Diplomacy & Statecraft
Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/fdps20

Bringing the Transnational In: Writing Human Rights into the International History of the Cold War

Sarah B. Snyder

Published online: 25 Feb 2013.

To cite this article: Sarah B. Snyder (2013) Bringing the Transnational In: Writing Human Rights into the International History of the Cold War, Diplomacy & Statecraft, 24:1, 100-116, DOI: 10.1080/09592296.2013.762885

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09592296.2013.762885

Diplomacy & Statecraft, 24:100–116, 2013
Published with license by Taylor & Francis
ISSN: 0959-2296 print/1557-301X online
DOI: 10.1080/09592296.2013.762885

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Bringing the Transnational In: Writing Human Rights into the International History of the Cold War

SARAH B. SNYDER

One of the most interesting innovations in recent international history writing is the adoption of transnational approaches. This article echoes earlier calls for international historians to integrate transnational methods more fully into their work by highlighting the salience of human rights and influence of human rights activism as aspects that would otherwise be largely left out of the history of the Cold War. Such methodological innovation is essential to a deeper understanding of the Cold War.

This special issue of *Diplomacy and Statecraft* grew out of a June 2011 conference entitled "New Perspectives on International History." The day was a celebration of the career of Professor Kathleen Burk and of the vibrancy of the field in which she specialises. There have been many fruitful developments in international history of late, including increasing consideration of culture, race, and gender.[1] One of the most interesting innovations and one that was highlighted by a number of presentations that day, is the adoption of transnational approaches.[2] I am fortunate to work at an institution where transnational history is championed. University College London, where I teach and from which Kathy has recently retired, is home to the Centre for Transnational History, which facilitates the study and writing of transnational history. Rather than seeing transnational history as a separate field of historical inquiry, I view it as an approach or methodology that enables international historians to study new actors, answer new and old questions, and broaden their audience considerably.[3] Such approaches have utility even for those who continue to see diplomatic and international

history as most appropriately focused on power and the state.[4] With respect to, for example, détente, international historians adopting a transnational methodology do not intend to rewrite the history of the period as solely a time of cultural exchanges and protest movements, but these, and other elements of the Cold War more readily accessible through transnational approaches, deserve greater attention.

My contribution to this special issue is an attempt to argue that in order to answer many critical questions in the history of the Cold War, we need to use transnational approaches. The drive for greater internationalisation of Cold War history, which often means moving beyond Anglo–American perspectives and sources, has been forcefully championed by Matthew Connelly and others with positive results. Although it is not yet complete, internationalisation is not the only avenue that offers fruitful possibilities for historians of the Cold War and particularly of its later years—a time of proliferating nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and rising influence for non–state actors.

Transnational approaches initially developed in an effort to "think beyond the nation." One of the earliest uses of the term "trans-national" came in Randolph Bourne's "Trans-national America" in the July 1916 issue of the *Atlantic.* Bourne urged his readers to reject the melting pot as an aspiration for American nationalism and suggested a different, more "cosmopolitan" conception was preferable. Bourne employed the imagery of woven fabric as a model for American nationalism, writing, "America is coming to be, not a nationality but a trans-nationality, a weaving back and forth, with other lands, or many threads of all sizes and colors." Furthermore, he highlighted the migration patterns of the early twentieth century, pointing out that after working for some time an immigrant might go back to their country of origin and even potentially return to the United States at a future point.[5] Bourne's imagery of woven fabric might assist our efforts to visualise how transnational approaches can usefully enhance the history of the Cold War, which was after all a complicated and multi-layered conflict.

Scholars writing transnational histories rejected the construct of the nation-state as the only appropriate framework. Instead, they sought to cast off previous national narratives and illuminate dimensions of historical reality that cannot be understood from within a purely national perspective. This impetus took several forms, including world history, international history, and transnational history, which are terms that people, often mistakenly, use interchangeably.[6] I would distinguish amongst them by asserting that international historians look much more at the interaction between states and have traditionally examined high-level diplomacy and the projection of power.[7] Largely, they still see the nation-state as the basis for their study. Transnational historians, or those adopting a transnational approach, often are critical of the nation-state as the unit of analysis and argue they are writing history that transcends political boundaries. Early definitions of

transnational emphasised nongovernmental status and a focus on more than two countries. For example, Kjell Skjelsbaek wrote, "For an organisation to be 'transnational' two minimal requirements must be met: At least two different countries must be represented in the organisation and one of the representatives must not be an agent of a government."[8] These two criteria have guided transnational history writing in subsequent years, but because transnational interactions often involve governments as well as nonstate actors, international and transnational history are increasingly intermingled. Indeed many topics in international history are impossible to comprehend without transnational approaches.

Why has this new approach emerged? Some see its increasing prominence as linked with the rise of globalisation.[9] Others have argued increasing attention to transnational history is fueled by regional associations such as the European Union, which have eroded strict senses of nationalism and created a new level of organisation for analysis—the transterritory.[10] This development has been connected with decolonisation, anti-colonial, and postcolonial scholarship, and what has been termed the "imperial turn," or attention to the influence of the experience of imperialism on metropolitan societies.[11] It is also linked with moving beyond the nation state or a fixed idea of a national culture to examine the deep effects of colonialism. Furthermore, it is connected to a recognition that many communities straddle national borders or move across them regularly.

The turn toward transnational approaches in international history did not, as it did in national histories such as United States history, come from an impetus to transcend the national narrative.[12] International historians, almost by definition, had long seen national histories in a global context. Yet, they did not always engage with the ideas, nonstate actors, and protests influencing those states or put another way, with international interactions from the bottom up.[13] Thus transnationalising international history offers new ways of expanding the field.

As Micol Seigel has written, "Transnational history examines units that spill over and seep through national borders, units both greater and smaller than the nation-state."[14] Unless we attempt to see the Cold War transnationally as well, we will miss the people and ideas that are not contained by national borders. Patricia Clavin reminds us that transnationalism "is first and foremost about people."[15] Indeed, transnational approaches highlight human agency in a conflict that too often is written in terms of superpower rivalry. They also enable us to assess the influence of individuals acting in groups and organisations that transcend national borders as well as to evaluate the role of NGOs in inter-state relations.[16] Borrowing from Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane's classic work on these questions, by studying transnational interactions we can identify changes in attitudes, new instruments of influence, and their influence on government policy.[17] In the *American Historical Review*'s forum on transnational history, Sven Beckert suggested we consider

transnational history as a "way of seeing . . . connections across particular units," which strikes me as a particularly appropriate way to think about the approach's benefits.[18] For example, a transnational approach could facilitate an assessment of the true nature of the iron curtain—how fixed was the East–West divide and where can we identify moments or points at which it was permeated.

There are a myriad of ways transnational approaches can enrich our understanding of international history, including by highlighting the influence of migration on the conflict. The movement of peoples, and particularly the diasporas this migration created, shaped the political and diplomatic alliances that developed. For example, Jason Parker's work fruitfully examines how the transnational black activism of West Indians and African Americans living in New York City in the 1940s shaped Caribbean decolonisation.[19] His work utilises traditional archival sources such as the records of the British Colonial Office and United States State Department whilst also supplementing them with work in the papers of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to reframe wartime Anglo–American relations in the Western Hemisphere as a story about the intersection of race and aspirations for freedom. Similar work could productively examine the intersection of other migrations and diasporas with Cold War diplomacy.

The transmission of ideas is particularly well suited to exploration with transnational methods. For the history of the Cold War, they are essential to understanding how ideas were transmitted and what impact the spread of these ideas had. Questions of interest include not only how ideas are received when they travel but also what happens to the ideas themselves—in what ways do they change due to their journeys? Thus far it has mostly been political scientists who have been writing about the influence of ideas on the end of the Cold War.[20] Although perhaps it is methodologically more challenging for historians, we need to do the same. Bradley Simpson's work on self-determination and Barbara Key's work on opposition to torture are both models in this respect that should encourage others to follow in their footsteps.[21]

Transnational approaches are increasingly useful to the history of the late Cold War. In many ways, it is impossible to understand the 1970s and later without moving beyond a state-centered approach.[22] This is due in part to the proliferation of NGOs but also forces such as terrorism that were not confined by national boundaries.[23] Furthermore, the history of concern for the environment, a phenomenon that grew in these years, naturally lends itself to transnational approaches.[24] As we are increasingly attentive to the environmental costs of the Cold War as well as the activism those inspired, the environmental history of the Cold War is a particularly productive area for transnational methods. Similarly, anti-nuclear activism and influence of the movement on Ronald Reagan's views on nuclear weapons,

as Lawrence Wittner and Matthew Evangelista's work have shown, require different methodologies.[25]

In some ways, my plea for greater attention to transnational aspects of the Cold War is in line with Tony Smith's 2000 call for a pericentric framework for Cold War history.[26] Smith asserted Cold War historians were mired in the muck of tired analytical frameworks and lamented that even with the opening of many formerly communist archives, scholarship remained in the same old ruts. In order to move beyond orthodoxy, revisionism, and postrevisionism, Smith advanced a "pericentric" approach. By examining the smaller states in the Cold War, Smith argued we could better understand how the Cold War spread, intensified, and persisted. Much as pericentrism shifts our gaze from two superpowers to lower level states such as East Germany, Egypt, North Korea, and Cuba, a transnational approach similarly moves our attention from the highest levels of international politics to greater attention to nonstate and lower level actors.[27] Thinking about the Cold War transnationally helps us account for the influence of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, Amnesty International, and anti-nuclear scientists—groups that have been minimised in traditional accounts of the Cold War.[28] Just as Smith argued a pericentric framework would give greater agency to states on the periphery of the Cold War struggle, a transnational approach similarly broadens the cast of characters and stage upon which the Cold War is acted.[29] Smith asserted that a focus solely on Moscow and Washington "cannot provide fully satisfying answers" to the critical questions of the Cold War: why it expanded beyond Europe, the reasons for its episodic intensification, and why it lasted as long as it did.[30] I similarly argue that looking solely at high-level diplomats and political leaders, who are the subjects of analysis in traditional international history, cannot provide fully satisfying answers to some of the most important questions in Cold War history.

Beyond expanding the stage and cast of the Cold War, attention to transnational actors can encourage re-evaluation of the Cold War's periodisation. For example, a focus on the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and transnational human rights activism could suggest the 1980s, rather than the 1960s or 1970s, as the key "long" decade of the Cold War. The period 1975 to 1989, or "from Helsinki to Gorbachev" as one recent volume has put it, becomes a more distinct period than, for instance, one broken up into détente, the new Cold War, and the conflict's end.[31] Similarly, Akira Iriye argues that examining the Cold War in the context of international organisations minimises the significance of the "new Cold War" from 1979–1985 because activism by such organisations remained constant throughout the longer period.[32]

Given my own research, I would argue that we cannot understand why the Cold War ended peacefully with only the more established, traditional approach. Earlier accounts have highlighted the military arms race, Soviet economic stagnation, overextension abroad, and other factors in the end of

the Cold War. Less attention has been paid to the influence of non-state actors such as the scientists Matthew Evangelista examines in *Unarmed Forces* or the human rights activists that made up the transnational Helsinki network. Both are key actors in these events whose influence could be overlooked with a reliance solely on traditional archives.[33] As Smith writes, "To study instead what was going on in Moscow or Washington is simply to miss what the expansion of the Cold War into Latin America was all about;" just as studying the Cold War only in situation rooms, National Security Council meetings, and high-level summits misses important components of the Cold War.[34]

Iriye, one of the early evangelists for greater attention to transnational actors by international historians, argues the development and international expansion of nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and voluntary associations to be "a theme that is far more critical to our understanding of the contemporary world than the Cold War."[35] I am not sure that both cannot exist as essential frameworks for understanding the second half of the twentieth century and beyond. The proliferation of international NGOs in the first decades of the Cold War were a means of bridging East–West and other divisions by focusing on issues that transcended military and ideological rivalry.[36] Certainly some NGOs are nationally confined in their membership, activities, and concerns, but many others increasingly had international memberships, paid attention to developments beyond narrow borders, and sought to exert influence further afield. In Iriye's view, these international NGOs represented a challenge to the zero-sum nature of the Cold War framework, and transnational activism attracted many supporters.[37] In these years, concerns about education, nuclear proliferation, population control, disease, and economic development garnered considerable interest at the nonstate level.[38] Peace, women's rights, and human rights also warranted attention from many international NGOs. Importantly these issues weren't limited by political or geographic boundaries, and organisations effectively collaborated transnationally. As Mark Lytle wrote over ten years ago, "Scholars who ignore INGOS [international NGOs] or exclusively do state centric-policy analysis are missing a crucial explanatory mechanism."[39]

In addition to gaining insight into the ways in which international NGOs enriched international society during the Cold War, transnational approaches also enable us to explore the roles of cultural exchanges, sport competitions, world's fairs, and new methods of communication in facilitating personal connections that transcended Cold War boundaries.[40] Protest movements against nuclear weapons, for self-determination, against violations of human rights, and in opposition to the war in Vietnam all require transnational approaches. These movements unquestionably shaped the Cold War world, especially for those living beyond the upper echelons of Washington and Moscow.

To offer one example of the different perspective these methods can add to our understanding of the Cold War, we should consider Jessica Gienow-Hecht's entry on the Cold War in the *Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History,* which makes clear the strengths of using transnational approaches as a supplement to international history. She highlights themes that a reference work without a transnational approach presumably would have neglected. For example, migration from the East to the West (first occurring in droves and then slowing) as well as ideas about modernisation and the transmission of popular culture garner greater attention than the nuclear arms race or military alliances.[41] These elements could never replace familiarity with balance of payments crises, Soviet strategic missile capabilities, and shuttle diplomacy, but they are important components of the picture, particularly for how the Cold War was lived and experienced at the individual level. Similarly, thinking about the Cold War transnationally might lead us more easily to the significance of popular culture in eroding Cold War barriers. Such approaches have facilitated, for example, Emily Rosenberg's interesting work on the influence of consumerism on the end of the Cold War.[42]

A number of years ago, Michael Hogan encouraged diplomatic historians to expand their scope. At the time, he and Iriye were amongst the few proposing inquiry into a broader range of actors, including non-state actors and NGOs. In his frequently cited Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations (SHAFR) presidential address, Hogan wrote, "International migrations, environmental transformations, capital movements, culture and technology transfers—these and other global phenomena may influence government policies, including the strategic and geopolitical policies that often preoccupy diplomatic historians. These transnational forces and their human elements are the stuff of a new international history and should not escape our attention."[43] Hogan was heralding this new approach in 2004, signaling to his colleagues the insights that could be garnered through methodological innovation. I want to assure the skeptics that adopting transnational approaches does not erode diplomatic historians' traditional concerns about power.[44] Indeed, the ways in which it makes the history of ideas more accessible suggests such methods might enable scholars to look more closely at soft power or other factors shaping international relations.[45]

Transnational approaches are particularly essential to the aspects of the Cold War most interesting to me: human rights activism and United States human rights policy. This is because for much of the Cold War, attention to human rights was confined to non-state actors and lower level officials, meaning in those years the issue will only appear sporadically in high-level records. Therefore, scholars seeking to explore the significance of human rights activism need to be creative to discern the evolution and influence of what we might call a human rights lobby. Methodologically, one needs to examine the archives of human rights organisations and the personal papers of those active on these issues.[46]

In an incredibly influential recent book, Samuel Moyn has written that the "drama of human rights . . . is that they emerged in the 1970s seemingly from nowhere."[47] Moyn argues that Carter's election "opened the way for the astonishing explosion of 'human rights' across the American political landscape."[48] He sees the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and Carter's "explosive affiliation with the language" of human rights in January 1977 as leading to the issue's subsequent prominence in international relations.[49] Without these influences, Moyn asserts that "human rights might have remained the preserve of expanding but still minor advocacy groups and their international members and promoters."[50] His book makes a number of important contributions to the field and is now an essential reference point for all subsequent work on human rights, but I believe adopting a transnational approach would have enabled a fuller portrayal of rising interest in human rights. Given that as of 1975 Amnesty International had nearly 1400 member groups in Europe alone and won the Nobel Prize in 1977, labeling it "minor" strikes me as a mischaracterisation.[51] Based on extensive research in the archives of human rights organisations, individual activists, and influential allies such as members of Congress, I see concern for human rights in the United States and internationally growing from grassroots initiatives often focused on a particular country, issues, or crisis such that by the late 1970s there was an international human rights movement.[52] Jean H. Quataert has a similar view of transnational movements for human rights in the 1970s that focused on Soviet dissidents, the disappeared in Argentina, and women. In her view, "Advocacy [became] transnational due to the increased ability of local activists and organisations to develop horizontal ties to like-minded people across borders and vertical links to national and international organizations and agencies."[53] The work of Quataert and others demonstrates that in the 1970s, to use Iriye's term, a "global project" devoted to human rights emerged. [54]

Other scholars, such as Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, have also identified greater grassroots impetus for transnational human rights connections. In discussion of the United States as an ally to human rights activists, they write, "Domestic human rights organizations in repressive countries learned that they could indirectly pressure their governments to change practices by providing information on abuses to human rights officers in American embassies for inclusion in the United States annual country reports."[55] A transnational approach is necessary to understanding the agenda, tactics, and influence of these organisations, particularly how they regarded United States human rights policy and saw themselves as connected to the United States government. According to Keck and Sikkink, "Many human rights activists considered Patricia Derian, assistant secretary of state for human rights during the Carter administration, part of the human rights network in the sense that she shared many of their values, and she and her staff were in frequent communication with them."[56] Such insights

can be gained only by research agendas that recognise the agency of human rights activists and seek to incorporate their perspectives.

For my own work, a transnational approach has been essential to explaining the evolution of United States president Ronald Reagan's stance on the CSCE. Whereas in the 1970s Reagan charged that the CSCE's concluding agreement—the Helsinki Final Act - had "put the American seal of approval on the Red Army's Second World War conquests," the United States actively and constructively participated in the Helsinki process during his presidency.[57] How can such a shift be explained? Certainly the Carter administration, and particularly its ambassador to the CSCE follow-up meeting in Belgrade, Arthur Goldberg, had demonstrated that the CSCE was an additional forum in which Cold War propaganda points could be scored. But, several years after Belgrade during the 1980 campaign, Reagan questioned whether the United States should participate in the subsequent CSCE review meeting in Madrid given the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan: "Frankly, I have an uneasy feeling that going to Madrid is negating what we thought we could accomplish by boycotting the Olympics. If the athletes can't go, why should the diplomats go?"[58] Furthermore, the new Reagan administration sought to diminish American attention to human rights more broadly, exemplified by the nominations of Jeane Kirkpatrick to serve as United States Ambassador to the United Nations and Ernest W. Lefever to head the State Department's Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs. Both were vocal critics of Carter's human rights policy. Human rights activists were key members in the campaign to defeat Lefever's nomination; examining records beyond those generated in the White House and Foggy Bottom is the only way to appreciate why the nomination floundered and the administration's overall approach to human rights subsequently shifted.[59] Transnational activism led to Reagan modifying his position as well as recognition by the president and his administration that human rights was an effective way to criticise their ideological rival.

Human rights did not only remain at the grassroots level and was not confined to the Carter administration. One of the principal arguments in my book is that Reagan's attention to human rights in the East–West context was surprisingly consistent with Carter's approach and more effective than his predecessor's had been.[60] The involvement of high-level White House and State Department officials in advocating for the release of prominent dissidents demonstrates engagement with the issue. Negotiating with Soviet leaders over the recent arrests of a Soviet spy in the United States, Gennadiy Zakharov, and a falsely accused American journalist, Nicholas Daniloff, in Moscow, American diplomats sought the advice of Helsinki Watch, a prominent NGO focused on human rights in Eastern Europe, as to which dissident the United States should seek to add to the deal.[61] According Aryeh Neier, one of the leaders of Helsinki Watch at the time, staff members "had heard [Yuri] Orlov was in bad physical condition out in Siberia and needed help.. . .

So, we said Orlov."[62] After the Soviets agreed to make Orlov part of the deal, they stripped him of his citizenship and released him into exile; Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs Rozanne Ridgway called Helsinki Watch's New York office and said, speaking of Helsinki Watch's Executive Director Jeri Laber, "Tell Jeri she's got her man."[63]

Orlov's inclusion in a prisoner exchange orchestrated by the American and Soviet governments highlights the importance of transnational approaches to fully understanding the Cold War. A traditional approach might see Orlov only as a pawn in one of a series of human trades between the superpowers. A different perspective could offer answers to the questions, how did Orlov capture State Department attention? Why was Helsinki Watch consulted on bilateral prisoner exchanges? The answers requires analyzing Orlov's place in Soviet dissident movements, his links with activists in the West, and growing attention to human rights violations in East–West relations. Orlov initially angered Soviet authorities when he gave an anti-party speech in the first months of Nikita Khrushchev's thaw.[64] After a long, informal exile in Armenia, Orlov returned to Moscow in 1972 and connected with other dissidents there. He worked to establish a Soviet Amnesty International Group and was soon fired from his job as a nuclear physicist for his activism.[65] With little left to lose at that point, Orlov became increasingly involved in what he termed the "democratic human rights movement."[66] Along with Jewish refusenik Anatoly Shcharansky, Orlov identified a way to reframe the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and use it to advocate for improved human rights conditions in the Soviet Union.[67] Their innovation—to establish a group of private citizens who would openly work to assist the Soviet government in ensuring the agreement was fulfilled - inspired a wave of Helsinki monitoring groups across Eastern Europe and beyond. Through transnational connections formed before and in the wake of Orlov and Shcharansky's arrest and imprisonment, human rights violations became a prominent element of Cold War diplomacy.[68] Without Orlov, the Helsinki Final Act could have had minimal long-term influence when in fact it contributed to the peaceful end of the Cold War. Neglecting actors, such as Orlov, who work outside traditional organs of power offers us an incomplete picture of the Cold War. Such stories would be left out without a transnational approach because the influence of nonstate actors cannot be measured solely through governmental records but also requires work with sources produced by human rights activists and organisations. Researching human rights activism in repressive countries presents additional challenges as creating, distributing, or preserving reports on Soviet human rights violations were cause for arrest, meaning that historians are often forced to rely on fragmentary evidence—often the records that remain are those successfully smuggled out of the country.[69] Nonetheless, international history will be worse off if it does not evolve to take account of these additional stories.

Despite the new paths of historical research opened by transnational thinking, considerable work remains to integrate such approaches into mainstream international history. Without methodological innovation, however, much could be lost. For example, a traditional approach limits our ability to understand the influence of human rights activists and concern for human rights on international relations during the Cold War, as evidenced by the fact that most notable recent histories of the Cold War barely mention human rights. For example, John Lewis Gaddis' *The Cold War* discusses the issue in connection with only four topics: the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, Jimmy Carter's foreign policy, the United Nations, and the Helsinki Final Act.[70] Walter LaFeber's *America, Russia, and the Cold War* contains only one reference to human rights, in connection with Jimmy Carter's foreign policy.[71] Warren I. Cohen's *America in the Age of Soviet Power* looks at human rights as they related to Carter's foreign policy, the Soviet Union generally, and the Jackson-Vanik Amendment.[72] Melvyn Leffler's *For the Soul of Mankind* included more discussion of human rights, drawing connections to the issue in the context of discussions of Soviet dissidents, religious freedom, Carter's foreign policy, the Helsinki Final Act, China, and the Jackson-Vanik Amendment.[73] Finally, George Herring's much lengthier account of United States foreign relations (the text is just short of a thousand pages) examines human rights in connection with the aforementioned topics as well as the Iraq War, Latin America (which seems like a serious omission in the other volumes), social activism, the Trilateral Commission, and United States violations, amongst others.[74] I have written elsewhere that historical surveys are particularly easy targets as even the most accomplished historians can muddle finer details and nuances when working across a broad span of history.[75] Nonetheless, it is important to ask why so many of the most prominent, single volume histories of the Cold War ascribe such a limited role for human rights in the history of the conflict.

Understanding that authors of synthetic histories need to make difficult choices regarding which actors, issues, and events warrant our attention, we also need to ask ourselves, what stories are left out of the Cold War if we ignore human rights? Certainly, the development of a transnational movement against apartheid in South Africa would be neglected.[76] In addition, these accounts largely ignore the role of dissidents and their transnational supporters in ending the Cold War. Similarly, mothers, journalists, and lawyers distraught about the repression in the Southern Cone and the ways in which their activism shaped debates about international assistance, the purview of the United Nations, and later transitional justice are all elided from these accounts of the Cold War despite recent works demonstrating their significance.[77] To offer an additional example, the genocide in Cambodia is largely neglected in the accounts discussed above. Considering the human rights dimension in this case would give a very different picture of the normalisation of Sino–American relations.[78]

We also need to interrogate the few moments at which human rights are already seen as part of the Cold War more critically, which in the surveys I examined included the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, Carter's foreign policy, and Tiananmen Square. For example, accounts of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment are often written as a battle between Senator Henry F. Jackson (D-WA) and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, set within a broader legislative-executive branch rivalry and questions about the morality of détente.[79] A transnational approach would examine how this legislation was influenced by Jewish activists in the Soviet Union, Israel, United States, and elsewhere as well as how the amendment and its sponsors were perceived in those communities. Historians examining this legislation from a transnational vantage point would also explore how the amendment fit into broader human rights and religious activism at the time. Similarly, a transnational history of the crackdown on protests in Tiananmen Square would give greater attention to the student protesters—their national and international objectives, the ties that connected them, and how cognisant they were of broader interest in their cause. It would also examine the role of the international media in capturing attention for the demonstrations and translating of the students' demands and aspirations for external observers. In addition, thinking transnationally about Tiananmen would necessitate attention to young people sent into exile or who wished not to return to China in the crackdown's wake; transnational connections made with one another, human rights activists, or political leaders in subsequent years would be significant to understanding the international legacies of Tiananmen.

During his presidency and immediately thereafter, Carter's approach to human rights was criticised from the right as naïve, misguided, and inconsistent. Jeane Kirkpatrick delivered one of the harshest evaluations of his policy in "Dictators and Double Standards"; she claimed that Carter disproportionately focused on the records of American allies, potentially undermining American security.[80] In the intervening years, particularly as more documents become available at the Carter presidential library in Atlanta, Carter's record on human rights has been repeatedly reassessed. Not surprisingly, many have found aspects of his attention to human rights praiseworthy.[81] Interestingly, there also have been reappraisals of Carter's policy, from further to the left, that have it insufficiently robust.[82] In diplomatic historian Kenton Clymer's view, the Carter administration, particularly National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, prioritised normalising relations with China over condemnation or action in response to the Cambodian genocide. Although Carter did label Cambodia "the worst violator of human rights in the world today" in April 1978, the denunciation was slow in coming and not followed with any American action.[83] Like Kirkpatrick, Clymer criticises Carter for episodic attention to human rights: "From time to time and place to place, the defense of human rights was a significant feature of Jimmy Carter's foreign policy. But it was not a primary consideration

for National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, and, to the extent that Carter allowed Brzezinski to formulate foreign policy, the defense of human rights faded as a central administration concern. Nowhere was this more clearly seen than in Cambodia."[84] To highlight these stories, which I view as essential to understanding the Cold War, we need transnational approaches. For example, how was Carter's emphasis on human rights perceived, not just in ministries and presidential palaces in foreign capitals, but by human rights activists themselves or their families who were often drawn into the cause as well? What do their records and testimonies say about the degree to which his policy should be judged as consistent or effective? Thinking transnationally will help international historians of the Cold War uncover deeper histories of policies and events assumed to be familiar, just as such approaches reveal relatively unknown individuals, like Yuri Orlov, as key actors in the Cold War.

Calls for international historians to adopt transnational approaches are not new; many of the seminal articles pressing this point date to the mid-2000s. Yet, transnational perspectives, such as those that enable fuller understanding of the significance of human rights, have not gained mainstream acceptance. As more scholars increasingly show how, for example, human rights activism influenced foreign policy and state-to-state relations—more traditional concerns of international historians—transnational approaches will cease to be seen as a "new" perspective on international history.

NOTES

I wish to thank Axel Körner, Meredith Oyen, Ryan Irwin, Katharina Rietzler, Daniel Fine, and Simon Macdonald for their suggestions and feedback on this article. I also express appreciation to the Friends of Princeton University Library, which generously funded research that informed this piece. Finally, I am grateful that my PhD supervisor, Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, who supported my work in all of the new directions it took me.

1. For one recent survey of these new trends, see Patrick Finney, ed., *Palgrave Advances in International History* (Basingstoke, 2005).

2. In addition to Katharina Rietzler's contribution to this special issue, David Sim presented his work on the Irish Question and Anglo–American relations in the mid-nineteenth century.

3. Here Jonathan Winkler's description of transnational history, like global history or international history, as an approach or "a kind of analytical viewpoint, one that lends itself to multiple geographic or temporal fields" clarifies these distinctions. Jonathan Winkler, "Terminology: Diplomatic History, International History, and Transnationalism," H-Diplo (25 March 2009). Odd Arne Westad's Bernath Lecture also offers thoughtful reflection on this question. Odd Arne Westad, "The New International History of the Cold War: Three (Possible) Paradigms," *Diplomatic History* 24:4 (Fall 2000): pp. 551–65.

4. See for example, Sally Marks, "Terminology: Diplomatic History, International History, and Transnationalism," H-Diplo (19 March 2009).

5. Randolph S. Bourne, "Trans-national America," *Atlantic* 118:1 (July 1916): pp. 86–97. The first reference in English may be Georg Curtius's "Every language is fundamentally something transnational" noted in an 1868 edition of the *Princeton Review*. See Pierre-Yves Saunier, "Transnational," in Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier, eds., *The Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History* (Basingstoke, 2009), p. 1047. H. Glenn Penny has argued that Adolf Bastian's work on ethnology should also be seen as an antecedent to transnational history. H. Glenn Penny, "Transnational History in Historical Perspective: Bastian's Museum Project," in Manuela Fischer, Peter Bolz, and Susan Kamel, eds., *Adolf Bastian and His*

Universal Archive of Humanity: The Origins of German Anthropology (New York, 2007), p. 50, 53. I thank Simon Macdonald for bringing both references to my attention.

6. Mary Louise Roberts, "The Transnationalization of Gender History," *History and Theory* 44:3 (October 2005): p. 457; and Ian Tyrrell, "Reflections on the Transnational Turn in United States History: Theory and Practice," *Journal of Global History* 4 (2009): pp. 453–74.

7. Zara Steiner has suggested it is a "new approach to diplomatic history." Zara Steiner, "On Writing International History: Chaps, Maps and Much More," *International Affairs* 73:3 (1997): pp. 531.

8. Kjell Skjelsbaek, "The Growth of International Nongovernmental Organization in the Twentieth Century," in Robert Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., ed. *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge, 1971), p. 72.

9. William I. Robinson, "Beyond Nation-State Paradigms: Globalization, Sociology, and the Challenge of Transnational Studies," *Sociological Forum* 13:4 (1998): p. 562.

10. Akira Iriye, "Transnational History," *Contemporary European History* 13:2 (May 2004): p. 211.

11. Antoinette Burton, ed., *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking with and through the Nation* (Durham, 2003).

12. Michael Kazin, "The Vogue of Transnationalism," *Raritan* 26:3 (Winter 2007): p. 158.

13. Patricia Clavin, "Time, Manner, Place: Writing Modern European History in Global, Transnational and International Contexts," *European History Quarterly* 40:4 (2010): p. 625; and Tyrrell, "Reflections on the Transnational Turn in United States History," p. 45.

14. Micol Seigel, "Beyond Compare: Comparative Method after the Transnational Turn," *Radical History Review* 91 (Winter 2005): p. 63.

15. Patricia Clavin, "Defining Transnationalism," *Contemporary European History* 14:4 (2005): p. 422.

16. Clavin, "Defining Transnationalism," p. 425; Joseph S. Nye, Jr. and Robert O. Keohane, "Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction," in Keohane and Nye, *Transnational Relations and World Politics*, p. xii.

17. Nye, and Keohane, "Transnational Relations and World Politics," pp. xvii–xxi.

18. "AHR Conversation: On Transnational History," *American Historical Review* (December 2006): p. 1454.

19. Jason Parker, "'Capital of the Caribbean': The African American–West Indian 'Harlem Nexus' and the Transnational Drive for Black Freedom, 1940–1948," *Journal of African American History* 89:2 (Spring 2004): pp. 98–9. See also Robin D. G. Kelley, "'But a Local Phase of a World Problem': Black History's Global Vision, 1883–1950," *Journal of American History* 86:3 (December 1999): pp. 1045–77.

20. Nina Tannenwald, "Ideas and Explanation: Advancing the Theoretical Agenda," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7:2 (Spring 2005): pp. 13–42; Robert D. English, "The Sociology of New Thinking: Elites, Identity Change, and the End of the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7:2 (Spring 2005): pp. 43–80; Andrew Bennett, "The Guns That Didn't Smoke: Ideas and the Soviet Non-Use of Force in 1989," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7:2 (Spring 2005): pp. 81–109; Tuomas Forsberg, "Economic Incentives, Ideas, and the End of the Cold War: Gorbachev and German Unification," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7:2 (Spring 2005): pp. 142–64; Daniel C. Thomas, "Human Rights Ideas, the Demise of Communism, and the End of the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 7:2 (Spring 2005): pp. 110–41; Robert D. English, "Power, Ideas, and New Evidence on the Cold War's End," *International Security* 26:4 (Spring 2002): pp. 70–92; Jeffrey T. Checkel, *Ideas and International Political Change: Soviet/Russian Behavior and the End of the Cold War* (New Haven, 1997); Sarah E. Mendelson, *Changing Course: Ideas, Politics, and the Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan* (Princeton:, 1998); and Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Ideas Do Not Float Freely: Transnational Coalitions, Domestic Structures, and the End of the Cold War," *International Organization* (Spring 1994): pp. 185–214.

21. Bradley R. Simpson, "Denying the 'First Right': The United States, Indonesia, and the Ranking of Human Rights by the Carter Administration, 1976–1980," *The International History Review* 31: 4 (December 2009): pp. 798–826; and Barbara Keys, "Anti-Torture Politics: Amnesty International, the Greek Junta, and the Origins of the Human Rights 'Boom' in the United States," in Akira Iriye, Petra Goedde and William I. Hitchcock, eds. *The Human Rights Revolution: An International History* (Oxford, 2012): pp. 201–21.

22. If, as Charles Maier argued, the era of "territoriality" ended in 1970, perhaps that explains why we increasingly need transnational approaches to explore the years that followed. Charles S. Maier, "Consigning the Twentieth Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era," *American Historical Review* 105 (June 2000): pp. 807–31; and Michael J. Hogan, "The 'Next Big Thing': The Future

of Diplomatic History in a Global Age," *Diplomatic History* 28:1 (January 2004): p. 1. See also Niall Ferguson et al., eds., *The Shock of the Global: The 1970s in Perspective* (London, 2010).

23. Iriye, "Transnational History," pp. 219–20.

24. Richard White, "The Nationalization of Nature," *Journal of American History* 86:3 (December 1999): pp. 976–86; and Ian Tyrrell, "American Exceptionalism in an Age of International History," *American Historical Review* 96:4 (October 1991): p. 1048.

25. Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb Volume 3: A History of the World Disarmament Movement, 1971 to the Present* (Stanford, 2003); and Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces: The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War* (Ithaca, 1999).

26. Tony Smith, "New Bottles for New Wine: A Pericentric Framework for the Study of the Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 24:4 (Fall 2000): pp. 567–91.

27. Smith, "New Bottles for New Wine," p. 568.

28. Paul Chamberlin, *The Global Offensive: The United States, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Making of the Post–Cold War Order* (New York, 2012); Keys, "Anti-Torture Politics;" and Paul Rubinson, "'Crucified on a Cross of Atoms': Scientists, Politics, and the Test Ban Treaty," *Diplomatic History* 35:2 (April 2011): pp. 313–349.

29. I thank Piers Ludlow for this imagery. N. Piers Ludlow, "H-Diplo Roundtable Review of Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War*," H-Diplo H-Diplo http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/roundtables/PDF/Roundtable-XIII-32.pdf (16 July 2012).

30. Smith, "New Wine in New Bottles," p. 571.

31. Leopoldo Nuti, ed. *The Crisis of Détente in Europe: From Helsinki to Gorbachev, 1975–1985* (New York, 2009); and Angela Romano, "The EPC Main Task: Fostering Détente in Europe," in P. Villaume and O. A. Westad eds., *Perforating the Iron Curtain: European Détente, Transatlantic Relations, and the Cold War, 1965–1985* (Copenhagen, 2010), pp. 123–141.

32. Akira Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley, 2002), p. 158.

33. Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces*; and Sarah B. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (New York, 2011). In Akira Iriye's view, the international organizations and international nongovernmental organizations laid a framework to take advantage of instability in the Cold War in the 1960s: "The intergovernmental organizations and international nongovernmental organizations did not change the geopolitical drama of the Cold War; rather, they were quietly writing a scenario for another drama. In that sense, international organizations were even more subversive of the Cold War than the spies and double agents who worked within that framework. And so, when the Cold War began to be undermined during the 1960s, these organizations were already there, ready to step in and lead the world in a different direction." He argues the protests against the Vietnam war in the 1960s can be seen as connected to larger forces developing a transnational movement for amongst other things, the protection of human rights. Iriye, *Global Community*, pp. 94–5, 115.

34. Smith, "New Wine in New Bottles," p. 576.

35. Akira Iriye, "A Century of NGOs," *Diplomatic History* 23:3 (Summer 1999): p. 427.

36. The numbers rise steadily from 427 in 1940 to 2,296 by 1970. *Ibid.,* p. 428.

37. *Ibid.,* p. 429.

38. For excellent work on anti-nuclear activism, see Lawrence Wittner's three volume history: Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb: One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement Through 1953* (Stanford, 1995); Lawrence S. Wittner, *The Struggle Against the Bomb: Resisting the Bomb—A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1954–1970* (Stanford, 1997); and Wittner, *Toward Nuclear Abolition*.

39. Mark Lytle, "Review Essay: NGOs and the New Transnational Politics," *Diplomatic History* 25:1 (Winter 2001): p. 127.

40. Iriye, "A Century of NGOs," p. 432.

41. Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, "Cold War," in Iriye and Saunier, eds., *Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, pp. 174–7.

42. Emily S. Rosenberg, "Consumer Capitalism and the End of the Cold War," in Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad, eds., *Cambridge History of the Cold War: Volume III Endings* (New York, 2010), pp. 489–512.

43. Hogan, "The 'Next Big Thing,'" p. 14.

44. Thomas W. Zeiler, "The Diplomatic History Bandwagon: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History* (March 2009): p. 1056.

45. Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York, 2004).

46. Examples include the records of Amnesty International at the Institute for Social History, the records of Human Rights Watch at Columbia University, and the papers of Roger Baldwin at Princeton University.

47. Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (London, 2010), p. 3.

48. *Ibid.,* p. 154.

49. *Ibid.,* pp. 148–9.

50. *Ibid.,* p. 149.

51. "Development of Amnesty International," IEC July 1975 Agenda No. 15 (a), IEC 1975, Folder 416, Amnesty International International Secretariat Archives, [International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam, The Netherlands]. Moyn's book often portrays attention to human rights as a response to top-down impetus. Moyn, *The Last Utopia,* pp. 138–9, 149, 154.

52. Sarah B. Snyder, "The Rise of Human Rights During the Johnson Years," in Francis J. Gavin and Mark Atwood Lawrence, eds., *The United States and Dawn of the Post–Cold War Era* (Oxford, forthcoming); Sarah B. Snyder, "'A Call for U.S. Leadership': Congressional Activism on Human Rights," *Diplomatic History* (forthcoming); and Aryeh Neier, *The International Human Rights Movement: A History* (Oxford, 2012).

53. Jean H. Quataert, *Advocating Dignity: Human Rights Mobilizations in Global Politics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), p. 7.

54. Iriye, *Global Community*, p. 108.

55. Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, 1998), p. 103.

56. *Ibid.*

57. Leo P. Ribuffo, "Is Poland a Soviet Satellite?: Gerald Ford, the Sonnenfeldt Doctrine, and the Election of 1976," *Diplomatic History* 14 (Summer 1990): p. 394.

58. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War*, p. 136.

59. For further discussion see Sarah B. Snyder, "The Defeat of Ernest Lefever's Nomination: Keeping Human Rights on the United States Foreign Policy Agenda," in Bevan Sewell and Scott Lucas, eds., *Challenging US Foreign Policy: America and the World in the Long Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke, 2011): pp. 136–61.

60. I want to be clear that I am not making universal claims here.

61. Reagan refused to execute an equal exchange of Zakharov for Daniloff because it could endanger future American journalists. In. V. Dubinin, *Vremia Peremen: Zapiski Posla v SshA* (Moscow, 2003), pp. 100, 117; Nicholas Daniloff, *Of Spies and Spokesmen: My Life as a Cold War Correspondent* (Columbia, 2008), 1–5, 366–84; and George Shultz Interview, Folder 2, Box 3, [Don Oberdorfer Papers, Public Policy Papers, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library, Princeton, New Jersey].

62. Aryeh Neier Interview, 24 April 2008.

63. Ridgway later said, "One of the nicest phone calls I was ever able to make was to call Helsinki Watch in New York and tell the staff there that Yuri Orlov would be leaving the Soviet Union." Yuri Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts: Memoirs of a Russian Life* trans. Thomas P. Whitney (New York, 1991), pp. 296–8; Ronald Reagan, *An American Life* (New York, 1990), p. 667; and Jeri Laber, *The Courage of Strangers: Coming of Age with the Human Rights Movement* (New York, 2002), pp. 253–5, 258.

64. Orlov, *Dangerous Thoughts,* pp. 118–22.

65. *Ibid.,* pp. 160–8.

66. *Ibid.,* pp. 174.

67. Anatoly Shcharansky changed his name to Natan Sharansky upon his emigration to Israel. I have chosen to use the original spelling of his name when discussing his activities in the Soviet Union.

68. For further discussion, see Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War,* pp. 53–80, 246.

69. In this respect, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Samizdat Archive at the Open Society Archives in Budapest is an invaluable resource.

70. John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War* (London, 2007).

71. Walter LaFeber, *America, Russia, and the Cold War*, 9th edition (New York, 2002).

72. Warren I. Cohen, *America in the Age of Soviet Power* (Cambridge, 1993).

73. To be fair, Leffler's book was not intended to be a comprehensive survey but rather to analyze what he views as key moments in the Cold War. Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (New York, 2007).

74. George Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776* (Oxford, 2008).

75. Sarah B. Snyder, "H-Diplo review of Richard Davy, 'Helsinki Myths: Setting the Record Straight on the Final Act of the CSCE, 1975,'" http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/reviews/PDF/AR231.pdf

76. Audie Klotz, "Norms Reconstituting Interests: Global Racial Equality and U.S. Sanctions Against South Africa," *International Organization* 49:3 (Summer 1995): pp. 451–78; and Audie Klotz, *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle Against Apartheid* (Ithaca, 1995); and Simon Stevens, "The Politics of Anti-Apartheid Activism in Britain in the Long 1970s," (paper presented at "A New Global Morality?: The Politics of Human Rights and Humanitarianism in the 1970s," Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies, Freiburg, Germany, June 2010).

77. See for example Quataert, *Advocating Dignity*.

78. This facet to the United States drive for normalization with China is unaddressed in much of the literature. For example, see Rosemary Foot, "Prizes Won, Opportunities Lost: The U.S. Normalization of Relations with China, 1972–1979," in William C. Kirby, Robert S. Ross, and Gong Li, eds., *Normalization of U.S.–China Relations: An International History* (London, 2005). Samantha Power's work is one exception. Samantha Power, *"A Problem from Hell": America in the Age of Genocide* New York, 2002), pp. 87–154.

79. Jussi Hanhimäki, *The Flawed Architect: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (New York, 2004), pp. 340–2.

80. Jeane Kirkpatrick, "Dictators and Double Standards," *Commentary* (1979): pp. 34–45

81. See for example, David F. Schmitz and Vanessa Walker, "Jimmy Carter and the Foreign Policy of Human Rights: The Development of a Post–Cold War Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History* 28:1 (January 2004): pp. 113–143; Douglas Brinkley, "The Rising Stock of Jimmy Carter: The 'Hands on' Legacy of Our Thirty-ninth President," *Diplomatic History* 20:4 (October 1996): pp. 505–530; and William Michael Schmidli,. "Institutionalizing Human Rights in U.S. Foreign Policy: U.S.–Argentine Relations, 1976–1980." *Diplomatic History* 35:2 (April 2011): pp. 351–78.

82. Two prominent examples are Simpson, "Denying the 'First Right'"; and Kenton Clymer, "Jimmy Carter, Human Rights and Cambodia," *Diplomatic History* 27: 2 (April 2003): pp. 245–78.

83. Clymer is also critical of the American vote to seat the Khmer Rouge at the United Nations and of the restrictions on delivery of food assistance to Cambodia. Clymer, "Jimmy Carter, Human Rights and Cambodia," pp. 253, 266, 273–5.

84. *Ibid.,* p. 278.