

the mid-to-late 2000s, during which expressions of this kind of cultural confidence seemed to be on the rise. The bilingual humor Gürel examines, for example, was popular among a group of Turks who, as a result of their education and background, were often justifiably proud of being uniquely fluent in both Turkish and Western culture. Similarly, in debates over gay rights at the time, Turkish progressives could also specifically cite traditional and partially-accepted identities like *travesti* to argue that the discourse of tolerance for diverse sexual identities was not purely a Western import but something with a longstanding indigenous precedent.

From Atatürk on, a succession of Turkish political movements have claimed to possess a unique vision that would, in the language of the nationalist thinker Ziya Gökalp, enable Turks to be like the West but still remain themselves. Less than a decade ago, there was still considerable optimism that Erdoğan's Justice and Development Party was poised to help realize this goal. Today, the optimism and confidence of that era seem painfully distant, and anti-Americanism in Turkey has become more widespread than ever.

The unspoken question lurking in the background of Gürel's book is why Turkey has remained in a state of enduring insecurity vis-a-vis the West. As she shows, Turkish fears over cultural Westernization have always been inseparable from fears over Western economic, political, and ultimately military dominance. If the message of Turkish writers and statesmen over the past century has been that only by achieving the correct level of cultural Westernization can Turkey approach the West on equal geopolitical terms, it may turn out to be that only when Turkey is on equal geopolitical terms with the West will the majority of Turkish writers and statesmen finally be comfortable with whatever level of cultural Westernization their country has achieved.

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E R E Z M A N E L A

Where in the World is the Periphery?

Bevan Sewell and Maria Ryan, eds. *Foreign Policy at the Periphery: The Shifting Margins of US International Relations since World War II*. Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2017. 386 pp. \$55.00 (hardcover).

Where exactly is the periphery of U.S. international relations? If nothing else, this useful volume should get you thinking about this question. One possible answer, a straightforward one, is delivered right on the book's front cover,

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which depicts two maps, one showing Latin America and the other centered on the Middle East and stretching from the Mediterranean to Central Asia. And indeed, those among the fourteen chapters in this volume that focus on a single geographic region are centered on Latin America, Africa, or the Middle East. But the book, as suggested in its subtitle, is concerned not simply with exploring a fixed periphery but considering how and why the margins of U.S. foreign relations have shifted over time, how regions considered peripheral among U.S. policymakers came to be seen as central, as did Cuba after Castro's ascent to power in 1959 or the Middle East did after the Oil Crises of the 1970s.

This volume, which emerged out of a conference held at the University of Nottingham in 2010, is made up of fourteen chapters split into two parts. The first part, "Themes," comprises five chapters that paint on a broad spatial and temporal canvas and focus, respectively, on the themes of geostrategy, development, culture, anti-Americanism, and war as they pertain to the relations between the United States and the Global South in the postwar era. The nine chapters of the second part, "Case Studies," are more circumscribed in time and space, each focusing on a specific region and/or time period in the recent history of U.S. foreign relations, proceeding chronologically, more-or-less, from the development of U.S. geostrategic thinking in the run-up to World War II to the post-2001 "global war on terror."

Diplomatic historians have, of course, long written about the history of U.S. relations with regions, such as the Middle East or South Asia, once seen as peripheral to U.S. strategic interests. But it is only fairly recently that we have seen wide acceptance of the argument, made perhaps most famously in Odd Arne Westad's *Global Cold War* (2005), that the regions once known as the Third World comprised, in fact, the central arena of international politics and conflict in the postwar era.¹ As part of this flourishing literature, the current volume traces the evolution of U.S. foreign policy from a time of near exclusive focus on relations with the major powers across the Atlantic and the Pacific—China, Japan, the major European powers—to growing concern with regions previously seen as marginal, notably the Middle East, Latin America and, a bit later, Africa.

As is often the case with edited volumes, the essays in this one vary in tone and format. Some are variations on their authors' previously published work; others, previews of forthcoming studies. Some showcase fine-grained archival work while others rely mostly on secondary sources. The five "thematic" essays in Part I are written by established scholars and cover ground that will be largely familiar to readers of their previous work; still, these chapters offer welcome summaries of important themes in the history of U.S. relations with the Global South and should prove useful, not least, for teaching purposes. The nine "case study" essays all repay careful reading; for this reader, some of the more revelatory among them included Philip Dow's account of the influence of

1. Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge, MA, 2005).

American missionaries on U.S. policy in Congo in the pivotal crisis years of 1959 to 1963; Christopher R. Dietrich's argument about the surprising connections between oil money and international terrorism in the 1970s; and Maria Ryan's exploration of the lesser-known arenas of the post-9/11 "war on terror," namely in Africa, the Caucasus, and the southern Philippines.

Interestingly, Ryan's treatment of the southern Philippines aside, relations with Southeast Asia are largely missing in this volume. This absence cannot but bring to mind the paradigmatic case in the history of postwar U.S. foreign relations of a region that shifted from a peripheral concern for Washington's policymakers into a central one, indeed so central that it consumed U.S. politics for more than a decade and remains even today inescapable in any debate about the deployment of U.S. military power abroad. But of course, Vietnam was not the first time that the seemingly peripheral suddenly became central. The United States' first major overseas war was fought in the Philippines, a place that few Americans had ever heard of prior to the Spanish-American War. Some decades later, Franklin Roosevelt's wartime meetings with Middle Eastern and African leaders—the king of Saudi Arabia, the Sultan of Morocco, the Emperor of Ethiopia—signaled the rising importance of places that had previously been viewed as marginal to U.S. interests.

Sometimes, in fact, places became central to U.S. interests partly *because* they were declared to be peripheral to them. One such place is the Korean peninsula, also outside the scope of this volume, where Dean Acheson's "perimeter speech" of January 1950 helped convince the North Korean leader Kim Il-sung to launch an attack on the south some five months later in order to reunite the peninsula under his rule. Vietnam itself could also be seen as a place that became central *because* it was deemed relatively marginal, as Washington's consistent post-1945 preference for the French claims of imperial privilege over the Vietnamese demands for self-determination contributed to the escalation of a conflict and eventually led to the U.S. military intervention there. Then again, perhaps the tendency of places along the western rim of the Pacific—the Philippines, Korea, Vietnam—to shift repeatedly from marginal to central concerns for U.S. policymakers suggests, as Michael Hunt and Steven Levin argued recently, that the region was never actually peripheral at all.²

Perhaps most importantly, however, this volume invites its readers to contemplate the concept of periphery in the history of U.S. foreign relations: how it is defined, how it shifts over time, and how the very definition of a region as peripheral in the first place is both contentious and consequential. After all, as this volume reminds us, there are many ways to define centrality and marginality in international relations. We can consider economic factors (industrial development, natural resources, etc.), military power (both conventional and not, both actual and potential), demography and geography, culture and

2. Michael H. Hunt and Steven Levine, *Arc of Empire: America's Wars in Asia from the Philippines to Vietnam* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2012).

civilization (the West vs. the “Rest”), and other factors as well. In the end, the history of marginality in U.S. foreign relations is one of subjective perception, reflecting as it does certain ways of seeing the world. Writing the history of the shifting margins of U.S. foreign relations requires exploring the contours of these perceptions, their evolution, and their consequences.

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Viet Nam at the Center

Christopher Goscha. *Vietnam: A New History*. New York: Basic Books, 2016. 592 pp. \$23.99 (hardcover).

Christopher Goscha’s new dense and demanding book presents a comprehensive synthesis of Vietnamese politics. It focuses on the period extending from the French conquests of the 1860s and concludes with the emergence of an authoritarian, single-party state. By clarifying the connections between national, regional, and global histories and emphasizing the involvement of Vietnamese in the diaspora, Goscha makes this larger history accessible to general readers. In the process, he challenges scholars who construe Vietnamese history too narrowly.

Goscha cites the Neolithic origins of Vietnam (10,000–2,000 BCE) but his treatment of the period before the French arrived is fairly perfunctory. By the end of chapter two (there are fourteen altogether) the French have finished taking, piece by piece, the five parts that, collectively, became Indochina: southern, central, and northern Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. In chapter three he observes that in the 1860s, “The French naval officers taking over in the Mekong delta knew next to nothing about the 1.5 million people suddenly under their control” (81). Stumped, they turned to French-speaking Vietnamese, including the well-known Catholic Trương Vĩnh Ký. In chapters four and five Goscha analyzes two movements that, in different ways, were both critical of France. For a short time the monarchist-modernist movement in northern Vietnam, centered on Prince Cường Để, regarded Japan as the “light of Asia” and encouraged young Vietnamese to “go east.” The Constitutionalist Party in southern Vietnam, over which the wealthy landowner and naturalized French citizen Bùi Quang Chiêu presided, sought to gain more political rights—not generally, but for male Cochinchinese elites. For a variety of reasons, including the effectiveness with which colonial administrators squashed them, both initiatives failed.

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