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Democracy Promotion, National Security and Strategy: Foreign Policy under the Reagan Administration by Robert Pee
(review)

Rasmus Sinding Søndergaard

Journal of Cold War Studies, Volume 21, Number 2, Spring 2019, pp. 199-201
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Published by The MIT Press



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from the late 1960s to the mid-1970s. Kissinger's fierce opposition to human rights as a U.S. foreign policy priority emerges as a powerful theme in Snyder's narrative. "The emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union is not an objective of America foreign policy," Snyder quotes Kissinger telling Nixon in 1973. "Why, if they put Jews into gas chambers in the Soviet Union it is not an American concern" (p. 32).

Kissinger's much-vaunted "realism" and corresponding intransigence on human rights issues will come as no surprise to readers familiar with the existing scholarship on human rights and U.S. foreign relations in the 1970s. Snyder reinforces that narrative, revealing in fresh detail Kissinger's seemingly indefatigable efforts to head off, water down, circumvent, or simply ignore the initiatives of human rights supporters on Capitol Hill and their non-governmental allies. "Human rights emerged as a relevant issue for U.S. foreign policy despite the obstructionist efforts of Henry Kissinger," Snyder concludes (p. 170).

Some readers will find Snyder's use of the "long 1960s" problematic. Many of the developments she analyzes—for example, human rights activism toward Chile after 1973—seem more firmly rooted in the 1970s than in the 1960s, and unique and significant developments of the 1970s are sometimes flattened out to make the narrative fit the chronological frame. Snyder also takes a rather narrow view of human rights by focusing on civil and political rights. Although she rightly points out that most U.S. human rights activists took this approach, she could have gone further in exploring the broader contestations over the meaning of human rights that played out during this period, both in the Cold War contest and along North-South lines. That said, *From Selma to Moscow* is an important and thought-provoking book and should be essential reading for human rights scholars and practitioners.



Robert Pee, *Democracy Promotion, National Security and Strategy: Foreign Policy under the Reagan Administration*. London: Routledge, 2015. 219 pp. \$145.00.

Reviewed by Rasmus Sinding Søndergaard, Georgetown University

In recent years, diplomatic historians have produced a burgeoning literature on the role of human rights in U.S. foreign relations during the Cold War, but the related topic of democracy promotion has received much less attention. In *Democracy Promotion, National Security and Strategy: Foreign Policy under the Reagan Administration*, Robert Pee offers a well-researched, balanced, and astute analysis of the Reagan administration's campaign to promote democracy. Focusing on both the administration and the broader foreign policy elite, the book traces the tensions between democracy promotion and U.S. national security strategy in the 1980s.

Pee asserts that the era of Ronald Reagan represented a turning point in the U.S. government's approach to democracy promotion by bringing about a reassessment of the relationship between democracy and security at the strategic level. This led to

the creation of the first U.S. organization dedicated exclusively to the promotion of democracy abroad: the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). Even so, the foreign policy elite, according to Pee, ultimately failed to agree on an overarching strategic framework, which meant that democracy promotion continued to operate on an ad hoc basis. He also notes that, in contrast to previous attempts to project democratic ideology or to reform foreign countries through their sitting governments, the new approach sought to build democracy from the bottom up through support for non-governmental forces. However, Pee concludes that a narrow definition of democracy and U.S. security interests limited such support to low-intensity programs designed to contain radical forces and secure stability in friendly regimes. “During the Cold War, the U.S. and the NED promoted a form of liberal democracy based on the U.S. model, which did not embrace deeper levels of redistributive reform, or the welfarism associated with post-war models of liberal democracy” (p. 191).

After a survey of the roots of U.S. democracy promotion in Cold War covert operations and modernization policy in the Third World, the book turns to the tensions between democracy promotion and national security during the Reagan administration. With great attention to detail, Pee examines the internal power struggles in the administration between hardliners on the National Security Council staff and moderate diplomats at the State Department, who favored different strategic objectives and organizational setups for democracy promotion. Ultimately, the hardliners’ preferred option of a government-controlled organization focused on the Soviet Union won out, only to be rejected by Democrats in Congress, who favored a broader campaign that included friendly dictatorships and an organization under less government control. Pee demonstrates how this rejection created an opportunity for a coalition of non-state actors, such as political consultants, think tank scholars, and representatives from labor unions and the Chamber of Commerce, to promote their preferred solution of a state-private network for a wide-ranging democracy campaign. The outcome was the establishment of the NED in 1983 as a semi-private foundation funded by the U.S. government, responsible for distributing grants to democratic forces abroad.

The final chapter analyzes the activities of the NED from 1984 to 1986. Although the formation of the NED solved the organizational question of how to support democracy promotion, Pee argues that strategic questions about the endowment’s objectives and the specific countries to target were left unresolved. He demonstrates that congressional control over funding constrained operations to cases genuinely aimed at strengthening democracy through democratic methods, and that senior officials in the NED and the administration subordinated democracy to security interests. As a result, the NED pursued democracy promotion on a tactical basis in countries in which such a policy was believed to enhance U.S. national security. In friendly dictatorships, this meant support for elite forces who enacted surface reforms without a fundamental elimination of injustice to preserve stability. In the Communist bloc, by contrast, the NED supported groups aimed at transforming society. In a concluding chapter, Pee argues that the tensions between democracy and national security—as well as the ideas and institutions of the 1980s—have carried over into the post-Cold War era, and he predicts they will remain a recurring feature.

Pee has made an important contribution to our understanding of U.S. efforts to promote democracy and of the Reagan administration's foreign policy. He particularly excels in tracing the turf wars inside the administration and their interactions with the broader foreign policy elite. Pee's meticulous archival research in the Reagan Presidential Library affords the reader an appreciation for the complexities of foreign policy-making and insights into how ideas become policy. It is the first account to make use of the papers of the political consultant George Agree in a study of the NED, furthering our understanding of the deliberations preceding the creation of the endowment.

Pee deserves credit for including important mid-level actors such as State Department bureaucrats, political consultants, and members of Congress, who are far too often omitted in studies of U.S. foreign policy. However, he could have elaborated further on the role of individual members of Congress, especially regarding the congressional debates over the establishment of the NED, which receives only a couple of pages. In this rather cursory discussion, Pee at times resorts to vague terms such as "various Congressmen" (p. 143) and "another opponent of the Endowment" (p. 144) without identifying these individuals and linking their positions to their motivations and backgrounds. Moreover, the focus of the book is heavily on Reagan's first term and the genesis of the NED, leaving one wishing for more on the practical democracy promotion during Reagan's second term, when U.S. efforts to promote democracy abroad expanded significantly. These, however, are minor objections to an overall convincing and intriguing account.

The book deserves a wide readership among historians, political scientists, and anyone interested in U.S. foreign policy, the Cold War, and the relationship between democracy promotion and U.S. national security strategy.



Michał Słoniewski, *Bojkot igrzysk olimpijskich jako instrument polityki międzynarodowej w latach 1976–1988*. Warsaw: Max sc, 2016. 574 pp. 77.00 złotys.

Reviewed by Janusz Kazmierczak, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań (Poland)

This book is a cogent analysis of boycotts of the Olympic Games in the years 1976–1988 in their international context, as well as the consequences of these boycotts for the Olympic movement itself. The book is based on meticulous, original research. Despite the wealth of historical detail that Michał Słoniewski presents, his book is engaging and lively. He focuses on the boycotts of the Olympic Games in Moscow in 1980 and Los Angeles in 1984, placing them in a broader context and discussing the problem of boycotts in the history of modern international sporting events.

Słoniewski's starting observation is that the modern Olympic movement, despite its proclaimed insulation from politics, has reflected all the major political problems of the world. This is a consequence of the growing internationalization of the movement and the problems that affected the participating countries regionally and globally. Not