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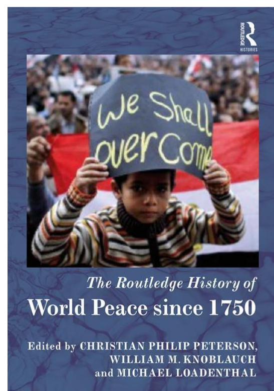

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Christian Philip Peterson, William M. Knoblauch, Michael Loadenthal

The Anti-Vietnam War Movement

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THE ANTI-VIETNAM WAR MOVEMENT

International activism and the search for world peace

Chris Dixon and Jon Piccini

Introduction

The Vietnam War provoked global controversy. What began during the early 1960s with a handful of critics expressing their opposition to a conflict largely unknown outside Southeast Asia grew into an issue driving protests around the globe—allowing protesters to become transnational in an era that augured the contemporary age of globalization. By the late 1960s opposition to the Vietnam War crossed national, class, and gender lines, not just in the United States, but internationally. This chapter argues that opposition to the Vietnam War was truly global. Opponents of the war in diverse locations shared a range of motives: Some emphasized the human cost of the conflict; others rejected the American-led effort to thwart Vietnamese nationalism or challenged the draft that swept up millions of unwilling young men in a conflict that was damaging America's global credibility and authority. Another unifying factor among these seemingly disparate movements was their shared understanding of a new type of citizens' participation and democracy, and a vibrant, productive debate concerning the meaning of, and the best ways to bring about, "peace." Conflicting meanings were ascribed to the term, ranging from peaceful calls for negotiations between the warring parties, and demands that the United States and its allies withdraw their forces from Vietnam, to provocative, often violent calls for a victory for the nationalist–communist forces.

There were shared differences, too, with debates over the most effective means of opposing the war present in each national case discussed in this chapter. These included growing divisions between moderate and radical factions, who embraced increasingly militant forms of resistance and criticized established political and economic structures as irreparably corrupt. That such debates occurred across the globe speaks to the transnational dimension of these movements, one best observed through what historian Timothy Scott Brown has dubbed a process of "situating the local within the global while locating the global at work locally."[1] Accordingly, this chapter argues that while opposition to the Vietnam War was transnational, as critics of the war shared ideas, tactics, and experiences, their critiques of the war, and the tactics they embraced to denounce it, were framed and articulated in dialogue with local circumstances. By analyzing the case of the United States, examples from its then key allies (Australia, West Germany, the United Kingdom, and Japan), as well as

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the war's effect in the second and third worlds, this chapter reveals the similarities and fault lines that (dis)united this global moment of revolt.

Anti-Vietnam War protest in the United States

United States intervention in Vietnam, which by 1968 included over 540,000 Americans, originated in the early stages of the Cold War. Committed to containing "monolithic communism" and ignoring Vietnam's long history of resistance to Chinese power, the United States supported French efforts to regain control of their former colonies in Southeast Asia. By early 1954, however, France was bogged down in a costly guerrilla war against the nationalist Viet Minh forces. In July 1954, following the defeat of French forces at Dien Bien Phu, an accord reached at Geneva temporarily partitioned Vietnam at the Seventeenth Parallel. With Ho Chi Minh's Viet Minh communists controlling the north, and the Western-backed regime of Ngô Đình Diệm ruling the South, national elections initially set to be held within two years were abandoned.

Beginning in 1960, nationalist–communist forces renewed their efforts to unify Vietnam. When the United States and its allies realized that the forces led by Ho Chi Minh would prevail, they decided to intervene more forcefully. By mid-1963 over 16,000 American military advisors were stationed in Vietnam to prop up Diệm's anticommunist, but increasingly unpopular, regime, which was overthrown in a 1963 coup sanctioned by US President John F. Kennedy. In 1964 the United States commenced a series of air strikes against North Vietnam; the following year President Lyndon Johnson dispatched ground troops to South Vietnam. While the American public initially supported the Americanization of the Vietnam War, by 1968 public opinion was turning, and hundreds of thousands of Americans were participating in various forms of antiwar protest.

Although these public protests became a defining image of the 1960s, the antiwar movement in the United States had modest beginnings. During the 1950s, a relative handful of Americans spoke out against US foreign policy, and a national Cold War consensus—sustained by continuing fears of monolithic communism—ensured there were few protests against American interventions in nations at risk of falling to communism. Until 1965, opposition to the war in Vietnam came only from small pacifist and religious groups. In 1963 the Student Peace Union made several public protests against the escalating conflict in Vietnam, including at the Easter Union Parade in New York City. Later that year, in October, the Society of Friends—the Quakers—established a Vietnam Information Center in Washington D.C. In July 1964 over 5,000 academics signed an antiwar petition, but such protests remained modest in scale until 1965, when American ground troops began arriving in Vietnam. By early 1966, with 200,000 Americans serving in Vietnam, including tens of thousands of draftees, antiwar sentiment grew.[2]

Much of that sentiment came from university campuses. In places such as the University of California, Berkeley, a "New Left" was repudiating the economic and cultural bases of American society and politics, as well as the dogmas and methods of the Old Left. The most significant and visible New Left group were the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), whose 1962 Port Huron Statement described the underlying problems with American society and articulated a radical vision for the future. Advocating "participatory democracy," and informed by both the inclusive ideology of the civil rights movement and anti-capitalist writings of sociologist C. Wright Mills, the New Left condemned the war in Vietnam as a stark and brutal expression of the failings of mid-twentieth-century capitalism. For many

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critics of American foreign policy, the draft was a particularly odious aspect of the heavily militarized American economy, with some of the nation's most prestigious universities intertwined with the military–industrial complex.

While much of the antiwar activism on college and university campuses was driven by SDS, the very phrase "antiwar movement" suggested a unity that belied the diversity of approaches to antiwar activism—which ranged from non-violent activism to more aggressive, radical methods. Initially, university-based activism borrowed from the civil rights movement, especially the tactic of "sit-ins" used to claim African Americans' rights to equal access to educational and other facilities. In early 1965 antiwar activists began staging their own "teach-ins," where academics and students discussed and debated the escalating American intervention in Vietnam. In April 1965, following numerous small-scale antiwar demonstrations, 20,000 people protested in Washington, D.C. Membership of SDS grew dramatically during 1966, but antiwar sentiment was not confined to students, nor to the New Left. Protests against the war in Vietnam now encompassed a wider critique of American defense policy and nuclear strategy, as evidenced by a May 1966 rally in New York City, organized by the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), which drew nearly 20,000 people.[3]

Increasingly, women and African Americans found a common identity in speaking out against the war. Frequently relegated to roles that confirmed their second-class status, the antiwar movement provided some women with the motivation to develop their own feminist consciousness, which fueled the "second wave" feminist movement. Concurrently, other women invoked their roles and responsibilities as mothers and wives to oppose the war. For African Americans, who bore a disproportionate burden of the fighting in Vietnam, connections between their Civil Rights struggle at home and that of the Vietnamese became clearer. As early as June 1964, Robert ("Bob") Moses of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) compared the guerrilla conflict in Mississippi with the war raging in Vietnam. Equally provocatively, in January 1965 Malcolm X claimed that African Americans were "on the same side of those little rice farmers," who he predicted would prevail against "[Uncle] Sam," just as they had prevailed against the French.[4] Condemning the ways in which the draft reflected and perpetuated racial inequalities in the United States, SNCC's Stokely Carmichael highlighted the transnational dimensions of the antiwar movement. The draft, he declared, amounted to "white people sending black people to make war on yellow people to defend the land they stole from red people."[5] (On the Black Power movement and antiwar activism, see Chapter 9.) Although Martin Luther King, Jr. was criticized for his reticence to speak out against the war, when he did so he forcefully linked the black struggle within the United States to the war in Vietnam.[6]

King's opposition to the war in Vietnam infuriated President Lyndon Johnson. Johnson also felt betrayed when his friend and political ally, Senator J. William Fulbright, used his position as Chairman of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee to question the expanding American commitment in Vietnam. The war that began as a struggle for liberation against French colonial rule, Fulbright contended in February 1966, had become a civil war. Although Congress did not turn decisively against the war until the late 1960s, political leaders became more critical of its high costs and worried that the war in Vietnam was jeopardizing the United States' ability to fulfill its treaty commitments in Europe and elsewhere.

Embracing both the rhetoric and the ideology of groups such as the Viet Cong, from the mid-1960s radical antiwar protesters were increasingly inclined to advocate more forceful

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opposition to the draft, and engage in acts of civil disobedience. In November 1965, following the example of a number of Buddhist opponents of the Diêm regime, a thirty-one-year-old Quaker named Norman Morrison self-immolated outside the Pentagon offices of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara. Increasingly skeptical about the efficacy of peaceful protest, some critics of the war drew inspiration from revolutionary movements abroad.

The war in Vietnam was the major issue during the 1968 US Presidential election campaign. Initial success by Democratic antiwar candidate Eugene McCarthy, followed by Senator Robert Kennedy's declaration in March that he too would seek to be the Democrats' nominee for the Presidency, influenced Johnson's announcement that he would not seek, nor accept, his party's nomination for the Presidency. Johnson's preferred candidate, Vice-President Hubert Humphrey, struggled to build a consensus among Democrats. The assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy, coupled with the very public chaos at the Democrats' Convention in Chicago, left the way open for Republican candidate Richard Nixon to promise "law and order" in the United States and to end the war in Vietnam. Nixon was vague—his critics said evasive—about *how* he would end the war, but for an increasingly disillusioned public, his promise to deliver "peace with honor" was sufficient to bring him a narrow and contentious victory in the November election.[7]

In office, Nixon worked to wind down American commitment in Vietnam. As American troop numbers declined, along with American casualties, the antiwar movement began to fray. "Liberal" opponents of the war contended that the radicals' sometimes violent methods were hindering rather than helping the antiwar cause, while radicals—who became more vocal as the broader movement declined—embraced ever-more dramatic tactics. Some met with representatives of the Vietnamese National Liberation Front, a gesture that highlighted the international dimensions of protest during the 1960s, but which antagonized millions of the great "silent majority" of Americans who regarded such actions as treasonous. By 1969 the New Left had fractured, with more radical elements joining groups such as the Revolutionary Youth Movement and the Weather Underground, whose campaigns of direct action progressed from demonstrations designed to "bring the war home," to more violent tactics—including a bombing campaign.

Those militant tactics, however, alienated a public already alarmed by the confluence of political and cultural protest against not just the war, but the broader American polity. A series of nationwide "Moratoria" to "End the War in Vietnam" drew millions of Americans onto the streets, including over 500,000 protesters to a November 1969 rally in Washington, D.C., and Nixon's decision to send American troops into Cambodia in April 1970 provided a brief fillip to the antiwar movement; still, many Americans were losing interest in the war.[8] Even the antiwar activities of a growing number of disillusioned Vietnam veterans, a group whose patriotism was beyond reproach, and whose 1971 "Winter Soldier Investigation" focused on the violence and atrocities committed by American forces in Vietnam, had only a marginal impact on public opinion. Nixon's policy of "Vietnamization," whereby American troops were supplanted by South Vietnamese forces, defused much of the antiwar angst within the United States. The fading of the American antiwar movement in the late 1960s suggested that while there was a genuine revulsion at the blood being spilled in Vietnam, many Americans were concerned principally at the loss of *American* lives in Indochina.

It was not until January 1973 that an agreement was reached that led to the United States formally withdrawing the last of its forces from Vietnam. By the time the communists launched a major offensive in late 1974 Richard Nixon had resigned in disgrace following the Watergate scandal and neither his successor, President Gerald Ford, nor the American

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public, had the will to recommit American forces to a doomed crusade born in the confusion of the early Cold War, and that had fired such passionate opposition at home and abroad. The examples that follow reveal that despite the characterization of the United States as "the belly of the beast," the antiwar movement in the US exerted significant influence on an increasingly global antiwar movement.

Other alliances: Peace protest goes global

Australia

The United States—as both the target of protesters' enmity and home to the most globally significant antiwar movement—had a significant role in that movement's history. The influence of this movement, however, was felt around the world, particularly in nations diplomatically—if not militarily—embroiled in the Indochina conflict. Australia was among the staunchest supporters of America's Vietnam commitment: Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt promised in 1966 to go "all the way with LBJ." First sending advisors in 1962, the conservative government committed ground troops in 1964, of whom 40 percent were conscripts; 521 Australians died and 3,000 were wounded before withdrawal in 1971–1972.[9] Conscription—labelled "selective service" in Australia but soon dubbed "the draft"—was not the only similarity these allies shared. The Draft Resisters Union, for example, organized protests in much the same way as its American counterparts. Such similarities led some commentators to judge Australia's peace movement as arriving "by airmail subscription": "[t]hey even use[d] "American terminology and spelling" protested one conservative commentator. However, others have suggested this was more "conscious internationalism" than unconscious copying, leading to "similar responses in similar kinds of societies to very similar sets of circumstances."[10]

As was the case in the United States, Australian antiwar protests relied on old networks of religious and peace groups, alongside left-wing trade unions and political parties previously marginalized by the Cold War. New groups emerged, too, including the Youth Campaign Against Conscription in 1964, and, in 1966, Save our Sons, an organization comprised of middle-class women who opposed conscription by deploying discourses of motherhood. In 1965, protesters began using a new repertoire of tactics, including "sit-ins" borrowed from the American Civil Rights Movement. In May 1965, following a march from the US Consulate in Sydney, sixty protesters participated in the first sit-in; later that month a protest in the nation's capital, Canberra, saw sixteen people arrested after blocking a major thoroughfare. Both protests were organized by the Vietnam Action Committee, a youth-led group with its origins in local branches of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.[11]

The use of such tactics may have shocked the government and press, but alarm grew even more intense in 1967 as New Left university students in Melbourne and Sydney raised money for the Viet Cong, while in 1968 students protested violently outside the US Consulate in Melbourne, breaking windows, removing the US flag, and attempting to replace it with a Viet Cong flag. The movement's high point came in 1970, with a variety of liberal and radical groups establishing a Vietnam Moratorium Committee—modelled on 1969 US protests of the same name. While derided by some as a "temporary panacea" born of "false or phony internationalism," this appropriation of US slogans, practices, and visual paraphernalia helped mobilize some 200,000 around the country for a May 1970 protest. By that point a majority of Australians opposed the war.[12]

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West Germany

The Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) was another close ally of the United States, although unlike Australia, West Germany did not contribute militarily to the Vietnam War. Nevertheless, a strong antiwar movement emerged, reflecting both the painful legacies of World War II, as well as the new nation's complex and contradictory postwar existence. West Germany's significant financial support of the war in Vietnam provided a morality tale for many young people that spoke to their inherited shame over the Holocaust. As one radical publication put it, "Vietnam is the Auschwitz of our generation."[13] The pre-eminent German student group, the Socialist German Student Union, shared both an acronym and mode of politics with the American SDS. Starting in 1964, the German SDS was the backbone of the "Extra-Parliamentary Opposition" (APO), a movement that challenged the governing "Grand Coalition" of right and left parties (1966–1969). SDS's links were consciously international, with a leading member involved in the drafting of their US counterpart's "Port Huron Statement," the first of many transnational ties that mirrored those of the governments they opposed. As historian Jeremi Suri argues, improvements in television media technology allowed images of protests, occupations, and riots to travel faster than ever before, fostering a cross-pollination of ideas and practices spread principally by "ideas, institutions, and personalities transcend[ing] national boundaries."[14] Unlike in Australia, the West German campaign was more inventive than imitative of its US counterpart. The Campaign for Disarmament (KfA) had organized the anti-nuclear movement of the early 1960s, and by mid-1965 was playing a major role in fomenting anti-Vietnam activism around the slogan: "Vietnam to the Vietnamese."[15]

As police violence against protests increased, so did the power of SDS's "anti-authoritarian" faction, who gained inspiration from guerrilla struggles in Vietnam and elsewhere. In December 1966, police violently squashed antiwar protests in West Berlin, while the infamous events of June 2, 1967—when police shot dead pacifist student Benno Ohnsberg at a protest against the Shah of Iran—further emboldened radicals who argued that "the generation of Auschwitz" must be resisted with violence. The high point of West German antiwar activism came in February 1968 with the International Vietnam Conference, held at the Free University of Berlin. Four thousand attended the conference from all over the world, while 15–20,000 marched the next day—significantly, chanting the newly popular militant slogans "Ho-Ho-Ho Chi Minh" and "Weapons for the Viet Cong."[16] However, passion for Vietnam dissipated following the April 1968 shooting of SDS leader Rudi Dutschke by a right-wing extremist, as domestic issues of police violence and the desire for what Slobodian calls a "cultural revolution" at home took prominence.[17] Some groups, such as the Red Army Faction, took SDS's line of militant solidarity with the Third World to its practical conclusion—taking up arms against the state in a mirroring of similar actions in America.

United Kingdom

Arguably, the militant and widespread opposition to the Vietnam War in Britain, an important part of the wider political and cultural upheaval that took place in that country during the 1960s, places it among the world's most successful. While the Labor Government of Harold Wilson (1964–1970) resisted American requests to commit forces to Vietnam, opponents of the war criticized the foreign policies of both the British and US governments. In 1965 critics within the Labor Party and the trade union movement, outraged by the death

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and destruction in Vietnam and perceiving themselves as fraternal allies of the Vietnamese, censured Wilson for not speaking out more directly against the American war in Indochina. Pacifist and anti-nuclear groups, including the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), also condemned the war, and in May 1965 the British Council for Peace in Vietnam (BCPV) was established. As the US commitment in Vietnam grew, so too did the membership of the BCPV, which used tactics such as sit-ins and teach-ins to raise consciousness about the war and put pressure on the government to both distance itself from the Johnson Administration, and demand that all sides abide by the terms of the 1954 Geneva accord.

Increasingly, however, radical critics of the war demanded more dramatic action. Inspired, in part by their New Left counterparts in the United States, and frustrated by what they regarded as CND and BCVP's reluctance to address the fundamental causes of the war in Vietnam, in January 1966 radicals established the Vietnam Solidarity Committee (VSC). Focusing particularly on mobilizing British youth, VSC organized mass protests, including the October 1968 rally in London's Grosvenor Square, which attracted tens of thousands of demonstrators. In groups such as the International Conference for Disarmament and Peace, and the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation—established in 1963, and inspired by the British philosopher's continuing criticism of the war in Indochina—British opponents of the Vietnam War contributed to a growing transnational movement against the war. Yet the principal focus of the British antiwar movement was on the home front, where the objectives were to ensure that the Labor Government did not enmesh itself more directly in the American war effort, and to encourage the Government to condemn, forcefully, US intervention in Vietnam. While Wilson's decision not to commit forces to Vietnam was reached before the antiwar movement mobilized significant support in Britain, pressure from the movement meant that Wilson could "maintain his stance of 'no troops'" and "played a large part in pushing him to take initiatives for peace."[18] And although British criticism of the war in Vietnam did not lead to an American withdrawal from Vietnam, Britain's status as a major Cold War ally of the United States played an important role in thwarting US attempts to depict the intervention as an international crusade against communism. The antiwar movement in Britain thus highlighted the symbiosis between domestic protest and the transnational politics of the Cold War era.

Japan

Japan, too, was a staunch Cold War ally of the United States, and while it did not commit troops to or directly support the war in Vietnam, Japan was in many respects a "silent partner" of the American intervention in Vietnam. The United States maintained a large military presence in Japan, which served as an important base for US operations. Along with dozens of military bases scattered across Japan—including a vast and controversial airbase on Okinawa—hundreds of thousands of American service personnel transited through Japan, spent time there on leave, or recuperated there after being wounded. The anti-Vietnam War movement in Japan grew out of the country's post-World War II pacifist and anti-nuclear traditions, as well as a more radically informed critique of the US–Japanese alliance. As elsewhere, Old Left organizations, particularly the Japanese Socialist Party and the Japanese Communist Party, were challenged by newer groups, most notably the Citizens' Federation for Peace in Vietnam—better known by the Japanese name, "Beheiren"—which self-consciously sought associations with like-minded groups abroad, and whose version of participatory democracy resembled similar ideas in the United States, and elsewhere.

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In August 1966, well-known antiwar activist David Dellinger was one of nine Americans to participate in Beheiren's "Japan–United States People's Conference for Peace," held in Tokyo.[19]

While Beherein advocated peaceful protest, and aided American deserters, other antiwar groups in Japan embraced more militant tactics. A January 1969 clash between police and student protesters occupying the University of Tokyo's Yasuda Auditorium was broadcast live on national television. The Japanese government, beholden to a pacifist constitution, sought to balance the competing demands of antiwar protesters on the one hand, and a foreign policy framed around the National Security Treat with the United States on the other. And, like their counterparts internationally, Japanese authorities responded to images of student strikes and protest with policies intended to restore law and order. During 1969 over 13,000 students were arrested nationwide during group protests; that repression, along with the US withdrawal from Vietnam, saw the Japanese antiwar movement dissipate by the early 1970s.

"Two, three or many Vietnams"

Throughout the Western bloc, non-aligned nations of the third world, and even the nominally Communist nations of the second world, youth-led protesters demanded peace and solidarity with Vietnam. French peace activists, with the protracted colonial war in Algeria fresh in their minds, adopted Vietnam's cause with vigor. Historian Kristin Ross has described the Vietnam conflict as having "played the most important role" in galvanizing the May 1968 protests, with the first spark that culminated in those events being the arrest of a Nanterre student for breaking a window at the American Express building, in protest against the war in Vietnam.[20] The differences over tactics that characterized antiwar protests elsewhere were played out with particular vehemence in France, where radical students' calls for "victory to the NLF [Vietnam's National Liberation Front]" clashed with calls for "peace" from the French Communist Party. Similar passions motivated students and workers in Denmark where anti-Vietnam protests emerged from pro-Cuba solidarity networks.[21] Striking Fiat workers in northern Italy, remapping the anti-colonial struggle onto their own industrial conflict, declared that "Vietnam is in our factories."[22] Elsewhere, Vietnam provided a discourse of militant decolonization to "first world" radicals seeking independence in Northern Ireland and Canada's Francophone regions.

Behind the "Iron Curtain," activism took a very different hue. State-sponsored peace organizations mobilized citizens and foreign peace movements against "US Imperialism" as a form of regime legitimation and foreign policy. Such mobilizations, however, often only amounted to rhetoric. The 1968 World Festival of Youth and Students, held in Sofia, Bulgaria, was officially committed to "opposition to the Vietnam War." Yet, antiwar demonstration outside the US Embassy, organized by West German and Czechoslovakian attendees, were suppressed by Bulgarian police. Official proclamations also lacked authenticity: As an Australian attendee at the Festival put it, "one had solidarity thrust down one's throat until one felt sick . . . these words lost all meaning they might have ever had."[23] Similar contradictions emerged in socialist Yugoslavia, which was navigating a precarious existence as a non-aligned socialist state. Protests against the Vietnam War were organized by official arms of the state, but when authorities lost control of these demonstrations, police were deployed to quell protest. Radina Vučetić argues that by simultaneously "organizing

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antiwar protests and . . . using violence against them", the Yugoslav government could play a vital Cold War double game, sending a clear message to America that Yugoslavia was not beholden to the USSR, while still "sympathiz[ing] with the Vietnamese people." Calls for peace and solidarity were multifaceted maneuvers in the Cold War.[24]

Opposition to the war in Vietnam also played a central organizing role in what was dubbed the "Third World." Criticism of the Vietnam War sat alongside support for the Cuban Revolution as central to the identity of the reinvigorated Latin American left in the 1960s. Radicals in decolonizing African states also found inspiration in the Vietnamese example, with Congolese students framing their rebellion as the making of a "second Vietnam." At the 1966 Tricontinental Conference in Havana, Cuba, Che Guevara called for "two, three or many Vietnams" to spring up across the world, "with their share of deaths and their immense tragedies, their everyday heroism and their repeated blows against imperialism."[25] Peace in Vietnam could only be achieved by turning the Vietnamese war into a worldwide conflict against imperialism, a cause to which Guevara would soon give his life.

Conclusion

"Vietnam was once a name without an echo," Australia poet Jack Lindsay wrote in 1971, but "now . . . Vietnam is everywhere."[26] Whether perceived as a "line in the sand" against barbaric communism, or an unjust intervention in someone else's war, Vietnam was one of the twentieth century's defining moral issues. From an obscure, far off location, the war in Indochina quickly became "everywhere." As one Australian peace campaigner put it, Vietnam "burnt down the rotten framework of cold war politics."[27] But if "Vietnam" was a rupture, it was one not without continuities, whether in terms of Vietnam's long history of resistance to foreign invasion or the importance of previous peace activism—church, pacifist or the "old left"—in laying solid foundations for the antiwar protests of the 1960s. While necessarily global in their outlook, and although they borrowed from activist practices from other nations, anti-Vietnam war protesters made sense of these new ideas in specific contexts, drawing on local traditions—the local and the global were in complex and enduring dialogue. Some may have been more imitative than others, but the notion that protest could be imported by airmail subscription was inaccurate.

Questions remain regarding the significance and legacies of the international opposition to the Vietnam War. Much has been written on the "generation of 68," especially concerning ways in which the conflict in Vietnam connected this generation across North America and Europe—west and east—as well as in the global periphery. While united in their opposition to the war, each national movement experienced a division into moderate and radical arms, usually as the result of the war's seemingly interminable duration and the peace movement's lack of demonstrable impact on policymakers. Although moderates called for negotiations and a phased withdrawal of foreign forces from Vietnam, more radical (and often youthful) opponents of the war began rejecting such limited demands, instead calling for a Communist victory. If Vietnam marked the end of the Cold War for these activists, then it opened the possibility of embracing former enemies not simply as friends, but as revolutionary heroes worthy of support. And in nations where solidarity with Vietnam was official Party rhetoric, the same demands were used to highlight the insincerity of ruling bureaucrats. Violence—intrinsic to any war—came to be seen by some as the only path to peace, and slogans such as "two, three or many Vietnams" and "bring the war home" proliferated.

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In 1969, stung by rebellions, both militarily and domestically, the United States began withdrawing its forces from Vietnam. Congress, and the public, had turned against what had become an immensely costly war that was proving increasingly difficult to justify. As US intervention in Vietnam wound down, the protest movement declined. While debates on the efficacy of grassroots protests in ending the war will continue, the antiwar movement was not without consequence, and was influential in two key ways. Both the movement's mobilizations and its radicalizing vernacular transformed the debates over the war. Protesters thus publicly challenged the Cold War consensus that had underpinned the United States intervention in Vietnam, exerting pressure from within and outside the country, with transnational forms of protest fueling activism in many localities. Equally, the anti-Vietnam peace movement seeded other, arguably longer-lasting and more successful movements. Second-wave feminists, environmentalists, and gay liberation all adopted the tactics and language of antiwar protest, while rejecting what they saw as its masculinist assumptions. From a name without an echo, Vietnam became a defining—albeit divisive and traumatic—generational experience, with profound global consequences.

Notes

1 Timothy S. Brown, "1968 East and West: Divided Germany as a Case study in Transnational history," *American Historical Review* 114, no. 1 (2009): 70.
2 On the Student Peace Union and Quakers see Van Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left: An Interpretative History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 54, 27.
3 For these figures see Gosse, *Rethinking the New Left*, 89–90.
4 Malcolm X, cited in James Westheider, *Fighting in Vietnam: The Experience of the U.S. Soldier* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2007), 21.
5 Carmichael, cited in Tom Wells, *The War Within: America's Battle Over Vietnam* (New York: Henry Holt, 1994), 124.
6 See Chris Dixon, "Denouncing the 'Horribly Clumsy and Deadly Game': Martin Luther King, Jr. and African American Opposition to the Vietnam War," in *Faces of War Phases of Reconciliation*, ed. Ülkü Donagay, (Ankara: Ankara University Printing House, 2004), 59.
7 On "peace with honour" see Rick Perlstein *Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America* (New York: Scribner, 2008), 706.
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