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Entrevista

Interview with Tanya Harmer: Latin America's Cold War through international, transnational and global lenses

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Tanya Harmer is a specialist on the Cold War in Latin America. After obtaining her BA from the University of Leeds, she completed an MA and PhD in International History, both at the London School of Economics (LSE). In 2009 she was appointed as a Lecturer in the Department of International History at LSE, where she later became an Associate Professor. She has also held visiting teaching positions at Columbia University in New York and the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.

She has written extensively on the international, transnational and global dynamics of the Cold War in Latin America. Her multifaceted work includes studies of the Chilean revolutionary road to socialism at the turn of the 1970s and the military coup that abruptly ended the government of Salvador Allende; the impact of the Cuban Revolution on the hemisphere and the agency of Latin American governments and diplomats in countering the communist experience in the region; inter-American diplomacy; solidarity networks and Latin America's revolutionary left; and the politics of gender in the making of everyday life during the Cold War.

Tanya Harmer's prolific production has undoubtedly enriched the field of Latin America and the Cold War. Not only has she brought new perspectives to widely studied topics, including an inter-hemispheric perspective on the origins and tragic end of Salvador Allende's government where regional actors – Brazil's anti-communism included – came to the fore, but she has also shed light on topics that have only recently received greater attention, such as gender and the impact of private histories in the Cold War – Harmer's biography of Beatriz Allende, the revolutionary doctor and daughter of Salvador Allende, is a thoughtful insight into how Cold War struggles were intertwined with personal and individual experiences. She has also built bridges beyond academia, helping to keep the memory alive and disseminating information about turbulent times that insist on coming back in new clothes. One of her most recent collaborations was with the Chilean feminist collective LATESIS, who were invited to LSE for a workshop exploring the boundaries between art, history, and resistance to state violence.

It was therefore natural for the three editors of this special issue of *Agenda Política* to invite her to share her insights into the past, present, and future of this field of study. Tanya Harmer kindly accepted our invitation, and the interview took place on 26 September 2024.

We invite not only those interested in the study of Latin America and the Cold War, but also those whose attention has been drawn to the socio-economic crises and recent threats to democracy in the hemisphere – in Brazil, the United States and beyond – to read a critical analysis by a leading scholar whose thoughts on the history of Latin America are fundamental to understanding our present times.

Alessandra Beber Castilho and Natali Francine Cinelli Moreira: Professor Harmer, what is so unique about the Cold War in Latin America? When did you first become interested in the topic, and what drew you into it?

Tanya Harmer: Thank you so much for having me and thank you for this question, which is a really a good one. There is a lot that is unique about what happened in Latin America, but also a lot of similarities between Latin America and other parts of the world that we do not really know very much about because the region has been studied separately for such a long time. Understanding Latin America in the context of the wider world, particularly what we now uncomfortably call the Global South, is very important, because we will probably see more similarities than we are currently aware of. But I think one thing that makes the Latin American experience particularly unique is its proximity

to the United States. No other region in the world has this proximity and a history of a deep kind of entangled interventions that pre-date the Cold War, particularly in the Caribbean and Central America. This became even more intensified and codified through the language and priorities of the Cold War. The relationship with the United States is particularly important when we think about the Cold War in Latin America.

There is another thing about Latin America that I have come to think has been quite important, and scholars of the Cold War in other regions may find similarities in this regard, and that has to do with how capitalism came to Latin America, particularly in the late 19th and early 20th century. The rapid growth of capitalism and particularly export-led growth at the end of the 19th and early 20th century - and Latin America's place within that global capitalist economy at that moment - resulted in simultaneous early challenges to that capitalist system. As much as the capitalist model was being embedded throughout the region, you also had evidence that the tensions within that capitalist model were developing very quickly and acutely, particularly in the major industrial centres and capital cities. And so the challenges to capitalism, the anti-capitalist ideologies or practices that occurred very early in Latin America, in the 1920s and in the 1930s or even further back. I think that the early communist movement, the early anarchist movement, and the early anti-capitalist models sowed the seeds for what would become the Cold War in the region and very much grew from within the region, it was not just imposed from outside.

I think the role of the Catholic Church in Latin America is also very particular. It might be interesting to think about how Catholicism differs or is similar to other ways in which religion played its part in the Cold War in other regions.

On the second question, I fell into the field to some extent by accident. I was born in Mexico, although I moved to the United Kingdom when I was four, but I have a connection to Latin America from there and I grew up in a family that was very attuned and aware of what was going on in Latin America in the 1980s. I remember the "Nicaragua must survive" campaign being visible at home. My mum had a large FSLN sticker of Sandino on her work satchel and my parents drank coffee out of Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign mugs, they campaigned against Reagan's interventions in Central America, and they took me to concerts in memory of Victor Jara. They listened to Silvio Rodriguez, Pablo Milanés. Cold War Latin America was therefore in the background as I was growing up. Many exiles from the Southern Cone came to the United Kingdom, my mum taught English as a foreign language. She also made friends with exiles in Cambridge. Then, when I was at university, there weren't actually any courses on Latin America in my department at Leeds, or at LSE when I did my Masters. How I got into it academically was by studying the international history of the Cold War, particularly the Cold War in the Third World. I was very lucky to take Odd Arne Westad's Masters module. It was a module that really mapped on and kind of fed into what became his book, *The Global Cold War*. We looked at Angola, we looked at Vietnam, we looked at how the Cold War looked from different parts of the world. And through that course I became more and more interested in Latin America, although it was very much Cuba or Nicaragua that we looked at. The interesting question was how

did Latin America fit within this global Cold War and the Third World revolutionary movement? At that stage there weren't many perspectives on the Cold War from Latin America. I think one of the most exciting books that we read was Piero Gleijeses' book *Conflicting Missions* about Cuba's intervention in Africa - but the relationship between Cuba and Latin America was much less clear. There were huge question marks about what was happening. So, around the time of my Masters, in addition to my family background, the kind of gaps and the questions that I had started to come together. I was fortunate enough to be doing my Masters and my PhD at a time when the archives were opening. A lot of new material was coming out, particularly on Chile and the coup. There was a huge declassification of material in the United States, but I think what really got me excited was also the declassification and opening of archives in Latin America itself. I was very lucky to start my research when it was becoming more and more possible to go to the archives in Santiago, for example, to find out what Chileans thought about what was happening.

Alessandra Beber Castilho and Natali Francine Cinelli Moreira: You wrote an article published in *Cold War History* about Brazil's Cold War in the Southern Cone, which is one of the first to expose the involvement of the Brazilian dictatorship in several coup d'etats across South America, especially in Chile, Bolivia and Uruguay, without portraying the Brazilian authorities as a mere pawn of the United States' policy towards South America.[1] How do you see the role played by National Security Doctrine dictatorships in Latin America regarding the Cold War and their interpretation of the Cold War vis à vis their relations with the United States or the expectations of the United States as to how they should behave? We see now, at least those who study Brazil in the Cold War, that the military, the dictatorship, the junta, had a particular view of the Cold War and of the fight against communism here in Latin America.

Tanya Harmer: I actually first came to look at the Brazilian case through US classified documents. It's strange, because in a way I ended up saying that the United States was not in control, but what I started to see in documents both in College Park at the National Archives in Maryland and in some of the document dossiers that were produced by the National Security Archive by Carlos Osorio and Peter Kornbluh, were hints of Brazil's role in Uruguay or Brazil's role in Bolivia. Those were hints that suggested there was a bigger story; so I started to see these mentions of Brazil 'rigging the elections' in Uruguay, or I pulled up files in the United States that showed that there was a big review of Brazilian policy after the Chilean elections that brought Allende to power. And I thought there was something there. It was thanks to those kinds of hints that I then started digging deeper and, particularly through the Chilean archives, I was then able to pull up the files pertaining to Chile's embassy in Brazil and start to look at what Brazil was involved in. Had I not seen those documents in the United States, I might not have actually pulled up the files of the Chilean embassy on Brazil during the 1970s.

[1] The interviewers refer to: HARMER, T. Brazil's Cold War in the Southern Cone, 1970–1975. **Cold War History**, v. 12, n. 4, p. 659–681, 2012. DOI: 10.1080/14682745.2011.641953.

I went on a hunch, and I think one of the only things I can say is that it's very important when you're doing research to keep an open mind and to follow leads. In this case, I was lucky that the leads actually led me somewhere, although when I was doing the research for this article, a lot of the material that Roberto Simon has since used on Brazil in Chile wasn't available, because a lot of it became available after the Truth Commission and Dilma Rousseff. Even still, I think there are lots of gaps.

When I looked at Chile's relationship with the United States during the dictatorship, looking for bilateral relationships, it soon became clear that the national security states and their leaders had their own conceptions of the Cold War. I think that they were very concerned about what they saw as a dereliction of duty on the part of the United States to do more to fight the Cold War, and that might be one of the things that perhaps I noticed this because I was looking at the period of détente, and I think it brought out those tensions much more so than if I'd been looking at the 1960s. Having said this, I also wrote an article on the so-caleld "Cuban question" and the inter-American system, and if you look at some of the correspondence with the Cuban exile community and the Kennedy administration, for example, you can see the same kind of tension between a group that wanted to push the Cold War further than the US policymakers. But I think the context of the 1970s really made the different ideas of what the Cold War was and the urgency of what was at stake appear more visible. I think we now accept that the United States couldn't really have controlled everything that was going on in Latin America, but a couple of decades ago, when I started, that was actually not something that people accepted. People were still saying, "OK, the Cold War created anti-communism, the United States was responsible for the deaths and disappearances that happened in Latin America". We cannot deny that the US role was vital; as I said at the beginning, it is what makes the Latin American experience particularly unique. But it is ludicrous to think that a few people in Washington can control everything that is happening across a vast region as Latin America.

And I think that researching at times when transitional justice and questions of justice are in the spotlight, such as in the early 2000s and up to this day, the question of exposing the responsibility of the United States was something that seemed important. But that kind of thinking also exonerated all these people within Latin America who were also carrying out those crimes, who were actually the ones who put them in motion, who seemed not to be receiving the type of attention and research that I felt was needed. Because, if we really want to understand why wider violence happens, we have to look at the people who were carrying out that violence and to understand what was driving them. In the end it was not simply because they were receiving a telegram from Washington saying, "you need to go and disappear this person or that person". So yes, there was training. Yes, there was complicity. Yes, there were green lights, but it is a much more complex system, and I think the structural idea that US imperialism is responsible for everything makes the United States much more important and relevant than it necessarily was, and invisibilises others who must also bear responsibility.

Alessandra Beber Castilho and Natali Francine Cinelli Moreira: In the book *Towards a Global History of Latin America's Left* which you co-edited with Alberto Martin Alvarez, you talk about

deepening our knowledge of the global dimensions of the Latin American revolutionary left, saying that the region also shaped ideas, events and processes during the Cold War, both on the revolutionary left and the anti-communist right. How did Latin American actors help shape ideas and events during the Cold War? How do you see Latin America in this broader sense?[2]

Tanya Harmer: I think on the right there's an incredible amount of global influence and absorption of what's happening around the world. Something that made me think about the agency of Latin American national security states was the work of the amazing documentary *Escuadrones de la Muerte* which looked at the French counterinsurgency models and how they were so influential on Brazilian national security doctrine and how it evolved; thinking about where counterinsurgency arises from led me to question the role of the United States. But then someone like Vincent Bevins has also shown how Brazil's anti-communism was actually influential in Indonesia, how some of the same ideas about the fear of the "reds under the bed" or the kind of communist threat that happened in Brazil in the 1930s kind of came back and echoed in Indonesia and Jakarta in the 1960s. I think it's actually really interesting to explore the story of that what was happening in the 1930s in Latin America and to examine the very significant connections with other processes as well as the ramifications it had elsewhere, which we don't really know enough about.

On the left, I think there's also a lot to expand on in that respect. The book is an edited volume, and it looks at select individual case studies, but I think what we were trying to do was to suggest through these cases was that there is a much bigger story to tell about the interconnections between Latin America and the wider world on the revolutionary left that are waiting to be explored. That could be with regards to student protests, ideas about strategy, about organizing. Particularly in Europe, the influence of what was happening in Latin America was huge, and the Cuban revolution had significant effects. You have some armed left-wing groups in Italy or in Germany drawing inspirational ideas from the armed revolution in Latin America. And then you have other influences: dependency theory has an enormous impact, which is tied in with the Cold War. The theories of dependency originate in Latin America, and their impact on the left is very significant in Africa, in Europe and in Asia, when you look at the structures of the global economy. I think the other thing that we do not tie in as much to the Cold War, although I think it is very significant and relevant, especially in Central America, is liberation theology. In Brazil it is very important, but the impact that liberation theology had on Catholic communities around the world is also significant, and also on the Vatican itself, how the Vatican then positioned itself either in support - briefly - or, determined by an anti-liberation theology counterrevolutionary approach in the 1980s.

I think we still have a lot to understand about Latin America as a place generating ideas, generating practices, generating networks and organisations, rather than simply being a receiving region of outside influence. Aldo Marchesi has made this point brilliantly about the global 1960s, but

[2] The interviewers refer to: HARMER, T.; ÁLVAREZ, A. (Org.). **Toward a Global History of Latin America's Revolutionary Left**. Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2021.

I think we need so much more research on this, which I think is part of a new field relating to the study of "Latin America and the World," which is really trying to move beyond just studying what is happening in the region.

The problem about assessing impact, of course, is that you need to work collaboratively with historians who are experts in African history or European history, or Soviet history or Asian history, so that they can also look at how we measure impact. And not to make the mistake of early US historians of Latin America who, because they read it in the US archives that the US wanted to do this or that, assumed that it changed everything in Latin America. We also need to look at the other side: how did people receive this from other perspectives? So, I think it would be really helpful for historians of Latin America to be much more in conversation with historians of other regions as well.

Alessandra Beber Castilho and Natali Francine Cinelli Moreira: You have recently published a book about Beatriz Allende, the daughter of Salvador Allende.[3] What strikes the reader most is how her personal history became entangled with the Cold War, and how the Cold War shaped her own experiences, leading to her tragic death. One of the things that had a big impact on us about the book is how the private sphere can influence global events, and how global events can shape individual lives. In this sense, what led you to tell her story? And how can the field benefit from stories like that being told, the reality of women and children that were entrapped in the Cold War logic, away from the idea of biographies of great men and statesmen, or the power struggles between the two superpowers?

Tanya Harmer: I started asking about her and wanting to know more about her because she kept being mentioned, but no one seemed to be able to tell me much about her. She came up in interviews as someone who was there or as someone who was significant in the relationship between Chile and Cuba. So, I started thinking, "who was she and why don't we know much about her"? I have to say I didn't really know where the project would end up when I started it, you know? Researching a biography of a revolutionary woman who was also in exile and who wasn't an intellectual; this meant that finding sources was very difficult because she didn't write a lot about her ideas on the revolution or the Cold War. She didn't put it down on paper. It was a period when to have information or to have letters or documents was a huge security risk, so they burned them right away, so she didn't leave anything for us to read.

I didn't have a lot of information about that part of her life, particularly the 1960s and her university life. So I started asking, "what is the context in which she's growing up? How do I begin to understand what it might have been like to grow up in that environment?". And that was really fascinating to me because it led me to reading newspapers, reading university bulletins, trying to get a sense of her immediate surroundings. That opened up huge new insights into, for example, significant

[3] The interviewers refer to: HARMER, T. **Beatriz Allende**: A Revolutionary Life in Cold War Latin America. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020. See also: HARMER, T. **Beatriz Allende**: Una vida revolucionaria en América Latina durante la Guerra Fría. Santiago, Chile: LOM, 2025.

turning points for the student movement that I wouldn't have found if I'd just gone in with a predetermined idea of the chronology of the student movement.

For example, in relation to the big protests in Chile in 1957 and mobilization during the 1958 elections, I found out that both she and many of her friends were there. They started campaigning in the elections and I started thinking, "ok, when the Cuban Revolution happens, it's not the first thing that is going on in student politics or on the left". I have often thought that a biography opens up a spotlight on the immediate surroundings that you might otherwise not necessarily see. I wanted to look at the impact of the Cuban Revolution. If you start in 1959, you don't really look at what is happening before that on a local level, which helps explain the Cuban Revolution had the impact that it did; why it resonated and had such traction.

I also think that [Beatriz's experience] helped me to understand what the implications of the Cold War and its violence on an individual were, on a human life. I mean, in a very tragic sense, but it also pushed me to thinking about how we measure costs. Often in Cold War history you hear about the statistics of those who were killed or murdered or tortured, but we don't tend to really talk about the psychological damage, the impact on families, the impact on the relationship between couples, between parents and children.

If we're going to think about what the cost of the Cold War were, we have to look at the people who actually lived through it. And I think if we understand that, we also grasp why the broader costs were so intense and why they are so enduring in Latin America, right? Why it still lives on, in memory battles and politics, you know, even contemporary politics.[With] Bolsonaro and Milei the Cold War has somehow returned. And that's because it didn't disappear when the Berlin Wall fell, because it was ingrained in family life and in people's lives as lived experience in the most intimate of spaces as well as the public sphere. The Cold War conflict revolved around a battle of ideas that related to and shaped how people lived, how they loved, how they died, and how they were meant to bring up their kids.

What does studying the quotidian mean for understanding what the Cold War was? I think if you start to understand how it manifested itself in everyday life, you start to get a sense of what was actually at stake in this ideological conflict. Beatriz herself says in 1969, I think, "I haven't really read Marxism very much"; actually, she says "I've got to start reading more about Marxism".

You look at what led people into politics, and it wasn't necessarily ideological theory; it was witnessing poverty or injustice. Understanding what motivates people is really important. On another level, one thing I have learned about the Allende government from all the interviews I conducted is that even if we had access to his presidential papers, which were in all likelihood destroyed, the significant conversations about what to do in terms of how the government should go forward weren't necessarily held at La Moneda and may not have been recorded. They were very often held in private places, between friends or a very close circle of confidence with people who weren't necessarily in government. Think about the informal advisers or his daughter. Presidents, policy makers, they are human beings. They go home, they talk to their partners, or they talk to their children about what's

going on; I think that grasping that there's this private dimension to the way in which formal politics happens is as important as understanding how formal politics impacts privacy.

And on the question of great statesmen and superpowers, I think we still need this history; we still do need to understand the great statesmen and the superpowers. I would like to know much more about the personal lives of some of these great statesmen, rather than just how many committees they led, or what they read, because I think the private sphere is probably very important in understanding how they acted during the superpower conflict, right? Even if it's not, determining it provides the backdrop and the kind of global structure that people are operating within. But I don't think we can use it exclusively to understand the global reach of the Cold War. If we really want to understand the Cold War as a global conflict and think about why it still has such a big legacy to this day, especially in Latin America, we have to go beyond those statesmen and look at how it affected day-to-day lives of millions of people, rather than just a few individuals.

Alessandra Beber Castilho and Natali Francine Cinelli Moreira: There is a growing body of the literature that examines how multiple forms of feminism emerged during the four decades of the Cold War. You have the rise of liberal feminism, which prevailed as a hegemonic framework for women's emancipation, which dominated international institutions, regimes, and one of the key features of this liberal approach is that there is a disconnection of so-called women's issues from broader concerns such as race and economic justice. So, when we overemphasize sex equality, this framework leaves little or nor room to address other topics beyond patriarchy. But alternative feminist approaches emerged from the Eastern Bloc and the Third World with more revolutionary perspectives. These alternatives, they saw women's issues as something connected to broader social struggles. They are closer to what we now call intersectionalism: that you cannot deal with feminism without dealing with issues of race and inequality or class struggle. Many of these voices came from Latin America such as the Cuban Vilma Espín, who rejected the liberal version of feminism and looked for socialist paths to women's emancipation, addressing issues such as poverty and economic imperialism. How might revisiting and amplifying those overlooked marginalised voices could contribute to Latin American women today?

Tanya Harmer: I will answer this question on two levels. On the first level, I think that raising the profile and knowledge of women in history is important in itself, because it establishes women as equal or at least significant historical protagonists, players or actors who deserve recognition. It can also provide examples or models for women activists today, who would be able to point out the role that women have played in revolutionary movements, in struggles against dictatorship, or in the fight for democracy or civil rights. It is also important to pay attention to which women have driven new ideas forward. Centering long histories of Black radical feminists in the story of intersectionality, for example, is imperative. Speaking about women and their collective activism in the past, explaining the varied contexts they operated within and thinking about the multiple overlapping structures of discrimination and privilege that shaped different women's

experiences, making sure that children are learning about them, can also be really significant in changing the way we think about history and its role in shaping the present. Recognizing past struggles of feminists, and feminist organisations, feminist politicians, feminist musicians and artists can also be empowering for people today; considering these genealogies and long-term historical roots of current day battles can offer strength through a sense of inheritance and continuity from or with female drivers of history.

On the other level, however, I was thinking about this question when we look at the history of global feminism. It can be empowering, but it can also be disheartening, right? Because what you see is women fighting the same fights again and again in separate parts of the world, very often in isolated positions, facing similar obstacles and coming up against the same barriers again and again. You look at what women in the 19th and the 20th century were fighting for, and you think, "Oh my God, we're over 100 years later and women are still trying to make the same point today". So you know, I was thinking, "how can it help emancipate women today?". Well, I think that knowledge of the past can also be illuminating in demonstrating that women don't have to start from scratch, right? There are waves of people, of women who are organizing, and yet they feel that they're isolated or that they have to fight from scratch. But learning about the past can at least show that we can learn lessons from these kinds of historical struggles, from strategies that have worked. We could maybe learn lessons about how to overcome the obstacles or problems in the past. But we can also look at how networking, solidarity, and coordination in the past have really been a way in which women have been able to advance their cause. I'm thinking particularly of the 1970s and 1980s. I'm thinking of the [United Nations] International Women's Year and Decade for Women and how they are often studied as not achieving all of their goals because of global structural economic structural crises or because they weren't given the right money or resources; what you miss is that these frameworks also allowed for new networks to be created, new information and knowledge exchange and sharing so you get kind of new Latin American solidarity and feminist Latin American organisations. You've got the development alternatives; the new DAWN era, that was set up in Bangalore in 1984 and really looked at questions of development for the Third World.

Going back to your question about what feminists today can learn from the history of emancipation, I think we can draw strength and lessons from understanding the power of collective organizing, and networking, and sharing, rather than fighting individually in isolated spaces.

Alessandra Beber Castilho and Natali Francine Cinelli Moreira: You mentioned the role of Black feminists in the United States. The Black movement in America also played a huge role in building solidarity movements between the Global North and the Global South, which brings us to the next question. You organized in 2023 an event at the London School of Economics called *Arts, Rights and Resistance for the 21st Century* that featured some Chilean feminist collectives. This event opened the door to a discussion about the importance of historical understanding in addressing present challenges, and the role of feminist theory in ensuring that Latin American women can retain

control over their bodies and lives. Can you share your thoughts on this dialogue between academia and civil society? How can this dialogue strengthen each other?

Tanya Harmer: Yeah, I think it's a really important challenge and it's a really important thing that we need to focus on it at this precise moment in time. We need to think about how we engage with civil society and how we talk about what happened in the past productively, constructively, without refighting it, avoiding a new conflict. I think that hesitancy, this reluctance to engage, is partly due to ignorance, so you just don't know who to engage with or how to do it. Like an impostor syndrome, you know what you are studying, but for me as a British person, for example, there is the question hanging over me: "what do I know about civil society groups in Chile? Is it my place to even go there?" But I have found that whenever I have reached out, I have been gratefully well received. Crucially, I think we need to work out what we are trying to do and how it benefits others, rather than just how it benefits us. I learned so much, having [the Chilean interdisciplinary feminist collective] LATESIS come to LSE. It was like a dream come true. It was an amazing experience as an individual, rather than a historian, to be in a workshop, to listen to them, to talk to them, to hear about how they are making history and struggling in the streets and actually changing ideas and perceptions. But the idea was also to open up the space for people from different backgrounds and experiences to also take part in a participatory workshop of solidarity and collective activism that empowered those who took part.

So I think there's a lot we gain, but I think we need to think about the ethics and the reciprocity of these kinds of engagements in terms of what we are offering.

My present research deals a little bit with feminism, but it's actually about exile in Cuba and exile communities that grew up in Cuba. I follow their trajectories back to the Southern Cone, to Chile and to Uruguay, and understand their experiences of going from a socialist country for 10 years plus to post-dictatorial neoliberal Chile and Uruguay. I've been doing a lot of oral histories, and I've been really interested in ideas of and the experiences of gender and family, and not just of the leaders who are in Cuba.

Through that oral history, two things happened: one is that I have come into much more contact with the exiles that I'm writing about, and so I've been doing many, many more of these interviews, and they are much broader. I have started to get to know many of the people that I interviewed and they, in turn, have become more interested in what I'm doing, and a connection between their own interest and mine in telling their story has arisen out of these interviews; at another level, I have been very conscious of not doing oral history in an extractive way. I think that is unavoidable, right? Me sitting in London and saying, "tell me everything about your life, the trauma, and the exile", and then I write an article, get published, and there is something deeply uncomfortable about that. So, the question is: what purpose does it serve them to talk to me? I've been very conscious that one of the things we need to do is to think about how these histories that we are producing are translated and disseminated among the people who want those stories told and to think carefully about what format this history should be disseminated; the people who are telling the story want this story

to be written about, and they want it to be discussed. But that might well be in a way that reaches beyond an academic journal and communicates in different ways.

So I have been thinking a lot about how how to communicate history, not just to wider civil society, but also to and for the people who were directly impacted by or related to the stories we are telling. This is complicated because what I might say might not be what they – or at least all of them together – want me to say; so it's also a dialogue. But the LATESIS event came out of those conversations and contacts between LASTESIS and the exiles themselves and the realization that the 50th anniversary of the coup was coming up. There was a deep desire among all sides to talk about it, to organize events about it. I realized that as an academic at the LSE I had a platform to raise many of the issues that they wanted to raise, to think about their experiences, to raise the profile of this important anniversary and its significance for memory battles in the rpesent and to listen to the stories of those who came as exiles to the UK or those who fought for solidarity; to think not just what we could learn from them, but also how to bring them together to share and reflect, to reconnect, remember and recognize the huge amount of work of solidarity activists and exiles day in and day out in fighting against the dictatorship at the time and ever since.

Alessandra Beber Castilho and Natali Francine Cinelli Moreira: How do you see the field of the Cold War in Latin America today? Is there a great difference between research that is conducted by researchers from the Global South and the Global North about the Cold War in Latin America? Where do you think is the state of the art in the field today?

Tanya Harmer: I think it's an exciting field. I think that the field of Cold War history in Latin America is growing. And I think it is really growing in new and different directions. And I think it's growing hugely in Latin America as well as outside of Latin America. In terms of new areas of research, I think there is now a new attention to different periods. Much more is being done on the late Cold War, the 1980s and the 1990s. I think the 1980s seems to be a new area of scholarship and attention, particularly relating to Central America. I'm thinking of the work of Julieta Rostica, Eline van Ommen, Mateo Jarquín and Emily Snyder are all bringing a lot of energy to that later period. And Central America has become more transnational, less top-down, more regional. In the Southern Cone, scholars like Isabella Cosse, Marcelo Casals, Aldo Marchesi, Vania Markarian, Rodrigo Patto Sá Motta, Soledad Lastra, Adriana Petra, Valeria Manzano, Mariano Zarowsky, to name just a few names, transformed the way we think about the Cold War as intersecting with, and being shaped by, topics such as gender, family, culture, science, modernity, youth and displacement.

I'd like to think that [the field] is more interconnected in terms of the people who are researching, and I think there is a much greater ability to talk across different borders and countries. Particularly when it comes to the Cold War Latin America, history was once very much about individual countries, right? The Cold War in Brazil, the Cold War in Chile. I think there has been much more opportunities to think across national borders. But I'm really conscious of the global turn

in history, the transnationalism, which has been so exciting in many ways, has also been a source of growing inequality in the field in other ways, because in order to do this kind of transnational global history, the universities in the Global North tend to have more money to give to their students and staff to do research. There are also inequalities between institutions in the Global North: you could be in an institution and not have any research funding, for example. While there is this huge emphasis on transnational, global history, I think it is still very reliant on who gets to do it and how. Some of that is changing because there has been such a digitization of archives. I have also done a lot of my interviews for the current project on Zoom or Whatsapp, which has just been incredible. But there are other differences and inequalities. I think someone outside the region is not going to be able to understand the region in nearly as much depth and detail as those within the region. There are, of course, sometimes benefits of being an outsider: in the Chilean case, for example, there are so many divisions on the left that if I were part of one part of the left, then another part wouldn't talk to me. So, being an outsider can help. But obviously, a Chilean historian knows far more how to capture the sensitivities, the cultural implications, the contextual references better than a British historian. I think we need to speak much more to each other. I think we need to work out ways. I have always been really excited about the idea of working out ways to share historiographical articles with each other. For example, what's the state of the Cold War field in Brazil? What's the state of the Cold War studies in the Caribbean? You know, to really become much more in tune with the kind of research that has been going on in different local areas.

But unfortunately, when you read many historiographical articles, they often just cite works published in English. I fear I sometimes fall into the same trap, but I am very conscious of it; it is something we really need to avoid, because there's so much work happening in the region itself, but also further afield in Europe as well, for example, in Portugal, in France, Germany and in Italy. It is not just a question of those working in Spanish or English. We need to know much more about research and scholarship on Latin America's Cold War in lots of different places.

Alessandra Beber Castilho and Natali Francine Cinelli Moreira: Do you have any insights for those interested in this field of research, especially early career researchers? Do you have any recommendations to inspire future researchers?

Tanya Harmer: I was thinking about this. There are so many gaps. Even though we know that there is so much work being done, I still feel that there are enormous gaps to be filled. The first one I would just say is women's organizing and international networks. Katherine Marino's book *Feminism for the Americas* was so groundbreaking for the early part of the 20th century. It would be lovely to have that, you know, Part 2 for the later half of the 20th century.
I think the Cold War in Latin America hasn't really dealt with race and intersectionality properly. There are people who look at how race and the Cold War overlapped or clashed or interacted with each other, or how counterinsurgency was racialized. But I think there's much more to look at how

the Cold War shaped or determined multiple and overlapping structures of oppression and racism, and I think there's probably more we could do about that. There's more and more being published about Latin America's place in the wider world, not necessarily in terms of links or influence, but connections, comparisons. There's also another field that I think is really underexplored, but there has not been a huge enthusiasm for it when I suggest it, namely a cultural history of the right. We know a lot about cultural history of the Cold War on the left, and we know about the 1960s, counterculture and rock, and we know about the Nueva Canción movement and Tropicália for example. But no one has really looked at the culture on the right: what did the dictators listen to and what was the military like? What did they watch on TV? What films? What did they read? I think it goes back to that question you asked about how national security states and the right understood the Cold War, and what particular conceptions they had of the conflicct. I think knowing a little bit more about the cultural history of these actors would probably help us untangle what the Cold War was fundamentally about in terms of social hierarchies, religion or ideas of how society should be organized. Like Benjamin Cowan, who has done a brilliant work on this in terms of religion is his book *Securing Sex* about sexuality and ideas morality in Cold War Brazil. I have learnt a lot from it, but there must be so much more. Maybe it's being done in Latin America, and I just don't know about it. But from my perspective, it's something that I feel is missing at the moment and acutely relevant for grappling with and navigating our contemporary moment as well as how to resist it and fight back.

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