

## *Foreword*

*Péter Marton and Csaba Békés*

The period framed as the Cold War of the superpower-led blocs is a limitless treasure trove of hidden stories about people, places and processes hitherto underestimated in significance. It is often said that the study of political events ultimately leads towards a convergence of the historical and the social sciences-based approaches, the idiographic and the nomothetic. What could better exemplify this than the impact of the continuous unearthing of important but — at least in comparative terms — ignored subjects relating to Cold War history, resulting in a need to constantly reevaluate the old evidence regarding established truths and narratives? The emergence of new pieces of fact and novel considerations feeds into just the kind of process-tracing analysis that is increasingly common in historical studies as well as the social sciences.

The *Corvinus Journal of International Affairs* (COJOURN) is based at the Department of International Relations (formerly known as the Institute of International Relations) at Corvinus University in Budapest, Hungary. The peculiarities of the evolution of the field of International Relations in Hungary (not altogether uniquely) led to its emergence as a multi-disciplinary field of study where the parallel work and contribution of historians, political scientists, economists and scholars of Area Studies has been not only accepted but expected. The Department is closely associated with the Cold War History Research Center and is pleased to boast of this productive long-running relationship. In past years, this collaboration was the source, *inter alia*, of several special issues of COJOURN devoted to Cold War topics, including an issue on the international context of the revolution of 1956 in Hungary, with contributions from the leading international scholars of the field, published on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the revolution in 2016, and an issue based on the Cold War History Research Center's annual international student conference in 2018.

The current issue continues the tradition and is based on the last year's student conference. The articles shed new light on old issues as well as they turn up new issues meriting detailed study in the context of Cold War historiography, along with valuable case material from the perspective of the Political Sciences, including International Relations Theory and Foreign Policy Analysis.

Jack Sargent revisits the issue of the Iranian Shah's nuclear programme and offers compelling evidence regarding the Persian ruler's ambitions to acquire the required components for a nuclear weapons programme: both fissile material and means of delivery. It sheds light on the complexities in the motives of an actor often and mistakenly treated as a mere vassal of the United States in Cold War politics, as a mere residual variable, when in fact his autonomous agency and interest in expanding his room for manoeuvre in regional politics clearly merit attention and holds important implications for assessing the dynamics of the relationship between Tehran and Washington.

Ksenia Ermishina offers findings from the study of Soviet media sources regarding the treatment of the Six Day War in the Middle East, showing how in this instance superpower propaganda aimed to belittle the significance of just the above kind of complexity in the actions of regional and lesser powers, attempting to portray the war between Israel and the Arab countries as but an expression of superpower imperialism and anti-imperial resistance — with rather awkward linkages to the treatment of the „Jewish question” in the Soviet Union itself.

For her part, Corey Cherrington studies the propaganda of the U.S. conveyed through Italian-Americans towards Italy, to counter the Communist movement in the country through messaging that was thought to resonate well with conservative values of Italian society and could thus inoculate Italians against the ideological influences of Socialism. She pays particular attention to the role of women in this, and how their roles were shaped and portrayed by this cultural diplomacy.

Last but not least, Robert DeLeon's article follows an intriguing thread of Cold War history into the present, looking at the very different trajectories of Communism in Cuba and Ethiopia. His analysis places these countries centre-stage, in contrast with Euro-centric or West-centric accounts of history which typically deal with them as side-theatres along the „main line” of events. The comparative look at the leaderships of Castro and Mengistu, respectively, as autonomous actors with their own considerations and in their own disparate strategic environments, allows us to understand better the very different patterns of development observed here.

We are proud to present this issue for our readers' attention and hope that you will take as much pleasure in these original considerations of Cold War history as we did during the process of editorial work.