Ripe for Revolution: Building Socialism in the Third World. Jeremy Friedman. Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 2021. 368 pp. $36. Hardcover ISBN: 9780674244313.

Jeremy Friedman's book *Ripe for Revolution: Building Socialism in the Third World* is a fascinating exploration of impact the of socialism in the Global South following the Second World War. He profiles five countries: Indonesia, Chile, Tanzania, Angola, and Iran. Each nation attempted to find its own path toward socialism, and all became important battle grounds in the Cold War.

One of the most important aspects of Friedman's work is his insistence that the Cold War was not a bilateral conflict between the United States and the Soviets, but a multilateral conflict with various players trying to impose competing ideologies on the developing world. The ideological split between the Soviets and the Chinese in the 1960s is equally important to understanding the Cold War as is the hostility between communism and capitalism. After the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956, the Soviets began promoting a peaceful transition to socialism instead of violent revolution. Socialism would win through economic competition with capitalism rather than armed conflict. This was a safer option in a world gripped by nuclear weapons and dominated by brinkmanship between the Soviets and the United States. The Chinese saw peaceful transition as a betrayal of socialist ideals. From their perspective, Moscow had sold out oppressed peoples in its ongoing struggle to enhance its global power safely. China continued to advocate violent confrontation as the means to end imperialism and build socialist nations. Chinese leaders believed that any state that failed to take power through violent means was doomed to fail. The ideological split between the Soviets and the Chinese had consequences. One of the biggest problems faced by developing nations was access to funds to build economies and infrastructure. The Cold War required nations to pick a side to receive financial assistance, which meant accepting certain ideological positions as well.

The socialist revolution in Chile in the 1970s illuminates the interconnected relationship among the Soviets, the Chinese, and developing countries. The socialist regime under Salvador Allende was committed to both a peaceful transition to socialism and to finding an independent socialist model that diverged from the Chinese and Soviet paths. Allende was a Marxist, elected to power, who wanted to maintain a democratic government, political pluralism, and freedom of speech while imposing state control over the means of production. Allende hoped that Chile could become a model for other nations wishing to transition to socialism. The Soviets were enthusiastic about Allende's path while the Chinese remained much more skeptical. Allende's regime eventually collapsed in violence and was replaced by a military dictatorship under Augusto Pinochet in 1973. Friedman argues that internal division among adherents of peaceful and violent transition weakened Allende's government. He suggests that the "Sino-Soviet split radicalized and politicized these differences to the point that cooperation and compromise among different groups on the left became impossible" (122). In the aftermath of Allende's collapse, the Chinese claimed that the Soviet model of peaceful development was a failure, and the Soviets were forced to develop new arguments justifying their peaceful approach. As countries like Chile forged paths toward

socialism, their options were shaped by ideologies promoted by more powerful nations. Likewise, successes and failures in the developing world either legitimized or delegitimized aspects of Chinese and Soviet international policies and contributed to the rivalry between those two nations.

Friedman's work reveals the severely limited options developing countries had to choose their own path and remain independent. The socialist experiment in Tanzania was led by Julius Nyerere. Like Allende in Chile, Nyerere hoped to create an independent means toward socialism that would prevent Tanzania from becoming a client state of China, the Soviet Union, or the United States. He focused on agricultural development instead of industrialization and wanted to build socialism without class struggle. Like Allende, Nyerere hoped Tanzania could become a model for other nations. Ultimately, Nyerere's socialist project failed, largely because Tanzania did not have the resources to build a stable economy. Nyerere refused to accept help from the Soviets, the Chinese, the World Bank, or the International Monetary Fund. Tanzania illustrates the difficulties faced by many developing nations in avoiding economic dependence. Assistance from any of these entities came with consequences that were often detrimental for developing nations.

Tanzania also illustrates how ideology, especially Soviet ideology, could be shaped by the exigencies of developing countries. Nyerere rejected two principal tenets of Soviet ideology: class struggle and industrialization. Countries like Tanzania required the Soviets to devise models for socialism that were not predicated on traditional Marxist precepts. A similar process reshaped the Soviet view of religion. Marxism suffered greatly in places like Iran and Indonesia because of its hostility toward religion. The Soviet desire to promote socialism in nations with strong religious cultures produced a re-evaluation of the relationship between socialism and religion. Soviet leaders eventually realized that they had no choice but to accept religious allies. They justified this position by adopting the notion that anti-western sentiments proved the compatibility of certain religious groups with communism.

This willingness on the part of the Soviets to re-evaluate or set aside a central aspect of communist theory raises questions about the utility of ideology. Friedman's conclusion does an excellent job tackling complex questions about the definition and role of ideology. He argues that defining ideology as "a systematically simplified way of understanding reality that facilitates judgments and actions" helps clarify how different socialist nations operationalized ideology in dramatically different ways (264). The Soviet Union's efforts to fund state-led industrialization in the developing world failed. This was politically and economically costly, and it led to Soviet acceptance of market activity and foreign investment as legitimate paths toward socialism in the developing world. Soviet leaders hoped that allowing market activity would buy time for developing nations to build socialism. This policy failed, as did the Chinese promotion of socialism through violence. None of the nations Friedman profiles successfully constructed socialist states. Even today, the Chinese continue to struggle with the role of private enterprise in China. The extent to which China and the Soviet Union continued to genuinely adhere to communist ideology is an open question.

Ultimately, Friedman argues that the legacy of socialism in the Global South has been the creation of one-party dictatorships. States gradually shifted away from socialist economic policy

but maintained single-party political systems that, in cases like Angola, have created extravagant wealth for the ruling class and extreme poverty for everyone else (263-274).

Friedman's work is extremely valuable for scholars and potentially for policy makers. This is not a book for non-specialists, and I would be reluctant to assign it to undergraduates. It will be a difficult read for anyone who does not have background in regional histories in Africa, Asia, and Latin America or the history of socialism. However, Friedman does an excellent job shattering the Cold War narrative of two great powers struggling for influence. He reveals the complex network of players vying for influence in the developing world and being shaped by each other. In addition, he highlights the impossible position faced by developing world leaders who wished to remain independent but lacked the financial resources to craft their own path toward development genuinely. His work is extremely important in revealing the legacy of socialism in the Global South and the long-term consequences that the Cold War had on nations struggling to emerge from colonialism.

Emily Machen, University of Northern Iowa