, including women.

Each year, one awardee receives $12,000 in tuition remission over a two-year period (covering about one 3-credit course per semester at in-state rates). If the awardee's GPA is below a 3.5 after their first year of studies, second-year funding is subject to review.

The competition is now open for the 2023-2024 academic year, and the deadline to apply to the Temple MA Program in History is February 15, 2023. There is no application procedure. All students admitted to the MA program, including the MA Concentration in Public History, will automatically be considered.

Join us at the AHA!

On Saturday, January 7, 2023, CENFAD, together with the Temple University History Department, the Feinstein Center for American Jewish History, and the Center for Public History, welcomes all to a reception at the American Historical Association annual conference. The largest university in Philadelphia, Temple offers undergraduates and graduates in History an unparalleled opportunity to study in an historically rich city, with a world-class faculty, and with significant support for graduates specializing in urban history or diplomatic and military history. The reception, which will include appetizers and one free drink per guest, will take place in Meeting Room 403 of the Philadelphia Marriott Downtown, 1201 Market St., from 5:30 to 7 pm. No RSVP necessary.

2023 Spring Lecture Series Announcement

In Spring 2023, CENFAD will welcome six scholars beginning the first week of classes. All lectures will be held in-person in the Weigley Room, 914 Gladfelter Hall, as well as online over Zoom.

- Tuesday, January 24, 3:30 PM EST
  Mitchell Orenstein, Professor of Russian and East European Studies and Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania, will deliver a talk titled "Russia's Invasion of Ukraine: Hybrid War, Cold War, or the Start of World War III?."
  Zoom Link:
  https://temple.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_LRi-hg9LRQ6uBuc4MmRtIQ

- Monday, February 13, 4:30 PM EST
  David Engerman, Leitner International Interdisciplinary Professor of History and Global Affairs at Yale University, will discuss their new book *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India*.
  Zoom Link:
  https://temple.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_r_0MSKiGQeivBuTPlEqbnw

- Tuesday February 21, 4:30 PM EST
  Alec Zuercher Reichardt, Assistant Professor at the University of Missouri's Department of History and the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy, will present their research on Indigenous Americans and early modern empire in North America.
  Zoom Link:
  https://temple.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_CJd-WutUTQGv81a0ro0IFw

- Thursday, March 14, 4:30 PM EST
  Marc Selverstone, Associate Professor in Presidential Studies and Chair of the Presidential Recordings program at the University of Virginia's Miller Center, will discuss their new book *The Kennedy Withdrawal: Camelot and the American Commitment to Vietnam*.
  Zoom Link:
  https://temple.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_sX6YUBaeT-WboQGKGFwi2Q

- Tuesday, March 28, 4:30 PM EST
  Natasha Lance Rogoff, TV producer and former executive producer of *Ulitsa Sezam* (Russian Sesame Street), will deliver a talk titled "Muppets in Moscow: What the Unexpected Crazy True Story of Making Sesame Street in Russia Reveals about the People, Culture, and Society of Russia and former USSR in the 1990s and Today."
  Zoom Link:
  https://temple.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IKCN7WAUR8aKNqvf4UQWYw

- Tuesday, April 25, 5:00 PM EST
  Holly Mayer, Professor of History at Duquesne University, will discuss her recent book *Congress's Own: A Canadian Regiment, the Continental Army, and American Union*.
  Zoom Link: https://temple.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dTDBc0uVToOElgWD6cwBeA

Note from the Davis Fellow

Dear CENFAD Community,

This fall semester has been an incredibly exciting time for CENFAD. I would like to thank all the members of the CENFAD community who have helped us invite speakers to Philadelphia, attended our colloquium series, contributed to this edition of *Strategic Visions*, and supported the Center in other ways. Because of your support CENFAD continues to be a robust intellectual community for military and diplomatic history.

This semester CENFAD welcomed seven distinguished scholars from around the world who shared research on topics that included immigration, the Cold War, the Russo-Ukrainian War, and the recent Brazilian presidential election. I would like to thank Sarah E. Robey, Ana Muñiz, Alessandro Iandolo, Serhii Plokhii, Silke Zoller, Fernanda Magnotta, and Penny M. Von Eschen for sharing their research with CENFAD. Each of their lectures can be viewed at our website.

This edition of *Strategic Visions* includes four interviews with visiting speakers and members of the CENFAD community. In a print-exclusive interview, the 2022-2023 Richard Immerman Fellow Brandon Kinney talks about his current research for his dissertation. I also sat down with Temple University Professor of History Jay Lockenour to discuss his new book, *Dragonslayer: The Legend of Erich Ludendorff in the Weimar Republic and Third Reich*. In addition to delivering lectures at CENFAD, Alessandro Iandolo and Penny M. Von Eschen also met with me over Zoom to talk about their recent projects. These interviews appear in print and video below.

Lastly, *Strategic Visions* features an essay and three book reviews from Temple History graduate students. In his essay, "A Reckoning for the Field," Graydon Dennison pushes historians to think beyond traditional actors and chronologies when studying United States diplomacy. Joseph Johnson reviewed Jacob Darwin Hamblin's *The Wretched Atom: America's Global Gamble with Peaceful Nuclear Technology*, Andrew Santora reviewed David Harrisville's *The Virtuous Wehrmacht: Crafting the Myth of the German Soldier on the Eastern Front, 1941-1944*, and Lucas de Souza Martins reviewed Kenneth P. Serbin's *From Revolution to Power in Brazil: How Radical Leftists Embraced Capitalism and Struggled with Leadership*.

If you would like to contribute to the Spring 2023 edition of *Strategic Visions* please let me know. I hope everyone has a restful and happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

Ryan Langton

Interview with Brandon Kinney, 2022-2023 Richard Immerman Fellow

Brandon Kinney is currently a fifth-year History PhD candidate at Temple University and the recipient of the 2022-2023 Richard Immerman Research Award. Named after one of CENFAD's co-founders and former director, the award grants up to $1,500 to a graduate student pursuing a research project congruent with the mission of CENFAD. Speaking of which, CENFAD is happy to announce that the Immerman Award will rise to up to $2,000 in the 2023-2024 year. In this print-exclusive interview, Brandon Kinney discussed the award and the research project that it will support.

RL: First off, congratulations on receiving the Richard Immerman Research Award for the 2022-2023 academic year. How have you utilized the award funds?

BK: I was really fortunate to be one of those accepted for this award. It was used for three separate research trips to the National Archives in College Park, Maryland and the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. It was my first time at the National Archives, so it was a real eye-opening experience. I focused primarily on the documents of the High Commissioner of Germany, or the American military government in Germany after the Second World War. I've been particularly focused on the departments and individuals that are focused on the exchange of persons programs, which saw Americans and Germans traveling across the Atlantic in large numbers. And I've found a lot of sources and correspondence between American officials and private American organizations, on whom American officials relied for a substantial part of the rehabilitation and reconstruction of West Germany after the war.

RL: What project was this research for?

BK: This funding supported the research for my dissertation, which is about the role of private American organizations in helping to rebuild West Germany after the Second World War and reestablishing cultural diplomacy between the two countries. Officials in the American Military Government in Germany often relied on the expertise, networking connections, and funds of American organizations (many of whom had primarily German-American membership) to help with rehabilitation efforts. The thought was, though Germany could be physically and materially rebuilt, it would be meaningless if there wasn't a spiritual or cultural rebuild that happened at the same time. That's where these

organizations and cultural diplomacy came in: helping to reconstruct culturally significant landmarks, organizing CARE packages for destitute postwar Germans, staffing German universities with teachers, carrying out exchange of persons programs, and helping to cultivate civil society organizations in West Germany. From the point-of-view of these organizations, a central tenet of the re-establishment of cultural diplomacy was the power of individual interactions and person-to-person relationships (what one journalist called "this marvelous exercise in grass-roots diplomacy") to soften prejudices and foster international cooperation.

The story of Cold War America and West Germany is often one that is told primarily on European soil: American power is projected outward, where it can be rejected, refashioned, or accepted by Germans or other Europeans. I want to tell this story a different way: as a transatlantic story, where people, ideas, and culture are flowing back and forth across the Atlantic.

"The story of Cold War America and West Germany is often one that is told primarily on European soil…I want to tell this story a different way: as a transatlantic story, where people, ideas, and culture are flowing back and forth…"

RL: In addition to offering you the Immerman Award, how else has CENFAD influenced your research and your time at Temple?

BK: The Center and its faculty have been indispensable for my project, and it's become increasingly clear that Temple University and CENFAD are a place that can help junior historians produce high quality research. Being able to talk with multiple members of CENFAD's faculty, bounce ideas off of them, work out my plans in conversation – it has all helped me to think very clearly about my project and go about completing it. The moral and intellectual support has been there every step of the way.

RL: Do you plan on taking advantage of any other funding opportunities? Do you have any advice for graduate students just starting their graduate careers?

BK: I have been applying to a few fellowships that I hope will defray the costs of researching and writing in the spring and summer. I am hoping to complete my research by the end of the summer, if all goes as planned (which it rarely does!).

I'm not sure I have too much advice outside of the usual platitudes: treat it like your job, where you don't get completely consumed by it. Outside hobbies are a crucial part of decompressing and keeping yourself from getting overwhelmed.

My major point of advice would be: once you get up and running, you should be trying to write as much as possible. When you are in graduate classes, treat the final papers and projects like something you might be able to use eventually or submit to a peer-review journal. Write or revise every day. There's no such thing as good writing, only good re-writing.

Interview with Dr. Jay Lockenour

Last year, Dr. Jay Lockenour, Professor of History at Temple University and a CENFAD-affiliated faculty member, published his new book, *Dragonslayer: The Legend of Erich Ludendorff in the Weimar Republic and Germany* (Cornell University Press, 2021). CENFAD's Davis Fellow Ryan Langton met with Dr. Lockenour over Zoom to discuss his book. The complete interview can be viewed here.

RL: Dr. Lockenour, thank you so much for joining me.

JL: Thanks for having me on.

RL: We will be talking about your new book, *Dragonslayer*, "The Legend of Erich von," sorry not von, *The Legend of Erich Ludendorff in the Weimar Republic and Third Reich*. In the book's beginning, you talk about how you are adopting a biographical approach to Ludendorff, but you are also just as, if not more, interested in the mythos that was built around him. For our readers and listeners, can you briefly explain Ludendorff's significance to German history and then talk about the legend that was constructed around him?

JL: Right, so there is a kind of straightforward story about Ludendorff that one could tell that involves his rise within the German military and the German General Staff, culminating with his position as the second-in-command of the third command of the German army during World War I. From 1916 to 1918 he was the first Quartermaster General, which was not a position that existed prior to Ludendorff. He sort of created it for himself to represent his position, technically, underneath Paul von Hindenburg, the head of the Supreme Command and the nominal commander, but Ludendorff was kind of the brains of the operation at a time when the German army was running the economy, the war effort, and diplomacy, and dismissing chancellors, and so forth. They were deeply involved in every aspect of German politics, economy, society, and Ludendorff was in charge. Several biographies of him refer to him as the "Dictator in the First World War," so he's essentially the dictator of Germany from 1916 to 1918. That story is pretty well known….

What interested me was really his post-war career, which is usually dismissed in these biographies as him sort of going crazy. He does have a nervous breakdown, some sort of episode in the summer of 1918. I suggest that he relatively quickly recovers from that. Others have taken [his mental episode] to explain his disappearance, relatively speaking, from the scene. He starts flirting with right wing radicals, including Hitler, he was

involved in the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch, but most biographers treat that as kind of an epilogue and see him kind of riding off into the sunset with his own little fantasies and demons. My book is trying to argue for his reinsertion into the Weimar Republic, his significance as at least a symbolic figure and for a while actually a practical political figure, and then as a symbolic figure embodying German fantasies of revenge for this war that they shouldn't have lost, according to many…

RL: That's a good transition to my next question. Because the book is partially a biography, it's a military history, it's a political history, but it also takes German culture very seriously, and that brings me to the title. It's obviously eye catching, but *Dragonslayer* refers not just to Ludendorff but to the Germanic legend of Siegfried. Could you go a little more into the legend of Siegfried, its importance in German culture at the time, and how it connects to Ludendorff?

"My book is trying to argue for [Erich Ludendorff's] reinsertion into the Weimar Republic, his significance as…a practical political figure, and then as a symbolic figure embodying German fantasies of revenge…"

JL: So, as someone who was an avid Dungeons and Dragons player as a kid and would love to play more if I had time and the crew to play with, having a book titled *Dragonslayer* was just a real treat for me, and it does connect directly to this story of Siegfried. Many people in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries might be familiar with the story from Wagner's plays – the Nibelungen sequence – that he did in the nineteenth century. What I'm really referring to is the medieval epic poem *The Ring of the Nibelungen* that Wagner uses among other sources to create his story, but this medieval epic poem is different in significant ways and I think more directly connected to the political culture of Germany and the Weimar Republic that I want to talk about. The story, briefly, is that the hero Siegfried is the son of a king, but he insists on making his own way in the world. He apprentices with a blacksmith, forges his own sword, and uses that sword to slay a dragon. After he kills the dragon he bathes in the dragon's blood, acquiring invulnerability much like Achilles being dipped in the River Styx, but a linden leaf is resting on his back while he's bathing and that makes this one spot vulnerable, sort of like Achilles's heel. He goes on to marry the most beautiful princess in the land and becomes influential in the court of Burgundy, which is the most powerful kingdom at the time, and that inspires jealousy among many of the courtiers and they conspire to kill him. They learn of his weakness and during a hunt they stab him in the back, and this is another one of the connections to the Ludendorff story. Ludendorff was the author of the stab in the back myth, the notion that the German army hadn't been defeated in the field but had been stabbed in the back, betrayed by the home front, by socialists, by Jews…That was another direct connection to the story, this idea – a mighty hero who is invincible, basically, except for this one vulnerability that these evil assassins take advantage of, coincides with the way [Ludendorff] liked to tell the story of the First World War.

And then [there's] the second half of the Siegfried story. There are two films that come out in 1924 directed by Fritz Lang. The first is called *Siegfried's Death*, and the second is called *Kriemhild's Revenge*. Kriemhild is Siegfried's wife and she plots this decades-

long plan to seek revenge on the assassins. The story ends in a blood bath in the court of Attila where she has lured these Burgundian nobles to their deaths and gets revenge for Siegfried. There's an element of that, too, with Ludendorff's second wife and her spiritual project to renew Germany and seek the recovery of German strength.

There were all these coincidences, and it occurred to me in an archive when I was reading through some right-wing German newspapers. One of them had the headline "Ludendorff is our Siegfried." I was like, "Oh my God!" I had done enough of the work beforehand to have all that sitting in my mind somewhere, and that headline just brought that all out in a big rush, so I thought that's the hook that I can use to tell this story, which I wasn't going to be able to tell as a straight biography…

RL: Right, the book is not a straight biography because it's also about the history of the world of stories and ideas that Ludendorff finds himself in after World War I…Does Ludendorff recognize himself as a kind of Siegfried? Does he inculcate this himself? What different myths does he try to perpetuate around himself?

JL: I've done several of these interviews. I love to watch the interviewers try to describe the book that way because it reflects the difficulty I had in selling it to publishers. I couldn't sell it as military history because they're like, "Well, where's the Galician campaign?" and it just wasn't about that. It is a biography in the sense that he's born, he has a career, he gets married, he dies – that's there, but what I have done is try to pull out the elements of the story that he and his followers later use to build this "Siegfried" story. It's not that he dressed up and actually believed he was some sort of incarnation [of Siegfried], but he and his wife and his followers were tapping into this – and others, other people in the military who were not really part of his personal project contributed to this in meaningful ways. It is the way that these earlier stories resonate with what he thinks is going to sell books and gain him political power in the Weimar Republic, ways in which they coincide with the Siegfried story, which has an enormous resonance. [The legend of Siegfried] has been described as the German *Iliad*, this medieval epic poem, in that every educated German read this book in gymnasium, in high school, so that everyone was intimately familiar with the story. I mentioned the Fritz Lang films in 1924 – they were enormously popular. He was tapping a really lively, rich source of Germanic national legend and character, and then attaching it to himself through these stories about himself. With respect to his childhood, [Ludendorff] emphasizes his non-aristocratic background. I love that you made the gaffe at the beginning of calling him Erich von Ludendorff – totally common and understandable.

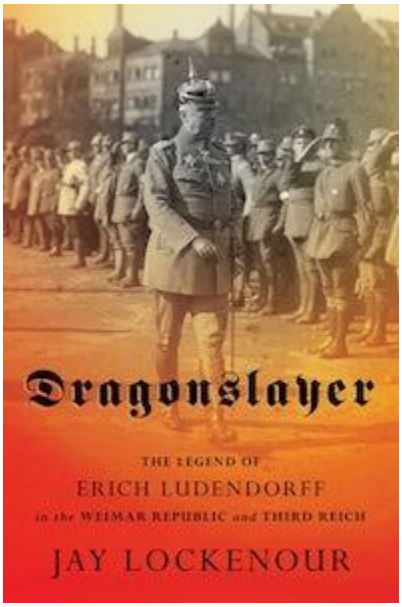
RL: I reminded myself before not to do it…

JL: But it just rolls off the tongue.

RL: Exactly, and for those not as familiar with twentieth-century German history, you recognize the name and it's like a reflex, you assume there is a "von" there.

JL: There are plenty of academic books, scholarly works that replicate that. He was *Time Magazine's* "Man of the Year" in the 1930s and they put a "von" on his name in the title. So it's a common mistake, but anyway he was proud of that upbringing. He's in an institution that was dominated by the aristocracy and the monarchy until 1918, and yet he succeeds beyond many people who have this upbringing, the connections, and so forth, that he does not have. Like Siegfried, who is a prince but makes his own way in the world, Ludendorff tells that self-made man story…

I'll emphasize for people who know a little bit about Ludendorff – he personally becomes increasingly isolated [after the war]. People cannot stand to be around him. I was around him for ten years, and I can't stand it anymore. He's really irascible, he's dogmatic, he's really hard to get along with, and so by the end of his life there aren't very many people in his inner circle. But I argue that his legend is powerful beyond all that, and the book that I rely on – I don't know if you've read it but some listeners might have read it – is Ian Kershaw's *The "Hitler Myth,"* which is a book that is outstanding and predates Kershaw's famous two-volume biography of Hitler by many years. In fact, he argues in *The "Hitler Myth"* that Hitler's biography isn't important. I always thought it was kind of ironic that the guy who writes the definitive biography of Hitler had made an earlier case for Hitler's biography not being important. The idea is that Hitler has this persona that Goebbels and Hitler himself and others build up around him that operates in German political culture somewhat independent from the person of Hitler himself, who can occupy this lofty position detached from the everyday politics of Germany in a way. Yet, this myth motivates, energizes, [and] instructs people at all levels of German society and politics. Ludendorff is not at that level of significance but I argue that it's a similar kind of thing that operates to promote this fantasy of revenge, this politics of national regeneration and military power.



RL: Can you talk about how Germany's defeat in the First World War played into the story of Ludendorff as Siegfried? Who exactly did this myth identify as the people who stabbed him in the back?

JL: … Something happens with the defeat, I think partly out of personal necessity to explain how [Ludendorff] managed to fail because he was so closely associated with the war effort by the end that defeat was really a personal failure. Whether for complicated psychological reasons, for purely opportunistic political reasons, he had to adopt an increasingly extensive and complicated conspiracy theory involving Jews, Freemasons, and Catholics. It's not uncommon, there were other people promoting similar kinds of conspiracies, but they come together for Ludendorff in a particularly concentrated way. Many groups like the Nazis are more closely associated with anti-Semitism. There were elements of anti-Masonic sentiment in the Nazis as well; certainly anti-Catholicism is partly there too. But Ludendorff really took this to an extreme and began to explain, not just World War I, but all of German history and European history and world history by the operation of these conspiratorial globe-spanning groups – the Vatican, what he referred to as "*Juda*" or this notion of an international Jewish conspiracy, and then Masons.

It almost defies rational explanation. I tried and ultimately failed – at various moments these various groups work together to suppress German power, and sometimes they're competing against each other. In some ways the Catholics are a part of the Jewish conspiracy because, to Ludendorff and many like him, Jesus was a Jew and therefore Christianity as a whole is suspect and part of this Jewish conspiracy to delude Europeans and Germans into following this

pacifist Christianity. It evolves, it changes over time and there are internal contradictions that make it really difficult to explain rationally.

Nevertheless, those are the targets of his ire. In some ways, the anti-Semitism was not surprising, it was increasingly widespread in Germany and the Nazis obviously pursue that to a certain conclusion, but for Ludendorff in a strange way the Catholics are more of a problem. He ends up spending a lot more energy and time concentrating on Catholics. The Jews never disappear [from his writings] but I think partly because of his living in Bavaria, and so forth, his main target became the machinations of the Pope and the Vatican…Just to finish this off, what I think is one of the real zingers of the book, particularly for people who don't know Ludendorff's story very well, is that after failing to win as a presidential candidate for the Nazi party in 1925 he breaks with the Nazi party and begins to argue that the Nazis are part of a Jewish conspiracy to destroy Germany. In fact, [Ludendorff argues] that Hitler was soft on the Jews, that because he was raised Catholic he had been brainwashed as a child because the Catholics are part of this Jewish conspiracy, so that Hitler ultimately was coddling the Jews and was paving the way for Jewish control of Germany. [Ludendorff's conspiracies] become anti-Nazi but for an even more radical anti-Semitic position in some ways…

RL: How did you initially approach researching Ludendorff's life and how did your discovery of the Ludendorff-Siegfried connections change your researching method?

JL: The original idea was to do a more traditional biography. I naively thought that would be relatively easy. The timeline is laid out for you – birth, life, death. You just talk about that and then you're done. I began, partly for convenience sake, with some of his writings because they were readily available. I wasn't ready to go to Germany yet, so I could use various libraries here. Penn has a Jewish archive that has a lot of anti-Semitic publications by Ludendorff and his press – he had a publishing house later – so I began in some ways where it ended with Ludendorff telling his own story. I struggled because I wasn't getting that biographical material from any other source, really. His childhood is described – his aunt wrote a book about his childhood, he wrote a book about his childhood, eventually. Those were the limits of my sources, so without a kind of archival base I struggled and felt a little bit at sea until I found [the article describing him as Siegfried]. This is an example I use with graduate students all the time, the idea of serendipity. We get that lucky break, that headline that just makes it all click suddenly about what the book is actually about. But if you haven't done the spade work in advance, haven't just done tons of reading and gone to archives and seen what's there and what's not there, you are not ready for that moment. I had done enough work with the microfilm that is available at Penn and books I could get through our interlibrary loan along with some archival explorations to have that moment where I was like, "Oh, that's it. It's a story, not just about his biography, but also about the legend that he builds out of his biography."

Then, I started to make the connections to Kershaw's method in *The "Hitler Myth"* about telling the story of how he tells his story and what does that mean that he tells the story the way he does. That's where the Siegfried legend became a part of it, and I start each chapter with an epigram usually from that epic poem that then links in some way to the chapter that follows and provides an organizing principle that I could use. Then it was really about these different elements of his career, as a putschist or person trying to overthrow the government, as a military commander, as a spiritual leader in the

League for the Germanic Understanding of God that his wife creates. The organization began to suggest itself around the elements of this legend…

RL: Are you working on any new projects?

JL: Yes, so COVID has interfered, but I did manage to get back to the archives this summer to work on a project on sports and the military. It's still pretty ill-defined at the moment, but it grows out of my dissertation. This is a lesson, too. The Ludendorff book ultimately is based partly on a paper I wrote as a senior in college. This project is based on an anecdote from my dissertation related to sports and veterans organizations. The military spends an enormous amount of money, energy, and time fostering sports programs, not just among soldiers, but in the broader public as well in order to create healthier recruits and so forth. There are a lot of assumptions about the value of sport to build physical fitness and camaraderie and teamwork and aggressiveness and competition – there's a whole litany of virtues that sport is supposed to bring. At a certain level that's indisputable, but there is not a whole lot of concrete evidence that this is true. Sports injure people, coaches abuse athletes, and sports build xenophobia – so there are other kinds of possibilities that aren't quite as rosy. By exploring military engagement with sport, I am hoping to reflect something about not only sporting culture but military culture and why the two seem to go together so well. I am starting with Germany, so I am looking at East and West Germany after the Second World War, and then my hope is that I can expand it to other places where my language skills apply – to France, England, maybe the United States as well. I'd love to do Eastern Europe but I just don't have the language ability. It's kind of a transnational history of sport in the military.

"[*Dragonslayer*] is a story, not just about [Ludendorff's] biography, but also about the legend that he builds out of his biography."

Right now, what I am working on immediately is an operation that was put on by the United States Army during its occupation of Germany called "German Youth Activities," and what that amounted to was – GIs were stationed in Germany and had particular skills, and they were often sports skills. They were encouraged to engage with German youth clubs and clubs were created to facilitate this engagement. There were often baseball teams, basketball teams, they played football and soccer, and went on hikes and other kinds of things. So sport was an important part of the American occupation project. It was an important part of the re-establishing of West German legitimacy after the war by engagement with international sporting competitions and so forth. The military played an important role in all of that. That's the early description of it. It's really exciting, it's an entirely new field in many ways, and sports history has its own journals and its own conferences that I've never been to, so there's a huge learning curve.

RL: That sounds really interesting, especially because sports history is a budding, blossoming field for critically analyzing sports and how it interacts with the political, social, cultural phenomena that we would focus on when studying anything else, but somehow sports gets left out – sports is set aside as a different thing from culture when it very much isn't.

JL: One of the things that got me started on this is a book, probably ten years old now,

by Franklin Foer called, *How Soccer Explains the World*, it's like ten chapters that take on globalization, racism, the Olympic movement…and talks about the connection of sports to society, economy, politics, religion, all that other stuff. In some ways it's similar to military history in the sense the military history can have all those other connections if you pursue them. It's also similar in that there is a huge relatively large public market for sports history, and the vast majority of what's published is really bad, like military history. There's a lot of bottom dwelling, lowest common denominator stuff that gets published and read and sold in military history and sports. There's also a lot of really excellent work in both fields. Part of the pleasure has been seeking that out, and figuring out that there are people, lots of people, really doing amazing critical work in sports history like there are in military history.

RL: Dr. Lockenour, thank you so much for your time.

JL: You're welcome. It's a pleasure.

Interview with Dr. Alessandro Iandolo

On October 3, 2022 CENFAD welcomed Dr. Alessandro Iandolo, Lecturer in Soviet and Post-Soviet History at University College London, to Philadelphia for a presentation on his book *Arrested Development: The Soviet Union in Ghana, Guinea, and Mali, 1955-1968* (Cornell University Press, 2022). CENFAD's Davis Fellow Ryan Langton met with Dr. Iandolo over Zoom to discuss his book. The complete interview can be viewed here.

RL: Dr. Iandolo, thank you so much for joining me.

AI: Thank you for having me.

RL: What prompted you to investigate the Soviet Union's attempts at international development in West Africa? How did you get introduced to the topic?

AI: That's a good question. I was always interested in the history of political radicalism and that is what brought me to the Soviet Union as a graduate student in history. I started doing graduate education around 2006-2007 and at that time there was really sort of an explosion in studies that looked at the Cold War, but from the point of view of the states, individuals, groups, and events in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and that got me thinking about Soviet connections with the outside world, specifically with Africa. The way in which the history of the Soviet Union, especially from an economic point of view, is told is usually as a history of failure. It's kind of a basket case of things that go wrong with anything related to the economy. If you think about the way in which, in contemporary treatments – newspapers, TV, radio, the media – people talked about West Africa and Ghana, Guinea, and Mali, it is not different. Usually the stress is very much on this history of economic failure. I wanted to write something that challenged this view. Instead of a history of failure, I wanted to highlight moments of collaboration and cooperation and break down the success/failure binary.

RL: So when you focus, not on these moments of failure, but these moments of cooperation, what did you discover about the Soviet Union in Ghana, Guinea, and Mali? What are the big arguments you are making in your work?

AI: There are two elements there. One is about continuity, and the other one is about change. I am interested in exploring the Soviet vision of economic development and how and why Soviet people and institutions worked together with individuals and institutions in West Africa to build economic development. The first is about continuity between socialist, specifically

Soviet, approaches to economic management, the economy, and economic ideas, and non-socialist approaches. What I argue in the book is that the projects that the Soviet government, the Ghanaian, Guinean, and Malian governments worked on together did not aim at building something that resembled communism in a classic sense. They had a lot to do with a mixed economy in which market and state would survive together, would operate together, very much dominated by public investment and state control, but with very strong elements of market structures and incentives operating in these economies.

There was also change regarding how distinctive this approach was. However, comparable and to a certain extent similar to things that other states, other people, and other institutions attempted at the same time, before, and after, the approach was also distinctively Soviet and socialist in every aspect of economic management and their attempts to build economic development. The stress was always on public ownership, collective organization, and socialist principles in organization and the final outcome. What I am trying to do is put the Soviet Union in the center of the history of economic development, and more in general economic globalization, in the second half of the twentieth century. [The Soviet Union] was a very important actor that pioneered certain approaches that collaborated with a number of governments, people, and individuals all over the world and shaped to a very large extent the history of this specific state-drive way of doing development.

"What I argue in the book is that the projects that the Soviet government, the Ghanaian, Guinean, and Malian governments worked on together did not aim at building something that resembled communism in a classic sense. They had a lot to do with a mixed economy in which market and state would survive together, would operate together…"

RL: This concept of development is a central focus of your book. Could you talk more about how the visions or expectations of development differed between officials in the USSR and the three West African nations?

Al: That's another excellent question. Development is an incredibly problematic word to use and critically problematic category to think historically with. What I do in the book, and in my research more in general, is that I try to stick to the way in which actors from my time period and from the places I study defined it and understood what development was. Something people in the Soviet Union and in Ghana, Guinea, and Mali certainly had in common was a very material understanding of development. They were primarily but not uniquely concerned with what we would call economic growth - building new infrastructure, modernizing and mechanizing agriculture to boost production, and building some sort of industry to start industrialization in each country. Those were the three pillars that they were interested in, all things that you can touch or were tangible. They were also worried about a number of intangibles or conceptual aspects but the first priority was a very material, concrete understanding of development.

They also had a lot of things they did not have in common. What to do in practice could be very complicated and contested on the side of the Soviet leadership among the officials, the technicians, the engineers, and the economists who worked on an everyday basis with

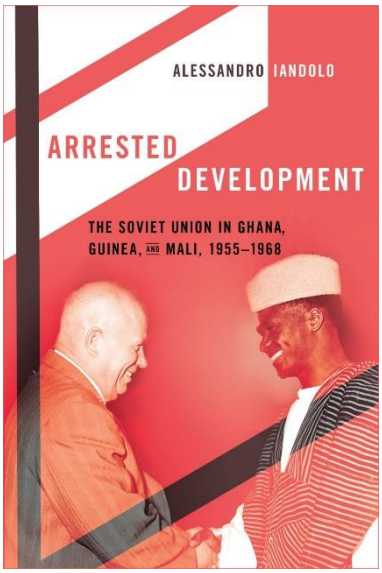
colleagues in West Africa. The visions from Ghana, Guinea, and Mali tended to be more ambitious. They wanted to realize important, significant projects in all fields and they believed it could be done. People on the Soviet side, despite official rhetoric, remained fundamentally skeptical or conservative about what could be done in practice in Ghana, Guinea, and Mali, in West Africa in general, and in what today we would call the Global South. They were not fully convinced by the projects and programs they were working on. Obviously that proved to be a problem.

RL: In your book, you make the point that these development projects need to be understood as holistic phenomena. It is not enough to focus on the construction of a particular road or a particular damn, you need to understand how these projects were fueled by ambitious national and international designs with particular organizing principles, which were then implemented in very particular circumstances. What kinds of historical actors are you focusing on when you take this holistic approach?

AI: One of the challenges I encountered doing research was that a sensible approach would have been to focus on a few case studies, to use a term from social sciences, to analyze bigger trends and ideas, but I found that very difficult because everything fed into each other. The construction of the road was related to the working of the factory, which needed the training of a specialist at a school or a technical institute, which fed back into different levels of government. I realized that this was a challenge not just for me as the researcher in the archive and libraries but also for the people at the time who were involved in these projects. This was a source of difficulty at all levels from the presidents and prime ministers to the people physically involved in building sites. They all had to deal with the intricacy and interconnectedness of this incredibly ambitious project of boosting economic growth. We sometimes talk about [development] in easy terms, but – when you deconstruct it – it is incredibly complicated. That is why I decided to try and follow them all as much as possible in order to try to show how these connections and misconnections often happened, and how they shaped the evolution of this relationship. How to research with this methodology also has its many challenges. There were many agencies, institutions, actors, and individuals involved, and I have tried to look into, ideally, all of them. On the Soviet side, you have a number of state agencies involved in these projects. Some had a more political direction, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or higher levels of the government in the USSR. [Others] had a more technical approach – how to build something in practice, how to assign a blueprint, what kind of materials are going to be needed, and so on and so forth. By and large, this was done by an agency called GKES – the State Committee for Foreign Economic Contacts or Foreign Economic Relations. Each of these bodies has documentation and archival records with a lot of documents that one at least used to be able to look into.

"What I am trying to do is put the Soviet Union in the center of the history of economic development... [The USSR] was a very important actor that pioneered certain approaches that collaborated with a number of governments, people, and individuals all over the world and shaped to a very large extent the history of this specific state-driven way of doing development."

The same is true on the West African side. I tried to look into the top level of government – presidents, prime ministers, their cabinets, their governments – and also the more technical organizations which usually tended to mean ministries – the ministry of economic development, ministry of the economy, ministry of infrastructure, ministry of economic planning, so on and so forth. They all produced many records. Not all the records in what was the Soviet Union, in West Africa, or in other parts of the world have survived or not all of them are, unfortunately, accessible, but I had a little bit of an advantage. By not focusing too much on specific projects that would have been a little bit difficult to follow the details I was able to access more than enough material.



RL: How might this history of Soviet economic development in West Africa be relevant to current discussion about development today or current events today?

AI: That is a tricky question for me to answer. My research agenda as a historian is to put the Soviet Union on the map of the history of development, and I think it should occupy a prominent place on that map. I talk about the USSR abroad, Soviet interactions with the economies of other countries, not so much about the Soviet Union at home and the management of its own economy. In that field, it was both the forerunner in some cases and also part of a much longer tradition of state-driven state development that stretches all the way back to the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. It is really a very long history of state driven economic development…and the Soviet Union is very important for anything that has to do with state-driven approaches to economic management and economic growth. That is relatively easy to conceptually argue.

As for the question of today and relevance for the world which we live in, I should say that is not necessarily a primary aim in my research. I am a historian and I am very comfortable with the past. I am interested in the present but I don't necessarily make claims that I have insight or ideas to make the present better. What I would say is that conversations between people and in some cases institutions who support market-driven approaches to economic growth and people and institutions that instead support or believe in a more state-driven approach continues to this day in post-Soviet spaces, West Africa, and other parts of Africa, Europe, and the United States – it is almost universal. The book says that the state matters and should be taken seriously when thinking about the economy, economic growth, and development.

RL: Do you have any plans or ideas for your next project?

AI: Yes, I have moved onto a second project. It has been difficult for reasons that I think everyone will be familiar with. I'm very interested in the intellectual legacy of Soviet engagement with societies, people, and economies outside of its orbit in the global South. After thinking about that and reading Soviet publications, documents, and debates, I started thinking many of the ideas they discussed reminded me of what dependency theorists were talking, arguing, and debating about in the 1960s and 1970s all the way up to the 1980s and 1990s and so on. I am especially thinking about the early generation of people interested in dependency theory, mostly from Latin America. They were economists by training that came from different parts of Latin America and tended to work for the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, a UN agency, and later on for UNCTAD, another UN agency – the United

Nations Conference for Trade and Development. They were set up with the task of studying and ideally improving trade and development on a global scale.

What I have been doing is looking at the interaction between economists in the USSR, their ideas, their approach to the global economy, and approaches that came instead from Latin America. I am trying to think about connections, misconnections, mutual understanding, misunderstandings, and mutual influences, if you will. The project focuses on a couple of these agencies, how they operated, and the contribution that came from each side, [the Soviet Union and Latin America]. It is also more of a history of ideas. I would call it an intellectual history, focusing on a few key individuals in Brazil, in Argentina, and in the Soviet Union. The basic question is why wasn't there more sharing among these countries? Why did they not manage in a way to create a shared intellectual space in which to discuss global economic issues using a mutually understandable language?

RL: Thank you again Dr. Iandolo for joining me and thanks for your time.

AI: Thank you very much!

Interview with Dr. Penny M. Von Eschen

On November 16, 2022 CENFAD welcomed Dr. Penny M. Von Eschen, William R. Kenan Professor of American Studies at the University of Virginia, to Philadelphia for a presentation on her book *Paradoxes of Nostalgia: Cold War Triumphalism and Global Disorder since 1989* (Duke University Press, 2022). CENFAD's Davis Fellow Ryan Langton met with Dr. Von Eschen over Zoom to discuss her book. The complete interview can be viewed here.

RL: Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me.

PVE: Thank you so much for having me. It was a lovely visit and I'm delighted to follow up after the on-campus visit.

RL: To begin, what brought you to study the end of the Cold War and this particular period of upheaval? What questions inspired your research?

PVE: Thank you so much for that question. The ideas for this book started to congeal in the aftermath of 9/11. I decided in earnest to launch this investigation into what I was seeing as a prevalent nostalgia, as well as strong claims about Cold War history, in about 2006 and 2007, but where I can directly see it coming from is in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the U.S. going into Afghanistan and then Iraq. I found myself constantly troubled by the claims I was hearing, even in the more responsible press about the U.S.'s relationship with these various countries, which seemed to assume no history of relationships with Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan – three of the major players in this later period – and this really troubled me. In some sense, this is a very classic uses and abuses of history study. I should note that my PhD advisor at Columbia University, Eric Foner, was very concerned with issues of how history was being used and employed in the present and he has a wonderful book called *Who Owns History?*, so I am working in that tradition as well, following many other historians that have taken up these kinds of issues.

At the same time I was very puzzled by the way I heard Americans and the Western press expressing astonishment or making fun of forms of Eastern Bloc *ostalgie*, the German word for nostalgia, while I was hearing Americans absolutely awash in nostalgia. In fact, in the popular press and among politicians, you are hearing after 9/11 literally "God, I miss the Cold War, it was so much better, it was so much safer, it was so much more stable." I wanted to figure out these conundrums along with really illuminating the way powerful claims about history were

shaping the present. As I investigated this, as I went back to revisit the late eighties and nineties, I quickly saw that that sense of "I miss the Cold War" and those forms of nostalgia were not a post-9/11 phenomenon. They had been powerfully articulated in the late eighties, and especially in the early nineties, just as claims about what the Cold War supposedly was were powerfully mobilized by politicians at that moment who constructed their own claims and narratives about the Cold War in the service of their most immediate political goals.

RL: Right, during your talk you mentioned that it seemed as if everyone from former presidents to Judi Dench in a Bond movie expressed this feeling of "God, the Cold War was simpler, I miss the Cold War." Can you walk us through what you discovered when you investigated where this nostalgia came from in the late eighties and early nineties?

"The idea that we won the Cold War because of military strength…blew in the face of the thinking of many…Václav Havel, Nelson Mandela, [Mikhail] Gorbachev – these people are very different, but all of them imagined a demilitarized world with much greater international cooperation.

PVE: That's a great question. First, we should point out – and this does have something to do with where [the nostalgia came from] – to the paradoxes. There's very contradictory, very different explanations for where all this nostalgia came together.

First, we should really speak to the obvious that "I miss the Cold War, it was safer, it was more stable" is in itself a construct that erases the fact that the Cold War was very violent and million and millions of people died in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and this escalated in the later years of the Cold War. That in and of itself makes one have to question, why is somebody thinking the Cold War was more stable? I think there are two things that are going on, and it's not necessarily from the same groups of people. People like George H. W. Bush, who was president at the time that the Soviet Union collapsed and was obviously in the Reagan Administration as Vice President, had a deep investment in keeping a strong military, absolutely wanted the U.S. to be the single most dominant power, and wanted a unipolar world. They celebrated that, and one of their arguments for having a robust unipolar militarism was the idea that we won the Cold War because of military strength, because we were the most powerful military in the world. We didn't fear using our military strength and now we must continue in that vein. It justifies this robust militarism. As I very much emphasized during the talk, this really blew in the face of the thinking of many Americans, and probably the dominant global sensibility…People I talked about such as Václav Havel, Nelson Mandela, and [Mikhail] Gorbachev – these people are very different, but all of them imagined a demilitarized world with much greater multilateral international cooperation. They all had a critique of the way Cold War militarism had damaged the environment, distorted the economy, and distorted people's lives. So there was a real call to go beyond the Cold War and certainly not miss the Cold War.

But in one vein you get this robust defense of militarism that says "we miss the Cold War" and, along with that, people said over and over, "we knew who our enemies were, it's so confusing now." I like the fact that you

brought up [seeing this nostalgia] from popular culture to presidents. I think we see a lot more when we investigate these things in many registers. This is coming from speeches…it's coming from pundits, it's coming from academics, it's also coming from films, from music, and, as it evolved into a dominant popular form, video games. We're getting [nostalgia] in all registers. There are many different articulations of nostalgia across the globe, and I think part of what was happening was that the world was becoming far more unequal economically. Social support and social safety nets had been eroded for most people throughout the globe… People started to experience very new forms of pressure, and life on the ground was changing very quickly in many ways. I think that created a sense of a longing for the certainty and stability of an earlier era, rightly or wrongly perceived…

RL: This nostalgia came from a number of different sources, but one of them was this reframing of the past to serve a vision of a unipolar world held by people such as George H. W. Bush, and another part of this vision is predicated on the incorrect assumption that neoliberalism was inevitable. You discuss in your book that you want to emphasize that there were moments of contingency during this period, paths that could have been taken but weren't. Can you talk about some of these moments of contingency?

PVE: Yes, absolutely. Two things that stand out are questions about the environment and climate and questions about militarism and this deep contingent moment around the U.S. going into what we now think of as the first American war in the Gulf. In terms of the environment, in 1989 there was a conference on the climate called in the Netherlands. It was an international conference, the U.S. was involved – all of the big players were involved. As scholars have uncovered and told this story, [they found] there really was a consensus that human activity, especially the general fossil fuel industry, was dramatically altering the climate and causing damage that needed to be quickly addressed and mitigated. It looked like the United States was somewhat on board, and George H. W. Bush actually ran as a bit of an environmentalist, but at the last minute the United States held out of an agreement that would have radically reduced carbon emissions. Then, since the U.S. wasn't in it, others followed suit. France pulled out, Britain pulled out, and the Soviet Union [pulled out]. The reasons they pulled out were also very important, because when they pulled out John Sununu, advisor to Bush, called the agreement's science technical poppycock. He challenged the legitimacy of the scientific findings and I think this is one moment where you see a real turning point where politicians start to question the legitimacy of science…This also has very long term consequences that lead to a kind of epistemological crisis of what is true, what is fact? I think you can see a lot of that going on also early in the nineties.

There's also this feeling that the reason for this highly militarized world was the Cold War itself, and that the Warsaw Pact and NATO were no longer necessary and that people need to follow in the footsteps of the Gorbachev-Reagan agreements for disarmament and disarming nuclear weapons and just keep going to come up with a world that was connected through a different form of economy that put environmental concerns and people's security and safety before militarism. I think anther contingent moment is the way the United States and the world responded to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait… There was enormous criticism of Saddam Hussein, [the invasion] violated international law, it was an invasion of a sovereign country, and the dominant position into the fall [of 1990] and before the U.S. went into the gulf were calls for a negotiated settlement and diplomacy to get Iraq out of Kuwait, look at the broader problems of the Middle East, and also look at a restoration of

Palestinian rights. Look at this systematically to see how this happened and have a long term resolution – this was the dominant position at the United Nations. One of the things I talk about in the book…is Bush's relationship with Nelson Mandela to show just how real and divisive this conflict was because Mandela strongly supported the UN position. He and Bush had very deep arguments over this…The U.S. going into Iraq had momentous consequences. One could say, "Oh, that was a quick war, when it was over they didn't stay," but in fact the legacy was to have military bases in the Middle East and throughout the gulf, and those very bases became a real bone of contention and resentment against the United States for having military bases in areas considered sacred and important by many Muslim peoples. It absolutely expanded U.S. military presence instead of contracting it in the aftermath of the Cold War…

"When we later see a very pronounced Islamophobia congealing in the aftermath of 9/11, we can see that this is not simply being produced in that moment. This has been produced in many registers across American politics and culture for well over a decade.

Another incredible consequence was the nature of the justification for going into Iraq, because here we have a turning point. U.S. interventions in the past had been based on stopping communism. Now, people are literally talking about "Who is our new enemy?," and George H. W. Bush – and I think it's easy to lose his role in this – advances what I think is a very clash of civilizations argument for going into Iraq. When he presented his defense doctrine and talked about Iraq in September of that year, he told a story about a nurse from Iraq who was reporting stories that Iraqis were taking babies out of incubators and throwing them on the ground, and Bush framed this as "We must defeat the rule of the jungle that we're seeing here with the rule of law." Now, in fact, this person was not a nurse. She was a daughter of a Kuwaiti ambassador and this was a fabricated story, but Bush repeated it over and over again in a classic clash of civilizations argument to try to say, "We need to restore civilization. These people are barbaric." Now, in the very same week that Bush laid out his strategic doctrine and ideas about Iraq, a person named Bernard Lewis published an article called "The Roots of Muslim Rage" in *The Atlantic*, where Lewis advances the idea of a clash of civilizations. He claims that this is a new enemy that is so fundamentally different than the West and that there can be no reconciliation. A couple of years later you get Samuel Huntington's certainly different and more nuanced version of this in his essay "The Clash of Civilizations?," followed by a book. Then, you are seeing this idea in popular culture. Tom Clancy's first post-Cold War book imagines wild Nationalist Russians working together with a whole set of people labeled as an Islamist republic or terrorists invading the United States, coming after the West and trying to destroy it. What is so striking to me, because I did have some memory of this period given my age and generation, was only by really carefully going back and unpacking this historically did I realize how early on those arguments were being made, and in how many different cultural registers. When we later see a very pronounced Islamophobia congealing in the aftermath of 9/11, we can see that this is not simply being produced in that moment. This has been produced in many registers across

American politics and culture for well over a decade.

RL: The mention of Tom Clancy's novels is a good transition because your book also investigates the different variations in this nostalgia and how it shifts over time. You draw on an eclectic, diverse set of sources from politics, journalism, commemorative sites and museums, and popular culture. How did you go about assembling this unique source base?

PVE: The very heart of the question of the book – to interrogate and investigate where this nostalgia came from – began because I was already hearing this [nostalgia] in so many cultural registers. I think that's partly because I'm a kind of historian who is deeply interested in politics at both its formal and informal levels, and I have always been very interested in how U.S. domestic politics and U.S. foreign policy greatly inform and influence one another. Sometimes they may not seem like they are; sometimes they diverge, sometimes they don't, but I think that is a relationship that always should be investigated. So I am already thinking across those grounds and I'm also interested in popular culture, especially as things became more and more fragmented in the last several decades. It's interesting that the post-Cold War world completely coincides with the rise of the Internet and the fact that people are no longer seeing things on a few television stations but instead getting information from all sorts of places. This [nostalgia] takes place in an increasingly fragmenting media, and I came to realize at some point, really from my students, that a very critical site of staging claims about the Cold War was in the realm of video games…I write about the Activision series *Call of Duty*, I think it's one of the most important cultural forms, and I had to sit with multiple groups of people to watch them play through it because I wouldn't have had the skills to get through the very first event. When you pick up *Call of Duty* in first-person-shooter mode one of the first things you're supposed to do is "assassinate Fidel Castro." I couldn't have even gotten to that point to figure out what happened next.

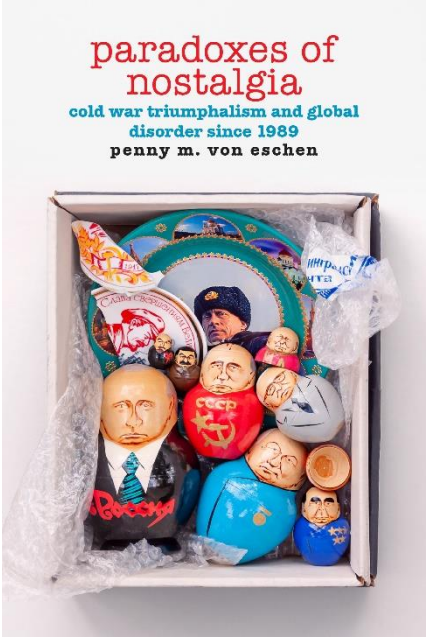
So, I want to emphasize the limitations, but to investigate a question this big you need a rich set of sources and you need to find out which sources are really critical for this investigation. In this particular study, they are not all exactly the same but strong claims about the Cold War are being made at the Spy Museum in [Washington,] DC, which is a private museum put together by former intelligence officers, in video games, in James Bond films, even resonating in something that has at its surface a very different politics like the Jason Bourne series. To see the same obsession, some of the same stories, some of the same patterns, to me that calls out for an investigation. It doesn't lead directly to a sense that this particular film or this particular video game has X causal relationship to the "Axis of Evil" speech of George W. Bush, but I do think by putting these things together you can see patterns. You can understand systems of meaning, structures of feeling, and meaning making and the way people grapple with and understand the world they live in. This process takes place across all those different places and all those different kinds of registers…

RL: Another thing you discuss in the book is that these structures of meaning making both in the West and the East need to be understood in relation to one another. How were these forms of nostalgia in dialogue with one another?

PVE: One example I'll start with would come from the Eastern Bloc. I visited a multitude of sites, some in Russia, one particularly interesting example is the political museum in Saint Petersburg, but places also in Lithuania, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia that explicitly represent the socialist or Eastern Bloc past. One of the reasons I say these things are in

dialogue is that the way people are staging the Cold War past, starting in the 1990s and peaking in the 2000s, is always mediated with a concern for the present…

I think of one example in Albania where the Albanians either borrowed or got a friendship loan of a piece of the Berlin Wall, and it was positioned outside of the neighborhood that had been the corrupt communist bureaucracy. It's positioned to say "We identify with the breach, with bringing down the Berlin Wall. We identify with that mode and that model of freedom." They use the word victimization – "we were victims of communism." I think one should pause. This is a notoriously brutal communist regime, and certainly a lot of people were victims, but this is a very simplistic story, and it's a very simplistic argument to say we're worthy of joining the EU because we are victims of communism…The story of victimization that became so strong in different nations' narrative of the communist past also became a deep pattern in the turn to right-wing authoritarian governments. The past and the present were staged so strongly in terms of anti-communism that the opposite or the alternative – a right-wing politics – was given a pass or seemed to be more acceptable. You can see this in Hungary. You can see this in Poland. You can see this in multiple places where anti-communism becomes the fixed history or central logic and this is an excuse for anti-democratic authoritarian regimes, almost always tied to notions of a mythical national ethnic purity.



This also breaks down at different places. One of the important distinctions I make in the book is that the world is awash in nostalgia but there are forms of critical nostalgia. Many people in Eastern Europe would say "I am not nostalgic for the flawed political regime, I am nostalgic for the political hope we felt in opposing those regimes or for hope itself, I am nostalgic for those democratic movements to reform socialism and have socialism with a human face, we are against authoritarian forms of control." Others would say – and I think this crosses the United States and Europe – "I am nostalgic for a social safety net, when people used to be kinder to one another" than in this brutal capitalist scramble. People who are desperate want that social safety net and a more humane world, not a kind hard, scrambled capitalism…

RL: Are there any new projects you are working on now?

PVE: I am working on a couple of projects. Most of my work has been concerned in different ways with the intersections of colonialism, anti-colonialism, and the Cold War. I am working on a project that goes back to the late forties, really starting around 1947 and 1948 and going into the fifties but then into the sixties, seventies, and even the eighties, and it looks at a range of activists and artists who had developed certain kinds of anti-colonial, anti-racist projects and modernities, and how their lives were challenged and those projects were challenged at the end of World War II because we developed new regimes and global divides around the Cold War. There is a new apartheid government in South Africa – it had always been a supremacist government but this was more severe. The formation of the state of Israel and the partitions of Palestine, the partition of India and Pakistan, keeping the divide in Korea, a tiny colonized country artificially split by the Cold War – all of these

new divisions create real challenges for people who have been working against racism and colonialism but were now confronted with new barriers and new challenges…

Let me mention one more thing that is ongoing that I've been talking to a lot of people about in a more collaborative mode. The current moment, to me, deeply underlines the enormous need for all forms of diplomacy, including cultural diplomacy. One of the themes of *Paradoxes of Nostalgia* is that one of the sets of "heroes" are actually the diplomats because it traces the rise of a disdain for diplomacy and the way diplomacy is increasingly painted as naïve. Any diplomacy was appeasement; war and militarism were the only answer. That is one important thread of *Paradoxes of Nostalgia*. As we come to the present moment, it is in the weakening of the diplomatic service, and this happened even before [the Trump Administration] but then a lot of people got tossed out during Trump, that we see a pinched imagination about diplomacy in the United States, a lack of a broad, full diplomatic imagination. In the past I worked on cultural diplomacy – jazz musicians in the State Department tours – and I think modes of cultural diplomacy on every level – from the teacher to teacher, people to people programs, sports, art – were incredibly important diplomacy and they play a very small role in U.S. foreign policy today. I'm very interested in furthering any and all relationships with scholars and people in public service about the critical role of [cultural] exchange and diplomacy – I don't think those things can be separated.

RL: Dr. Von Eschen, thank you so much for your time.

A Reckoning for the Field

By Graydon Dennison
PhD Candidate, Temple University
Assistant Editor, *Diplomatic History*

Seventy-seven to twenty-nine. This lopsided score, which, at a glance, one might think was from an uneven college basketball game, reflects a divide within our field. Specifically, these numbers represent a striking chronological emphasis in recent historical scholarship published among historians of the United States in the world. Emily Conroy-Krutz, in her 2022 Bernath Lecture for the Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR), cited this statistic as evidence how SHAFR's journal *Diplomatic History* has published more than twice as many manuscripts on the 1970s as the entire pre-1898 period since 2010.[1] These numbers reflect an infatuation with the post-1945 era that many within the field have recognized but failed to overcome. But why are historians of the United States in the world so obsessed with studying post-1945 topics? Likewise, why is this periodization so important? This chronological fixation, though often supported by a steady stream of newly declassified records, holds a host of potential problems. It runs the risk of telling the story of U.S. foreign relations as one that emerged out of World War II. It has the danger of making U.S. power—and empire—seem like recent phenomena with little connection to developments of previous centuries. When not contextualized or supported by broader analysis, this focus siloes the nineteenth and eighteenth (and the early twentieth) centuries as periods of historical aberrations or, worse, isolationism.

Lumped in with the periodization fix is concern over the historical actors under study. The cultural and transnational turns furnished studies of U.S. foreign affairs with a wide array of themes, theories, and concepts designed to enhance our understanding of past decisions and actions. Gender, race, and class feature prominently here—but so have the roles of nonstate, and non-U.S., actors in the development of American diplomacy and power. But in their provocative and popular essay "Recentering the United States in the Historiography of American Foreign Relations," Daniel Bessner and Fredrik Logevall—two titans in the field—argue that the field needs to bring the U.S. state, and the actors traditionally at the center of decision-making, back to the core of studies relating to the United States in the world. Though they acknowledge the value of nonstate actors and a transnational lens, Bessner and Logevall believe the field has gone too far astray from

[1] Emily Conroy-Krutz, "What is a Missionary Good for Anyway?: Foreign Relations, Religion, and the Nineteenth Century," *Diplomatic History* 46, no. 3 (June 2022): 437.

the chief sources of U.S. diplomacy, that being the executive, legislative, and judicial apparatus of the U.S. state.[2] Again, their analysis lays only in the post-1945 period. Further, it collides with Conroy-Krutz's call to keep studying the nonstate actors who were prime movers of American foreign policy well before and after 1945. In Conroy-Krutz's case, it is missionaries that were there through wars, acquisitions, and administrative changes that defined U.S. interactions with the wider world. In studying missionaries, and breaking down the barriers of strict periodization, Conroy-Krutz believes we can trace how continuity, rather than change, defines most of U.S. diplomatic history.[3] Other historians have said similar things about merchants, settlers, soldiers, or corporate figures in their attempts to understand U.S. force and diplomacy on a wide spectrum from the eighteenth century down to the present. That said, the increasing prevalence of studies that focus exclusively on the past few decades and the calls for a return to more traditional approaches begs attention from our scholarly community.

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So how can we square these two divergent approaches? How can we, as a scholarly community, rethink periodization and our historical actors? A good start would be to reexamine our tendency to strictly periodize the history of U.S. foreign relations. Our work often falls into chronological categories—colonial period and early republic, the long nineteenth century, and post-1945 to name a few. These categories serve a purpose in joining scholarship on a certain time period, for cultural mores, power dynamics, and historical actors change over time. As historians, we are interested in turning points and forces of historical change. However, this periodization, when unchecked, traps historians into focusing almost exclusively on one time period, seeing it as distinctive and putting other eras into silos. As Conroy-Krutz points out in her Bernath Lecture, this has become a problem for historians studying the twentieth century, and specifically those fixated on the post-1945 period, where chances for richer histories with new questions are left on the table in lieu of studies that see U.S. power and foreign affairs as uniquely different since 1945.[4] Bessner and Logevall wish to return to seeing U.S. state actors as the straw that stirred the proverbial drink during the Cold War and thereafter. But why is this the case? Sure, the United States exercised an unprecedented level of hard and soft power in the postwar years. This is especially true of its military power as it sought armed primacy over the world in the name of *pax Americana*.[5] But, as some historians have noted, this power and influence was not created in a vacuum. Nor was it entirely unique to the history of the

[2] Daniel Bessner and Fredrik Logevall, "Recentering the United States in the Historiography of American Foreign Relations," *Texas National Security Review* 3, no. 2 (Spring 2020): 39, 40–41.
[3] Conroy-Krutz, "What is a Missionary Good for Anyway?," 439.
[4] Ibid., 441.
[5] See: Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire: A History of the Greater United States* (New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 2019), esp. 278–316; David Vine, *Base Nation: How U.S. Military Bases Abroad Harm America and the World* (New York: Macmillan, 2015).

United States in the world. American power did not emerge in 1945 and neither did its interests in matters the world over.[6] Much of what the United States has done in the realms of force and diplomacy since World War II have roots in its actions well before that turning point—a hinge conflict the field has given so much weight to. By continuing to free ourselves of the periodization barrier, we can better understand the long history of the United States in the world and center that understanding on themes rather than eras. For example, we can trace American imperialism and racial paternalism across centuries as well as matters of economic or military policy and cultural diplomacy from time periods often overlooked by scholars of twentieth-century U.S. foreign policy.

"American power did not emerge in 1945 and neither did its interests in matters the world over. Much of what the United States has done in the realms of force and diplomacy since World War II have roots in its actions well before that turning point…"

One of the most important themes to uncover in this retreat from recency bias is that U.S. power has taken on a hegemonic character since well before 1945. Just ask a scholar of Latin America, Asia, or even the North American continent. In none of these instances did the United States not "exert a major (and often) decisive impact," as Bessner and Logevall would say about the post-1945 world.[7] Painting with this broader brush exposes the second major theme: how continuity, rather than simply change, defines the history of the U.S. role in the world. For instance, historians have charted how the young republic, though relatively weaker than the empires surrounding it, carved a path for its commercial penetration of global markets and its mastery over the continent. Even prior to the Declaration of Independence, settlers served as important power brokers on the borderlands of North American empires and used such leverage to take Great Britain—the most powerful of these empires—to task for their restrictions on the settlers' drive to seize land and kill Indigenous peoples. The settlers ultimately prevailed in this struggle, using their position "among the powers of the earth" to spread their nation to the west, south, and north.[8] Though not unchallenged—from either Indigenous peoples or other rival powers—the United States soon supplanted all other suitors for primacy over the continent. From the first excursions over the Proclamation Line, to the Louisiana Purchase, the ultra-imperialistic war with Mexico, and the last wars with Native American nations,

[6] See: David Vine, *The United States of War: A Global History of America's Endless Conflicts, from Columbus to the Islamic State* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2020); Robert Kagan, *Dangerous Nation: America's Place in the World from its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Penguin, 2006); George Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: American Foreign Relations since 1776* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); and A.G. Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018).

[7] Bessner and Logevall, "Recentering the United States in the History of American Foreign Relations," 40.

[8] Many studies elucidate these points. Some of the best ones include: Eliga Gould, *Among the Powers of the Earth: The American Revolution and the Making of a New World Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012); Paul Mapp, *The Elusive West and the Contest for Empire, 1713–1753* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Robert Tucker and David Hendrickson, *Empire of Liberty: The Statecraft of Thomas Jefferson* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); and Walter Nugent, *Habits of Empire: A History of American Expansion* (New York: Penguin, 2008).

the United States came to subjugate a territory that one scholar has taken the liberty to define as unmatched "in breadth and scope." This aggrandizement may have "operated from the bottom," but the state almost always backed it.[9] Through force, finance, and diplomacy, the U.S. state rolled with its citizens who pushed the bounds of British, French, Spanish, Mexican, Russian, and Native American (yes, they were foreign nations) territories to subsume them under one flag—a position that gave the United States the wealth and strategic positioning to continue its hegemonic pursuits into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

The pattern becomes ever more apparent when one looks further abroad. In nearby Latin America, U.S. power colored international affairs from the mid-nineteenth century. The ambitions of both private citizens and the U.S. government came to place the region firmly in the crosshairs of this new empire. The government was interested in the rich sugar trade of Cuba as well as the prospects for an interoceanic canal at Panama. Both enterprises would shore up the nation's aspiring position in global commerce and shelter its expansion from external threat. Corporations came to dominate the former and the U.S. government, through treaties and the ever looming threat of the Monroe Doctrine, kept rivals at bay in the case of the latter. Soon, determined filibusters, primed to expand their manifest destiny as well as the institution of slavery, created colonies throughout Latin America. Never permanent, these missions did bring the region further under U.S. influence, creating the image of the North American colossus in the minds of Latin Americans.[10] These incidences make the all too familiar story of the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War less of an aberration, as one prominent historian once called it, and more of a continuation of U.S. imperial hegemony that started on the continent and soon spread to the wider world.[11] That war, the spoils of which brought the United States sovereignty over Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, also convinced North Americans of the need to finally annex Hawai'i and build a Panama Canal on its own terms. These accomplishments, especially the dissection of Panama by 1914, gave the United States a base for power projection in both the Caribbean and Pacific and a platform from which to continue its economic exploitation of the mineral and resource wealth of the Western Hemisphere.

A look to Asia develops these ideas even further. Many scholars of the modern era focus on relatively recent affairs in the Middle East or with China, but these developments are neither strange nor unprecedented. Asia has been a critical center of U.S. foreign policy for centuries and the nation's involvement in Asian affairs has set the table for these current situations. The forced opening of Japan in the 1850s paved the way for a deluge of diplomatic overtures and commercial pressures that sought to make Asia the safety valve for American overproduction. Further, the acquisition of the Philippine Islands gave the United States an opportunity to pursue an "Open Door" in China and have a seat at the table in all matters Asian. When conflict continued throughout the archipelago, U.S. forces learned and adapted new counterinsurgency techniques they would later apply in places like Nicaragua, Haiti, and, to lesser effect,

[9] Walter Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism: A History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 1, 9.
[10] See: Robert May, *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire, 1854–1861* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2002); Matthew Karp, *This Vast Southern Empire: Slaveholders at the Helm of American Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016); and Michel Gobat, *Empire by Invitation: William Walker and Manifest Destiny in Central America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).
[11] Samuel Flagg Bemis, "The Great Aberration of 1898," in *A Diplomatic History of the United States* (New York: Holt, 1936).

Vietnam and Afghanistan.[12] Diplomatically, the United States brokered the 1905 peace between Russia and Japan and used its increasingly preponderant position in Asia to try to check Japanese encroachment on its allies' interests. When that failed, U.S. forces brought the weight of the nation's military and industrial might to bear in the destructive Asia-Pacific War, a process that, from 1941 onward, won the United States a position, both in territory and dollars, to exact influence over the postwar Asian order.[13] This frame of reference places the United States at the heart of Asian affairs from well before 1945 and contextualizes the nation's fixation with the region ever since.

So, why the scholarly preoccupation with periodization, and specifically, with post-1945 studies? The United States was clearly never isolationist—a claim that risks being both ahistorical and Eurocentric. Likewise, U.S. power did not emerge in 1945, but rather developed gradually over the longue durée of the nation's drive to hegemony. Historical forces of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and, perhaps especially, the early twentieth centuries contributed greatly to the developments that animate scholars of the post-1945 ilk. The centrality of continuity, and not change, to studies of the United States in the world can only enrich our field. Broader analyses that focus less on strict periodization and, instead, on themes and concepts across a wider chronological lens could remedy the disparity highlighted by Conroy-Krutz. Sure, this may produce bigger books and longer articles. It may also move some scholars away from the cohort of modern historians that commands so much attention in field-specific journals. But those who take up the mantle may find value in the history they often leave on the table. In some cases, one will not even need to change archives.[14]

"Historical forces of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and, perhaps especially, the early twentieth centuries contributed greatly to the developments that animate scholars of the post-1945 ilk."

Dovetailed nicely with this issue is that of the historical actors we choose to frame our histories around. The cultural and transnational turns have guided scholarship since the 1980s. The result has been a bevy of books, articles, and volumes that has charged the historian with thinking about how certain mechanisms, such as race, gender, class, or ideology, informed past decisions and events. Even further, the field has adjusted to see U.S. force and diplomacy as not merely the object of Washington, but rather a complex set of forces involving multiple places and people. Those on the ground or at the margins—including the subaltern peoples the field used to see as merely "acted upon"—reveal much about the history of international relations. These actors, through their roles as agents, resistors, intermediaries, or delimiters of U.S. power, shed new light on past decisions and help flesh out our understanding of historical

[12] See: Brian McAllister Linn, *Guardians of Empire: The U.S. Army and the Pacific, 1902–1940* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997) and James Arnold, *The Moro War: How America Battled a Muslims Insurgency in the Philippine Jungle, 1902–1913* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2011).

[13] See: Vine, *The United States of War*, esp. 153–193.

[14] The National Archives and Records Administration, Library of Congress, and plenty of university-sponsored archives—popular among historians of the post-1945 world—contain rich caches of material on different time periods. This leaves much room for novelty still.

developments.[15] A catchphrase of late has been the "nonstate actor," someone outside the purview of the state who shapes or reshapes how foreign policy is executed. These actors may be in the service of the state's mission or may use the state to further their ends (like settlers have many times over), but they differ from those traditionally seen as the prime movers of foreign policy, namely the president, his close advisors, or cabinet members at the center of decision-making. Nonstate actors, especially those who implemented or resisted foreign policy on the ground, help historians see the nuance and contingency so rife in historical events.

Bessner and Logevall wish to see us table studies of these influential nonstate actors for a return to more traditional understandings of foreign policy. Conroy-Krutz, however, represents a push within our field to consider the roles played by nonstate actors even more than we already do. In many instances, taking the plunge into these actors illuminates much about the formulation and implementation of U.S. force and diplomacy. Conroy-Krutz's missionaries were present in China, Japan, and throughout Latin America, spreading North American cultural mores and serving as the advance guard of U.S. penetration in these regions. The missionary, though motivated by their own religious goals, often felt connected to the overarching task of civilizing "others" and remaking societies in the image of the metropolitan culture. Consciously or not, missionaries informed decision makers of the progress made in these areas of interest and helped pave the way for further exploitation.

"Keeping an eye on these crucial [nonstate] actors only serves to enrich the field and provide it with more novel approaches to the history of the United States in the world."

Similar points are made about merchants and military men at the vanguard of empire. On the North American continent and abroad, these actors were important power brokers who planted the seeds of future conflict and negotiated a space for state actors to operate in. It proves difficult to understand U.S.-Latin American affairs without first understanding the United Fruit Company's endeavors and the responses of those the company displaced. Likewise, one will struggle to grasp U.S. exploits of force without studying those on the frontlines who often formed and reformed policy, no matter the side they fought for. More contemporary examples bear the same token. Private citizens in Panama provided intelligence and some of the muscle required to launch occupations of that republic throughout the twentieth century. Labor unions and professional technocrats took the pulse of U.S. modernization efforts in Latin America, Africa, and Asia during the tumultuous Cold War era. And, as is common knowledge now, oil corporations and private interest groups have fueled action in the Middle East for the better part of the past sixty years. Keeping an eye fixed on these crucial actors only serves to enrich the field and provide it with more novel approaches to the history of the United States in the world.

The twin issues of periodization and historical actors are obviously not new to the profession. Historians, like the ones mentioned in this piece, have spilled ink over the merits of various perspectives on the matter. But with calls to recenter state actors

[15] In the case of intermediaries and "middlemen" in the history of U.S. international relations, see: Eric Grynaviski, *America's Middlemen: Power at the Edge of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

and a chronological divide between practitioners still set around 1945, the field needs to further reckon with its priorities. With many forums available for such discussion, perhaps that reckoning will come sooner rather than later.

Book Reviews

Hamblin, Jacob Darwin. *The Wretched Atom: America's Global Gamble with Peaceful Nuclear Technology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021.

The earliest years of the Cold War were marked by the perils of the nascent nuclear weapons the United States utilized against Japan in the final days of the War in the Pacific. Once the U.S. unleashed the atom's potential in conventional warfare, the possibility of other nations developing similar technology increased exponentially. To prevent the further dissemination of nuclear technology, U.S. presidential administrations wielded the atom as a tool of statecraft to secure exclusive mineral rights and development contracts with developing countries they viewed as subordinate. In *The Wretched Atom: America's Global Gamble with Peaceful Nuclear Technology*, historian Jacob Darwin Hamblin examines how the U.S. employed rhetoric regarding peaceful nuclear technology, transformed pre-existing imperial economic structures, and reinforced racial hierarchies that favored white supremacy in the search for atomic domination.

Hamblin asserts an intriguing thesis in this work, claiming that "[t]he promise of civilian atomic energy was a formidable tool of state power in the late twentieth century because it took advantage of social aspirations, anxieties, and environmental vulnerabilities, especially in the developing world" (6). Hamblin structures his research chronologically and thematically, resulting in three sections that span from the end of the Second World War into the early twenty-first century. The first section, "Atomic Promises," highlights the immediate postwar decade and the shifting U.S. foreign policy around atomic energy. According to Hamblin, "a global scramble for uranium and thorium" ensued and the proliferation of peaceful nuclear technology, which promised to solve the subsistence concerns of underdeveloped nations, became a central promise of U.S. deals for mineral rights (23). The second section, "Atomic Propaganda," hones in on the consequences of diplomatic promises made in the 1950s and 60s about the benefits of nuclear technology, demonstrating the U.S. attempt to subvert decolonial initiatives with promised technology by wielding international organizations like the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to monitor and limit nuclear technological developments. Finally, the third section, "Atomic Prohibition," focuses on the appearance of what Hamblin refers to as "colored Bombs" after China attained its first atomic weapon, bringing to life the fear that the atom might be wielded by those deemed racially inferior by U.S. policymakers (165). This new destabilization of the nuclear order was accelerated as "the United States found itself relatively poor in oil resources, while Europeans no longer held the colonial stranglehold they once enjoyed" (191). Attempting to regain control over global energy production, the U.S. placed sanctions on governments such as Iran, where nuclear reactors could be used as leverage in diplomatic proceedings. Hamblin traces these tensions to modern-day concerns about Iran's nuclear programs and the continued attempts of the U.S. to stymie its progress. Ultimately, these themes highlight that "the promise of the peaceful atom has been used, abused, and exploited for decades… often leveraging the greatest fears and highest ambitions of people around the world" (10).

Methodologically, Hamblin relies on post-colonial theory to make his case. Hamblin prominently centers his theoretical approach on the claim that "[a]tomic energy was supposed to be a liberator, not a means of reinforcing the historical divisions of the world" (93). By focusing on Dwight Eisenhower's early attempts to appease developing nations in the Global South with

nuclear developments toward subsistence technology, Hamblin demonstrates the continuance of previously existing colonial power structures in these diplomatic dealings. In this manner, Hamblin argues that the U.S. was more heavily invested in maintaining its positive relationships with faltering colonial powers from Western Europe, outwardly fearing the potential that developing countries had as a "vehicle for neutralism and accusations of racism" (96). In the case of the IAEA, Hamblin states that "American diplomats feared the consequences of 'colored' influence… especially if it might mean introducing issues of racism and colonialism" (104). Hamblin highlights the process for selecting permanent board members for the IAEA, where a seat was promised to represent African and Asian countries, which ultimately "ended up as the Union of South Africa, the world's bastion of white supremacy…." (105). By focusing on the Cold War imperatives of the U.S. to maintain the international networks of imperialism, Hamblin makes a compelling case for the post-colonial power dynamics powering nuclear statecraft.

Hamblin makes excellent use of a variety of international sources. There is a bevy of published primary sources, such as the *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS) series. One of the most striking aspects of this work is Hamblin's inclusion of archives from the IAEA, which constitutes one of the first extensive uses of this archive, and the World Health Organization (WHO), granting his study a multilateral international lens. This work forms a template for future historical inquiry from international perspectives on the debates surrounding nuclear technology and its potential to proliferate across the globe. International regulatory organizations have existed for decades to provide information and oversight, but their archives have scarcely been utilized for historical research. By including similar international archives in this conversation, historians can potentially offer a greater understanding of the conversations and policies that have fueled and limited the proliferation of nuclear technology.

Ultimately, Hamblin has contributed significantly to the growing historiography on nuclear non-proliferation and the environmental impact of nuclear technology. While a great deal of literature focuses on the build-up of armaments and the potential for nuclear electricity generation, Hamblin points to other uses of nuclear technology for medical and agricultural development in the developing world. By highlighting racial dynamics and post-colonialism, Hamblin asserts that the promises of technological development were nothing more than appeasement to a global community that did not approve of the morally dubious arms race between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, which hoarded this technology. In an attempt to stay ahead of the diplomatic curve, the U.S. engaged in deft promises, propaganda, and prohibition campaigns to maintain its primacy over atomic weapons. Through this partnership with the wretched atom, the U.S. perpetuated and sustained the colonial dynamics of the past five centuries.

Joseph Johnson
PhD Student
Temple University

Harrisville, David A. *The Virtuous Wehrmacht: Crafting the Myth of the German Soldier on the Eastern Front, 1941-1944*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2021.

Following the collapse of the Nazi regime in 1945, a troubling narrative became entrenched in German public perception: the myth of the clean Wehrmacht. In comparison to the Hitler Youth and SS, soldiers of the Wehrmacht, so the myth went, were decent fellows and faithful Christians who made enormous sacrifices on the battlefield against an unworthy foe, only to be duped by a nefarious state that turned its own unwitting troops into victims. This whitewashed image of the Wehrmacht remained entrenched in the public imagination for decades as postwar Germans sought to reconcile their wartime pasts in the wake of Cold War tensions. In *The Virtuous Wehrmacht: Crafting the Myth of the German Soldier on the Eastern Front, 1941-1944*, David Harrisville explores the roles that the Wehrmacht's own soldiers played in constructing that myth during their time in uniform, which shifts both the time in which this myth emerged and the agents that created it.

Harrisville argues that Wehrmacht soldiers operated in a moral landscape with "a broad array of more traditional value systems" that informed their self-perceptions (9). Traditional nationalism, Christian principles, middle-class norms, and military virtues such as comradeship, duty, sacrifice, and military necessity all interacted with Nazi morality in complex and occasionally contradictory ways. Soldiers encountered traditional value systems in wartime rhetoric and orders that sometimes deviated from broader Nazi values but nevertheless demonstrated Wehrmacht soldiers' supposed moral superiority over their Soviet enemy. Harrisville divides the book into five thematic chapters that investigate the Wehrmacht's value systems and their use in rationalizing the force's actions and its soldiers' culpability. The Wehrmacht's moral value systems leveraged martial values, bourgeois ethics, and military necessity, all infused with Nazi racial hierarchies, to allow soldiers to reinforce notions of decency and moral superiority over their enemy. For soldiers, orders calling for leniency and restraint, even though they clashed with Nazi rhetoric, offered supposed proof of their force's upholding of morality and rules of engagement. Soldiers wrote about German atrocities as morally justified necessities against flagrant Red Army breaches of international law. At the same time, Wehrmacht soldiers leveraged religion and humanity to paint their invasion of the Soviet Union as a welcomed crusade and a righteous liberation, with propaganda citing dramatic gestures to convey the Wehrmacht's position as good Christians fighting godless opponents and freeing a subjugated population from the burden of communism. The Wehrmacht's proper burial of its fallen initially offered proof of the force's moral worthiness, yet as retreat rendered these practices impossible, soldiers instead painted themselves as victims, a sentiment that would ultimately become a quintessential pillar of the postwar Wehrmacht myth. Taken together, Harrisville shows how Wehrmacht soldiers in the east used blended systems of morality to choose whatever rationalizations or narratives they personally found most compelling, which allowed them to convince themselves of the righteousness of their cause and justify the horrific means by which they sought to achieve it. By showing how soldiers reconciled their own morality, Harrisville convincingly argues that the "clean Wehrmacht" was not just a postwar reassessment of the Nazi past but instead a wartime narrative crafted by the ordinary soldiers themselves still fighting a losing war and seeking to reconcile their own positions and responsibility for the violent front around them. In this way, Harrisville's work reveals that the myth was the "sum of countless individual decisions to present audiences in the homeland with a positive

image of 'their' men and the organization to which they belonged" (13).

Harrisville's decision to search for the roots of the Wehrmacht myth among its soldiers on the battlefield is perhaps his work's most significant contribution, and this evaluation is made possible by his masterful use of a diverse pool of sources from several levels of the Wehrmacht. The core of his source base consists of 2,018 letters written by thirty Wehrmacht soldiers from different social, religious, geographic, and educational backgrounds who saw service in the east and faced many different wartime fates. For some, this sample size may appear limited, particularly due to its prioritization of the lower ranks of frontline units who predominantly served in the early phases of eastern operations. Nevertheless, with these sources, Harrisville convincingly reveals the ways in which soldiers portrayed their front experiences, while at the same time demonstrating how soldiers presented themselves and their tales to friends and family. These letters behave both as a source of self-exploration and a tool of self-defense for the soldiers writing them, and his attention to the responses and views offered by civilians reading them only adds to his work's utility. Harrisville takes careful note of potential censorship, both self-imposed and officially enforced, in his sources and succeeds in navigating these potential pitfalls to offer a sound analysis. By drawing attention to the dialogue between soldiers on the eastern front and their families on the home front through their correspondence, Harrisville's work also reveals how the negotiation of the Wehrmacht's value system and popular image within these letters offered a site of greater integration of the warfront with the home front. To contextualize these letters within broader conceptions of service and violence, Harrisville also employs institutional documents at various levels of the Wehrmacht's structure, including orders and regulations, propaganda materials, and reports from the rear echelons, as well as home front documents. In so doing, his work treats Wehrmacht soldiers as moral agents that retained their own space to make choices within the constraints of an institution that demanded obedience and conformity. This effort blends top-down and bottom-up historiography to draw broader conclusions about the Wehrmacht's nature in its own terms and the terms of its lowest ranks.

In sum, Harrisville's work offers a significant contribution to a dynamic field by revealing the role of the Wehrmacht soldier in postwar memory and morality. Indeed, Harrisville's book should prove a must-read for those looking to better understand Hitler's war in the east as well as the long-term views of the men that fought it.

Andrew Santora
PhD Student
Temple University

Serbin, Kenneth P. *From Revolution to Power in Brazil: How Radical Leftists Embraced Capitalism and Struggled with Leadership*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2019.

Kenneth P. Serbin's *From Revolution to Power in Brazil: How Radical Leftists Embraced and Struggled with Leadership* analyzes how resistance members' ideas about the pursuit of democracy changed during and after Brazil's military dictatorship (1964-1985). Serbin's work joins others such as Benjamin Cowan's *Securing Sex: Morality and Repression in the Making of Cold War Brazil* and Victoria Langland's *Speaking of Flowers: Student Movements and the Making and Remembering of 1968 in Military Brazil* that examine twentieth-century Brazil from the perspective of those who fought against the regime.[1]

Using more than three hundred hours of oral interviews, Serbin narrates the stories of nine former guerrilla members of the National Liberation Action (ALN), the main left-wing armed anti-military organization. Founded in 1967 and dismantled in 1974, this organization was formed by young adults who sought to fight the regime through armed combat. The nine former ALN members chosen by Serbin each later reached positions of power in the Brazilian government after the country re-democratized in 1985. They also went in different ideological and political directions in their careers, such as still-leftist Paulo Vannuchi, a minister of Human Rights during President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's administration (2005-2010), and now-centrist Aloysio Nunes Ferreira, Brazil's Minister of Foreign Affairs in the presidency of Michel Temer (2016-2018) and a Senator who represented the state of São Paulo in the Federal Senate (2011-2016).

The book is divided into three parts that chronologically address the trajectory of these nine activists. Part I, "Revolution and Repression," describes the days in which many of the interviewed took up arms. In Part II, "Resurgence," Serbin discusses the years these revolutionaries spent in exile or prison and how such experiences changed their perspectives concerning the pursuit of democratic reforms. The final section, "Rule," overviews how these nine former guerilla members became major players in a re-democratized Brazil. The last two sections contain the work's main argument: nonviolence was and still remains key to promoting change. All of Serbin's interviewees—in their late sixties or early seventies by the time the book was written—stress that armed conflicts were not the best strategy to achieve social justice. As the author highlights in one of the names of his subchapters, activists transitioned "from bullets to ballots" as they reached prominent local or federal offices (183).

One highlight of the book is how Serbin narrates the interviews with the former ALN members. He walks with them while they are campaigning, resting on their private farms, having lunch with their families, or working in their political offices. As the author shadows these figures, he reveals details to the reader that demonstrate his interviewees' new ideologies and ways to do politics. Serbin mentions that he saw Senator Nunes Ferreira in his office taking a call to discuss Brazil's need for an antiterrorist law with the Tunisian ambassador. In another moment of the book, the author takes a ride with Vannuchi to the regional metalworkers' union headquarters in the countryside of the state of São Paulo. During the trip, the former cabinet member stressed that "socialism now" means

[1] Benjamin A. Cowan, *Securing Sex: Morality and Repression in the Making of Cold War Brazil* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016); Victoria Langland, *Speaking of Flowers: Student Movements and the Making and Remembering of 1968 in Military Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013).

"profound respect for democracy as a value, not as a political instrument to be manipulated" (321).

From Revolution to Power in Brazil over relies on oral histories to reach its main arguments. The book would benefit greatly from the use of secondary sources and other primary sources that offer critical perspectives on the strengths and weaknesses of Brazil's re-democratization, such as the 1988 National Constitutional Assembly archives and additional newspaper articles concerning the 2016 impeachment process that removed President Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016) from office. The book was published in 2019, one year after the election to the presidency of far right-wing Jair Messias Bolsonaro, a former Army captain and congressman for seven terms who does not acknowledge that the military regime was a dictatorship and praised the use of torture against those who fought against the authoritarian government. In the end, it feels like Serbin's work, his interviews, and interviewees overlooked the point that the Brazilian re-democratization process in the 1980s was not enough to contain the rise of political players who have relativized democratic values in the country to high ranking public offices.

Despite these issues, *From Revolution to Power in Brazil* is an important addition to the historiography of Brazil's military dictatorship and the narratives of those who fought against it. The book's argument concerning the importance of nonviolence as a way to achieve social reforms is still crucial today as certain Latin American countries still struggle with guerrilla movements (both leftists and rightists) and black block groups in the region.

Lucas de Souza Martins
PhD Student
Temple University