

Bernd Stöver. *Der Kalte Krieg: Geschichte eines radikalen Zeitalters 1947-1991.*
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Later this year, the end of the Cold War will be twenty years in the past. While many of the principal documentary records up to the mid-1970s are becoming available in western archives, a growing body of records is now open from former communist archives too, even though Russian opening practices and accessibility rules are not as generous and consistent as in western archives. Given the both the growing distance in time of these events and the burgeoning archival record, we should not be surprised that the Cold War continues to attract enormous interest as a central historical epoch of the twentieth century and that historians are increasingly inclined to historicize it. A number of recent Cold War histories follow this trend.[1] In his new book, German historian Bernd Stöver presents a new interpretation that breaks into the predominant phalanx of Anglo-American Cold War historiography that has established the master narratives of the Cold War.

The iconic front and back illustrations of the dust jacket (a nuclear mushroom cloud and the

Brandenburg Gate in Berlin behind barbed wire) provide the key themes of the book. Stöver thinks little of the old Cold War discourses between "traditionalists," "revisionists," and "post-revisionists," which were connected to their own age and partial to specific historical contexts. He pleads for the unity of the Cold War as a historical epoch and posits himself against subdividing the epoch into historical periods such as the "first" and "second" Cold War. Instead he suggests six distinct "phases" of the Cold War epoch: formation and official beginning (1945-47); the formation of blocs (1947/48-55); escalation and pacification in Europe (1953-61); removal to the Third World (since 1961); détente (1953-80); return to confrontation (1985-91). These phases, however, do not look much different from traditional subdivisions of Cold War history. In perhaps his most original contribution, Stöver insists that conflict and détente ran parallel to each other in this unitary epoch of the Cold War at all times. Moreover, the Cold War was a "total and ubiquitous" conflict fueled by both the nuclear arms race(s) and the ide-

ological conflict between capitalism and state socialism, two systems aiming at providing "global order" (p. 21). Such an overarching total conflict makes it a period of "non-peace" (p. 21). The Cold War was "a political-ideological, economic, technological-scientific, and cultural-social conflict," affecting everyday life as well (p. 21). Stöver also rejects the notion of the "bipolar" United States/Soviet Union Cold War. In his view the Cold War always was a multipolar conflict, with China, the nonaligned movement (to which he gives more attention than Anglo-Americans traditionally do), and the United Nations acting as power blocs, too, next to the two superpowers. From his German perch, Stöver also addresses sub-systems of conflict in the larger Cold War struggle such as the special "German-German" conflict and other sub-conflicts in the Third World (Vietnam, Korea, India and Pakistan, Ethiopia and Somalia). In this "total" Cold War the difference between center and periphery must not be neglected either. Stöver's agenda is an ambitious one.

From the book's twelve chapters, three thematic units emerge. The first four chapters deal chronologically with the origins of the Cold War, the division of the world into the two bloc systems (with China emerging as a third world power), and the escalation and pacification of the Cold War in Europe (1945-61). The next four chapters address the nuclear arms race, the mental world of the Cold War, the culture wars, and the competition between two social and economic systems. These diachronic chapters cover the entire Cold War period and are clearly the most innovative in a general Cold War history; they treat broad themes that general Anglo-American Cold War histories often neglect. The final four chapters return to the more pedestrian Cold War narrative and continue chronologically where the first four chapters ended. They deal with the Cold War in the Third World since 1961, the *détente* period, the return to the Cold War superpower confrontation of the 1980s, and the end of the Cold War.

The first third of Stöver's book recapitulates familiar ground, with his own foci frequently interspersed. The Cold War broke out over territorial conflicts between the Soviet Union and the United States and Great Britain, which led to the break-up of the wartime coalition. The powers secured spheres of influence and resources. In contrast to traditional Cold War histories, for Stöver "securing resources" does not refer to oil or other natural resources needed to compete and dominate the world economically, but to the capture of National Socialist scientists and intelligence assets by both superpowers. In this phase of the emerging Cold War, when the United States was still "denazifying" its German zone of occupation, it was not averse to harboring Nazi war criminals to "defend" the West. Rocketeer Walter Dornberger, top spy Reinhard Gehlen, and dubious Ukrainians like Mikola Lebed, all reliable anticommunists, were captured and employed in the struggle against "red fascists" in Moscow. This material offers a poignant reminder from a young German scholar about the United States' willingness to compromise its principles from the get-go in the struggle against communism—a point usually ignored by American Cold War scholars.

For Stöver, Harry Truman's containment doctrine and Andrej Zhdanov's "two camp" proclamation of 1947, which lifted the "class conflict" to global status, mark the beginning of the Cold War. Stöver notes the unease of Truman's critics with mere containment of communism and stresses how the administration of Dwight D. Eisenhower complemented it with a "liberation" strategy. In fact, returning to the argument of his previous book *Die Befreiung vom Kommunismus* (2002),^[2] he argues that this American strategy prevailed until the end of the Cold War. Stöver often returns to "liberation" policy, especially when he deals with the repeated crises in the Soviet bloc (in 1953 in the GDR; 1956 in Hungary, 1968 in Czechoslovakia, 1980/81 in Poland) and the U.S. failure to respond to Soviet intervention, but also with respect to the Truman administration's failed "liberation"

of North Korea, and John F. Kennedy's failure to respond to the building of the Berlin Wall.

Along with the formation of NATO and the Warsaw Pact in the early 1950s, Stöver deals with the ascent of China as a world power and Mao Zedong's uneasy relationship with Moscow, as well as the Joseph Tito-Joseph Stalin split and the emergence of the neutrals and nonaligned movement as a bloc entity in the world. He gives the Berlin crisis of 1958-62 broad treatment and posits that the confrontational quality of the Cold War after 1961 opened new opportunities for détente.

Chapters 5 and 6 summarize the nuclear arms race and everyday life in the atomic age. Without ever mentioning the American or Soviet "military-industrial complex," Stöver presents an excellent survey of the arcane nuclear arsenals on both sides, along with strategic planning, including the strategic war plans from "Pincher" to SIOP. He also points to aggressive Warsaw Pact operational planning, which envisioned nuclear war scenarios in central Europe, exactly where western planners expected it. The spying wars of the secret services are covered next, along with covert operations on both sides of the Cold War divide. He goes into CIA and KGB assassination attempts, and the famous exchanges of spies at Glienicke Bridge outside Potsdam. With the CIA's unsuccessful endeavors to undermine communist regimes in eastern Europe, he returns to his favorite theme of United States's "liberation" strategy. The technical-scientific Cold War competition is covered along with nuclear weapons accidents and breakdowns in nuclear production facilities.

Daily life in the nuclear age--what scholars today call the emotional history of the Cold War--gets a prominent place in this book. The everyday madness of nuclear testing and potential catastrophe can be seen in tests such as the 1954 "Bravo" test in the Bikini Atoll, where the H-bomb detonated was two-and-a-half times more powerful than anticipated. Deadly nuclear fallout was the result.

Both sides tested their soldiers in terrain polluted by nuclear explosions and produced enormous quantities of nuclear materials that would be hard to dispose of. Both sides developed civil defense programs, including Soviet programs designed for the leadership class only. The anti-nuclear protest movements of the Cold War are oddly seen in their German isolation--Lawrence Wittner's definitive trilogy of the global anti-nuclear armament movement is missing in the references. [3] The growing presence of terrorism as a Cold War phenomenon is included here. NATO's "stay-behind" Gladio forces are juxtaposed with Soviet Speznaz units and their support of the famous terrorist "Carlos" and the West German Red Army Faction and the Irish Republic Army, all the way down to the Palestine Liberation Organization and the current terrorist scene.

The decision to privilege the Cold War "culture wars" with an entire chapter (chapter 7) lifts Stöver's book above the quality of run-of-the-mill political Cold War histories. Usually, the fascinating struggle of the cultural and intellectual cold wars is ignored as an arcane subfield of Cold War studies. Just as Stöver pits the American and Soviet nuclear and intelligence worlds opposite each other as mutually complementary, so he posits "Americanization" vis-à-vis "Sovietization" efforts by the superpowers. This perspective makes sense in the German context, where both sides had vast populations to influence culturally in their respective occupation zones. But it is much less persuasive in a European and global context, where American popular culture tended to win the struggle for "hearts and minds" hands down.[4] Stöver delves into the literature of the Cold War, television and radio programs, architecture, sports, and religion as part and parcel of the universal Cold War competition. Again, most of his rich empirical evidence comes from the intense German Cold War battlefield.[5]

Chapter 8 is dedicated to the social and economic contests between the two sides of the Cold

War. Again from the unique German perspective, Stöver shows how generous West and East German welfare systems competed directly with each other, acting as "magnets" to each other's populations (p. 308). The West German "social market economy" produced such an attractive prosperity that an astounding 4.5 million East Germans fled to West Germany in the course of the Cold War. More surprisingly as many as 650,000 West Germans resettled in the GDR between 1950 and 1989, looking for more economic security, social safety, and warmth. Both East and West also tried to pull newly independent Third World countries to their respective sides with generous foreign aid programs. Both sides damned their competitor's efforts as "imperialist," designed to establish hegemony. An overview of the policies of some oil-rich Third World countries, using their precious resource as a means to break away from old colonial dependencies, completes this chapter.

As noted above, the final four chapters of the narrative return to a more typical chronological trajectory of traditional Cold War history. Chapter 9, on the numerous smaller superpower proxy wars on the periphery of the Cold War, shatters John Lewis Gaddis's model of the Cold War as "the long peace." Stöver covers here the well-known conflicts in Vietnam and Cambodia, Central America (Nicaragua) and Africa (Congo), as well as the Cuban missile crisis. He also treats the Sino-Soviet conflict in considerable detail, all the way down to the military clashes on the Ussuri River in the late 1960s. He sees his thesis of the ever-present, total quality of the Cold War above all confirmed by the wars between nonaligned nations (India vs. Pakistan since 1947; Malaysia vs. Indonesia [1963-65]; and Ethiopia vs. Somalia since the mid-1970s). Originating in the colonial era, these conflicts were drawn into the Cold War struggle by the superpowers' involvement.

Chapter 10 is dedicated to the entire trajectory of Cold War détente and disarmament. Stöver starts very early with Stalin's aborted attempts in

his 1952 "Notes" to reunify and neutralize Germany, the Kremlin's initiative at "peaceful coexistence" with the West and Eisenhower's refusal to "give peace a chance," as well as the still-born Geneva Summit in July 1955.[6] Stöver sees Kennedy's famous "strategy of peace," as referred to in his speech of June 10, 1963 in Washington, as well as Egon Bahr's July 1963 proposal of "change through rapprochement" (*Wandel durch Annäherung*) as counterproposals to the Soviet strategy of "peaceful coexistence" (p. 388). Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik* owed much to Bahr, who became one of Brandt's leading advisors. Just as Stöver stresses German *Ostpolitik* as a principal track in Cold War détente, he sees the Helsinki Final Act (1975), pushed by the Europeans, as the culmination of détente. He does not privilege the American-Soviet disarmament agenda (Partial Test Ban Treaty, Strategic Arms Limitations Treaties, and Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) as the culmination of the easing of tensions between the superpowers, as Anglo-American scholars often do.

The final two chapters cover the return of Cold War tensions in the 1980s. Chapter 11 brings the story from Jimmy Carter's trials and tribulations over the Iranian hostage crisis and the Soviet quagmire in the ten-year Afghanistan War to the election of Ronald Reagan and the return of Cold War conflict. The Polish crisis over the Solidarity trade union produced martial law in Poland. The stationing of medium-range nuclear missiles in western Europe to counter similar Soviet missiles unleashed a vast peace movement. Stöver again concentrates on the German context and shows the roots of the "new social movements" and the Green Party in the turmoil of 1968 and the anti-Vietnam War movement. He comes to the conclusion that the western public might have supported the Cold War for a long time, but now "demanded its end" (p. 433). In spite of the American nuclear freeze movement, given the enormous support for Reagan's policy of strength, this statement less accurately summarizes Ameri-

can than German public opinion. In one of his many fascinating asides, Stöver shows how the peace movement, with its powerful symbolism of "swords into ploughshares," also began spilling into East Germany. In his final chapter he interprets the end of the Cold War as emanating almost exclusively from Mikhail Gorbachev. Reagan's role in ending the Cold War is barely mentioned and neither is the vast literature that supports that position. Pointing to Gorbachev's key role is a rare example of Stöver privileging individual human agency over structural historical factors.

Who, then, is responsible for the end of the Cold War? Stöver's stress on the bold struggle for civil rights and democracy in the Soviet satellites, culminating in the fall of the Berlin Wall and the mostly bloodless "velvet revolutions" in eastern Europe in 1989, again offers an alternative historical explanation to Anglo-American Cold War scholarship. In the end, the tremendous efforts towards détente, going back to the 1960s, may have contributed more to the end of the Cold War than both the failed dream of producing a communist world revolution and the American offensive against communism since 1947, culminating in Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative. Just as it does not help much to ask who is responsible for the origins of the Cold War, Stöver avers, so it is obvious that the total Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union. The role of the dictatorial, state socialist "people's" democracies in attempting to sustain a totalizing order meant that when they collapsed, the self-sustaining system of the Cold War finally came to an end.

Stöver has penned an important new Cold War narrative that deserves a wide readership in the Anglo-American world too. His analysis, privileging the Cold War in Europe and in Germany and European détente policies, will merit further discussion in global Cold War historiography. Yet, much of his empirical evidence emanates from Germany during the Cold War—it is a German

Cold War history. Since Stöver's perspective is so relentlessly continental European, it is predictable that no Anglo-American publisher will be much interested in a translation. Stöver cites very few primary sources, which I find is not a problem for a general interpretative narrative. If the book had a bibliography, however, the reader would recognize how much Stöver relies on German-language literature.[7] While he is familiar with the principal Anglo-American discourses, he ignores much of the literature. He seems to suggest *sub rosa* that German scholarship on the Cold War era is so rich that it explains much of the trajectory of the conflict—but in the process, he loses nuance. Cold War studies has become an increasingly complex field. Vast amounts of sources continually become available as previously closed archives open; new methodological approaches are being applied to this epoch; and additional general Cold War histories like Stöver's will be written from specific national perspectives in the future. Nonetheless, Stöver must be complimented for his courage in writing such a broad general history of the Cold War.

Notes

[1]. The dean of Cold War scholarship John Lewis Gaddis recently published a tight history for the general public and college audiences, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: Penguin, 2005); along the same lines is Fraser J. Harbutt, *The Cold War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). The best one-volume documentary collection, containing a rich assortment of little-known documents from communist archives, is Jussi M. Hanhimäki and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *The Cold War: A History in Documents and Eyewitness Accounts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Vladislav Zubok has penned the hitherto best history of the Cold War from the perspective of the Soviet Union in *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007). For a methodologically sophis-

ticated history of the Cold War in the Third World, see Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 2005); for a Cold War history concentrating on five crucial moments that could have been turning points towards diffusing the tensions, and with a wealth of historical portraits of Cold War leaders, see Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007). A broad political survey is J. P. D. Dunabin, *The Cold War* (New York: Harlow 2008); see also Saki Dockrill and Geraint Hughes, eds., *Palgrave Advances in Cold War History* (Basingstoke: Houndmills, 2006).

[2]. This *Habilitationsschrift* is an empirically rich, deep analysis of American Cold War strategy and propaganda, as well as anticommunist networks in the West; it is unjustly ignored by Anglo-American Cold War scholarship. One of the few American scholars to absorb its findings is Chris Tudda, *The Truth Is Our Weapon: The Rhetorical Diplomacy of Dwight D. Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006).

[3]. Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle against the Bomb: One World or None: A History of the Nuclear Disarmament Movement Through 1953* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), *Resisting the Bomb: A History of the Nuclear Disarmament Movement 1954-1970* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), and *Toward Nuclear Abolition: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement 1971 to the Present* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003).

[4]. Again, definitive literature in the field is ignored, such as Richard Pells, *Not Like US: How Europeans Have Loved, Hated and Transformed American Culture since World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1997); Reinhold Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War: The Cultural Mission of the United States in Austria after the Second World War* (Chapel Hill: University of North

Carolina Press, 1994); idem and Elaine Tyler May, eds., *"There, There and Everywhere": The Foreign Politics of American Popular Culture* (Salzburg: Salzburg University Press, 2000); Alexander Stephan, ed., *Americanization and Anti-Americanism: The German Encounter with American Culture after 1945* (New York: Berghahn, 2005), and *The Americanization of Europe: Culture, Diplomacy, and Anti-Americanism after 1945* (New York: Berghahn, 2006).

[5]. Missing again are key works on the intellectual and cultural Cold War, such as Volker Berghahn, *Transatlantische Kulturkriege: Shepard Stone, die Ford-Stiftung und der europäische Antiamerikanismus* (Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag, 2004); and Margot A. Henriksen, *Dr. Strangelove's America: Society and Culture in the Atomic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

[6]. An explicit argument that the Geneva Summit should not be seen as the "dawn of détente" is made by the essays in Günter Bischof and Saki Dockrill, eds., *Cold War Respite: The Geneva Summit of 1955* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000).

[7]. Among the two principal American journals of record, *The Journal of Cold War Studies* regularly reviews German and Cold War scholarship in other languages, while *Diplomatic History* never does.

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