

# H-Diplo | Robert Jervis International Security Studies Forum

## Roundtable Review 14-11

Brandon Wolfe-Hunnicut. *The Paranoid Style in American Diplomacy: Oil and Arab Nationalism in Iraq*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2021. ISBN: 9781503613829 (hardcover, \$85), 9781503627918 (paper, \$26).

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 Introduction by Robert Vitalis, University of Pennsylvania
 

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It is my great pleasure to introduce this roundtable review of Brandon Wolfe-Hunnicut's *Paranoid Style in American Diplomacy: Oil and Arab Nationalism in Iraq*. I began corresponding with the author almost two decades ago, when he was a new graduate student and thinking about dissertation topics. Since then, I watched as he turned a first-rate dissertation on the nationalization of the foreign-owned Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC) into an even better book. Our four reviewers call it an "essential contribution" to "multiple fields," first and foremost the international politics of oil, a "brilliant account" of US foreign policy, and an "important" study of Iraq in the 1960s. I agree. On the back cover, I am quoted as saying that it reads "like a John Le Carré novel with footnotes, where the moral compromises and paranoia of the Cold War drives the action." Frankly, I was expecting much more pushback by the reviewers, given that the author admits to writing the book in part as a "provocation."

Nathaniel George, who works on Arab intellectual history and is completing a book on the Lebanese civil war, leads with an expert summary of the *The Paranoid Style's* sources, arguments, and findings. Like him, I thought the most eye-opening aspect of the book is its account of the Iraqi technocrat Kheir el-Din Haseeb who, with a handful of like-minded colleagues, developed the blueprints for nationalization of the foreign oil concessions before his enemies in the 1968 Ba'ath party coup imprisoned and tortured him. George argues that Wolfe-Hunnicut might have done more with "Arabic newspapers, memoirs, and journals." Fair enough, but I would have appreciated clarification on what he suspects a deeper dive into these sources would reveal.

Bryan Gibson is an London School of Economics-trained diplomatic historian who has also written critically on US relations with Iraq.<sup>1</sup> His analysis of the political upheavals of the 1950s and 1960s, which he explains as the costly consequence of the cold-war competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, serves as foil ("the more traditional or "orthodox" interpretation," 235, fn. 23) for Wolfe-Hunnicut's account of the private economic or material drivers of US national security policy. Gibson gracefully plays down their differences, which, in my view, turn on what each considers an adequate account of the causal mechanisms that would allow one to conclude that the CIA was behind the 1963 Ba'ath Party coup and the subsequent massacre of Iraqi Communists or that the US state shared the IPC's specific objective of stemming "the tide of overproduction that riddled the industry in the 1950s and 1960s" (6). He praises the book ("a brilliant account of the intersection of US foreign policy, Arab nationalism, and oil interests") and reviews fifty years of writing on Iraqi politics in highlighting the significance of Wolfe-Hunnicut's work.<sup>2</sup>

Historian David Painter, who recently retired from Georgetown University, agrees about the book's importance, and that is saying something. No one knows more nor writes more authoritatively about oil and US foreign policy in the Cold War. Painter calls *The Paranoid Style* pathbreaking and the author's command of the disparate literatures that inform it outstanding. I agree. Painter's summary of them is a model of the art; the footnotes themselves are invaluable; and when Painter expresses some skepticism with the account of President Lyndon Johnson making Middle East policy based on his "religious upbringing," Wolfe-Hunnicut quickly gives ground in his response.

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<sup>1</sup> Bryan Gibson, *Sold Out? US Foreign Policy, Iraq, the Kurds, and the Cold War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Gibson distinguishes three waves of scholarship over those fifty years, and says political scientists dominated the first two, with diplomatic historians like himself and Wolfe-Hunnicut, who have worked in recently declassified documents, driving the third. Yet virtually all the books he references as illustration of the earlier waves were written by historians, including my friends and mentors Peter and Marion-Farouk Sluglett, the great Hanna Batatu, Phebe Marr, Uriel Dann, Stephen Grummon, and Barry Rubin, among others.

Painter's review also offers challenges to the author's claim that the unique feature of the IPC consortium made it especially vulnerable to nationalization. The takeover of foreign copper, gold, oil, and other industries in dozens of newly independent countries was a hallmark of the 1960s and 1970s. There were earlier waves of nationalization of foreign-owned oil concessions as well. Think Mexico. While ownership structure differed—private, individually-owned firms; joint ventures between publicly-traded companies; consortia of single country-domiciled firms; and national-identity-spanning consortia even more complex than the British-French-US-and-Portugal-domiciled IPC—the outcome everywhere was the same. So how much did the IPC's ownership structure really matter to the outcome? As Painter argues about the Johnson administration's support of Israel, the turn to nationalization of raw material export industries across the Global South would seem to have been overdetermined.<sup>3</sup>

Of the four reviewers, New York University's Sara Pursley is the most expert on the history of Iraqi politics and society, and she also finds a lot to praise in the account of the politics of oil nationalization in Iraq, in particular Wolfe-Hunnicut's "reassessment" of the first post-coup prime minister, 'Abd al-Karim Qasim. Pursley's discussion focuses on Qasim's unilateral revision of IPC's concession by passing Public Law 80 of 1961, which stripped the firm of its mineral rights in the vast part of Iraq's yet-to-be-developed fields. The moment, she says, has gone understudied by herself and others, and yet, if Wolfe-Hunnicut is correct, it "radically altered Iraqi political history." She also follows Wolfe-Hunnicut in describing the act as having "nationalized 99.5 percent of the concessionary area," which is misleading. Nationalization typically refers to the negotiated (Saudi Arabia 1972) or unilateral (Iran 1953) takeover of a firm's *property*. The oil-bearing lands were always Iraq's, just as the Suez Canal was always Egypt's. Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the company that operated the concession in 1956. In Iraq, IPC continued to operate just fine until 1972. Had it sought legal remedy rather than regime change it would have been a matter of breach of contract rather than illegal expropriation, as US officials recognized at the time.<sup>4</sup>

Pursley's unrivaled expertise also leads to the sharpest challenge of the four reviews. She questions the value of adopting Richard Hofstadter's 1964 account of the "paranoid style" of far-right conspiracy theorists prominent in the failed presidential campaign of Barry Goldwater to describe US diplomacy in the Cold War. She believes it leads the author to downplay the strength of the Iraqi Communist movement, which Qasim's government targeted for destruction in 1959. She also thinks US policymakers interpreted matters correctly, meaning that Wolfe-Hunnicut may over-emphasize the oil question. She writes, "US policy was able to adopt to oil nationalization more easily than to Iraqi Communism, which might at least raise a question about the argument that US support for the 1963 coup was more about the former than the latter."

Wolfe-Hunnicut offers a generous and spirited response to his critics, who give his book the respect it deserves.

### Participants:

**Brandon Wolfe-Hunnicut** is an Associate Professor of History at California State University, Stanislaus. He is currently compiling some notes for a future project on the philosophy of history and beginning work on a second volume of the *Paranoid Style* that will cover the years between the 1972 nationalization and the 2003 invasion.

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<sup>3</sup> Jeffrey Frieden, "Oil and the Evolution of US Policy Towards the Developing Areas, 1900-1950: An Essay in Interpretation," in R. W. Ferrier and A Fursenko, eds. *Oil in the World Economy* (London: Routledge, 1989), 53-73.

<sup>4</sup> See the discussion in John Blair, *The Control of Oil* (New York: Pantheon, 1977), pp. 80-90.

**Robert Vitalis**, a professor of political science, is the author of *When Capitalists Collide: Business Conflict and the End of Empire in Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), *America's Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2005), *White World Order, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), and *Oilcraft: The Myths of Scarcity and Security that Haunt US Energy Policy* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2020). He is currently researching the rise of the militant right in US national security studies.

**Nathaniel George** lecturer (Assistant Professor) in Middle East Politics in the Department of Politics and International Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. His research and teaching focus on the relationship between revolution, counterrevolution, sectarianism, and empire in the modern Middle East and the United States. Previously, he was a Raphael Morrison Dorman Memorial Postdoctoral Fellow at Harvard University's Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, and an Ibrahim Abu-Lughod Fellow at Columbia University's Center for Palestine Studies. His article "'Our 1789': The Transitional Program of the Lebanese National Movement and the Abolition of Sectarianism, 1975–77" appeared in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 42:2 (2020): 470-488.

**Bryan R. Gibson** is an Assistant Professor of History at Hawaii Pacific University. He holds a Ph.D. in international history from the London School of Economics and is the author of *Sold Out? US Foreign Policy, Iraq, the Kurds and the Cold War* and *Covert Relations: US Foreign Policy, Intelligence, and the Iran-Iraq War* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

**David S. Painter** taught international history at Georgetown University for 31 years. His publications include *Oil and the American Century: The Political Economy of U.S. Foreign Oil Policy, 1941-1954* (Johns Hopkins, 1986); *The Cold War: An International History* (Routledge, 1999); *Origins of the Cold War: An International History* (co-edited with Melvyn P. Leffler, Routledge, 2005)); and articles on US policy toward the Third World, oil and international relations, and the Cold War. His book, *The Struggle for Iran: Oil, Autocracy, and the Cold War, 1951-54* (co-authored with Gregory Brew) will be published in January 2023 (University of North Carolina Press). His current projects include a study of oil and world power in the twentieth century and an analysis of the origins, course, and impact of the oil crises of the 1970.

**Sara Pursley** is Associate Professor in the departments of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and of History at New York University. She is the author of *Familiar Futures: Time, Selfhood, and Sovereignty in Iraq* (Stanford University Press, 2019) and numerous articles, including "Ali al-Wardi and the Miracles of the Unconscious" in *Psychoanalysis & History* (2018) and "'Lines Drawn on an Empty Map': Iraq's Borders and the Legend of the Artificial State," in *Jadaliyya*. She is currently a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study, where she is working on her second book manuscript, *Enclosing Iraq: Insurgency, Development, Law* (Stanford University Press, under contract).

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 Review by Nathaniel George, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London
 

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Nearly two decades after the second US invasion and occupation of Iraq, the state and its diverse people remain poorly understood in the United States. Since the British invention of an Iraqi state after the fall of the Ottoman Empire in the early twentieth century, Iraq's political society has been defined by a struggle for sovereignty against imperial powers and exploitative enterprises that sought to control the country's politics and formidable resources for their own benefit.<sup>1</sup> Brandon Wolfe-Hunnicut's book is an extremely valuable contribution that exposes the role of capitalist imperialism—much of it directed out of the US—in shaping the fate of Iraq's society and state long before the more obvious US interventions and sanctions regimes of the 1990s and 2000s.

*The Paranoid Style in American Diplomacy* relates the complex, decades-long story of the nationalization of the oil industry in Iraq. In doing so, the book makes key contributions to the study of three primary sets of actors: Western oil company officials, the Iraqi state-building class, and the US foreign policymakers. After a series of largely unproductive predecessors, the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) was formed in 1928 as a consortium that united British, French, American, Dutch, and Ottoman Armenian oil companies under the protective umbrella of the British colonial mandate for Iraq (12-16). The IPC was the sole legal entity permitted to extract and market oil from Iraq, and as with most oil concessions in the region, the Iraqi government had no power to determine how much oil the IPC should produce and when, locally arbitrate legal disputes, or to amend rates of taxation, among numerous other onerous restrictions (66-67). On top of this, the IPC consistently and substantially underpaid its export taxes to the government (78). As a variety of Iraqi patriots were to assert from its inception, the IPC concession represented a severe compromise of Iraqi sovereignty, one that was all the more egregious considering that by 1952 oil represented more than 60 percent of Iraqi government revenue (21).

As the subtitle succinctly announces, *The Paranoid Style* focuses on two interrelated themes: oil and Arab nationalism. The book joins a recent wave of studies on US-Arab relations and the international history of oil.<sup>2</sup> What distinguishes it from the pack is the author's passionately felt outrage at the whirlwind that "American Grandiose Strategy" (179-82) has reaped in Iraqi and Arab society, as well as in the world more generally. Thoroughly documenting his claims, Wolfe-Hunnicut narrates how, in defense of private corporate interests, US policy in Iraq fostered the mass killing of its opponents, a succession of authoritarian coup regimes, and the continuous drain of superprofits into the coffers of Western oil companies. Yet the author powerfully underlines that none of these drastic measures employed by the US could prevent the full nationalization of the IPC in 1972—the very outcome the British and the US empires and the major international oil companies strove so hard to prevent.

In drawing this grim conclusion, Wolfe-Hunnicut takes conceptual inspiration from C. Wright Mills's invocation of "crackpot realism," Priya Satia's "covert empire" and "official conspiracy theories," and even J.R.R. Tolkien's paranoid vision of a "One Ring" that bestows its bearer with an unconscionable invisibility.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Reeve S. Simon and Eleanor H. Tejirian, eds., *The Creation of Iraq, 1914–1921* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004); Toby Dodge, *Inventing Iraq: The Failure of Nation Building and a History Denied* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> Robert Vitalis, *America's Kingdom: Mythmaking on the Saudi Oil Frontier* (London: Verso, 2009); Irene L. Gendzier, *Dying to Forget: Oil, Power, Palestine & the Foundations of US Policy in the Middle East* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015); Christopher R.W. Dietrich, *Oil Revolution: Anticolonial Elites, Sovereign Rights, and the Economic Culture of Decolonization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Victor McFarland, *Oil Powers: A History of the U.S.-Saudi Alliance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020); David M. Wight, *Oil Money: Middle East Petrodollars and the Transformation of US Empire, 1967–1988* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Priya Satia, *Spies in Arabia: The Great War and the Cultural Foundations of Britain's Covert Empire in the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit; or, There and Back Again* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1937).

Another methodological thread that runs through the book is an emphasis on social biography (137-8). Wolfe-Hunnicuttt's narrative is laced with a string of compelling mini-biographies of key personalities entangled in this international story. This method helps to make legible the networks of global connections and the life-or-death stakes involved. The book's source material is primarily culled from the archives of the US Department of State, presidential libraries, and the IPC itself. Wolfe-Hunnicuttt supplements these archival sources by engaging with some Iraqi memoirs in Arabic, as well as extensive original interviews with one of the main advocates of oil nationalization, Khair el-Din Haseeb.

Building on the work of Timothy Mitchell, Roger Stern, and Robert Vitalis, *The Paranoid Style* attacks the ideology and historiography of oil scarcity, which envisions oil as a sparse resource, access to which demands protection.<sup>4</sup> Like these works, the book turns this policy narrative on its head by arguing that oil is in fact abundant and that oil companies spend a great amount of energy to prevent its production and distribution in order to drive up its price. Given the great efforts the IPC made throughout its life *not* to produce, the consortium is one of the best possible examples to illustrate this argument. In fact, decades of policy concern that nationalization might interrupt the supply of oil (to the "Free World") were proven to be little more than the self-serving propaganda of the oil majors: Iraqi oil exports doubled after nationalization, and Iraq was more than happy to sell oil to the US and its allies despite policy differences on other issues (213). Instead, in an effort to understand the drivers of imperial oil policy, *The Paranoid Style* places far more emphasis on business-state relations within the context of shifting geopolitical conjunctures. "The entirety of the oil order in the region," Wolfe-Hunnicuttt writes, "was organized around the effort to prevent the emergence of a free market in oil" (184).

To the book's great credit, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt reveals the US state as an arena of competition between conflicting business interests and their attendant strategic doctrines. The book powerfully leaves the reader with the impression that the vast machinery of the US state serves private business interests, rather than the other way around. However, this did not mean that the oil industry simply and directly dictated policy. Wolfe-Hunnicuttt shows that neither the various branches of the US state nor the oil industry were far from united in intent, methods, and worldview. Different factions of state were allied with—or were captured by—competing factions of capitalists. For instance, the interests of international oil majors with plentiful reserves spread across states—such as Exxon and BP—clashed with the interests of "crude short" firms that lacked adequate supplies or whose extraction area were relatively limited—such as the American independents like Sinclair, or France's state-owned *Compagnie Française des Pétroles* (CFP) (155). Within the US government, the author demonstrates how the Department of State was closely associated with the interests of the oil majors (and the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs in particular, 74-75), while domestic independent firms captured the Department of the Interior.<sup>5</sup> The antagonism between these sectors allowed the Iraqi government to make strategic alliances with the independents at key junctures in order to outflank the IPC (148-52).

The linking of competing material oil interests and subjective ideologies leads to revealing new perspectives on US policy and Arab nationalism. The rise of anticolonial Arab nationalist military revolutions in Egypt (1952) and Iraq (1958) forced a debate amongst US policymakers over the best strategy for achieving their objectives in the Arab world. To what extent could Arab demands for self-determination and sovereignty be tolerated? Could these demands best be contained by overt US opposition or by covert action? Should the US throw its support behind the pliant, monarchical, and conservative rivals of anticolonial nationalism or should it back nationalists who were more amenable to Western interests as an alternative to more radical socialist and Communist influences? The titular "paranoid style" refers precisely to the overpowering tendency in US

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<sup>4</sup> Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (London: Verso, 2013); Roger J. Stern, "Oil Scarcity Ideology in US Foreign Policy, 1908-97," *Security Studies* 25, no. 2 (2016): 214-57, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2016.1171967>; Robert Vitalis, *Oilcraft: The Myths of Scarcity and Security That Haunt U.S. Energy Policy* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2020).

<sup>5</sup> "The State Department," Wolfe-Hunnicuttt argues, "never tired in its effort to save international capitalism from and for international capitalists" (145-6).

diplomacy to view all attempts at resource and political sovereignty in the Third World as necessarily directed by the Soviet Union and Communism, and attendantly, as a challenge to US power and Capitalism (43-44, 248 n69).<sup>6</sup>

The book provides important insights into the complex history of the Ba‘th Party in the Arab east, particularly the contested story of its relations with the US (with a few reservations to be discussed later). Chapter 5, “The Rise and Fall of the Ba‘th,” is a highly informative account of the Ba‘th’s February 1963 coup in Iraq, its first, which overthrew the independently-minded revolutionary regime of General ‘Abd al-Karim Qasim. Wolfe-Hunnicuttt masterfully sifts through the contradictory existing evidence to make a convincing case that the US covertly played a key role in the coup’s murderous execution.<sup>7</sup> The Kennedy-era flirtation with anti-Communist Arab nationalism took particular interest in Ba‘thism in Iraq, a perspective perhaps best understood as a culmination of what historian William Appleman Williams memorably dubbed the US policy of “imperial anticolonialism.”<sup>8</sup> The Kennedy regime supported the Iraqi Ba‘th because 1) the party was fiercely anti-Communist and responsive to Euroamerican capital interests (130-1), 2) it could invest anticolonial legitimacy in the Iraqi state, contra the neocolonial British monarchy, and 3) it weakened the leadership of Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser and his followers, the strongest coherent anticolonial force in the Arab world.

Throughout spring 1962, US embassy officers compiled lists of suspected members of the immensely popular Iraqi Communist Party (ICP) and its sympathizers (115). Upon taking power in February 1963, Ba‘thist militiamen embarked on a very specific campaign of mass political assassination and detention, decimating the ICP, particularly its most active cadres.<sup>9</sup> While direct evidence linking the two actions is unavailable, it is difficult to ignore the potential causal link. Given the rest of the evidence the author lays out—including the outright boasting of James Akins, one of the principal State Department political officers active in Iraq at that time, of US support for the coup (116-7)—the indications appear damning indeed.<sup>10</sup> Importantly, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt shows how this anti-Communist mass killing was not an isolated incident, but fit a pattern and strategy developed over time, across the world.<sup>11</sup> Because the Arab world is often exceptionalized and left out of broader narratives of US covert operations and support for counterrevolutionary mass murder during the Cold War, this contextualization is an important contribution.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The title is also a critical reappropriation of Richard Hofstadter’s “The Paranoid Style in American Politics.” As Wolfe-Hunnicuttt explains, Hofstadter’s essay focused on conspiracy theories at the margins of US politics, whereas Wolfe-Hunnicuttt is concerned with the far more consequential “official conspiracy theories” that emerge from the commanders of US power. See Richard Hofstadter, “The Paranoid Style in American Politics,” *Harper’s*, November 1964.

<sup>7</sup> As Wolfe-Hunnicuttt notes, this thesis was first systematically presented in Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq’s Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of Its Communists, Ba‘thists, and Free Officers* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 985–87.

<sup>8</sup> William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, 2nd ed. (New York: Delta, 1972), chap. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Tareq Ismael estimates that “Over ten thousand individuals were detained, and between three thousand and five thousand were executed.” Tareq Y. Ismael, *The Rise and Fall of the Communist Party of Iraq* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 107.

<sup>10</sup> See also Weldon C. Matthews, “The Kennedy Administration, Counterinsurgency, and Iraq’s First Ba‘thist Regime,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43 (2011): 635–53, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743811000882>.

<sup>11</sup> Notably, in the CIA’s 1954 overthrow of the democratically-elected president of Guatemala, Jacobo Arbenz. The technique surfaced again in Iraq, and once more, on a much grander scale in the 1965 overthrow of Indonesian president Sukarno and the suppression of the Indonesian Communist Party, in which an estimated half-million were killed.

<sup>12</sup> See, for instance, the otherwise informative Vincent Bevins, *The Jakarta Method: Washington’s Anticomunist Crusade & the Mass Murder Program That Shaped Our World* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2020); Walden Bello, *Counterrevolution: The Global Rise of the Far Right* (Halifax: Fernwood, 2019); Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (New York: Metropolitan, 2007).

The author shows how the Iraqi struggle for natural-resource sovereignty against foreign powers produced important moments of coordinated national action across social difference. Perversely, these promising episodes were usually cut short by US covert action that intervened repeatedly to advance the cause of pro-American Iraqi anti-Communists. To relate this history, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt uses his social biographical style to highlight trailblazing members of the Iraqi statebuilding class and their principled commitments to sovereign development for the benefit of the many. These include Sassoon Hasqail, Iraq's first finance minister who was sidelined in the 1920s for daring to challenge the foreign oil concession (14-15). Ministers Adib al-Jadir and Tahir Yahya, as well as intellectuals such as 'Abd al-Fattah Ibrahim are also given their due. Significantly, the author paints a rare sympathetic portrait of General 'Abd al-Karim Qasim, the leader of the 1958 revolution and the first revolutionary regime. Much of the English literature does not know what to make of this independent minded leader who refused to be beholden either to Nasser, the ICP, or the Ba' th. Wolfe-Hunnicuttt reveals him to be a patriotic ascetic devoted to fashioning a sovereign, multiethnic republic geared towards serving the broad mass of the Iraqi people.<sup>13</sup> But if Qasim's incorruptibility and commitment to a pluralistic Iraqi society are convincing, his credentials as a republican committed to democratic representation and participation are less so.<sup>14</sup> That being said, given the immense countervailing pressure from the US, IPC, the Ba' th, the British, the Shah, Israel, the Kurdish movement, the Arab monarchies, and even Nasser, the possibility of orderly, effective, democratic revolutionary transformation was hardly more than an abstract idea. In Wolfe-Hunnicuttt's estimation, Qasim was a pivotal figure who significantly advanced the cause of resource sovereignty and independent development in the Third World—one who came tantalizingly close to delivering a nationalized oil industry before he was overthrown and summarily executed by the Ba' th in 1963.

Perhaps most importantly, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt powerfully introduces English readers to Khair el-Din Haseeb (1929–2021), one of the masterminds of the IPC nationalization project and a pillar of Arab national thought. Haseeb was born into a prosperous family that soon lost its wealth under the Hashemite monarchy. Yet Haseeb persevered and used his considerable intellectual gifts to advance, eventually earning a doctorate in statistics from the University of Cambridge and joining the Arab statebuilding class. Like so many others of his generation, Haseeb's politics were steered towards Arab national liberation by the Algerian revolution and the 1956 British-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt. As Governor of the Central Bank of Iraq in 1964, Haseeb directed the nationalization of banking, insurance, and large industry (147). After the 1967 war, Prime Minister Tahir Yahya appointed Haseeb and Adib al-Jadir to lead the board of the Iraqi National Oil Company (INOC). Under Haseeb and Jadir, INOC concluded pioneering agreements with France and the Soviet Union to develop the oilfields that lay dormant under the IPC control, as well as Iraqi national expertise, setting the stage for total nationalization of production. Their project was cut short after the 1968 Ba' th coup, after which Haseeb was imprisoned and tortured for two years. He later fled to exile in Beirut, where he founded the Center for Arab Unity Studies in 1975, an influential publishing house and think tank dedicated to pan-Arab aspirations independent of any ruling regime.<sup>15</sup> By resurrecting Haseeb's career for English readers, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt does his legacy a great service and points toward the necessity of going beyond studying merely heads of state and members of cabinet in the shaping of Arab state policy.

Thanks to the protracted preparatory work of Haseeb and his comrades, Iraq was well prepared to sever the relations of dependency and reclaim sovereignty from colonial capitalist exploitation when the nationalization

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<sup>13</sup> Another recent, significant contribution on the Qasim era is Sara Pursley, *Familiar Futures: Time, Selfhood, and Sovereignty in Iraq* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019).

<sup>14</sup> Charles Tripp notes that "Qasim refused to create any representative institutions or to hold parliamentary elections," while Pursley reiterates that the success of the 1963 coup was also "enabled by the fact that Qasim's regime had dismantled most of the popular organizations that might have defended it." Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, 3rd ed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 155; Pursley, *Familiar Futures*, 8.

<sup>15</sup> The activities and publications of the Center for Arab Unity Studies (CAUS) may be surveyed on their website at <https://caus.org.lb/en/homepage/>. In addition to an important and large and catalog of books, CAUS publishes two journals: *al-Mustaqbal al-'Arabi* (*The Arab Future*) in Arabic, and *Contemporary Arab Affairs* (co-published with the University of California Press) in English.



decree finally came in 1972. Another key contribution of *The Paranoid Style* is to reveal that the 1967 Arab oil embargo, which was prompted by Israel's preemptive colonial conquest, was not the failure many have assumed.<sup>16</sup> Instead, it paved the ground for the Iraqi nationalization project by helping to divide European interests from the Anglo-American majors, while also discrediting US policy and the more conciliatory elements in Iraq (175-86). In this way, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt argues the Arab oil embargo worked to shift the foundations of the global oil order by creating the space for Iraq to strike new kinds of service contracts with the Soviet Union and France. Furthermore, the March 1973 final settlement for the nationalization of the IPC could not have come at a better time. The massive spike in the price of oil during and after the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War was collected by the Iraqi government, whose redistributive policies allowed nothing less than the creation of a sizeable, well-educated middle class in the country within the span of a few years (212-14). Unfortunately, this impressive moment of anticolonial social reconstruction was not allowed to last. The US, Israel, and the Shah's Iran instigated an ill-advised Kurdish rebellion that was designed to punish Iraq for its nationalization and realignment with the Soviet Union (218-20).<sup>17</sup> This policy, followed by the war with revolutionary Iran, contributed greatly to ensuring that the only stable Iraqi government that could survive such an onslaught was a brittle garrison state led by a figure such as Saddam Hussein.

Weighed against these considerable strengths, there is very little to lament in this eye-opening monograph. Yet, perhaps a more substantial reckoning with Arabic newspapers, memoirs, and journals might have allowed the author to provide a more three-dimensional account of how the story described here affected and was shaped by a broader range of Iraqi society. One of the most suggestive contributions of the book is the author's willingness to view divisive social differences in the US (race) and Iraq (sectarian and national) in a common frame of reference. Yet as it stands, this point is more evocative than a sustained analytical thread. If nationalizing oil "was the material analog to a multicultural conception of Iraqi national identity" (226), a fuller account of Iraqi social mobilization across difference would be a most welcome avenue for further research. Finally, some Arabic materials cited by the author are incorrectly transliterated or translated, and there are certain misidentifications. For instance, it was the Beirut-based Palestinian economist Yusif Sayigh (1916–2014)—a future member of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Executive Committee and founder of the PLO Planning Center—who wrote the influential manifesto for sovereign Arab economic development *al-Khubz ma' al-Karama (Bread with Dignity)*, not the Iraqi poet, novelist, and playwright Yusif al-Sayigh (1933–2005) (271).<sup>18</sup> It should be underlined, however, that these are very minor points that do not substantially affect the argument and narrative presented.

In sum, *The Paranoid Style in American Diplomacy* is an essential contribution that dismantles much of the received wisdom about the politics of oil and the global struggle for equitable development. Moreover, it invites further research that critically investigates the subsequent history of international interventions in Iraq and their intersections with private capital and state authoritarianism. The book deserves to be read by all students of US-Arab relations, oil, Iraq, Middle East politics and state formation, covert operations, and the history of capitalism.

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<sup>16</sup> For example Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 555–58; Guy Laron, *The Six-Day War: The Breaking of the Middle East* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 310.

<sup>17</sup> Here, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt relies heavily on Roham Alvandi, *Nixon, Kissinger, and the Shah: The United States and Iran in the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), chap. 3.

<sup>18</sup> On Yusif Sayigh's remarkable career, see Yusif A. Sayigh, *Yusif Sayigh: Arab Economist, Palestinian Patriot: A Fractured Life Story*, ed. Rosemary Sayigh (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2015).

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 Review by Bryan R. Gibson, Hawaii Pacific University
 

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The Iraq Revolution of July 1958 completely upended American Cold-war calculations for the Middle East. For the previous decade, Iraq had served as a central lynchpin in the American containment strategy as applied to the Middle East, and so the sudden, unexpected overthrow of the Baghdad wing of the pro-Western Hashemite monarchy—as part of a wave of nationalism sweeping the region in the 1950s—posed an immense challenge to policymakers assessing the situation in Washington. However, in the aftermath of the coup, American policymakers struggled to chart a clear path with respect to Iraq, often getting lost in their analysis about whether Iraq was ‘going red’ and how to respond in the event that it did. This paranoia, according to Brandon Wolfe-Hunnicuttt’s *The Paranoid Style of American Diplomacy*, “contributed a great deal to the violent convulsions that rocked Iraqi politics” in the years between 1958 and 1975 (29).

In his brilliant account of the intersection of US foreign policy, Arab nationalism, and oil interests, *The Paranoid Style of American Diplomacy* carefully walks its readers through the challenges the US faced when navigating its relations with Iraq from the creation of the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) in the 1920s, through the tumult of Iraq’s revolution in 1958, and ending with the nationalization of the IPC in the early 1970s. In particular, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt successfully shows how American paranoia about the ideological nature of Iraq’s regime contributed significantly to the violence that plagued the country between 1958 and 1975. Unlike most studies of Iraq during this period that tend to focus on Iraqi internal politics or the meddlesome role of external powers (like my own study, *Sold Out?*, which examined the destabilizing role the Kurds played in Iraq during this same timeframe),<sup>1</sup> Wolfe-Hunnicuttt deviates from the norm and instead weaves together a narrative of Iraqi political history with the history of the IPC, its relations with western oil companies, and its place in the wider discussion about oil and the Middle East during the Cold War. It is a fascinating nexus of topics that sheds considerable light on an understudied aspect of Iraq history.

Wolfe-Hunnicuttt’s study is part of a recent massive wave of scholarship that has occurred in the 20 years since the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.<sup>2</sup> It contributes significantly to a growing compendium of studies that explore Iraq’s history, the history of US-Iraq relations, US Middle Eastern strategy, and the centrality of the oil companies to each of these subjects. Given this, it is useful to briefly situate this study within the broader scholarship on English-language studies of Iraq history and its relations with the United States.

Scholarship on Iraq has appeared in several waves, following closely behind the occurrence of significant historical events. The first major wave of Western scholarship on Iraq occurred in the 1960s and 1970s, starting with Uriel Dann’s *Iraq Under Qasim* in 1969, which examined the tumultuous reign of Abd al-Karim Qasim.<sup>3</sup> Then, in 1978, Hanna Batatu published his massive study of Iraqi politics, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq*, followed by Edith Penrose and E.F. Penrose’s analysis of Iraq foreign policy

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<sup>1</sup> See Bryan R. Gibson, *Sold Out? US Foreign Policy, Iraq, the Kurds and the Cold War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Johan Franzen, *Red Star over Baghdad* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011); Peter Hahn, *Missions Accomplished?* (London: Oxford University Press, 2011); and Joseph Sassoon, *Saddam Hussein’s Ba’ath Party: Inside an Authoritarian Regime* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2012)

<sup>2</sup> See Thomas Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin, 2006); Michael R. Gordon and Bernard Trainor, *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq* (New York: Vintage, 2007); Ricks, *The Gamble: General Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin, 2010); Peter Mansour, *Surge: My Journey with General David Petraeus and the Remaking of the Iraq War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013). Gordon and Trainor, *The Endgame: the Inside Story of the Struggle for Iraq, from George W. Bush to Barack Obama* (New York: Vintage, 2013); and Timothy Sayle, et al, *The Last Card: Inside George W. Bush’s Decision to Surge in Iraq* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019).

<sup>3</sup> Uriel Dann, *Iraq Under Qasim: A Political History* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1969).

and social development in *Iraq: International Relations and National Development* that same year.<sup>4</sup> Based on interviews, documents, and news sources, these three texts serve as the intellectual basis for modern scholarship on Iraq.

A second wave occurred in the mid-to-late 1980s, following Iraq's disastrous invasion of Iran and the stalemated war that ensued thereafter. This period saw an immense volume of scholarly analysis on the history of Iraq, like Phebe Marr's *The Modern History of Iraq* (1985), and Marion Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, *Iraq Since 1958: From Revolution to Dictatorship* (1987).<sup>5</sup> This period also saw a large volume of politico-military studies, like Stephen Grummond's *The Iran-Iraq War: Islam Embattled* and Shahram Chubin's analysis of military-supply relations during the war.<sup>6</sup> In the late 1980s, further scholarship explored specific aspects of the war, like which country was responsible for starting the conflict, or the so-called Tanker War.<sup>7</sup> It also saw the first edited volume on the war, Efraim Karsh's *The Iran-Iraq War: Impact and Implications*.<sup>8</sup>

Scholarship on Iraq dramatically increased following President Saddam Hussein's ill-conceived decision to invade Kuwait in 1990 and the US-led military operation in 1991 to expel Iraqi forces from the country. Scholars went back and revisited the recently concluded Iran-Iraq War to try to determine its connection to the events in Kuwait.<sup>9</sup> In addition to a flurry of studies on the Gulf War itself,<sup>10</sup> this period also saw studies that explored ancient Iraq,<sup>11</sup> Iraq's political economy,<sup>12</sup> and Iraqi political discourse.<sup>13</sup>

The turn of the millennium brought further scholarship, with Charles Tripp's *A Modern History of Iraq* offering a detailed analysis of Iraqi political history going back to the nation's founding in the 1920s.<sup>14</sup> But it was the US-led invasion of Iraq that led to a massive wave of scholarship studying not just Iraqi history but also the American role in the war. At this point, there are well over a hundred publications that explore various aspects of the Iraq War, like the invasion, the massive failure to establish a post-invasion plan, the Surge, and the withdrawal in 2011.<sup>15</sup> To date, only *The Endgame* and a US Army internal study actually examine the entirety of the war, and even then, the authors of these studies have admitted to me personally that they had

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<sup>4</sup> Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978); and Edith Penrose and E.F. Penrose, *Iraq: International Relations and National Development* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1978).

<sup>5</sup> Phebe Marr, *The Modern History of Iraq* (London: Routledge, 1985); and Marion Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett, *Iraq Since 1958: From Revolution to Dictatorship* (London: IB Tauris, 1987).

<sup>6</sup> Stephen R. Grummond, *The Iran-Iraq War: Islam Embattled* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Publishing Office, 1982); and Shahram Chubin, *Security in the Persian Gulf 4: The Role of Outside Powers* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1982).

<sup>7</sup> Nita Renfrew, "Who Started the War?" *Foreign Policy*, vol. 69, no. 1 (Spring 1987); and Barry Rubin, "Drowning in the Gulf," *Foreign Policy*, vol. 69, no. 4 (Winter 1987-1988).

<sup>8</sup> Efraim Karsh, *The Iran-Iraq War* (London: Osprey Publishing, 1989).

<sup>9</sup> Steven C. Pelletiere, et al, *Iraqi Power and U.S. Security in the Middle East* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1990); Dilip Hiro, *The Longest War: The Iran-Iraq Military Conflict* (London: Routledge, 1991); Pelletiere, *The Iran-Iraq War: Chaos in a Vacuum* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992); Farhang Rajace, ed., *Politics of Aggression* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 1993).

<sup>10</sup> Richard Hallion, *Storm over Iraq: Air Power and the Gulf War* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 1993).

<sup>11</sup> George Roux, *Ancient Iraq* (New York: Penguin, 1993);

<sup>12</sup> Abbas al-Nasrawi, *The Economy of Iraq: Oil, Wars, Destruction of Development and Prospects* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

<sup>13</sup> Ofra Bengio, *Saddam's Word: Political Discourse in Iraq* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998).

<sup>14</sup> Charles Tripp, *A History of Iraq* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

<sup>15</sup> See Ricks, *Fiasco*; Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra II*; Ricks, *The Gamble*; Mansour, *Surge*; Gordon and Trainor, *The Endgame*; and Sayle, *The Last Card*.

to exclude vast amounts of important information—like on logistics or the role of civilian contractors—to meet publication requirements.<sup>16</sup>

Wolfe-Hunnicuttt's study fits in to the most recent wave of scholarship, which followed the US withdrawal from Iraq. Unlike previous phases, which political scientists tended to drive, historians who have gained access to recently declassified documents have driven this wave. This phase saw a focus on Iraqi history during the height of the Cold War, thanks largely to the availability of hitherto inaccessible information, primarily in US archives. It began with my study of US policy toward the Iran-Iraq War, *Covert Relationship*, which was followed by a volume of articles examining the role of external powers in the Iran-Iraq War, which Nigel Ashton and I edited in 2012.<sup>17</sup> Around this time, Douglas Little published his 2010 study on Iraq's Kurdish population and its drive to independence.<sup>18</sup> Soon thereafter, Weldon Matthews examined the relationship between the Kennedy administration and the Ba'ath Party during its tumultuous eleven-month reign in 1963, focusing on the level of US assistance provided to the regime as it rounded up and slaughtered thousands of suspected Communists.<sup>19</sup>

In 2012, Hal Brands published two studies on Iraq that were based on documents captured during the invasion in 2003. The first article examined whether the US gave Saddam Hussein a green light to invade Iran in 1980, a topic that Chris Emery also examined in detail in a scholarly volume I co-edited and published that same year.<sup>20</sup> Later that year, Brands and David Palkki published a second article that examined Saddam's perception of the US and its seemingly confusing and often contradictory policy toward Iraq since the 1980s.<sup>21</sup> That same year, Eric Jacobsen's examination of the Kennedy's controversial support for the short-lived Ba'athist regime in Iraq, which was violently anti-Communist and therefore earned the Kennedy administration's support and assistance, was published.<sup>22</sup> In 2015, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt waded into the discussion with his study of the 1963 coup in Iraq, in which he claimed that the CIA had initiated the coup, a claim reinforced in this text. While I humbly disagree with Wolfe-Hunnicuttt (and others) on this single point in my book *Sold Out?*, his study nevertheless stands out as a major contribution to our understanding of the coup and its immediate aftermath.<sup>23</sup> This view was further reinforced with Weldon C. Matthews's study of arms transfers to the short-lived Ba'athist regime in Iraq in 1963.<sup>24</sup> All of these studies offer vital glimpses into our understanding of Iraq, but they are also limited by size and scope; none explore the IPC's role in any of these events, which is why *The Paranoid Style of American Diplomacy* is such an important contribution at this juncture in the historiography of Iraq.

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<sup>16</sup> See Joel Rayburn and Frank Sobchak, eds., *The U.S. Army in the Iraq War, 2003-2006*, vols. 1 and 2 (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Publishing Office, 2019).

<sup>17</sup> Bryan Gibson, *Covert Relationship: US Foreign Policy, Intelligence, and the Iran-Iraq War, 1980-1988* (Boulder, CO: Praeger, 2010); and Nigel Ashton and Bryan Gibson, eds., *The Iran-Iraq War: New International Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>18</sup> Douglas Little, "The United States and the Kurds: A Cold War Story," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 12, no. 4 (2010).

<sup>19</sup> Weldon C. Matthews, "The Kennedy Administration, Counterinsurgency, and Iraq's First Ba'athist Regime," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 43, no. 1 (2011): 635-653.

<sup>20</sup> Hal Brands, "Saddam Hussein, the United States, and the Invasion of Iran: Was There a Green Light?," *Cold War History* 12, no. 2 (2012): 319-343; and Christian Emery, "Reappraising the Carter Administration's Response," in *The Iran-Iraq War*, eds. Nigel Ashton and Bryan Gibson.

<sup>21</sup> Hal Brands and David Palkki, "'Conspiring Bastards': Saddam Hussein's Strategic View of the United States," *Diplomatic History* 36, no. 3 (2012).

<sup>22</sup> Eric Jacobsen, "A Coincidence of Interests: Kennedy, U.S. Assistance, and the 1963 Iraqi Ba'ath Regime," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 5 (2013).

<sup>23</sup> Brandon Wolfe-Hunnicuttt, "Embracing Regime Change in Iraq: The American Foreign Policy and the 1963 Coup d'état in Baghdad," *Diplomatic History* 39, no. 1 (2015).

<sup>24</sup> Weldon C. Matthews, "The Kennedy Administration and Arms Transfers to Ba'athist Iraq," *Diplomatic History*, 43, no. 3 (2019).

Relying on a broad array of primary sources, including British and American archives, interviews with Iraqi officials, and oral histories, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt's study adds considerable clarity to previous studies of Iraq's oil economy, like Abbas al-Nasrawi's 1994 study,<sup>25</sup> but more importantly it also builds on broader recent studies of the role of oil in Middle East politics, like Rex Zedalis's *The Legal Dimensions of Oil and Gas in Iraq*, Timothy Mitchell's *Carbon Democracy*, Roger Stern's, "Oil Scarcity Ideology in US Foreign Policy," Chris Dietrich's *Oil Revolution*, Victor McFarlane's *Oil Powers: A History of the U.S.-Saudi Alliance*, Robert Vitalis' *Oilcraft*, and David Wright's *Oil Money*.<sup>26</sup> However, by focusing exclusively on Iraq, and not the typical case studies of Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, and their relationship with the US, *The Paranoid Style of American Diplomacy* offers considerable clarity about Iraq's place in the Middle Eastern oil economy but also how American actions undermined the company's ability to successfully navigate the turbulent waters of the 1960s and 1970s.

*The Paranoid Style of American Diplomacy* posits two main arguments. First, it contends that "the unique features of the IPC consortium rendered it particularly vulnerable to eventual nationalization." (3) In particular, the study shows that the IPC was a byproduct of a the dying British Empire, which resulted in company ownership being split between a diverse range of companies, with competing and disparate economic interests. Prior to the Second World War, the gulf region was primarily a 'British lake' and the US had little-to-no influence apart from its large stake in Aramco. But with the precipitous decline of British power following the Iran nationalization debacle and the 1956 Suez Crisis, American policymakers suddenly had to take a crash course on Middle East politics, and just as they were beginning to get a handle on the region, it was further upended by Abd al-Karim Qasim's coup in July 1958. This left the US in a decidedly awkward position, where it was applying overly general Cold War strategies to a region that was dominated by internal dynamics, like imperialism, Arab nationalism and conservative reactionism, rather than Cold War rivalry.

Second, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt shows how over the course of half a century, Iraq's leaders managed to overcome the "tremendous obstacles" necessary to "expropriate the property of some of the world's richest and most powerful corporations." Finally, the book reveals that Iraq's drive to nationalize the IPC "exposed critical contradictions and vulnerabilities in the logic and structure of American power" (3-4). In a sense, the US was beholden to several actors all at once: the Iraqi nationalists, whom the US ostensibly supported as part of its championing of national self-determination; the British imperialists, who had long held up the UK's 'special relationship' with the US; and the oil majors, who had considerable economic interests in the region; and defense contractors, who saw an opportunity to wean Iraq off of British and Soviet arms in favor of American ones. Each of these forces had interests that often stood at odds with those of the IPC, and so US policymakers struggled to find an amicable middle ground on Iraq and ultimately alienated them all (4-5). These competing circumstances and interests, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt argues, left the IPC out to drift in the late 1960s and early 1970s as Iraqi nationalists edged closer to the complete nationalization of Iraq's oil industry in 1972.

Finally, *The Paranoid Style of American Diplomacy* posits that business rivalries within the oil industry, Iraqi nationalism, and American ambiguousness about the US approach to these issues came together in the early 1970s to bring about the successful nationalization of the IPC. In short, the US was paralyzed by its own domestic (i.e., race relations, civil rights, anti-war protests, etc.) and international (i.e., Cold War tension, the Vietnam War, etc.) crises. The inability of the American government to guide the IPC—as the British had

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<sup>25</sup> See Nasrawi, *The Economy of Iraq*.

<sup>26</sup> See Rex Zedalis, *The Legal Dimensions of Oil and Gas in Iraq* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (London: Verso, 2009); Roger Stern, "Oil Scarcity Ideology in US Foreign Policy, 1908-1997," *Security Studies* vol. 25/no. 2 (2016): 214-257; Chris Dietrich, *Oil Revolution: Anticolonial Elites, Sovereign Rights, and the Economic Culture of Decolonization* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Victor McFarlane, *Oil Powers: A History of the U.S.-Saudi Alliance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020); Robert Vitalis, *Oilcraft, The Myths of Scarcity and Security that Haunt US Energy Policy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2020); and David Wright, *Oil Money: Middle East Petrodollars and the Transformation of US Empire, 1967-1988* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2021).

previously done—ostensibly gave President Saddam Hussein’s fledgling regime an opening to seize control of Iraq’s natural resources. (5)

*The Paranoid Style of American Diplomacy* offers a considerably rounder understanding of the dynamics at play in Iraq during the 1960s and 1970s than most of its predecessors. By focusing on the IPC, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt rightly shows the close connection between economic interests and the rhetoric of national security; explores pronouncements of human rights and democracy as having served “as swords of empire”; and details how multinational oil corporations viewed American foreign policy as a vehicle to serve their interests and not necessarily those of the American people (7-8). Given the paranoia that pervaded US policymaking during this period, it is no wonder that after more than half a half century Iraqi nationalists finally managed to regain national control over their country’s sovereign resources, a move that established a model of control that would be become the norm from the 1970s onwards.

This is an important book that brings Iraq back into the history of the 1960s.<sup>1</sup> Most studies of the 1960s neglect the country. This is unfortunate since Iraq was deeply involved in the changes that transformed the international oil industry in this period, including the foundation of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in 1960, the failed Arab embargo in response to the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, and the growing participation of independent and state-owned oil companies in the world oil economy. Iraq also played an important role in the response of Arab oil producers to the October 1973 War, which resulted in the quadrupling of oil prices and the nationalization of the major oil concessions in the 1970s.<sup>2</sup> The 1960s were a crucial decade in Iraqi history. Between 1958 and 1972 it experienced a major revolution (1958); three coups (February and November 1963, and July 1968); a decade long dispute with the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC) over the forced relinquishment of 99.5 percent of the company's concession area; and nationalization of the IPC in June 1972. The 1960s were also a crucial decade in the arc of US foreign policy. In addition to such well-known events as the Berlin Crisis, the Cuban Revolution and the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Vietnam war, multiple interventions in the Third World, and the beginning of détente with the Soviet Union and rapprochement with China, Iraq showcased both the limits and the detrimental impact of US foreign policy.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to being a pathbreaking account of Iraq's role in world affairs in the 1960, *The Paranoid Style in American Diplomacy* lays out a very useful framework for analyzing US relations with other nations in the Global South, especially other oil-exporting countries.<sup>4</sup> Brandon Wolfe-Hunnicuttt focuses on three "broad fields of knowledge": international political economy, especially the structure and dynamics of the global oil industry; Iraqi history; and US foreign policy (5-8). He not only explores each area but also analyzes their interactions over time to provide multi-dimensional study of US relations with Iraq from 1958 to 1973. In addition, the book is beautifully written and skillfully organized. The chapter sub-heads, for example, are not only a very useful guide to the contents, but also evocative.

Although a productive guide to analysis, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt's three-part analytical approach is challenging to implement. Mastering the scholarship in three fields of knowledge and integrating insights from all three into a coherent analysis is a monumental task. Understanding the changing structure and dynamics of the global oil industry requires mastery of a vast and uneven historical literature as well as industry-specific technology, business organization, and resource economics. Understanding the history of Iraq requires language skills and area specific training. Understanding US policy toward Iraq requires, among other skills, understanding the dynamics of the international system and the US position in it at various points in time as well as the domestic factors that influenced US relations with the rest of the world. It is perhaps unrealistic to expect a single author to develop and display equal expertise in all areas, especially when the scholarly literature itself is uneven and at times incomplete. Although there are some gaps in his coverage and a few minor factual errors,

<sup>1</sup> I want to note that I corresponded with Dr. Wolfe-Hunnicuttt a few times when he was working on the book and offered some comments on his background chapters, but this constituted the extent of my interaction with him and his work.

<sup>2</sup> Although Iraq joined in the selective embargo implemented by the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), it did not participate in the production cuts OAPEC imposed. Iraq also nationalized the Exxon, Mobil, and Shell's shares in the Basrah Petroleum Company; see David S. Painter, "Oil and the October War," in *The October 1973 War: Politics, Diplomacy, Legacy*, edited by Asaf Siniver (London: Hurst, 2013), 173-93; published in the United States by Oxford University Press as *The Yom Kippur War: Politics, Diplomacy, Legacy*.

<sup>3</sup> Iraq receives little attention in Mark Atwood Lawrence, *The End of Ambition: The United States and the Third World in the Vietnam Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> For similar frameworks, see Bruce Cumings, *The Origins of the Korean War*, vol. 2: *The Roaring of the Cataract, 1947-1950* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 3-32; David S. Painter, "Explaining U.S. Relations with the Third World," *Diplomatic History* 19 (Summer 1995): 525-48, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7709.1995.tb00648.x>; and Steven Hurst, *The United States and Iraq since 1979* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 1-22

Wolfe-Hunnicuttt's command of the three fields of knowledge is outstanding and his ability to integrate his analysis of them quite remarkable.<sup>5</sup>

Wolfe-Hunnicuttt argues that “the unique features of the IPC consortium rendered it particularly vulnerable to eventual nationalization.” IPC was owned by British-owned BP, British/Dutch controlled Royal Dutch/Shell, US-owned Near East Development Corporation (jointly owned by Standard Oil of New Jersey and Mobil), French-owned *Compagnie Française des Pétroles* (CFP), with a 23.75 share each, and Partex Oil and Gas (Holding) Corporation, which was domiciled in Portugal, with a five percent share.<sup>6</sup> IPC's diverse mix of corporate interests “created political vulnerabilities that Iraqi oil nationalists were eventually able to exploit in their drive to gain control of the industry” (3-4). Wolfe-Hunnicuttt also argues that the rising share of world oil production outside North America and Communist areas controlled by independent and state-owned oil companies in this period facilitated the eventual nationalization of IPC.<sup>7</sup>

Wolfe-Hunnicuttt makes extensive use of Iraq Petroleum Company Records at the BP Archive at the University of Warwick, British documents in the Cambridge Archive Editions collection of documents on OPEC, and State Department records in the *Foreign Relation of the United States* series and at the National Archives and Records Administration to trace US policies toward resource nationalism in Iraq.<sup>8</sup> He also draws on the John J. McCloy papers at Amherst College. Dubbed “Chairman of the American Establishment” due to many high posts he held during a long career as a Wall Street lawyer and public servant, McCloy often represented the major US oil companies in their dealings with the US government, in the 1960s and 1970s. Wolfe-Hunnicuttt has also consulted a solid selection of studies on the international oil industry and US foreign oil policy. Edith T. Penrose, the leading oil economist of her day, lived and taught in Iraq in the late 1950s, and published path-breaking studies on the structure and operations of the international oil companies, including the Iraq Petroleum Company, and Wolfe-Hunnicuttt makes extensive use of a book on Iraq that she wrote with her husband, international relations scholar E.F. Penrose.<sup>9</sup>

As leading oil consultant Walter J. Levy told the State Department in 1964, “an objective historical account of the IPC concession would show that Iraq had not been treated fairly” (153). Wolfe-Hunnicuttt's analysis makes it clear that IPC's members manipulated Iraqi oil development to serve their own ends. While the diverse ownership of IPC provided opportunities for Iraqi nationalists to pit its members against each other, the governing structure of the company allowed the larger companies with access to production elsewhere, especially BP and Standard Oil of New Jersey, to control the pace of its development and limit the amount of

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<sup>5</sup> Perhaps inevitable in a sole-authored work of this scope and complexity and the lack of any fact-checking by publishers, a problem that unfortunately also affects peer-reviewed journals, the gaps and errors do not affect his overall argument-

<sup>6</sup> IPC was originally called the Turkish Petroleum Company and changed its name to the Iraq Petroleum Company in 1929. Partex was founded by Armenian businessman Caloutste Gulbenkian, who had negotiated the original concession in Iraq, then Mesopotamia and part of the Ottoman Empire, just before World War I. After Gulbenkian's death in 1955, Partex became the property of the Gulbenkian Foundation. For an outstanding analysis of the international oil industry in the 1960s, see Edith T. Penrose, *The Large International Firm in Developing Countries: The International Petroleum Industry* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1968).

<sup>7</sup> Originally commissioned by Standard Oil of California to aid in its defense against a Justice Department antitrust suit, Neil H. Jacoby, *Multinational Oil: A Study in Industrial Dynamics* (New York: Macmillan, 1974), contains a wealth of useful information on the changing structure of the global oil industry.

<sup>8</sup> There is also a set of IPC papers at the Total Archives in Paris. Anita L.P. Burdett, ed., *OPEC: Origins and Strategy, 1947-1973*, 3 vols. (Slough: Archive Editions, 2004).

<sup>9</sup> A subsection in chapter 8 titled “The Penrose Affair” provides a brief account of Penrose's career and her involvement with Iraq. E.F. and Edith T Penrose, *Iraq: International Relations and National Development* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1978).



oil the two members with less access to oil in other areas, CFP and Partex, could obtain from IPC,<sup>10</sup> As a result, the key contributors to nationalization were the *Entreprise de recherches et d'activités pétrolières* (ERAP), a French-government owned oil company formed in 1965 to promote French oil interests, and the Soviet Union, which provided technical assistance. Iraq also benefitted from the closure of the Suez Canal between 1967 and 1975, which forced most Persian Gulf oil exports to Europe to travel the Cape route around Africa. Most of Iraq's oil exports flowed through a pipeline to the Mediterranean, which gave Iraqi oil an advantage in European markets and allied Iraq with fellow "Mediterranean" producers Libya and Algeria.<sup>11</sup>

The changing structure of the world oil economy undermined the dominance of the major companies, but rising production by independent oil companies, especially in Libya in the 1960s, not only put pressure on prices, but also provided an incentive for IPC not to settle its dispute with Iraq over the forced relinquishment of over 99.5 percent of its concession area in December 1961. Iraq carefully designed its action to allow IPC to retain ownership of producing properties, which made it difficult for the companies to claim compensation, allowed Iraq to continue receiving revenues from oil exports, and exacerbated divisions among IPC's owners. The area Iraqi leaders forced IPC to relinquish contained the North Rumaila oil field, which IPC had discovered but which had not begun production, and which turned out to be one of the largest oil fields ever discovered in the Middle East. Iraqi nationalists saw national control of North Rumaila as crucial to their plans to gain control of their nation's oil. IPC's owners, especially Standard Oil of New Jersey, warned that letting Iraq have a share in the ownership of North Rumaila would lead other oil producing countries to demand similar treatment (167-68). Although Iraq successfully resisted IPC efforts to regain control of North Rumaila, the dispute provided an excuse for IPC to limit development in Iraq to make room for increased production elsewhere.<sup>12</sup> As Standard Oil of New Jersey Standard executive Howard Page pointed out in March 1974 testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations, "keeping Iraq down" allowed markets to absorb increased production in Libya without causing a collapse in prices.<sup>13</sup>

*The Paranoid Style in American Diplomacy* draws on the author's training in the history of the modern Middle East and his Arabic language skills. Wolfe-Hunnicuttt argues that "Iraq's state-building efforts . . . overcame tremendous obstacles to marshal the force necessary to expropriate the property of some of the world's richest and most powerful corporations" (4). The study's analysis of the impact of external influences, in particular the constraints imposed by the global oil industry and US policies and actions constitutes one of the book's most significant achievements. In contrast to US policymakers and some scholars, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt recognizes and appreciates the role of a different and neglected group of Iraqi actors, in particular, 'Abd al-Karim Qasim, the leader of the 1958 Free Officers Revolution and President of Iraq from 1958-1963; Tahir Yahya, one of the organizers of the 1958 Revolution and Prime Minister of Iraq, 1963-65, and 1967-68; Khair el-Din Haseeb, the key architect of Iraq's nationalization strategy in the 1960s; and Adib al-Jadir, who held several key posts related to oil between 1958 and 1968. Wolfe-Hunnicuttt provides a favorable analysis of 1958 Revolution, "which swept away to vestiges of a semi-sovereign monarchy and replaced it with an

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<sup>10</sup> Theodore H. Moran, "Managing an Oligopoly of Would-Be Sovereigns: The Dynamics of Joint Control and Self-Control in the International Oil Industry Past Present, and Future," *International Organization* 41 (Autumn 1987): 580-83.

<sup>11</sup> John Vincent Bowlus, "The Closure of the Suez Canal and Mediterranean Oil Unity," in *Les routes du pétrole/Oil Routes*, edited by Alain Beltran (Brussels: P.I.E. Lang, 2016), 125-38.

<sup>12</sup> For detailed analyses of the negotiations, see Samir Saul, "Masterly Inactivity as Brinkmanship: The Iraq Petroleum Company's Route to Nationalization, 1958-1972," *International History Review* 29 (December 2007): 746-92, which draws on the collection of IPC papers at the Total Archive in Paris, DOI: <https://doi-org.proxy.library.georgetown.edu/10.1080/07075332.2007.9641140>; and George W. Stocking, *Middle East Oil: A Study in Political and Economic Controversy* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1970), 200-315.

<sup>13</sup> Multinational Corporations and United States Foreign Policy, Hearings before the Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations of the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 93<sup>rd</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), 309.

independent republic” (4), and credits Qasim for setting in motion the nationalization effort with the forced relinquishment of undeveloped portions of the IPC concession in December 1961. Rather than trying to exploit Iraq’s sectarian and ethnic divisions to enhance his power, Qasim tried to bridge the divisions and promote an Iraqi nationalism apart from the internationalism of Nasser and Iraq’s Communists. According to Wolfe-Hunnicut, Qasim, whose mother was Kurdish, sought a multi-ethnic, non-sectarian, and democratic future for Iraq and rejected Nasser’s version of pan-Arabism, which would not only exclude non-Arab Iraqis, but which would likely be dominated by Sunni Arabs. (47-48, 101). Wolfe-Hunnicut also highlights the other reformers, especially Haseeb, whom he was able to interview.

Qasim was overthrown and murdered in a coup led by the Ba’th Party in February 1963. Although the US role in the coup itself is unclear, largely due to the policy of not releasing records on covert action, the United States saw the coup as a “plus,” and probably assisted the Ba’th Party in the reign of terror it conducted in the coup’s aftermath. While the Party was overthrown in November, and the new nationalist government resumed the quest to gain control of the oil industry, the Ba’th returned to power in a July 1968 coup. Although the IPC partners initially believed that they could reach a favorable settlement with the new regime, the Ba’th Party continued the nationalist oil policies of its predecessor while abandoning efforts to build a multi-ethnic, non-sectarian, and democratic society.

According to Wolfe-Hunnicut, the Iraqi oil nationalization effort, especially the actions of the Qasim government, “exposed critical contradictions and vulnerabilities in the logic and structure of American power” (4). Wolfe-Hunnicut’s analysis of US foreign policy draws on a rich mixture of primary and secondary sources, especially the venerable and valuable *Foreign Relations of the United States* series. His archival research in this “field of knowledge” is largely focused on State Department records at the National Archives and material at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library in Boston.

Wolfe-Hunnicut emphasizes the arrogant conviction of US policymakers that they possessed the wisdom, ability, and duty to manipulate developments in other societies and their lack of concern for the human consequences of their actions. He paints a convincing and critical portrait of the detrimental impact of the beliefs and activities of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and his younger brother Allen W. Dulles who headed the Central Intelligence Agency during the Eisenhower years. His discussion of “crackpot realism,” a phrase coined by iconoclastic sociologist C. Wright Mills is both enlightening and entertaining. Similarly, his dissection of the “grandiose strategy” that dominated US policymaking during the 1960s helps illuminate the mindset of US policymakers during this crucial decade. Wolfe-Hunnicut does a good job of linking the views of the “activist intellectuals” of the Kennedy administration to uncritical anti-Communism, simplified versions of Keynesianism, and unconscious ethnocentric arrogance. The impact of this sort of thinking was not limited to Iraq. Although better known for their role in US policy toward Vietnam, Robert, “Blowtorch Bob,” Komer and McGeorge Bundy, who was called “Harry Hopkins with Hand Grenades,” also played key roles in US policy toward Iraq during the Kennedy years.<sup>14</sup> The bloody suppression of Iraqi communists by the Ba’th Party after the 1963 coup in Iraq, which was condoned if not facilitated by the United States, foreshadowed similar US-supported mass murder programs that became known as the “Jakarta method” following the 1965 military coup in Indonesia.<sup>15</sup> State Department official James Akins, one of many mid-level officials profiled in the book, who later became famous for his role in oil policy during the 1970s before running afoul of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, was deeply involved in US covert activities in Iraq in the

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<sup>14</sup> Frank L. Jones, *Blowtorch: Robert Komer, Vietnam, and American Cold War Strategy* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2013); Lloyd Gardner, “Harry Hopkins with Hand Grenades? McGeorge Bundy in the Kennedy and Johnson Years,” in *Behind the Throne: Servants of Power to Imperial Presidents, 1898-1968*, edited by Thomas J. McCormick and Walter LaFeber (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), 204-31.

<sup>15</sup> Vincent Bevins, *The Jakarta Method: Washington’s Anticommunist Crusade and the Mass Murder Program that Shape Our World* (New York: Public Affairs, 2020). Bevins published a summary in the *New York Review of Books*, 18 May 2020.

mid-1960, including drawing up lists of suspected Communists that were used by the new Ba'ath regime in their anti-Communist rampage after the 1963 coup (100-01, 116-17).

Wolfe-Hunnicuttt's analysis of Johnson administration policy toward the Middle East, especially during the 1967 War, which had a huge impact on Iraqi politics, focuses on the personal views of President Lyndon B. Johnson. While provocative, it is less convincing. Although he mentions Robert Caro's comprehensive portrait of Johnson, he relies on studies by Olivia Sohns and Darren Dochuk to argue that Johnson's policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict was heavily influenced by Johnson's religious upbringing.<sup>16</sup> As several scholars have noted, however, US policy toward Israel, not only the 1960s but in general, has been over-determined. Apart from the complex and contested moral and strategic issues involved, US public opinion held very positive views of Israel and was largely negative, and uninformed, about the "other side" of the conflict. Organized labor and the American Jewish community, both important Democratic constituencies, were also overwhelmingly pro-Israel.<sup>17</sup> Wolfe-Hunnicuttt takes the story through the nationalization of the IPC in June 1972. Although he briefly mentions the oil shock of 1973-74, he does not discuss US policy toward Iraq and the Middle East and Iraq during the Nixon years in depth.

Wolfe-Hunnicuttt provides a critical but balanced analysis of the influence and actions of the CIA, a difficult task due to continued classification of key records, and in the case of covert activities, the purposeful avoidance of a written record. Although the ability of the United States to control events in Iraq was limited, in part due to the absence of suitable alternative leadership and lack of control of the army, US policies and actions had a significant, if indirect impact on Iraqi politics and society. The degree of US involvement in the February 1963 coup is not clear, and the United States probably played no direct role in the 1968 coup, but while a decade of US interference in Iraqi politics and opposition to Iraqi resource nationalism could not prevent nationalization of IPC, US policies and actions helped produce a climate that led to the construction of a 'coup proof regime' that limited the prospects for democracy and exacerbated ethnic and religious tensions.

Iraq eventually succeeded in taking control of the IPC in 1972. Wolfe-Hunnicuttt portrays this success as evidence "of the resilience an Iraqi society that refused to accept the world determined by Washington" and, he might have added, the oil companies (227). The cost, however, was high. Reformers such as Qasim, Yahya, Haseeb, and Jadir laid the groundwork for nationalization, but in a world dominated by US power, only "a kind of Arab Stalin backed by the Soviet Union" was able to control the levers of state power and carry through the historic task of nationalization (226). While one can debate whether the victory was worth the cost, this excellent study leaves little doubt that US policies and actions and the structure and power of the oil industry played an important role in the outcome.

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<sup>16</sup> Olivia Sohns, "The Future Foretold: Lyndon Baines Johnson's Congressional Support for Israel, *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 28 (2017): 57-84, DOI: <https://doi-org.proxy.library.georgetown.edu/10.1080/09592296.2017.1275509>; Darren Dochuk, *Anointed with Oil: How Christianity and Crude Made Modern America* (New York: Basic Books, 2019).

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Kerry Kolander's H-Diplo review of Sohn's article, H-Diplo Article Review 746, ed. Diane Labrosse, 28 February 2018 <http://tiny.cc/AR746>.

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 Review by Sara Pursley, New York University
 

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In the introduction, Brandon Wolfe-Hunnicuttt somewhat humbly describes his book as a history of the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC). The book is that, and much more. In telling the history of the IPC, it centers on the transition from British imperial rule to expanding American power in the region, tracing “how the Americans sought to prop up and defend the IPC and other imperial structures built by the British” (3). Drawing on both English- and Arabic-language sources, the author braids together a narrative involving three main sets of characters: the oil company officials seeking to preserve their control over Iraqi oil, albeit often to obstruct rather than enable its extraction; a group of “state-building” Iraqis seeking expanded oil production, increased revenues, and ultimately full resource sovereignty; and the US officials who “sought to mediate between the two contending sides” (3).

Three main arguments are laid out in the introduction, corresponding roughly to these three sets of actors. The first relates to the “weakness of the British empire” during Iraq’s mandate period and how this weakness shaped the subsequent history of the IPC, including the “vulnerabilities” in the company that later enabled nationalization (3-4). The second involves the Iraqi state-builders and how they “overcame tremendous obstacles” on their decades-long road to resource sovereignty, the “turning point” of which was the 1958 revolution (4). Throughout the book, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt links the movement for oil nationalization in Iraq to a “process of imagining a secular, democratic, and multiethnic conception of national identity” (7). The third argument is that the struggle over nationalization “exposed critical contradictions and vulnerabilities in the logic and structure of American power” (4). The book thus speaks to important questions in the historiographies on Iraq, the British empire, US foreign policy, and expanding claims to resource sovereignty globally.

A number of sub-arguments enhance the book’s contribution to multiple fields. Wolfe-Hunnicuttt supports other recent scholars in criticizing the narrative of “oil scarcity,” providing extensive evidence that the IPC and the British and US governments were usually more worried about oil abundance, and sought to obstruct the flow of oil from Iraq in the interest of maintaining high prices for oil extracted elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> He also offers a new reading of what he argues was Iraq’s pivotal role in the global process of oil nationalization.<sup>2</sup> Finally and relatedly, he re-assesses the history of the 1958 Iraqi revolution and its aftermath through the lens of oil, boldly placing post-revolution premier `Abd al-Karim Qasim “at the forefront of a global movement to decolonize the world economy” (84).<sup>3</sup> In the rest of this review, I will focus mainly on the book’s interventions in the historiography on Iraq, before concluding with some questions about the “paranoid style” of American diplomacy.

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<sup>1</sup> See also Robert Vitalis, *Oilcraft: The Myths of Scarcity and Security That Haunt U.S. Energy Policy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2020); Roger J. Stern, “Oil Scarcity Ideology in US Foreign Policy, 1908–97,” *Security Studies* 25, no. 2 (2016): 222–27; Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (London: Verso, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> Here the book engages usefully with recent work on global struggles for oil sovereignty. See Christopher R. W. Dietrich, *Oil Revolution: Anticolonial Elites, Sovereign Rights, and the Economic Culture of Decolonization* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

<sup>3</sup> For an overview of English-language scholarship on the 1958 revolution, see Sara Pursley, “Essential Readings: The Iraqi Revolution of 1958,” *Jadaliyya*, October 7, 2019, <https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/40058>. Many works on the revolution, including my own, have centered intellectual, political, and to a lesser extent social history, but have not focused significantly on oil policy. See Sara Pursley, *Familiar Futures: Time, Selfhood, and Sovereignty in Iraq* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019); Eric Davis, *Memories of State: Politics, History, and Collective Identity in Modern Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008). Works that have addressed Qasim’s oil policy have tended to explicitly downplay its importance or revolutionary nature. See, for example, Juan Romero, *The Iraqi Revolution of 1958: A Revolutionary Quest for Unity and Security* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2011), 137–38; Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq’s Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of Its Communists, Ba’thists and Free Officers*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 959.

Regarding the book's second main set of actors, Iraqi oil experts and state-builders, Wolfe-Hunnicuttt tells the "virtually unknown history of the 'Al-Haseeb group'" (6). Its eponymous center was Khair el-Din Haseeb, who was in "in many ways the key architect of Iraq's radical oil policy" (137). After returning to Iraq in 1960 with a Ph.D. from Cambridge, he held various positions in the Ministry of Oil and then the Iraq National Oil Company, which was established to oversee development of the areas of the IPC oil concession that were nationalized by Qasim in 1961. Wolfe-Hunnicuttt's research into this group is based partly on reading "US and oil company records 'against the grain'" (3), but also on Iraqi memoirs and on a series of oral history interviews he conducted with Haseeb before the latter's death in 2021 at the age of 91.<sup>4</sup> He employs Haseeb's "social biography" as a productive lens through which we "can view and understand the seismic forces transforming the regional political economy of oil in the 1950s and 1960s" (137-38).

Nevertheless, the 'turning point' in the history of oil nationalization, the 1958 revolution, occurred before the rise of Haseeb and his group in the 1960s (though Haseeb did work in Qasim's government after his return to Iraq in 1960). One of the book's contributions is its re-assessment of Qasim himself, perhaps especially as he has been portrayed in US-centered diplomatic histories. Against his "frequent portrayal as a kind of erratic 'madman,'" Wolfe-Hunnicuttt asserts that "Qasim skillfully navigated the shoals of Iraqi domestic politics and harnessed the international winds of change in the 1950s to carry through broadly shared national objectives" (83). Qasim used his "strategic brilliance" to "forge the international cooperation that would ultimately give rise to OPEC," which first convened in Baghdad in 1960, and helped to "lay the institutional foundation for the eventual nationalization of the IPC" (61).

According to Wolfe-Hunnicuttt, Qasim was inspired in part by the first meeting of the Arab Oil Congress in 1959 in Cairo. The conference brought together leading oil experts from the Arab oil-producing countries, including Saudi Arabia's famous Abdullah Tariki and Iraq's Mohammed Salman. In its wake, "Qasim effected a fundamental reorganization of Iraq's institutional structure with regard to oil" (69). This included the elevation of "moderate and liberal reformers" into top positions in the Ministry of Finance, which managed the Office of Petroleum Affairs before the creation of a Ministry of Oil (69). Muhammad Hadid was appointed Minister of Finance, and Hadid in turn gave the post of director general of petroleum to his long-time ally in the liberal democratic-socialist al-Ahali group, 'Abd al-Fattah Ibrahim. The latter was well-known for his social-scientific elaborations of a pluralistic and "populist theory of democracy," including in his 1939 *Introduction to Sociology* (70).<sup>5</sup> His role in Iraq oil policy is relevant to Wolfe-Hunnicuttt's argument about the relation of oil nationalization to the vision of a "secular, democratic and multiethnic" Iraq (7).

Wolfe-Hunnicuttt frames all of Qasim's major initiatives, from the threat to annex Kuwait (90) to the war on Kurds (102), through the lens of oil and the struggle for nationalization. Even Qasim's well-known crackdown on the Communists in 1959 was "intended to open space for him to mount a challenge to the IPC" (85).<sup>6</sup> Whether all of these assertions will stand up to scrutiny is a question for future historical research, but Wolfe-Hunnicuttt clearly demonstrates the value of narrating the history of the revolution through the lens of oil. Indeed, his book makes the history of Law 80, which was promulgated by Qasim in 1961, seem astonishingly understudied in the previous scholarship.<sup>7</sup> In asserting Iraqi sovereignty over all unexploited regions of the IPC concession, Law 80 nationalized 99.5 percent of the concessionary area. Wolfe-Hunnicuttt describes it as "the most significant oil law in the region" since Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad

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<sup>4</sup> The memoirs include Muhammad Hadid and Najdat Fathi Safwat, *Mudbakkirati: al-Sira` min Ajl al-Dimuqratiyya fi al-Iraq* (Beirut: Dar al-Saqi, 2006); 'Ali Karim Sa'id and Talib Shabib, *Iraq 8 Shubat 1963: Min Hivar al-Mafahim ila Hivar al-Dam: Muraja`at fi Dhakirat Talib al-Shabib* (Beirut: Dar al-Kunuz al-Adabiyya, 1999).

<sup>5</sup> Abd al-Fattah Ibrahim, *Muqaddama fi al-Ijtima`* (Baghdad: Matba'at al-Ahali, 1939).

<sup>6</sup> The more common interpretation has been the opposite, namely that the challenge to the oil company was an attempt to appease the Communists. For example, see Batatu, *The Old Social Classes*, 959.

<sup>7</sup> Hanna Batatu's massive 1200-page work on modern Iraqi history, centering on the revolution, contains only one sentence on Law 80. Juan Romero's 2010 monograph on the revolution doesn't mention it at all, nor does my own book. Batatu, 959; Romero, *The Iraqi Revolution of 1958*; Pursley, *Familiar Futures*.

Mossadegh's 1951 nationalization of the Iranian oil industry (86) and a "landmark decree that would permanently alter the oil politics of the region" (92). This argument is a major intervention in scholarship on both Iraq and the global history of oil nationalization.

The law may also have radically altered Iraqi political history. According to Wolfe-Hunnicut, Law 80 was a major factor in US support for the February 1963 Ba'ath coup in which Qasim was overthrown and assassinated. Chapters 2, 4, and 5 provide new research as well as overviews of the current state of the field on US covert operations in Qasim-era Iraq, including the question of direct US involvement in the 1963 coup.<sup>8</sup> While it seems there is still no smoking gun, the author's research expands our base of substantial circumstantial evidence for such a direct role, and reminds us that tacit US support is not in doubt. In a more original argument, Wolfe-Hunnicut links this support directly to Qasim's oil policy, writing that the Kennedy administration responded to Law 80 by committing to "a policy of bringing about regime change in Iraq through covert action" (87). And he asserts even more boldly in the book's conclusion that "when General Abd al-Karim Qasim emerged to challenge this colonial hierarchy and establish a pluralistic national identity with true sovereignty over Iraq's natural resources, the CIA conspired to murder him" (225).

Moreover, the US was not content with Qasim's murder but further participated, again in ways that are suggested but not definitively proven by the currently available evidence, in the Ba'athist project of rounding up and slaughtering Iraqi Communists and suspected Communists after the 1963 coup.<sup>9</sup> The author writes that "it was in Iraq (among other places) that the CIA, working in close collaboration with the Ba'ath Party, developed what would become known as the 'Jakarta Method'--that is, the systematic mass murder of suspected Communists as a root-and-branch approach to removing the impediments to capitalist development" (225). Here Wolfe-Hunnicut seems to suggest that Iraqi Communism posed an actual threat to US interests, or at least to "capitalist development," though this argument gets lost somewhat in the emphasis elsewhere on US "paranoia" (more on that below).

The short-lived Ba'ath regime from February to November 1963 did not pursue further steps toward oil nationalization, perhaps providing some supporting evidence for the author's assertions that US support for the coup was related to oil interests. But the anti-Ba'athist Arab nationalist regime that came to power in November 1963 picked up where Qasim had left off. Over the next decade, the Haseeb group "sought to complete the work that Qasim had begun" and indeed accomplished "nothing less than a revolution in international legal norms with regard to oil concession agreements" (137). By the spring of 1968, the Iraqi government was "poised to finally carry out the long-awaited nationalization of the IPC" (187), when the process was suddenly derailed again by the second Ba'ath coup of 1968. Four years later, taking advantage of a convergence of circumstances, including the 'paralysis' of the US in the face of competing domestic interests, the Ba'ath government under President Saddam Hussein brought oil nationalization to its conclusion. Wolfe-Hunnicut again puts Iraq at the center of global processes of asserting resource sovereignty: "In the wake of Iraq's bold action, producer-state control would become the industry norm by the end of the 1970s" (5).

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<sup>8</sup> On US involvement in the coup, Wolfe-Hunnicut engages with and builds on works including Weldon C. Matthews, "The Kennedy Administration, Counterinsurgency, and Iraq's First Ba'athist Regime," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 4 (2011): 635–53; Weldon C. Matthews, "The Kennedy Administration and Arms Transfers to Ba'athist Iraq," *Diplomatic History* 43, no. 3 (2019): 469–92; Douglas Little, "Mission Impossible: The CIA and the Cult of Covert Action in the Middle East," *Diplomatic History* 28, no. 5 (November 2004); William J. Zeman, "U.S. Covert Intervention in Iraq 1958–1963: The Origins of US Supported Regime Change in Modern Iraq," MA thesis, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, 2006; Eric Jacobsen, "A Coincidence of Interests: Kennedy, U.S. Assistance, and the 1963 Iraqi Ba'ath Regime," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 5 (May 2013): 1029–58.

<sup>9</sup> For a detailed account of the horrific Communist experience of 1963, see Tareq Ismael, *The Rise and Fall of the Communist Party of Iraq* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), Chapter 2.

The set of questions I would like to pose about *The Paranoid Style* relates to the theme of paranoia referred to in the title, and the related issue of Iraqi Communism. The book's title arguably does not do justice to Wolfe-Hunnicut's own quite nuanced analysis of the US state, which is shown to have been "an arena of competition" between diverse agents, interests, and styles rather than a unified entity (6). This analysis is central to Wolfe-Hunnicut's close exploration of the growing tensions between 'the majors'—the international oil companies with stakes in the IPC—and the emerging coalition of domestic US oil companies, Israel lobbyists, and defense contractors, all of whose interests ran counter to those of the IPC (5). These tensions and contradictions in US policy ultimately created maneuvering space for the agents of nationalization in Iraq, which the latter skillfully exploited.

The "paranoid style" is thus not asserted to be a universal attribute of US foreign policy but a recurring tendency of specific actors, such as certain officials of the Eisenhower administration including Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. The term refers to their "dire warnings of an oil supply cutoff" (45), their "strong tendency to overstate Soviet intentions and capabilities" (38), and their habit of "systematically overstat[ing] the threat of the Iraqi Communist Party coming to power in Iraq" (61). But it is not always clear how much influence these officials ultimately had on US policy in Iraq, which again seems to work against the primacy of the theme that the book's title suggests. As Wolfe-Hunnicut shows, John Foster Dulles "grew less and less relevant to the making of American foreign policy" after the 1958 revolution, as President Dwight Eisenhower and CIA director Allen Dulles took the more level-headed road of "respond[ing] to the Iraqi coup by adjusting US foreign policy in the region and looking for opportunities to collaborate with Nasser *against actually existing Arab Communism* [emphasis mine]" (46). In other words, even those in the presumably more realistic US camp were responding to the threat posed by the Iraqi Communist movement; the difference was that they pragmatically dropped their paranoia about Nasserism in the face of that newer and greater threat.

Qasim's 1959 crackdown on the Communist movement seems to be the main evidence the book provides for the claim that the movement was weaker than supposed by some US policymakers (62), but the breadth of the crackdown could instead be read as an indication of Communism's appeal. Certainly the Eisenhower administration, as the author notes, appreciated Qasim's repression of Iraq's Communists as a "great if largely unheralded victory in the Cold War" (60). In any case, the later history that Wolfe-Hunnicut recounts suggests that US policy was ultimately able to adapt to oil nationalization much more easily than to Iraqi Communism, which might at least raise a question about the argument that US support for the 1963 coup was more about the former than the latter.

My concern here is that while 'paranoia' as a psychological state undoubtedly applies to specific actors, when employed as an analytical framework—or as the highlight of a book title, which is more to the point in this case—it can work to flatten actually conflicting historical interests and sociopolitical struggles.<sup>10</sup> For example, in the context of the 1958 Iraqi revolution, it can work to make illegible the many subaltern political mobilizations and upheavals of the time that gave Iraqi Communism much of its strength, even when the Iraqi Communist Party had little or no direct control over them.<sup>11</sup> These struggles were about more than national resource sovereignty and the promotion of a multicultural society. They may have posed genuine challenges to US imperial interests, challenges that are not illuminated through demonstrations of the irrationality of specific US policymakers and diplomatic styles.

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<sup>10</sup> I have similar concerns about the 'paranoia' framework in Priya Satia's work, which Wolfe-Hunnicut draws on repeatedly when making his own argument. She uses it to frame British imperial actions and ideology in Iraq during and after World War I. See Priya Satia, *Spies in Arabia: The Great War and the Cultural Foundations of Britain's Covert Empire in the Middle East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> See Pursley, *Familiar Futures*, Chapter 6.

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 Response by Brandon Wolfe-Hunnicut, California State University, Stanislaus
 

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Let me begin by expressing my sincere gratitude to Nathaniel George, Bryan Gibson, David Painter, and Sara Pursley for offering such carefully considered reviews of my book. And let me also thank Robert Vitalis for introducing this roundtable and Thomas Maddox for organizing it. It is truly an honor to have my book reviewed by scholars with such great range and depth of expertise.

All these reviews are more than fair. They are in fact so generous that there is very little with which I can take issue. That said, I will briefly respond to a few points of critique that I find especially valuable in reflecting on the work. My response will focus on the use of Arabic language sources, the role of the CIA in the 1963 coup, the influence of Christian Zionism on the Lyndon B. Johnson administration, and the utility of ‘paranoia’ as an overarching concept to explain American foreign policy.

Nathaniel George notes the book’s limited use of Arabic language sources. This is certainly a valid critique. Much of the book relies on US embassy or oil company translations of Arabic language media reports for analysis of political and economic developments in the region. And those few sources that I did translate myself do not follow a uniform system of transliteration.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, deeper immersion in local sources could have allowed me to avoid mistakes such as confusing the Beirut-based Palestinian economist Yusif Sayigh (1916–2014), who wrote the highly influential *al-Khubz ma’ al-Karama (Bread with Dignity)*, with Yusif al-Sayigh (1933–2005), the Iraqi poet, novelist, and playwright. I appreciate this correction.

Closer attention to the nuances of language might have also helped clarify the nature of President ‘Abd al-Karim Qasim’s regime (1958-1963). It is true that, as Charles Tripp and others have noted, “parliamentary elections” were not a part of Qasim’s reform program. That said, elections are hardly a true measure of democracy, and Qasim’s regime was far more democratic than were the regimes most closely allied with US power at that time. It is particularly significant in this connection that Qasim brought into his inner circle of advisers principled democrats such as Muhammad Hadid, ‘Abd al-Fattah Ibrahim, Khair El-Din Haseeb, Adib al-Jadir, and Abdullah Tariki. As George’s review makes clear, these men were so much more than mere technocrats. They were in fact deeply committed to advancing what Ussama Makdisi describes as an “ecumenical” vision for economic development in the region.<sup>78</sup> I don’t think it would go too far to describe these men as the inheritors of a political and philosophical tradition stretching back to Ibn Rushd, Ibn Sina, and the Golden Age of the Bayt al-Hikma. But this is certainly more than I could demonstrate in the book, and I appreciate George’s point that deeper engagement with local sources could have allowed for fuller development of such arguments—especially as they relate to the larger analogy that I suggest between racism in the US and sectarianism in Iraq. I take George’s point on this score.

Bryan Gibson’s very useful survey of where the book fits within the historiography of US-Iraqi relations highlights what is probably one of the more controversial aspects of the book, which is my take on the CIA’s role in the February 1963 coup. While I do not go so far as to claim that the CIA *initiated* the coup, I do examine available documentary evidence to argue that the CIA very likely *collaborated* with the Ba‘th in the run up to the coup, and that the Kennedy administration enthusiastically *embraced* the regime that emerged out of that coup—despite (or because of) that emergent regime’s brutality directed against suspected Communists. While I do not claim to have achieved a full accounting of the CIA’s role in Iraq in the early 1960s, I do hope

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<sup>77</sup> In general, I tried to make the language as open and accessible as possible for non-specialist readers. So, for Arabic terms familiar to broader American audiences, I went with the *New York Times* spelling throughout (e.g., Nasser). For specialized Arabic terms, I went with best practice within the recent scholarly literature (e.g.: Ba‘th). For Haseeb’s name, I simply went with his preference.

<sup>78</sup> Makdisi refers to Haseeb specifically as principled adherent of ecumenical thought. See Ussama Makdisi, *Age of Coexistence: The Ecumenical Frame and the Making of the Modern Arab World*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019), 213.



to have provided readers with some informed speculation as to what that role might have looked like. And more importantly, I hope to have offered some insight into the moral universe of the embassy officials who watched the coup unfold at close hand.<sup>79</sup> I also hope that, as with the case of Iran in 1953, scholarship such as mine will help spur further declassifications.<sup>80</sup> It would be illuminating, for instance, if the CIA would tell us what “Project Cleanup” was all about (54). The idea that disclosing such information to the public would constitute a ‘threat to national security’ is totally paranoid. Any country pretending to be a democracy would demand immediate declassification of such records.

David Painter notes that my chapter on the Johnson administration and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War leans heavily on secondary sources and is more provocative than convincing.<sup>81</sup> These are fair observations. However, my emphasis on the eschatology of Christian Zionism in shaping Johnson’s *weltanschauung* were intentionally provocative. I was moved to this provocation because I was writing at a time when apocalyptic fantasies of a coming rapture had moved to the very center of American political discourse, and I was curious to excavate what seemed the underexamined origins of this tendency in American political culture.<sup>82</sup> That said, I appreciate Painter’s point that American diplomatic support for Israel—even when that support contradicted the interests of the major oil companies—was overdetermined. I certainly tried to point to several of those overdetermining factors by referencing American popular culture, public polling data, and a geopolitical imaginary in which Israel stood on the side of civilization and the Arabs on the side of savagery. As a kind of literary technique, I used the figure of Johnson to personify larger trends and tendencies in American political culture, but I acknowledge that the chapter is more suggestive than conclusive. I do hope that the book will contribute to increased scholarly attention to the influence of Christian Zionism on foreign policy—and on American political culture more generally.

Sara Pursley raises an important question about the adequacy of ‘paranoia’ as an overarching concept to tie the work together. As she notes, the emphasis on a paranoid style in the title suggests a rather one-dimensional image of the American state, and that this one-dimensional image is at odds with the more nuanced portrayal that emerges between the covers. Over the course of the chapters, we see a diverse set of agents, interests, and styles shaping American foreign policy. But the title suggests a state wholly unified by an irrational fear of a Communist takeover resulting in an oil supply cutoff. In addition to oversimplifying the complexity of the state and its motives, this emphasis on paranoia, especially when understood as irrational

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<sup>79</sup> Ervand Abrahamian once critiqued prominent accounts of US covert intervention for adhering to what he described as a “Myth of Benign Intent.” This is to say, the belief that “Other states might be Machiavellian and malevolent, but the US is altruistic, idealistic, and benevolent.” In my account of 1963, I hope to have substantially demystified this way of thinking of American intervention. See Ervand Abrahamian, Review of *All the Shah’s Men: The Hidden Story of the CIA Coup in Iran* by Stephen Kinzer; *Mohammad Mosaddeq and the 1953 Coup in Iran* by Mark J. Gasiorowski and Malcom Byrne, *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 57, No. 3 (Summer, 2003), 499-501.

<sup>80</sup> On the declassification of records pertaining to the 1953 coup in Iran, see Malcolm Byrne, ed., “Iran 1953: State Department Finally Releases Updated Official History of Mosaddeq Coup,” National Security Archive Briefing Book No. 588, June 15, 2017.

<sup>81</sup> In addition to the works by Olivia Sohns and Darren Dochuck, I also draw on social psychology research that found that, of the forty-two presidents up to George W. Bush, Lyndon Johnson scored the highest on the scales for “narcissistic personality disorder” and “grandiose narcissism.” See Ashley L. Watts et al., “The Double-Edged Sword of Grandiose Narcissism: Implications for Successful and Unsuccessful Leadership among U.S. Presidents,” *Psychological Science* 24, no. 12 (2013): 2379-89 (cited on 279, n. 73.).

<sup>82</sup> See for example: Arlie Russell Hochschild, “Donald Trump, ‘The Apprentice,’ and secular rapture,” *Boston Globe*, Sept 5, 2016; Heather Digby Parton, “Meet Mike Pompeo, the far-right Christian zealot,” *Slate*, Jan 13, 2017; Tara Isabella Burton, “Mike Pompeo, Trump’s pick for secretary of state, talks about politics as a battle of good and evil,” *Vox*, Mar 15, 2018; Edward Luce, “Pompeo’s global rapture tour,” *Financial Times*, Jan 14, 2019; Edward Wong, “The Rapture and the Real World: Mike Pompeo Blends Beliefs and Policy,” *New York Times*, Mar 30, 2019; Audrey Farley, “The apocalyptic ideas influencing Pence and Pompeo,” *Washington Post*, Jan 28, 2020; Luce, “Mike Pompeo and America’s end of times diplomacy,” *Financial Times*, May 21, 2020; Alex Morris, “Donald Trump: The End-Times President,” *Rolling Stone*, Oct 20, 2020.

fear, understates the very real possibility, especially in the late 1950s, of the Communist Party acquiring decisive influence over the Qasim regime, or perhaps more remotely, seizing power for itself. Given that a Communist takeover was within the realm of possibility, was not it rational for the US to be concerned about and take measures to guard against this eventuality?

I do not think that it was. US policy toward Iraq was part of a broader pattern of willfully misrepresenting every manifestation of nationalism in the Third World as evidence of ‘Soviet meddling.’ Even in place like Iraq where a vibrant Communist movement exerted significant influence over the government, that influence was the hard-fought achievement of an Iraqi social movement. The Iraqi Communist Party was not a Soviet ‘proxy’—or mere piece on a grand strategic gameboard. The strength of the Communist Party rested on its ability to diagnose in broadly compelling terms the significant ills afflicting Iraqi society and then to articulate an equally broad and compelling program of action to ameliorate such ills. To attribute Communist successes to a Soviet bogey is to project all the failures of modern capitalism onto an imagined other.<sup>83</sup>

It was this recurrence of projection that I had hoped to capture with the book’s title. Despite so many iterations—variations on a style—this performative anti-Communism constitutes what I see as the ideological ground-zero of the American state and the foreign policies that it generates. The fanatical commitment to eradicate any trace of ‘Communism’ from any corner of the globe is the ideological tie that binds the most liberal State Department Arabist to the most conservative National Security hawk. The American state will permit an almost endless array of variations on the basic theme, but at the end of the day, the metaphysics of Communist-hating trump all other considerations and impose a stifling degree of conformity on anyone who might put themselves in service of the state. As overwrought as they were, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles’s jeremiads were quite effective in setting the parameters of the debate and institutionalizing a McCarthyite politics of American foreign policy.

So, the question that my title ultimately poses to the reader is this: Was American anti-Communism paranoid, rational, or perhaps an expression of a kind of paranoid rationality? I tried to suggest this third position. I paraphrased Theodore Adorno to describe poisoned handkerchiefs and the like as rational means to an irrational end.<sup>84</sup> To my way of thinking, the whole business of anti-Communism represents the height of folly. The impulse to eradicate Communism from the world over gave rise to what I described as American Grandiose Strategy. Looking at the case of Iraq, I tried to show the bloody consequences that flow naturally from such hubris. By highlighting paranoia, hubris, and other states of psychological disequilibrium, I hope that the book and its title will serve to call into increasing question the idea of the US as a rational actor on the world stage.

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<sup>83</sup> As C.W. Mills put it: “In the name of realism, they have constructed a paranoid reality all their own; in the name of practicality, they have projected a utopian image of capitalism.” Mills quoted in *The Paranoid Style*, 38.

<sup>84</sup> On a leader’s ability to “make rational use of his own irrationality,” see Theodore Adorno, “Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda,” in Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt, eds., *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader* (New York: Continuum, 1977), 132.