INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY AND
THE END OF THE COLD WAR IN EUROPE, 1985-91

PART II SPECIAL SUBJECT
TRIPOS 2018-19

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The Cold War did not end in a third world war. Unlike earlier international crises during the first half of the twentieth century (1914-18, 1939-45), the face-off between the superpowers was resolved peacefully. Explanations for this dénouement remain matters of historiographical controversy: Soviet implosion, American pressure, people-power, etc. This Special Subject will focus on the contribution of international diplomacy, asking how far and in what ways relations at the top between leaders helped construct a diplomatic settlement that facilitated radical arms control agreements, the independence of Eastern Europe, and unification of the two Germanies. But we will also consider whether some underlying problems of the Cold War era have still not been resolved.

The paper will draw on the transcripts of key superpower meetings, especially those between Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan/George H.W. Bush, from Geneva (1985) to Washington (1990), and on newly-opened archives from both sides of the Cold War divide. These are available in English and mostly online via the Reagan and Bush ‘41 Presidential Libraries, the Cold War International History Project, the National Security Archive and the Thatcher Foundation. There should, therefore, be no copyright and reproduction issues.

This archival material will be contextualized through the memoirs of key leaders and advisers and, more generally, via the analyses of recent historians. Although the superpowers will receive particular attention, consideration will also be given to the role of specific Eastern European countries (Poland and Hungary) in breaking the Cold War logjam in 1989 and to the contrasting positions of West European leaders especially Helmut Kohl (pushing for German unification), Margaret Thatcher (preferring a modified status quo) and François Mitterrand (advocating a European solution to the ‘German question’).

The paper will also raise larger conceptual (HAP) issues: for example, the role and limits of political agency in effecting systemic change; the cultural dimensions of international history, especially perceptions of ‘the Other’; and the methodological challenges posed by practising ‘contemporary history’.
PRIMARY MATERIALS

American Presidency Project (APP) website: public papers http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/

Bush, George H.W. Presidential Library https://bush41library.tamu.edu
- Memcon, meeting with Mitterrand, 13 July 1989 [3pp]
  https://bush41library.tamu.edu/files/nso/nso23.pdf
- Telcons, Bush-Kohl phone conversations 1 and 3 June 1990

‘Bush and Gorbachev at Malta’ [Dec. 1989] NSAEBB 298 docs 3, 8, 10, 13 [= 47pp]
http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB298/

Bush, George, and Brent Scowcroft, A World Transformed (1998), chs 1 & 2 [54pp], chs 5-8 [92pp], pp. 354-5; chs 20 to end [75pp]
[= 221pp]


‘The End of the Cold War’, CWIHP Project Bulletin 12/13 (Fall 2001)
- ‘New Evidence on the “Soviet Factor” in 1989’ – Zubok, 5-23 (docs 1-4) [19pp]
- ‘Soviet Approaches to E Europe, beginning of 1989’ – Lévesque, 49-72 [24pp]
- ‘Poland, 1986-9’ – Machcewicz, 93-129 (docs 15-19) [37pp]
- ‘The Fall of the Wall’ – Hertle, 131-64 [34pp] (docs 6-11) [= 138pp]

‘German History in Documents and Images’ (GHDI) – 1989-2009: Democratic Awakening
http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_doclist.cfm?sub_id=267&section_id=16
docs 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15 = 32pp

- ‘We Can’t Go On Living Like This’ (pp. 165-8)
- Ch. 18 ‘New Thinking in For Policy’ – Geneva & Reykjavik (401-20)
- Ch. 19 ‘Europe – Our Common Home’ – Home & Helsinki II (427-33)
- Ch. 20 ‘Towards a New World Order’ – summits, 1987-8 (439-63)
- Ch. 23 ‘Overcoming Divisions in Europe’ – 1989 (496-515)
- Ch. 24 ‘German Unification’ – 1989-90 (516-35)
- Ch. 25 ‘Understanding Leads to Partnership’ – Wash & Paris (536-50)
- Ch. 29 ‘Bush in Moscow’ – START, 7/91(618-25) (= 117pp)


Gorbachev, Mikhail, speech to UN, 7 Dec. 1988 [5pp]

http://unix.ocis.temple.edu/~rimmerma/gorbachev_speech_to_UN.htm


http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/713999951

National Security Archive (NSA): *To the Geneva Summit* (NSA Electronic Briefing Book No. 172)

http://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB172/index.htm

Doc 2, RR to MG, 11 March 1985 inviting him to visit Washington (1pp)
Doc 3, Yakovlev memo on RR, 12 March (3pp)
Doc 6, MG to RR, 24 March – agreeing to meet but not to sign agreements (4pp)
Doc 9, RR to MG, 30 April 1985 – detailed reply to 24/3 (11pp)
Doc 10, MG to RR, 10 June 1985 – concerns about SDI (10pp)
Doc 11, Politburo, 29 June 1985 – appointment of Shevardnadze as For Min (6pp)
Doc 14, CIA Assessment of MG agenda for Geneva (4pp)
Doc 15, Geneva, 1st Private, 19 Nov. 1985 (8pp)
Doc 16, Geneva, 1st Plenary, 19 Nov. 1985 (8pp)
Doc 17, Geneva, 2nd Plenary, 19 Nov. 1985 (8pp)
Doc 19, Geneva, 2nd Private, 19 Nov. 1985 (7pp)
Doc 23, Geneva, discussion at dinner, 20 Nov. 1985 (7pp)
Doc 26, Excerpts from Chernyaev’s diary, 24 Nov. 1985 (1pp)


http://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB203/index.htm

Doc 1 (MG to RR 15 Sept. 1986 – 6pp)
Doc 4, Shultz to RR, 2 Oct. 1986, briefing memo on Reykjavik (2pp)
Doc 6, NSC briefing (Sestanovich), 4 Oct. on ‘coy’ MG (2pp)
Doc 8, Politburo, 8 Oct. (6pp)
Doc 10, 12, 14, 16 – FBIS transcripts (29pp)
Doc 18, US ‘Lessons’ (1p)
Doc 20 MG reflections (2pp)
Doc 25, NSDD 250, 3 Nov. 1986, NSC try to rein in anti-nuclearism (3pp)

National Security Archive (NSA): The Reagan-Gorbachev Summits
http://www.thereaganfiles.com/the-summits.html
- Washington, 1987 [53pp]
- ‘The Moscow Summit: 20 Years Later’, docs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10[pp. 67-71], 14, 15, 16, 17, 24, 26, 28 [70pp]
- New York, Governor’s Island, docs 2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 11 [25pp] [= 277pp]

https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB320/index.htm
Doc. 4, CPSU Central Comm directives for talks with Baker, 16-19 May 1990
Doc. 8, ‘Status Update on Agreements for the Summit’, 29 May 1990
Doc. 9, Kohl-Bush phone conversation on Germany, 30 May 1990
Doc. 10, Bush-MG first 1-on-1, 31 May 1990
Doc. 11, Bush-MG plenary, 31 May 1990
Doc. 12, Bush-MG 1-on-1 and plenary (extracts), 1 June 1990
Doc. 13, Bush-MG talk at Camp David, 2 June 1990 [misdated 1 June]
Doc. 15, ‘Soviet Reactions to the Summit’, Moscow Embassy, 12 June 1990

National Security Archive (NSA) End of the Soviet Union – Twenty Years Later (2011)
https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB364/
American documents:
Doc. 8, Bush-MG telcon, 18 Jan. 1991
Doc. 9, Bush-MG telcon, 23 Feb. 1991
Doc. 11 Bush-MG telcon, 11 May 1991
Doc. 12, CIA report ‘Gorbachev’s future’, 23 May 1991
Doc. 13 Bush-MG telcon, 21 June 1991
Doc. 14, Bush-MG memcon, 30 July 1991
Doc. 16 Bush-Yeltsin telcon, 21 August 1991

Reagan, Ronald, An American Life (1990), chs 76-85 (612-723) [= 112pp]

Thatcher, Margaret, The Downing Street Years (1993), ch. 26, pp. 782-815 [= 34pp]
SOME KEY SECONDARY BOOKS AND ARTICLES

  12) The Gorbachev Revolution (Brown)
  13) US foreign policy under Reagan & Bush (Fischer)
  14) Western Europe, 1979-89 (Young)
  15) E. European revolutions of 1989 (Levesque)
  16) Unification of Germany, 1985-91 (Haftendorn)
  17) Collapse of USSR, 1990-1 (Pravda)
  24) Reflections on end of Cold War (Roberts)
Reynolds, David, *Summits: Six Meetings that Shaped the Twentieth Century* (2007), esp. intro and chs 1, 7, 8
Savranskaya, Svetlana, and Thomas Blanton, eds, *The Last Superpower Summits: Gorbachev, Reagan, and Bush: Conversations that Ended the Cold War* (Budapest, 2016)

Zubok, Vladislav M., *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (2009), esp. chs 9-10


Palmowski, Jan, and Kristina Spohr, ‘Special Issue: At the Crossroads of Past and Present – “Contemporary” History and the Historical Discipline, *JCH* 46/3 (2011), esp. 485-530


Zubok, Vladislav, ‘Gorbachev and the End of the Cold War: Perspectives on History and Personality’, *CWH*, 2/2 (2002), 61-100

Zubok, Vladislav, ‘With His Back against the Wall: Gorbachev, Soviet Demise, and German Unification’, *CWH* 14/4 (2014), 619-45

*CWH* Cold War History

*CWIHP* Cold War International History Project

*JCH* Journal of Contemporary History

*JCWS* Journal of Cold War Studies

*JMH* Journal of Modern History

NSA National Security Archive

OUTLINE TEACHING SCHEDULE

INTRODUCTORY LECTURES/CLASSES (8 x 2 hours) Michaelmas

1) From the ‘New Cold War’ to the new Soviet leader, 1980-5

2) Gorbachev and Reagan: Geneva and Reykjavik, 1985-6

3) Domestic pressures: Perestroika and Irangate, 1986-7

4) Arms control: Washington and Moscow, 1987-8

5) Eastern Europe: a failing bloc, 1981-9

6) 1989: people power and international leaders

7) 1990-1: German unity, European integration and Soviet collapse

8) Has the Cold War Ended?

DOCUMENTARY PRESENTATIONS (12 x 2 hours) Lent

GOBBETS CLASSES (4 x 2 hours) Easter