

I am grateful to Mario Del Pero for his thoughtful, thorough, and generous review. One of Professor del Pero's comments captures the dilemma that faced both sets of human rights advocates in the U.S. Congress. As I would put it, their human rights advocacy claimed to transcend politics on behalf of a universal ideal. But of course these politicians could not transcend politics, and their pursuit of moral absolutes necessarily came into conflict with political and ideological imperatives. This dilemma was not unique to these two groups; it reappeared in the Carter administration's confusion about how to elevate human rights to a central pillar of U.S. foreign policy and is an inescapable consequence of any effort to wed idealism to policy.

Professor Del Pero offers three criticisms. First, he quite correctly suggests that the book overlooks international influences (other than the Vietnam War) on the development of international human rights in the United States. This outcome came as a surprise to me, as I was, if anything, predisposed to find such influences. And there were certainly many lines of transmission among the groups and individuals who raised the banner of human rights in the 1960s and 1970s: exiles who fled repression in their homelands, academics who travelled to conferences around the world, politicians who formed international parliamentary groups, and many others. These networks were indispensable to the rise of human rights: without the spread of information about abuses in repressive countries, there would have been no human rights movement. At the same time, what struck me most in my research was the extent of Americans' preoccupation with America. The international fuel was a precondition for the turn to human rights, but it was not decisive. For the decisive factor, in my view, one has to look to Americans' sense of trauma and the peculiar effectiveness of human rights as a salve for that trauma.

A second objection is that in arguing for discontinuities between the civil rights movement of the 1960s and the human rights activism of the 1970s, the book overlooks that the two shared a common emphasis on an apolitical morality and on individual rights, as well as the fact that the civil rights struggle was formative for many (white) Americans who later took up international human rights causes. Arguments about continuity/discontinuity are endemic to history and are difficult to resolve. Both elements are always present, and emphasizing one or the other entails judgments about where the most significance lies. Without disagreeing with Professor Del Pero's points, it still seems to me *most* significant that the civil rights movement aimed at making America more American—more true to its own ideals—whereas the human rights movement of the 1970s was fundamentally about recovering from a traumatic war by telling other countries what (not) to do. Working to improve one's own country and moralizing to the rest of the world are distinctly different enterprises.

In my conclusion I wrote: «The rise of human rights in a pessimistic crisis of modernity in the 1970s was surely yoked to the fall of modernization theory and its optimistic zeal». Professor Del Pero argues that the failures of liberal modernizing crusades in the 1960s should be placed alongside the trauma of the war to explain the appeal of human rights. As one universalistic discourse fell into disrepute, he suggests, another one took its place. I am in basic agreement with this observation, and hope that future researchers take up the call to attend to this important dimension of the story.

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