The Goat and the Butcher. Nationalism and State Formation in Kurdistan Iraq since the Iraqi War by Robert Olson (Mazda Publishers: Costa Mesa, California, 2005)

The Goat and the Butcher is an important work as it sheds light on and analyses the development of Kurdish nationalism in northern Iraq and Turkey and the emergence of the de facto Kurdish state in northern Iraq from the U.S. invasion of Iraq in March 2003 to the end of 2005. Even though it mainly focuses on the link between capitalism, the butcher, and nationalism, the goat, i.e. Kurdish nationalism, the book also examines Turkey’s relations with its neighbors, including Syria, Russia, Iran and Israel and explains the impact of those relations on Kurdish nationalism in Turkey as well as in northern Iraq.

The book gives different reasons for the rise of Kurdish nationalism in the region. The American invasion and occupation of Iraq and the rejection of the 1 March Resolution 2003 by the Turkish Assembly appears as the main reason. The author argues that fierce Iraqi resistance to American troops and the rejection of 1 Mart Tezkeresi forced the U.S. to cooperate with Kurdish troops and peshmergas to fight against Iraqi resistance groups. This helped Kurdish leaders to gain the upper hand in northern Iraq vis-à-vis the Turkish government. As a result of this “changed” relationship, red lines established in February 2002 in an agreement between the US and Turkey (which were: Musul and Kerkük would be occupied by the U.S. forces; not by Kurdish troops; the U.S. would not permit the PKK/Kongra-Gel to gain strength in the region etc) and other red lines determined late, have been erased or changed. The violation of the 28 February agreement between the U.S. and Turkey in which the Americans promised to provide Kurdish peshmerga with only light weapons and to collect them after the fighting was over; the
capture of Kerkük by American and Kurdish forces in April 2003 and the failure of Turkish military troops to come to the aid of the Turkomans and finally the “bag affair” in July 2003 that resulted in the expulsion of 11 Turkish Special Forces personnel, were all indications of diminishing Turkish power in northern Iraq. Despite Turkey’s unhappiness with these developments, including increasing PKK terrorist attacks in Turkey, Olson argues that Turkey continued to agree to play the limited role assigned to it by Washington, i.e. contributing to the US-controlled “rebuilding” of Iraq. This included Ankara’s hesitation to take any cross-border military action against PKK/Kongra-Gel and other Kurdish groups in northern Iraq; a situation that continues to prevail as this review was written in September 2006.

The author explains Turkey’s response to the above developments, and US policy in northern Iraq, with the theory of omni-balancing. According to this theory, inter-state relations are determined by geopolitically-shaped national interests and external threats; domestic politics, internal ideological legitimization dictates and economic needs. From these elements, the author emphasizes economic needs as being dominant, especially the AKP’s need to accumulate capital and rent requisites in order to consolidate its power, as the main factors determining Turkey’s policy toward Kurdish nationalism in Turkey as well as in Kurdistan-Iraq. More importantly, the author argues that by establishing strong economic relations with the KDP and PUK in Kurdistan-Iraq, Ankara hoped to make Kurdish nationalism less attractive to the Kurds of Turkey as well as Iraq. But, as Olson insightfully argues, these policies resulted, as of mid-2006, in the Kurds of Iraq achieving a de facto independence that contributed greatly to the strengthening of Kurdish nationalism in Iraq and strongly influencing Kurdish nationalist movements in Turkey.

Turkey’s bid for EU candidacy appears as another important reason for the rise of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey as well as in Iraq. The author argues that the rejection of 1 March Resolution by the Turkish Assembly that contributed so greatly to the strengthening of American-Kurdish relations was a result of the government’s policy of “inching toward Europe.” Another EU-linked reason for Turkey to accept stronger Kurdish autonomy in northern Iraq, as indicated in the state-to-government relations established between Turkey (state) and KDP-PUK (government), was the harmonization laws. Turkey passed massive legislation from 2004 onwards (it is still continuing) related to human rights, penal, civil and financial laws in accordance with the EU criteria and the proposed EU constitution. Some articles in the
harmonization laws required that the Kurds be given linguistic, cultural and political rights that ‘minorities’ in EU countries have.

In sum, examining the relations between the goat and the butcher from a Marxist perspective, the author underlines the significant and determining role of economic interests such as oil, gas and customs/trade revenues, as the main factors in Turkish-American and, more importantly Turkish-Kurdish relations, in the Middle East. When it comes to economic relations, the author argues that the goat and the butcher can be on the same side even though political rhetoric seems to argue the opposite. Olson’s book is the first book in English, or in any other language as far as I know, to address these important developments which are bound to have a great impact on the evolving geopolitical realignments, such as Sunni-Shi’a challenges, potential Turkey-Iran differences, taking place in the Middle East as a result of the US invasion and occupation of Iraq. Olson’s study makes a fundamental contribution to the historiography of this emerging and increasingly important literature. It also emphasizes the increasing importance of the Kurdish question, i.e. Kurdish nationalism in Middle East politics.

Reviewed by
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The increased interdependence of states in the contemporary international system has seen the emergence of a number of multilateral institutions that seek to improve and coordinate activities that affect the general populace globally. Undoubtedly, this has created problems of governance in the management of these international affairs. The book is well intentioned as it seeks to analyse issues of power in global governance.

Chapter one by Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall is an excellent introduction to the volume. It offers clear definitions of central concepts of global governance and power. They manage to distinguish pertinent types of power vis compulsory power, institutional power, structural power and productive power and analyse their centrality in understanding the dynamics of global governance. The authors explained how these forms of power could generate aspects of resistance. Essentially, the authors assert that “Because power in world politics is complex and takes many forms, so, too, is resistance”p.23.

Andrew Hurrell in chapter two analyses the liberal discourses that have shaped academic thinking in international relations i.e. liberal institutionalism and liberal constructivism. The author goes further to examine the relationship between power, governance and globalisation. Lastly, the author considers the normative implications of the liberal governance agenda. He posits that, “The strengthening and thickening of the institutions of global governance become central to the meaning of that much appealed-to ‘international community’.”p.58.

The third chapter by Mark Laffey and Jutta Weldes explores power in global governance by examining the increase in and transformation of policing that accompanies, and helps to produce, the globalisation of the neo-liberal form of capitalist structures. It traces the workings of global governance through institutional, structural, and productive forms of power. The chapter identifies the integral relations between global governance and policing within the framework of neoliberalism. It also exposes how different forms of power are manifested in the policing practices that both enable and reinforce the practices of commodification and privatisation at the center of neoliberalism. The authors provide much more clear definitions of neoliberalism; globalisation and the examples that are dwelled on are pertinent to issues raised particularly on policing in practice and policing in governance. The authors finally submit that, ‘A central task
for analysts of power in global governance, then, is to trace out where and how the global is implicated in the local, and vice versa.’ p. 79.

In the fourth Chapter, Ethan B. Kapstein, analyses the issues of power and fairness in global economy. The chapter offers a comprehensive definition of the concept of fairness, and explained how the present disputes between the North and the South are struggles for fairness of the present day order. The Chapter examines in detail the nexus between compulsory power, institutional power, and the norms of fairness focusing on the international trading system. The conclusion made by the author sounds feasible and to the point,

If fairness demands anything at present time, it is that Washington negotiates with its partners in the context of the regimes it once helped to establish…Without fairness considerations firmly in place to harness and restrain the constant exercise of compulsory power, there can be no durable global governance. Self-styled realists, both in government and the academy alike, need to acknowledge that there is power in the pursuit of fairness.p.101.

Lloyd Gruber in Chapter five examines how the institutionalization of international relations is linked to power politics. The major contentious issues in this realm of trying to expose the linkage is that,

…the problem with current research is not that our theories are too disparate. The real stumbling block is that these theories have been put to use in understanding only one side of the globalisation and the political integration story-the side having to do with collective action, efficiency and mutual gains. If we want to understand the other side-the one concerning winners and losers, zero-sum conflict, and the struggle to achieve and maintain power-we must first discard the analytical biases that have led international relations theorists to overlook it.p.129.

Chapter six by Gregory Shaffer analysed the concept of power and governance dwelling on the WTO case study. By using the comparative institutional approach the author analysed various means through which United States and the European Union directly and indirectly shape and deploy WTO law; that is, other states and international bodies that are relatively weaker. The chapter presents how judicial bodies exercise institutional power when adjudicating over legal cases. In essence, the paper justifies why institutional analysis has to be comparative. The author in the final analysis notes that ‘in criticizing how power operates in any institution, policy analysts need to view it counterfactually in relation to non idealized institutional alternatives’. p.160.
Micheal Barnett and Martha Finnmore examine power within the framework of liberal international organisations that were defined in an explicit manner. They explain how liberalism has largely dominated thinking about international organisations theoretically and in policy making and enlighten on major bone of contentions with other schools of thought i.e. neo realist. They also trace the historical issues surrounding the development of international organisations. The linkage between IOs and authority and power are analysed within the context of the forms of power. In essence their examination managed to conclude,

‘…for both policy makers and scholars, international organisations, provided solutions to an array of policy problems, and challenges to their essential goodness were few and far between .p.181….international organisations are not only helping states coordinate their activities, they are also shaping which activities the international community values and holds in high esteem’.p.184.

In the next chapter Ian Johnstone analysed the impact of law within the framework of different forms of power vis productive, institutional and compulsory. The author offers a clear conceptualization of law and interpretive community. They also examined the relevance of legal norms and discourse in the Security Council of the United Nations. Examples drawn are central to one’s appreciation of not only legal issues but also political issues at play. In essence the author argues that,

…legal discourse is a form of productive power which connected to the power of interpretive communities. In a global environment lacking a normative or institutional framework, interpretive communities would wield no influence…p.204.

Mark Rupert examined the issues of class powers and how they directly affect politics of global governance in chapter nine. The authors explain how class based powers, the social relations of capitalism, historical instantiations within and across nation states, help one to understand relations and processes. The concept of class power is well explained and its centrality in global power is equally well explained. The author does identify forms of resistance citing relevant examples to illustrate the raised issues. The author’s recommendation is valuable. ‘...capitalism and its putatively private relations of power organize crucial parts of social life on a transnational scale, the struggles surrounding these relations and their various articulations in sites around the world merit serious study as part of the questions of global governance’. p.228.

Chapter ten by Ronnie D. Lipschutz analyses the centrality of global civil society in global government and how issues of power i.e. institutional and productive are linked to it. The author examines
agents resisting the market before examining the emergence of global civil society. In the final analysis, the author explores the relationship between global civil society, markets and the state system.

In Chapter eleven Helen M. Kinsella examines the productive power within the discourses of gender, analysing international humanitarian law and the laws of war. She offers clear definitions of gender within the laws of war and locates its centrality. The author further provides historical origins of the laws of war to its present state. The author questions and challenges the scholarship that engages analysis of gender and the laws of war that focus on the protection of women rather than the production of women in the law and the production of the laws of war.

Himadeep Muppidi, within the framework of what he terms colonial and postcolonial governance, examines some configurations of powers, principles and practices of global governance. The author explicitly shades light on the term colonial governance espousing the major contentions, contestations and resistance that have arisen. At the end, it has to be understood that,

Proponents or critics of global governance that do not offer a space for dissensus and difference, that do not encourage a self reflexivity that emerges and seeks to learn from various others, can be seen as deeply complicit in the production of colonial orders of global governance. p.293.

The final Chapter by Emanuel Adler and Stephen Bernstein provides an in-depth conception of power and knowledge and goes further to justify how global governance rests on material capabilities and knowledge. The chapter also explores the ways in which the emerging pockets of global governance can be made more sustainable and just by examining the possibilities and limitations.

All things considered, the text offers an excellent analysis of power in global governance and is highly recommended to those who have interest in international relations discourses, international relations theory, international organisations and international law. I found the text highly informative and providing interesting case studies, examples and illustrations.

Reviewed By
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Various concepts like the Spirit of Independence, Manifest Destiny, and the Frontier that codify and edify the trajectory of the American cultural rubric in the nineteenth-century America are still today ingrained in the daily lives of American people, and predominant in both the domestic and international policies of the US government. These phenomena have characterized and pedestaled as American values the ontogenesis and reinforcement of the so-called cult of masculinity. Now that the ideology and rhetoric of masculinity were constructed, they have been chiseled out further into the American ego, and accompanied by oedipal complex in military, political, cultural and literary spheres to establish a patriarchal, and hegemonic American identity yet in the making. The century is one of transition, if not of equilibrium, ideologically rooted in the eighteenth century when, following the War of Independence, Oedipal America was gradually trying to shake off the influence of the colonial complex, and equivocally assuming the role of the imperial colonizer per se not only within the territories in the American continent, but also across the continents in the twentieth century.

The emergence of the concept of “Manifest Destiny” in particular earmarks an important factor in the development of American culture. The significance of the neologism lay not in its originality of coinage, but in the socio-political ideology the phrase epitomized. Although the conceptual framework can be traced back to Puritan epistemology, the phrase was first used by the American journalist and diplomat John Louis O'Sullivan, in an editorial supporting the annexation of Texas. “Manifest Destiny” was thus refurbished with secular overtones to minister to fledgling expansionist, and even imperialistic aspirations of the political elite. Earlier the concept furnished Puritan historiography with both a consolation and rationalization for why the immigrants had to migrate to the New World, interpenetrating history with a sacrosanct ideal. The Puritans acutely felt that they were reenacting the biblico-historical hardships, torment and tyranny that the Ancient Israelites experienced until they reached the Promised Land, whose imagery figured prominently in shaping English colonial thought. The Pilgrims identified themselves with the ancient Hebrews: they saw in the New World the New Canaan; they were God's chosen people headed for the Promised Land. Other colonists believed they, too, had been
divinely called. This self-image of being God's Chosen People called to establish the New Israel became an integral theme in America's historical self-interpretation.

The Manifest Destiny Doctrine was based on the idea that America had a divine providence. It was God's will that Americans spread over the entire continent, and to control and populate the country as they see fit. It also had a future that was destined by God to expand its borders, with no limit to area or country. All the traveling and expansion were part of the spirit of Manifest Destiny. Many expansionists conceived God as having the power to sustain and guide human destiny. During the revolutionary period, the idea emerged with a new force. In 1776, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson wanted the Promised Land images for the new nation's Great Seal. Franklin proposed Moses, based on the Biblical model of Exodus, dividing the Red Sea with Pharaoh's army being overwhelmed by the closing waters. Of course, the British King stood for the Egyptian Pharaoh, in whose palace Moses grew up. Jefferson urged a representation of the Israelites being led in the wilderness by the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day. Later, in his second inaugural address (1805), Jefferson again recalled the Promised Land, evoking the Puritan memory of America as “a City upon a Hill,” the “New Israel.” All this imagery evidences how inherent the Bible and Biblical imagery and figures were in the socio-political and cultural heritage of America.

The colonists had seen a profoundly Biblical significance in their voyages to and settlements in America. It is also interesting to observe that the Edenic notion of America emerged in reference to the Biblical paradise. The Puritans thought that they were going to recover from the bondage and persecutions of the past to establish a Puritan theocratic paradise like the ancient Israelites. To voyagers and explorers the country had offered an exciting vision of Edenic America--an immense “virgin” continent. Several early writers focus on America in this vein. For instance, In *Gods Promise to His Plantations* John Cotton (1584-1652) writes that “He hath appointed the times and places of our habitation, that we might seeke and grope after the Lord.” In *Of Plymouth Plantation* Bradford ascribes the causes of immigration to divine calling that “the truth” should prevail and “the churches of God revert to their ancient purity and recover their primitive order, liberty and beauty.” John Smith’s *Description of New England* portrays the land in terms of cornucopia and differentiates between the Old and the New World as follows: “This is the difference betwixt...the golden age and the leaden age, prosperity and misery, justice and corruption, substance and shadowes, words and deeds, experience and
imagination.” Increase Mather also considered America a Kingdom of Christ “restored to its Paradise state.” Hence, the new continent, for the Pilgrim Fathers, meant separation from the past, a new adventure, a new history, and a new beginning.

When it appeared in the July-August 1845 edition of The United States Magazine and Democratic Review with its new semantic turn, the term “Manifest Destiny” had already been divested of its religious garb, and came to put on military uniform to transform American demography forever.9 The phrase later became a shibboleth used by all political parties to legitimize the acquisition of California, and the Oregon Territory, which included the extermination of the Native Americans.10 From President Monroe11 to President Bush, doctrines and ideologies have focused on both the idea of isolating the New World from the Old World interventions, and the zeal of commingling imperial expansionism with religious veneer.12 By the beginning of the twentieth century the same phrase was being indefatigably applied to the proposed annexation of various islands in the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. Taking new semantic turns en route, “Manifest Destiny” turned into ever-receding bivouac the American eagle perched on, ranging from Alaska to the Far East, i.e. from coast to coast and from pole to pole, from the national to the transnational frontier, legitimizing all that the American empire has intended to do.13 Puritan theocracy was long since gone, but the Puritan rhetoric has lingered on in secular disguises such as “the frontier” or “the West,” The Great American Dream” the “New World Order,” and “Globalization.”14 The hand of God, the principles of social-cultural and economic Darwinism, the hegemonic sense of dominating and subduing the “other,” now sugarcoated with a messianic mission of democracy, now egregiously adamant tour de force,. Deliberate ambiguity and sophistic approach toward similar events has come to identify American imperialism.

Unlike historically “real” events, of course, mythmaking and nation-building ideologies are not tangible. Manifest Destiny is a phenomenon that cannot be pegged to a single date and event or even a specific period of time. It has always existed in American history as an intangible ideology that created American politics, history, life and culture. It has ethno-centric and even racist connotations in its conceptual framework. Above all, it considers imperialistic expansionism as rightful destiny and legitimate necessity ordained by God, required and foreshadowed by history. Though American government has chosen to be constitutionally secular, this ideological euphemism has harbored in it a fundamentally religious ideology, and
messianic eschatology. Thanks to this idea, several wars have broken out. For example, in 1846 the United States declared war on Mexico and proceeded to win much of what is now the Southwestern United States. The war with Mexico was just one out of a series of aggressive acts that can be tied to America's Manifest Destiny. Manifest Destiny emerged almost naturally and with a sort of inevitability out of fundamental want and need to explore, conquer new lands and establish new borders. With this growth came moral, cultural, social ideological and economical differences between people, states and countries. Manifest Destiny reflected both the prides that characterized American Nationalism in the middle of the nineteenth century, and the idealistic vision of social perfection through God and the church, both of which fueled much of the reform energy of the time. Individually, the components created separate reasons to conquer new territories.

It is against this background of mediocrity that The New American Imperialism stands. In the book Fouskas and Gökay argue persuasively that the demise of the Soviet Empire marked out not only the end of the Cold War Era, but also the beginning of the unchallenged rise of the American empire by a kind of see-saw effect. The American imperial expansionism, they argue, show different characteristics from the Western empires in history. America has essentially been attempting to remake and remodel the whole world to create a sense of order compatible with American socio-economic and political system, thus giving liberalism a distinctively American shape. The imperialist motive in American politics, according to the authors, have been reinforced after World War, and spurred on by 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001.

A very striking point Vassilis and Fouskas discuss in their book is that the USA has seized the attacks of 9/11 as almost a long-sought-for opportunity “to expand and increase its military and economic grip on the resources of Eurasia, and that this reaction to 9/11 is the product of a general decline of American economic power in the world’s political system.” It is the decline of economic power and “relative retreat of its dominant position in the world economic system” that has “promoted a militarist drift in U.S. foreign policy” (71). They expound that the American economic decline was “well under way before the attack (5).” The “Dollar hegemony” was decreasing, and so was the American strategy for global dominance. Earlier the attempt was to replace the British pound with the American Dollar, which would also imply that the American Empire was replacing the British as well (16). The idea was kicking already in OPEC in 1970s, which finally resulted in OPEC’s agreement that all oil pricing would be “exclusively” in dollars.
The creation of the Euro in 1999 was to some extent a challenge to the dollar as well as American currency hegemony. By mid-2003, the Euro had increased its share of money markets to almost 46 percent (25). The authors also point out that currently the Euro accounts for “one-quarter of the global market.”

Fouskas and Gökay also elaborate on another fundamental issue that America has explicitly solidified: the alliance between Washington and Israel in the post-Cold War era. Unconditional support for Israel has proved to be the vulnerability of the American Empire at the expense of the American tax-payers and at the risk of international community’s taciturn disagreement.

It is more than mutual interests, as scholars of international relations would be wont to say, that have welded together the two promised lands. “Pax Americana” has actually promoted the Zionist targets of Israel. In this sense, former US President Jimmy Carter’s recent book, *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid* (2006) is harping on the same strings as *The New American Imperialism*. In the Palestine-Israeli conflicts, the US has always tipped the scale in favor of Israel. According to the authors, neoconservative clique that has paved the way for the strategies to seize America’s grip on energy resources of Eurasia, has also collaborated with the Zionists, considering all as grain to their mill.

The authors brilliantly and meticulously delineate the links between Christian and Jewish ideologists. To power and global reach can therefore be added another imperial characteristic: a hidden desire coated with political rhetoric of democracy and globalization to hurry forth and act. Even before America was attacked on September 11, 2001, influential forevoices were calling for a more activist foreign policy. Several groups were impatient with the constraints imposed by treaties, multilateral action and America's membership of international clubs like the UN. They wanted to see America immediately hit back when attacked. George W. Bush sympathized with them. It was on the assertive nationalists—along with men like Dick Cheney, his vice-president, and Donald Rumsfeld, his secretary of defense, not bilateral and multilateral agreements, which George G. Bush relied. Bush even boasted after 9/11 that he was “a war president” quoting passages from the Bible to shed light on the current issues. His second term, in particular, has witnessed a Manichean dichotomy between good and evil, and those who “are either with us or against us.” This period also marks out a new strategic alliance between the Christian
Fundamentalist and neo-Zionists” (115). The president's instincts were to take robust action if necessary, but to avoid foreign entanglements. In particular, even as a candidate, he had been hostile to the idea of satellite building abroad, an ambition more closely identified with the democratic imperialists, also known as neoconservatives. For them, Afghanistan and Iraq were just the start. The transformation of the entire Middle East—Iran, Syria, Saudi Arabia, would later ensue.

Fouskas and Gökay, in sum, draw a grim picture of the world after the collapse of the Russian Empire. At a time when the world has essentially been keeping mum about what the Bush administration has been doing, they have documented in their book a highly readable, and remarkable, if not unique, account of America’s imperialist strategies, which paradoxically intends to “liberate the world in rhetoric while actually it has been attempting to “liberate” several countries and regions across the world from their natural resources, and even territorial rights unlike the “good Samaritan.”

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NOTES


11 Hiram Bingham, The Monroe Doctrine, an Obsolete Shibboleth (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1913) 3
13 Hiram Bingham, The Monroe Doctrine, an Obsolete Shibboleth (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1913) 3