Introduction

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On September 11, 1990, less than a year since the fall of the Berlin Wall, President George H. W. Bush declared in his address to the joint houses of the US Congress:

> We stand today at a unique and extraordinary moment. . . . a new world order . . . can emerge: a new era – freer from the threat of terror, stronger in the pursuit of justice, and more secure in the quest for peace. An era in which the nations of the world, East and West, North and South, can prosper and live in harmony. A hundred generations have searched for this elusive path to peace, while a thousand wars raged across the span of human endeavor. Today that new world is struggling to be born, a world quite different from the one we've known. A world where the rule of law supplants the rule of the jungle. A world in which nations recognize the shared responsibility for freedom and justice. A world where the strong respect the rights of the weak.[1]

Perhaps no passage captures better the promise of limitless transformation of world politics offered by the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union as one of two superpowers. Having prevailed in its geopolitical competition with Moscow, Washington now sought to seize the moment and fully realize the vision that President Woodrow Wilson had laid out seventy-three years earlier when, also addressing the joint houses of Congress to build support for war against Germany, he stated:

> The world must be made safe for democracy . . . . Peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them.[2]

[1] President George H. W. Bush, "Address before a Joint Session of Congress," September 11, 1990.
[2] President Woodrow Wilson, *War Messages*, 65th Cong., 1st Sess. Senate Doc. No. 5, Serial No. 7264, Washington, DC, 1917; 3–8, available at: https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Wilson's_War_Message_to_Congress.

Bush's long-term vision was one of a world in which unparalleled American power underpinned a global liberal international order based on universal principles of human freedom – or at least on the United States' interpretation of those principles. It was in part this vision that led the United States to act forcefully in the first crisis of the post–Cold War, triggered by Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990; a crisis that provided the backdrop against which Bush delivered his "new world order" speech. After a moment of initial hesitation, the United States decided to act decisively to expel Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

In contrast, the Soviet Union, roiled by the political convulsions that would ultimately lead to its demise sixteen months later, was vividly hampered in its ability to project its influence. Moscow no longer acted as a superpower in one of the key theaters of the Cold War, the Middle East. Having offered massive support for the Iraqi war effort in the last phase of the Iran–Iraq War up to its end in 1988, the Soviet Union was now unwilling and unable to support its protégé in the Persian Gulf, opting instead for the role of mediator.[3] The position of the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev during the crisis was that "we cannot separate from the Americans, no matter how much we might want to avoid war."[4] Even in this diminished role, the USSR failed to achieve its goal of avoiding US military action. On January 15, 1991, a broad international coalition led by the United States started major military action against the Iraqi army – the fifth largest in the world, armed mostly with Soviet-supplied weaponry. Iraqi forces were defeated in six weeks. Casualty counts reflected the imbalance in the two sides' military effectiveness: more than 20,000 Iraqi soldiers died; US forces suffered 154 combat-related deaths.[5] Stunned by this outcome, veteran Iraqi foreign minister Tariq Aziz declared, "We don't have a patron anymore. . . . If we still had the Soviets as our patron, none of this would have happened."[6]

Confirmed on the sands of the Kuwaiti desert, the end of the Cold War seemed to be nothing short of a revolution in world affairs. For better or worse,

[3] On Soviet support for Iraq after 1986, see Mohiaddin Meshbahi, "Soviet Policy towards Iran-Iraq War," in Carl G. Jacobsen, ed., *Soviet Foreign Policy: New Dynamics, New Themes* (Basingstoke UK: The MacMillan Press, 1989), 163–181, esp. 177–180.

[4] Gorbachev's position was mentioned by his top foreign policy advisor, Anatoly S. Chernyaev, in his diary entry for October 31, 1998, in National Security Archive (NSA) Electronic Briefing Book (EBB) 720, "Inside the Gorbachev-Bush 'Partnership' on the First Gulf War 1990," Doc. 1, 5.

[5] On Iraqi Gulf War casualties, see Carl Conetta, *The Wages of War: Iraqi Combatant and Noncombatant Fatalities in the 2003 Conflict*, "Appendix 2: Iraqi Combatant and Noncombatant Fatalities in the 1991 Gulf War," Project on Defense Alternatives Research Monograph # 8, October 20, 2003, available at: www.comw.org/pda/031orm8ap2.html#2.%20Iraqi%20military%20personnel%20killed%20during%20the%20air. On US and coalition casualties, see James C. Helmkamp, "United States Military Casualty Comparisons during the Persian Gulf War," *Journal of Occupational Medicine* 36, no. 6 (1994): 609–615.

[6] Quoted in Thomas L. Friedman and Patrick E. Tyler, "From the First, US Resolve to Fight," *New York Times*, March 2, 1991.

the "master cleavage" that had organized global politics since the end of World War II was no longer operative. Just as US leaders celebrated their country's victory in the geopolitical contest against the Soviet Union, Russian leaders came to see the end of the Cold War and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union as a watershed moment for Russian influence in world affairs. President Vladimir V. Putin would later call it "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century."[7]

This revolution seemed to affect all areas of international life, offering the promise of radical transformation in world politics. Great-Power competition, the kind in which different social, political, economic, and, ultimately, ideological systems competed with each other, now seemed to be a thing of the past. Liberal democratic capitalist societies had prevailed in what seemed at the time to have been their final showdown against their authoritarian alternatives. The United States had completed its inexorable progression from settler state in North America to regional hegemon in the Western hemisphere, to leader of the Free World, to becoming the sole, undisputed global power.

This new world order was captured in Charles Krauthammer's proclamation of a new "unipolar moment" in world politics.[8] Perhaps for the first time in history, one state and one state only – the United States – could be called a Great Power. From the viewpoint of the early 1990s, no other country had the economic or military wherewithal to compete with America. Russia retreated from world affairs to lick its post-Soviet wounds. China was still in the early stages of what would prove to be a stunning period of economic development.

The revolution in world affairs was not limited to the realities of material power, however. It extended, with even greater importance perhaps, to ideological competition. In a highly influential article published in 1989, Francis Fukuyama proclaimed "the end of history," by which he meant nothing short of the final victory of Western ideas in the Hegelian process of human development.[9] With Soviet-style Marxist socialism defeated, no other alternatives to liberal market democracy were seen on the horizon – and none were thought to lurk over this horizon.

The end of the Cold War, therefore, indexed not only the final defeat of the West's existing global competitors but, at a deeper level, also signaled the impossibility of new competitors emerging to challenge the Western liberal order. This opened the possibility – almost the necessity, for lack of viable alternatives – of a global liberal international order; one that encompassed not only the West but gradually spread throughout the globe. It was under this glow of inexorability that US policymakers soon started their attempts to turn Russia into a responsible stakeholder in this order. By fostering Western-style political and economic reforms during the mandates of Russian president

[7] Quoted in Associated Press, "Putin: Soviet Collapse a 'Genuine Tragedy,'" April 25, 2005.
[8] Charles Krauthammer, "The Unipolar Moment", *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 1 (1990/1991): 23–33.
[9] Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" *The National Interest*, no. 16 (1989): 3–18.

Boris Yeltsin, the United States tried to turn Russia into a sort of "larger Poland." Likewise, US policymakers worked hand in hand with Chinese leaders to foster greater integration of China into the global economy and, more broadly, the emerging global liberal international order, culminating with the US-sponsored Chinese accession to the World Trade Organization in 2001.

The new world created by the end of the Cold War also fostered in the West optimistic visions of the rising power of nongovernmental and international organizations, at the expense of the modern nation-state, now decidedly démodé. Indeed, Western governments generally welcomed this view, hoping to enlist these organizations in the spread of liberal market-based democracy.

Seen from the vantage point of the 1990s, then, the end of the Cold War seemed to be that rarest of events in world politics: an unalloyed good, ending tyranny over large swathes of the world's population and offering the promise of freedom, development, and perpetual peace to all humankind.

But it was not to be. The idea that the post–Cold War global order would be radically different from the past was abandoned in a process similar to how one of the characters in Hemingway's novels described his personal bankruptcy: "Gradually, then suddenly." The first signs of trouble appeared right after the turn of the century with the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11, 2001, and the United States' unfettered response, invading Afghanistan and then Iraq. Over the course of the following decade, US–Russian relations went decidedly sour. Then, just as Brexit, the Trump presidency, and a wider populist wave unsettled the West from within, Beijing became more assertive. Bush's vision of a "new world order. . . . in which the nations of the world, East and West, North and South, can prosper and live in harmony" turned out to be a mirage.

Three decades after the end of the Cold War, the promise of progress in world politics that so prominently marked the period of 1989/91 and the events surrounding the end of the Cold War – better US–Russian relations, Chinese integration into the liberal international order, the gradual dissolution of security conflicts and their replacement with a global security community engaged in cooperative growth – feel like distant relics. Instead, many of the core features of contemporary world politics smack of the period preceding the demise of the Soviet empire: hostile relations between the United States and Russia; talk of a new US–China "Cold War."

The question we are left with, then, is what about world politics did change with the end of the Cold War, and what did not? What were the transformations that the Soviet geopolitical collapse did indeed bring about and what are, in contrast, the continuities we can find across the 1989/91 divide? Our volume focuses on these questions. In the pages that follow, we seek to peel away the assumption that the end of the Cold War spurred radical change in the international system and replace it with a genuine openness to the sources of both change and continuity across the Cold War/post–Cold War divide.

Beginning from a position of radical uncertainty about change and continuity in the end of the Cold War introduces numerous analytical benefits. First, agnosticism about the effects of the end of the Cold War on world politics brings the importance of the changes and continuities that we *do* ultimately identify into sharper relief. Once radical change is no longer assumed, the changes in the international system that did take place in the late 1980s become all the more significant. And once a "new world order" is no longer part of "the horizon of the taken-for-granted," the continuities that persisted in world politics become objects of interrogation in their own right.[10] Examining change and continuity side by side denaturalizes both phenomena, and in so doing, increases their explanatory power.

In holding change and continuity across the 1989 divide in balance, we also aim to investigate the contingencies that determined both sets of outcomes. Scholars have long emphasized that the dramatic changes of the late 1980s in world politics were contingent, and this is no doubt true. Many of the chapters that follow will reinforce this conclusion. A focus on both change and continuity, moreover, will also allow our volume to push this conclusion further by examining what we might call the "contingencies of the continuities" – that is, the extent to which the continuities we identify in this volume were contingent outcomes. Many of our chapters allow us to ask how the 1989–1991 period might have become a stronger point of rupture in the international system by identifying paths not taken – on NATO expansion, on US unilateralism and overextension since 1989, on the many possible paths of China's reform and modernization. Collectively, the chapters in this volume allow scholars to evaluate the ways in which the end of the Cold War could have produced a more extensive and durable rupture in the international system, and the reasons it did not.

Finally, in examining both change and continuity across the Cold War's end, we aim to trace the many lineages of contemporary international politics that stretch far back into the Cold War period. Whether it is the ways in which nuclear weapons continue to structure international politics (and date back to 1945) or the role of global financial markets, which continue to influence the fate of nation-states (and date back to the 1960s), the contemporary international system is the product of forces that took hold long before the Cold War ended. This volume aims to capture the historical development of those forces and trace their persistent influence on the course of global politics. Doing so will allow us to examine the end of the Cold War not just as a *cause* of subsequent changes in world politics, but also as a *consequence* of earlier changes in global affairs.

In doing so, the contributors to this volume intervene in the many scholarly debates that emerged after the Cold War and which assumed that its end

[10] Stuart Hall, "The Toad in the Garden: Thatcherism among the Theorists," in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds., *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 35–73, quoted at 44.

represented a dramatic break in world politics. The first major debate was triggered by the need for scholarly self-examination after having collectively failed to foresee the most momentous peaceful transformation in world politics since the inception of the postwar period almost half a century earlier. This failure led to vigorous self-questioning – and a good amount of bickering – both within and between the several fields involved in the study of US–Soviet relations and world politics more broadly: area studies, history, and political science.[11] What good were these disciplines if they had failed to predict (and were having trouble retrodicting or explaining) the demise of the Soviet Union as a global US competitor? What lessons could be learned from this failure so that it would not be repeated? The core premise of this debate – that the end of the Cold War was indeed a revolution in world politics – deemphasized the continuities between the pre- and post-1989 eras. Consequently, there was at the time scant scholarly questioning of whether in fact the fall of the Berlin Wall symbolized an unquestionable watershed in all aspects of international politics.

The second, related academic debate triggered by the end of the Cold War focused on its causes. What led the Soviet Union to end its geopolitical competition with the United States? Was it the smaller economic base from which Moscow projected power that ultimately proved incapable of sustaining the strain? Was it an ideological shift with Gorbachev's "New Thinking"? Or was the Cold War won by the United States, with Reagan's military buildup playing the key role in overstretching Soviet capabilities? The first wave of scholarship on these questions, hampered by lack of access to archival materials, attempted to answer them through inferential reasoning.[12] As archives in Russia and abroad were gradually opened, historians added their own views.[13] Decades later, this debate is in no way settled, and novel

[11] See, for example, John Lewis Gaddis, "International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War," *International Security* 17, no. 3 (1992/93): 5–58; Richard Ned Lebow, "The Long Peace, the End of the Cold War, and the Failure of Realism," *International Organization* 48, no. 2 (1994): 249–277; William C. Wohlforth, "Realism and the End of the Cold War," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (1994/1995): 91–129; Ned Lebow and William C. Wohlforth, "Realism and the End of the Cold War: Correspondence Exchange," *International Security* 20, no. 2 (1995): 185–187.

[12] See, for example, Fred Chernoff, "The Soviet Retreat and the US Military Buildup," *International Affairs* 67, no. 1 (1991): 111–126; Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, "The International Sources of Soviet Change," *International Security* 16, no. 3 (1991/1992): 74–118; Rey Koslowki and Friedrich Kratochwil, "Understanding Change in International Politics: The Soviet Empire's Demise and the International System," *International Organization* 48, no. 2 (1994): 215–247; Randall Schweller and William C. Wohlforth, "Power Test: Evaluating Realism in Response to the End of the Cold War," *Security Studies* 9, no. 3 (2000): 60–107.

[13] See, for example James G. Wilson, *The Triumph of Improvisation: Gorbachev's Adaptability, Reagan's Engagement, and the End of the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014); Mary Elise Sarotte, *1989: The Struggle to Create Post-Cold War Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009); Mary Elise Sarotte, *Collapse: The Accidental Opening of the Berlin Wall* (New York: Basic Books, 2014); Robert Service, *The End of the Cold War 1985–1991* (New York: Public Affairs, 2015).

contributions continue to improve our understanding of the processes that ultimately resulted in the dissolution of the Soviet empire and the Union itself.

A third scholarly debate soon emerged on the consequences of the end of the Cold War. Was the United States the sole superpower? Or was the world instead multipolar, with the United States merely the most capable of several Great Powers? How had the basic structure of world politics been transformed by the demise of the Soviet empire and how long-lasting would the new situation be? A few scholars saw in the post–Cold War world something radically different, perhaps even unique in the history of the modern state system: the unipolar world coined by Krauthammer, but one that would perhaps last longer than a "moment."[14] Still, it is in this debate that we find the earliest signs that, despite the general overhaul of international politics brought about by the end of the Cold War, important continuities might nevertheless exist across the 1989/91 divide.[15]

The possibility that the momentary preponderance of US power resulting from the abrupt collapse of the Soviet Union might be long-lasting opened a fourth and last debate stemming from the end of the Cold War: What was the adequate strategy for a newly dominant power such as the United States? Should Washington use its unmatched capability to shape the world further in its own image and interests? Should the United States instead focus on building multilateral security communities spanning the globe? Adapting itself to the varying circumstances of the post–Cold War world – the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001; worsening relations with Russia; the gradually eroding situation in the Middle East – this debate on US grand strategy has continued through the past few decades.[16] In fact, the perception that the post–Cold War order collapsed circa 2017 with the twin shocks of Brexit and the election of Donald Trump to the US presidency has greatly reinvigorated this debate, making it one of the most lively in world politics today.[17]

[14] See, for example, William C. Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World," *International Security* 24. no. 1. (1999): 5–41.

[15] See, for example, Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion: Why New Great Powers Will Rise," *International Security* 17, no. 4 (1993): 5–51; Michael Mastanduno, "Preserving the Unipolar Moment: Realist Theories and US Grand Strategy after the Cold War," *International Security* 21, no. 4 (1997): 49–88.

[16] See, for example, Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, "Competing Visions for US Grand Strategy," *International Security* 21, no. 3 (1996/1997): 5–53; Robert J. Art, *A Grand Strategy for America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003); Eugene Gholz, Daryl G. Press, and Harvey M. Sapolsky, "Come Home, America the Strategy of Restraint in the Face of Temptation," *International Security* 21, no. 4 (1997): 5–48; Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, "Don't Come Home, America: The Case against Retrenchment," *International Security* 37, no. 3 (2012/2013): 7–51; Barry R. Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for US Grand Strategy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015).

[17] See, for example, Thomas J. Wright, *All Measures Short of War: The Contest for the Twenty-First Century and the Future of American Power* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017); Jake Sullivan, "More, Less, or Different? Where US Foreign Policy Should – and Shouldn't – Go from Here," *Foreign Affairs* 98, no. 1 (2019): 168.

The contributors to this volume intervene in these debates by pursuing the volume's organizing theme of change and continuity in the end of the Cold War across a rich array of regions, topics, and actors. We have arranged their contributions in three distinct parts: (1) Sources of Continuity and Change, (2) Continuity and Change Across the 1989/1991 Divide, and (3) Toward a New World Order?

SOURCES OF CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

The scholarly debate over the causes of the end of the Cold War began as soon as it was over, and it has continued ever since. Across the disciplines of history and political science, the debate over the causes of transformation has revolved around four questions of degree: To what extent did the causes of change emerge from the East or the West? To what extent did the causes of change emerge from material or ideational factors? To what extent did the causes of change stem from structural conditions of the international system or the agency of particular actors? And finally, to what extent was change at the end of the Cold War a top-down or bottom-up process?

Each scholar of the end of the Cold War has answered these questions in slightly different ways, and collectively, their answers have at times produced wildly divergent explanations. Political scientists working in the constructivist tradition have maintained that it was the Soviet elite's evolving views of the West that paved the way for the rise of Mikhail Gorbachev and ultimately produced the Cold War's end.[18] Realists have responded with equal fervor that it was the growing imbalance of material power between the two blocs that ultimately drove the Kremlin to seek an exit from its military and ideological competition with the West.[19] Historians – always ones to stress the role of contingency and agency in the course of human affairs – have by contrast

[18] Among a large literature, see Robert D. English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, Intellectuals, and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), and Robert English, "Power, Ideas, and New Evidence of the Cold War's End: A Reply to Brooks and Wohlforth," *International Security* 26, no. 4 (Spring 2002): 70–92; Mark Kramer, "Realism, Ideology, and the End of the Cold War: A Reply to William Wohlforth," *Review of International Studies* 27, no. 1 (Jan. 2001): 119–130; Archie Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1996); Matthew Evangelista, *Unarmed Forces: The Transnational Movement to End the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002). On Gorbachev, see William Taubman, *Gorbachev: His Life and Times* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2017). For a historical account that stresses the role of ideology and threat perception, see Melvyn Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007).

[19] Among many articles, see Stephen G. Brooks and William Wohlforth, "Power, Globalization, and the End of the Cold War: Reevaluating a Landmark Case of Ideas," *International Security* 25, no. 3 (Winter 2000–2001), and more recently, William Wohlforth, "No One Loves a Realist Explanation," *International Politics* 48 (2011): 441–459. For a detailed historical account that ultimately argues in favor of the materialist explanation, see Service, *The End of the Cold War*.

stressed the primacy of individuals over structures in determining the Cold War's endgame. Their debate has instead centered on *which* individuals were most important. Long skeptical of the so-called Reagan Victory School, most historians have credited Gorbachev with the essential innovations that ended the superpower competition, and they have stressed the role of "people power" in peacefully bringing down communist governments in 1989.[20]

Several chapters in this volume speak directly to these debates, illuminating the historical processes that surrounded the end of the Cold War. In Chapter 1, Fritz Bartel seeks to advance the debate over material and ideational causes of the end of the Cold War by focusing on the understudied role of sovereign debt in spurring the revolutions of 1989. By the late 1980s, the Eastern Bloc was over $90 billion in debt to Western governments and capitalist banks, and the communist governments in Poland and Hungary were under severe pressure from the International Monetary Fund to implement austerity and structural adjustment programs. Through a focus on the course of events in Warsaw, Bartel illustrates how this Western pressure to impose austerity led to the Polish roundtable, and how the Eastern Bloc's sovereign debt problems deterred Soviet officials from intervening to prevent the collapse of communist governments in Eastern Europe. From this new empirical understanding of the causes of the revolutions of 1989, Bartel then challenges the prevailing scholarly emphasis on Gorbachev's unique and essential role in producing the end of the Cold War. For him, the causes of the Cold War's end are to be found in the material structures of the global economy, structures that were ultimately controlled by Western governments, capitalist banks, and international institutions. Far from being a unique act of an exceptional leader, Bartel contends that Gorbachev's acceptance of the fall of communist governments in Eastern Europe reflected long-running Soviet concerns over the material burden of empire and that for

[20] The most recent treatment that balances all the factors mentioned above is Arne Westad, *The Cold War: A World History* (New York: Basic Books, 2017). For accounts that stress the predominant role of Gorbachev, see especially Vladislav Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind*, and Mark Kramer, "The Demise of the Soviet Bloc," *Journal of Modern History* 83, no. 4 (Dec. 2011): 788–854. Cf. Hal Brands', *Making the Unipolar Moment: US Foreign Policy and the Rise of the Post-Cold War Order* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016). The classic account of the 1989 revolutions is Timothy Garton Ash, *Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague* (New York: Vintage, 1990). For recent scholarship, see Gregory Domber, *Empowering Revolution: America, Poland, and the End of the Cold War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Lazlo Borhi, *Dealing with Dictators: The United States, Hungary, and East Central Europe, 1942–1989* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016); Mary Elise Sarotte, *Collapse: The Accidental Opening of the Berlin Wall* (New York: Basic Books, 2014). For a critique of the "people power" argument, see Stephen Kotkin, *Uncivil Society: 1989 and the Implosion of the Communist Establishment* (New York: Modern Library, 2009).

material reasons alone, many Soviet leaders would have reached the same historic decision to set the Eastern Bloc free.

The continuities and commonalities between Gorbachev and his predecessors in the Kremlin receive further examination in Sergey Radchenko's chapter (Chapter 2). There can be little doubt that the man from Stavropol represented a dramatic break from the approaches of Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev in many ways. Still, Radchenko productively focuses on one commonality that linked Gorbachev to those who came before him: the importance of global leadership, superpower status, and the acceptance of that status by domestic and foreign audiences. Gorbachev's revolutionary break from the Soviet past came from the fact that he understood these long-standing Soviet priorities of leadership and status in new moral and intellectual terms. Through the history of superpower arms control negotiations and the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Radchenko charts how this understanding of global moral leadership under the banner of "New Thinking" profoundly affected Soviet foreign policy and the end of the Cold War. The image of Gorbachev as a uniquely idealistic and peaceful figure in Soviet history is a bedrock of scholarly and popular understandings of how the Cold War ended. But Radchenko makes clear that Gorbachev's concern for moral leadership did not always tilt the scales of Soviet policy in favor of peace and retrenchment. Though his pursuit of the global moral high ground led him to make dramatic concessions in nuclear arms control negotiations with the United States, his abiding concern to maintain the Soviet Union's global credibility and prestige made it *more* difficult for him to withdraw from Afghanistan. Radchenko unspools these tensions in Gorbachev's thinking, and in so doing, sheds new light on Gorbachev's place in the lineage of Soviet and Russian leaders.

Gorbachev was hardly the only world leader during the closing act of the Cold War whose strategies were beset by lasting tensions. Ronald Reagan toed a delicate and, in the eyes of some, bewildering line between bellicosity and engagement during his time in office, and his grand strategy has been the subject of enduring scholarly and political debate ever since. Many conservative policymakers in the post–Cold War period have viewed his statecraft toward the Soviet Union as ample evidence of the United States' ability to bend an adversary to its will through maximum military and economic pressure.[21] Leading historians, by contrast, have either emphasized the importance of Reagan's engagement with Gorbachev or denied that he had a coherent grand strategy at all.[22] In Chapter 3, Simon Miles charts a new path through these varied and contested views to argue that Reagan did indeed possess a coherent

[21] For the classic account of the Reagan Victory School, see Peter Schweizer, *Victory: The Reagan Administration's Secret Strategy That Hastened the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1994).

[22] For a focus on Reagan's engagement, see Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind*. For an argument that Reagan had no grand strategy, see James Graham Wilson, *The Triumph of Improvisation: Gorbachev's Adaptability, Reagan's Engagement, and the End of the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014).