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The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World

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in wartime are supposed to be more responsive than others to the pressures of public opinion, an effect that points sometimes toward escalation, sometimes toward moderation and timidity. A large body of literature surrounds the question whether democracies are sufficiently peace-loving by nature to preclude their fighting each other. This proposition holds considerable inspiration for U.S. statesmen, who have made the spread of democracy a cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy for the last century and more, though historians may be inclined to skepticism, if only because history has offered relatively few opportunities for conflict between democratic states. Alexis de Tocqueville, contemplating the military potential of the fledging American republic, proposed that democratic armies were different because it was both hard to get them to start fighting and hard to get them to stop.

Alexander B. Downes's book is not a comprehensive study of the subject announced in its title. It seeks instead to come to grips with a derivative problem arising from the theoretical literature on "democratic peace": are democracies more or less inclined than other belligerents to kill civilians in war? In the end, the author concludes that democracies are more inclined, but only under conditions of strategic "desperation" or when they seek to acquire enemy territory. Few are likely to find this conclusion persuasive, less because anyone seriously doubts the capacity of democracies to wreak havoc than because the book makes no meaningful effort to compare the warfare of democratic states with that of other kinds.

The book also suffers from tone-deafness toward the moral and cognitive complexities of killing in war. Downes offers a reasonable definition of who counts as a civilian—anyone not in uniform or directly involved in the manufacture of munitions—although this definition is actually more stringent than that embodied in international law, a subject he neglects. He considers civilians to have been targeted if they were killed either deliberately or though culpable carelessness. This criterion is also reasonable, though its application can prove extraordinarily difficult in real life, as the case studies that occupy the last two-thirds of the book inadvertently demonstrate. Of these, the most disconcerting is the account of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, which is "coded" as a war of territorial aggression by the Israelis.

The general question why so many noncombatants die in war is nevertheless a good one. Modern governments are distinguished neither by their willingness to inflict civilian casualties nor by their professed concern to avoid doing so. War is a normative concept and has always included ideas about protected categories of innocents whose lives should be spared. Yet part of the promise of modernity was that such ideas would have a better chance of being realized in practice: if only life were organized in more rational and publically responsible ways, the world would become a more peaceful place—a dream that has so far failed to come true.

Democracies have stood out more by virtue of their willingness to embrace this promise than by their capacity to fulfill it. That capacity has been improving, however, due in large part to changing perceptions of who the enemy is. For at least a century prior to the end of the Cold War, belligerent governments, democratic or not, tended to view their adversaries as integral wholes, nations-in-arms against which any form of violence was justified if it threw sand in the gears of the enemy's war machine. Nowadays the United States, at least, scarcely views its enemies as social entities at all, but prefers to regard them as "regimes" that have effectively taken their own populations hostage, and which should be fought by methods designed to sever the supposedly fragile threads that connect state and society. This is an idea worth contemplating, not least because it may be wrong. Opponents of democracies should not count on a reluctance to use force on the part of democratic states. It would be no less wrong for the democratic world to imagine that its opponents are little more than deracinated criminal gangs, whose toppling can be accomplished by the kind of highly discriminating violence on which democracies pride themselves, but which, as Downes shows, they are perfectly able to set aside when the chips are down.

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Lorenz M. Lüthi. *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World*. (Princeton Studies in International History and Politics.) Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2008. Pp. xvii, 375. Cloth $65.00, paper $27.95.

A reader of both Russian and Chinese, Lorenz M. Lüthi provides fascinating depth and detail to an unstable Sino-Soviet alliance shaped by strong and ambitious personalities, nationalist sensitivities, cultural misunderstandings, and the perhaps inevitable clash between two societies at very different stages in "socialist" history. China and the Soviet Union were headed in different directions, with Nikita Khrushchev committed to de-Stalinization and further engagement with the United States while Mao Zedong was pushing for "more political and economic development along Revolutionary Stalinist lines" (p. 47). Lüthi returns often to the problem of the ideological nature of the Sino-Soviet dispute (evident in the two contrasting models of socialist development), the Stalin question, and imperialism and the Americans (pp. 8–12, 345). Along the way, he carefully describes the central intersecting moments of Soviet and Chinese political history, from Mao's travails in Moscow in December 1949 to the denunciation of Marshal Peng Dehuai at the Lüshan Plenums in 1959 for his supposed sympathy for the Soviet Union (pp. 31–36, 123–135). Lüthi continues the story through the abrupt Soviet withdrawal of its advisers from China in July 1960 to the early stages of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. A chorus of Chinese historians and memoir writers continue to blame the Soviet withdrawal for decades of China's economic difficul-

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ties, while Russian scholars and memoir writers generally remain disturbed by what they consider the callous Chinese misuse of their "selfless" political and economic aid. Lüthi considers the sudden withdrawal something of a Soviet tactical blunder, as it gave the Chinese a "convenient pretext . . . to deflect blame for the self-induced economic collapse" (p. 176).

Lüthi's greater familiarity with the Chinese materials allows him to describe best the importance of the Soviet factor in the disturbing evolution of Chinese politics on the eve of the Cultural Revolution. Chinese memoir writers are keen to address high-level episodes of diplomatic exchange and personality conflict, and their new insights into the character of Mao are understandably intriguing to scholars of revolutionary China. For Lüthi as well, Mao's role was central to the ill-fated relationship. The author reasonably turns our attention to the importance of Mao's destructive radicalism and delusional perception of China's future strength and role in international affairs. Like other scholars of China, such as Thomas J. Christensen, Roderick MacFarquhar, and Chen Jian, Lüthi emphasizes the close relationship between Mao's efforts to mobilize the population and developments in Chinese foreign policy. Liu Shaoqi, of course, eventually was denounced as "China's Khrushchev." China scholars will be intrigued by Lüthi's research in the increasingly inaccessible foreign policy archive in Moscow, which greatly enhances the narrative of Chinese politics on the eve of the Cultural Revolution. Figures such as Kang Sheng, Chen Boda, and others central to the early unfolding of the Cultural Revolution were closely engaged with the problem of Soviet "revisionism" (p. 237).

Might scholars of Soviet history similarly pay more attention to China? The Soviets and the Chinese were in an intense debate about the stages of socialist development and the time frame for the glorious transition to "communism." The Soviet notion of "catch up and surpass" (*dognat' i peregnat'*) that was directed at the United States, the ideological pronouncements unveiled at party congresses, the continuing Stalin problem, and Soviet foreign policy generally always unfolded with China and the "Great Friendship" either front and center or at least in the background. The process of "re-Stalinization" in the Soviet 1960s was implemented by figures such as Yuri Andropov, Mikhail Suslov, and others who were still bruised by the split and keenly aware of the impact of reform upon the broader bloc.

Lüthi's single-minded focus on the highest levels of foreign policy exchange in the socialist bloc prevents him from considering other kinds of archival materials that might complicate his conclusions about the importance of ideology in the socialist world. What was the relationship between the diverse practices and arrangements of the "friendship" and the angry and even bizarre exchanges between important figures such as Suslov, Andropov, Deng Xiaoping, and Chen Yun? The "friendship" of the 1950s meant the initiation of a vast series of exchanges and collaborative relationships between universities, cultural institutions, metallurgical factories, and newspapers that were often about far more than the charged ideological issues that divided the important leaders at the apex of their hierarchical political systems. The Soviet administrative system was frequently exploitative, at home and in the far reaches of the bloc, and incapable of responding to the diverse concerns that made up what the Chinese called "socialism with Chinese characteristics." Socialist bloc practices deserve as much attention as socialist theory. Lüthi offers new insight into numerous foreign policy relationships central to the Cold War, while also directing our attention to a series of still unexplored issues pertinent to the vast socialist bloc and the fascinating alliance between the Russians and the Chinese.

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Robert H. Kargon and Arthur P. Molella. *Invented Edens: Techno-Cities of the Twentieth Century*. (Lemelson Center Studies in Invention and Innovation.) Cambridge: MIT Press. 2008. Pp. viii, 190. $24.95.

Robert H. Kargon and Arthur P. Molella's study traces the work of thinkers and builders who tried to harness technology to construct better, more livable cities and towns. They do not aim at a strict intellectual history of these ideas or an architectural history of projects built. Instead, their goal is to explore how these ideas are developed in the real world and how the act of trying to bring a utopian idea to life complicates this process.

Kargon and Molella focus on thinkers, scholarly and otherwise, who proposed a planned society that would make the most of both the rural and urban and created a new technological hybrid: the garden city. Beginning in England with the Garden City movement, then moving both to the United States and to Italy, the book traces the ways politicians, architects, and others sought to create a utopian vision of housing, technology, and everyday life.

The book presents a series of case studies of what would seem today to be "New Urbanism" city design. All of the communities profiled are small (under 100,000 people) and designed with a mix of technologically based industry, parks and public spaces, and housing in belts around the central business area.

Each of the studies has enough depth to satisfy specialists in the field but not too much to slow the narrative or cloud the analysis. Kargon and Molella are also astute in their discussions of the ways that abstract ideas change when they are applied to real communities. They devote an early chapter to Torviscosa, a model city designed by industrialists in Italy and built by the fascist government that ultimately became a "pleasant industrial town," not a utopian model of industry and agriculture (p. 66).

The same dynamics can be seen at work in Oak Ridge, a city in Tennessee created to house the vast workforce brought to the area to work on the Manhat-

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