

MICHAEL PATRICK CULLINANE and DAVID RYAN, eds., *U.S. Foreign Policy and the Other* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2015), vi + 244pp.

Michael Cullinane and David Ryan's *U.S. Foreign Policy and the Other* is a welcome contribution to a growing body of literature on the importance of views of the other in American history. In U.S. diplomatic history, this approach constitutes an important facet of an ideological and cultural turn, which has been in the ascendancy at least since Michael Hunt's *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* and which effectively tries to assess in how far cultural attitudes and views—in contrast to more quantifiable national security interests—influence foreign policy making.¹ The contributions to this volume cover the entire span of American history, from the colonial period to the war on terror. Within that timeframe, the articles single out seminal events and periods in U.S. domestic history, but more consistently in its foreign policy, including the American Revolution, the nineteenth century focus on the Western Hemisphere, the Spanish-American War and its aftermath, both World Wars, and the Cold War.

As often with such collections, the quality of the articles varies slightly. Several pieces are broad, sweeping, and conceptual, whereas others focus on more closely delimited historical examples. On the whole, however, the editors have managed to recruit an impressive array of specialists, many of them established specialists in their respective fields. While readers who know their works will undoubtedly be familiar with their arguments, it is still worth re-encountering these contributions in the context of this collection because it is so focused on the issue of hetero-stereotypes, i. e. images of the other, and therefore allows for interesting comparisons. It is also obvious that the editors have taken care to select contributions on some of the key topics and themes that one might expect in such a volume.

Thus, Walter Hixson returns to the origins of the American experience, explaining how “the formation of American national identity depended in part on [the] identifica-

tion of Indians as a unitary and savage foe. Indian removal and indiscriminate warfare thus became synonymous with the formation and achievement of U.S. nationalist aspirations.” (28) Hixson also acknowledges that “opposition to British authority” was the second source of early American national identity, a theme that is further explored in Jack P. Greene's contribution. Greene argues that British settlers in North America were pushed to enact their own national identity because the citizens of the metropole were “othering” them as uncultured and uncouth. This reading complements the work of T.H. Breen and others who have argued that the development of American national identity—and of the split that led to the Revolution—was conditioned by the prior development of a British national identity.²

Moving to the nineteenth century, Marco Mariano offers a sweeping interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine, which managed to establish (at least) two others; initially, the European imperialist powers whom Monroe wanted to discourage from re-establishing their empires in the Western Hemisphere. In later gestations of the doctrine, such as the 1904 Roosevelt Corollary, the “inferior” civilizational status of Latin Americans took center stage, legitimizing repeated U.S. interventions. Mariano also emphasizes how the thinking at the heart of the doctrine was replicated throughout the twentieth century. Kristin Hoganson's article on consumerist geographies in nineteenth century writing on foreign cultures offers an interestingly different approach because she emphasizes not only the negative, but also positive (if exotic) views of the other, which “cultured” middle and upper class Americans sought to emulate in their food, fashion, interior design, etc.—even if only for show and entertainment. In his own contribution to the volume, Cullinane focuses on the imperialism debate after the Spanish-American War and demonstrates how images of the other could be controversially discussed in the United States, with clashing positive and negative images of the Filipino independence struggle. More importantly, by analyzing the heated debate between imperialists and anti-imperialists, Cullinane shows how the “un-

¹ For an earlier essay collection on images of the other, particularly enemies, compare Ragnhild Fiebig von Hase and Ursula Lehmkuhl, *Enemy Images in American History* (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1997).

² T.H. Breen, “Ideology and Nationalism on the Eve of the American Revolution: Revisions Once More in Need of Revising”, *Journal of American History* 84 (1997): 13-39.

American others" (109) could also reside at home, rather than only abroad—an important emphasis that connects back to Hixson's point about Native Americans.

Lloyd Ambrosius's article leads us into the twentieth century, highlighting the limits of Wilsonian internationalism. Crucially, Ambrosius emphasizes that Wilson's promises of national self-determination were not only tempered by post-war compromises with European imperialist powers, but also by the fact that Wilson himself drew "a global color line" (137), believing that non-white races were not entitled to share in his vision. Most articles implicitly stress the fact that American enemy constructions amounted to a *total* antagonism, portraying the enemy other not only as an obstacle to the fulfilment of closely circumscribed and changing national interests, but as mortal enemies of civilization and an idealized democratic order. Michaela Hoenicke Moore's contribution, however, highlights an ironic exception. For much of the Second World War, American propaganda either refrained or was unsuccessful in describing Nazi Germany in such stark terms and in highlighting the responsibility and support of ordinary Germans for the genocidal regime. Given the extent of Germany's crimes, it is baffling indeed that it took until late in the war to paint a more consistently negative picture of a German *Sonderweg*. Transitioning to the post-war period, Geraldine Kidd's case study focuses on Eleanor Roosevelt's strong support for the young Israeli state which, Kidd argues, was at least in part facilitated by a negative view of Arabs and the Palestinians. Given the crucial importance of the Cold War and its various crises for the "American Century," one might have expected more than one article on the subject, but David Ryan's piece actually offers a very bold and sweeping analysis of how the negative image of the communist and Soviet other was constructed and exaggerated, in part to facilitate glossing over the fact that the new "West" incorporated others who were still oppressing colonial peoples in the global South. Ryan concludes that this sweeping framing still continued and continues in the post-Cold War world of global terrorism. With his focus on renowned photo-journalist Philip Jones Griffiths's work during the Vietnam War, Liam Kennedy chooses a different subject matter and source material than the other contributors to this collection, whereas Arshin Adib-Moghaddam concludes

the book by demonstrating "how the particular form of sexualized torture of Iraqi inmates was dependent on...a civilizational discourse permeated by racist depictions of Arabs and Muslims." (223) This concluding article appropriately demonstrates how some key themes of othering, such as the civilizational discourse, persisted throughout much of American history—a common thread in many contributions to this volume.

Adib-Moghaddam's bold statement also summarizes the implicit attitude to the importance of cultural attitudes that most authors in this edited volume share—the view that such attitudes, in this case views of an objectified other, truly matter and that they not only justify, but even shape foreign policy decisions. This finding makes this collection an important contribution to the ongoing discussion of the importance of culture in diplomatic history. Another unifying thread that runs through most of the articles is the realization that hetero-stereotypes tell us at least as much, if not more, about auto-stereotypes, images of the self, than about the other. In his own contribution, Ryan goes as far as postulating that images of the other are more central to American identity creation than they might be in other national contexts: "In the prevailing absence of a stable national identity, the binary constructions have been prevalent and buttressed the definition of a U.S. identity, a nation defined in opposition, rather than indigenously constituted." (185) This statement might be a little too sweeping for my taste, but it helpfully underlines why Americans so frequently defined their antagonisms with others as absolute; namely because they were defined as mortal enemies to the country's core identity, its democratic order and universal mission.

Here, as in other instances, Cullinane and Ryan's collection certainly offers a lot of food for thought. Precisely because the editors have included domestic others in their discussions, however, such as Native Americans in the case of Hixson's contribution, readers may miss other key juxtapositions, especially the seminal conflict over African American slavery and civil rights or that on successive waves of immigration. As already indicated above, specialists on the Cold War may also miss a more explicit discussion on how this key twentieth-century conflict intersected with the other constitutive force of the post-war period—decolonization. This could have provided an opportunity to analyze how im-

ages of an ideological (communist) other were paired with images of an ethnic other, as was the case most prominently in Korea and Vietnam. Nevertheless, this is not really a criticism of an excellent collection that furthers our

understanding of images of the other and that keeps our discussion on the role of culture in diplomatic history alive.

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