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 Review
 

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Kees van der Pijl  
**The Discipline of Western  
 Supremacy. Modes of Foreign  
 Relations and Political  
 Economy, Volume III**

Pluto Press, London, 2014, 259 pp.

*This book provides a complete overview of mainstream International Relations as a set of theories which translate Western supremacy into intellectual hegemony. (a quote from the book's cover)*

The book by Kees van der Pijl (Professor Emeritus at the University of Sussex) titled: *The Discipline of Western Supremacy. Modes of Foreign Relations and Political Economy, Volume III* represents a final chapter (after: *Nomads, Empires, States. Modes of Foreign Relations and Political Economy, Volume I; The Foreign Encounter in Myth and Religion. Modes of Foreign Relations and Political Economy, Volume II*) in the author's successful attempt to study foreign relations and the political economy of the late 19<sup>th</sup>, the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The book is organized into five chapters (*Empire and Nationality in the Pax Britannica, The Crusade for Democracy and World Politics, Cold War Discipline in International Relations, The Pax Americana and National Liberation, and The Crisis of International Discipline*), each covering a distinct period in history, providing the historical overview of the development of the international re-

lations (IR) discipline. According to the main thesis of the book, the discipline of international relations is designated as "the discipline of Western supremacy", thus providing the title.

This book offers an in-depth look into the development of the international relations discipline, as a discipline that was introduced into political science by the Anglo-Saxon, White, and mostly Protestant elites (economic and political), residing in the United Kingdom and in the United States in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The author provides numerous examples that verify this thesis. First, and as it later became apparent, the continuous financial and intellectual impulses for the development of the IR discipline have come out of the large foundations and endowments that were founded by and subsidised on the donations from the US richest capitalist families in the age of imperialist, monopolist capitalism (Ford, Rockefeller, Carnegie, Mellon etc.). In 1934, the networks sponsored by Carnegie and Rockefeller foundations accounted for 60 per cent of the capital of 123 largest US foundations (p. 79). So, the discipline was founded with the money from these donors, in order to intellectually ("scientifically") justify the position of the elite in the existing Western societies, and even more important – to provide the intellectual framework for liberal internationalism, which supported a system of nation-states based on sovereign equality (a fiction) with open markets, governed by the elites ready and willing to support the foreign (Western) investments. For the purposes of this review, only the most important and interesting points and "stations" of this seminal book are discussed.

In the first chapter, after the explanation of the historic intellectual grounds for the liberal internationalism (mostly provided by Locke's insisting on liberal values and private property, thereby the ideologues of the Lockean heartland) and of the world order in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (the Pax Britannica), the author explains when, how, and most importantly – why the discipline of IR was established (p. 47). He also explains the influence of M. Weber on the IR discipline (“The realism of Anglo-American IR is already in evidence in Weber”, p. 52), which influenced the origins of the idea about the American century, and the roots of realism in international relations. Not omitting the political and economic influence of the elite over the social sciences and universities, the author mentions the supervision of universities and the first “witch-hunt” in US academia in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, aimed at the social scientists who did not comply with the demands of the elite. It should not be forgotten that this was the period of the first organized workers' movements and uprisings, contained with brutal reprisals from the repressive apparatus that protected the capitalists (of which the Haymarket massacre in Chicago in 1886 is the most notorious example).

In the second chapter, the author explains how the institutional founding of departments devoted to the international discipline flourished between the two World Wars. The United States' elite for the first time saw the opportunity to internationalize its influence. The author discusses the most important circles of intellectual power (the Milner Group, the Inquiry and the special role of I. Bowman, as well as the subordination of the US science to the

state) that were financed with a purpose of developing the intellectual support for US, and to a much lesser extent UK, capital that needed new investment areas and markets. After the Great War, the *Council on Foreign Relations* (CFR) was founded in the United States, and the *Royal Institute of International Affairs* (RIIA) was founded in the United Kingdom. These two institutions were meant to be a single institution, however, opposition from certain circles prevented this from happening. Nevertheless, this development shows how connected the economic, political, and military elites of the two countries were in the period when the United States “took over” from the United Kingdom as the “world's hegemon” (especially by its own elite's perception). At the same time, all of the prestigious US universities (the Ivy League) were funded, supported and cooperated with the large foundations that financed projects and programs under one basic condition – that they produce the intellectual base for liberal internationalism, develop the international discipline and support the (fictitious) principle of sovereignty and the founding of new nation-states. As history has shown and the current period shows, sovereignty is nothing more than a formality, except for the largest and most powerful and dominant states, and a couple of contender states. The additional important topic from the second chapter is the one about the German (actually Jewish and German) influence in the discipline, which was disproportionately high, especially since the period of the Nazi persecution of the European Jews. Consequently, many Jewish scientists (mostly from Germany and the surrounding countries) found refuge

in the United States and continued to develop the discipline (mostly in the realist and the neorealist schools, with probably the most known names being Morgenthau, Kissinger, and Spykman, among many others) as the intellectual base for the US foreign and defense policy before, during, and after the Second World War. On pages 90 and 91 the author provides two lists of names of the scientists that found refuge in the US before and during the period of Nazi Germany.

Chapter 3 of the book covers the period from the beginning of the Cold War to the *détente* years. The discipline was, understandably, critically influenced by the anti-communist policy of the United States and devoted to the various forms of the Containment policy (G. F. Kennan) or militaristic efforts and more open calls for covert actions and refusing to accept “the status quo” (P. Nitze, etc.). The Cold War years saw the development of the RAND Corporation (with its doomsday scenarios, and the use of game theory and rational choice theory), the national security state (from 1947 and to its more powerful form from 1950 onwards, with the NSC-68 document and the Gaither Report in 1957), and the second witch-hunt in the public sphere, which included the social sciences and consequently the IR discipline (McCarthyism). The dual state (with a completely separate national security complex that is actually above the government) and securitization were at its (first) peak, strongly influencing the discipline, and producing some of the most “ethically problematic” (a euphemism) conduct (denunciations, firing of the intellectuals from universities) and projects (Project Thor, funding of the projects by the CIA, etc.). The discipline

*de facto* became an academic intelligence base for the national security state and remained tightly connected with the national security establishment until the present day. At the same time, it flourished: from fewer than 10 dedicated IR degree programs in the United States before the (Second World) War, the discipline expanded to 191 such programs in 1968; most of them, according to Harvard’s McGeorge Bundy, “manned, directed, or stimulated by graduates of the OSS” (the US intelligence service whose role was emulated by the CIA) (p. 106). The Cold War years also witnessed the founding and buildup of the new informal highly influential networks of power and decision-making (the Bilderberg Group, the Trilateral Commission).

Chapter 4 is mostly devoted to the discipline’s development from the 1960s to the 1990s, and addresses the problems of decolonization in the Third World, particularly the ways in which the discipline was used to find the means to transfer the Western economic model to the newly (formally) independent countries, concurrently containing the influence of Marxism and the USSR in the Third World. The works of W. W. Rostow and S. Huntington, which originated in the mid-1960s, represent the most conservative intellectual grounds for supporting the military elites in the Third World, through establishing and supporting loyal client regimes that would guarantee open markets for Western capital and goods, as well as stop the spread of communist ideas, through “the transfer of Western political culture (G. Almond’s invention) to the Third World countries”. This period, among other developments, also witnessed the development of ethically highly questionable projects that were

led by intellectuals from the IR discipline (Project Camelot, the CIA project in Vietnam). On the other hand, the Vietnam War and its influence on public opinion in the United States caused the first major massive “rebellion” among academics, after revealing that the CIA funded organization called Operations and Policy Research (OPR) had several hundred social scientists, many of them APSA members, working for it covertly to commission and promote books favorable to US foreign policy. This resulted in the investigation (from 1968) by a committee under the Yale political scientist and president of APSA, R. Dahl. Its report led to a walkout of critical scholars, mostly young graduates, and the formation of a Caucus for a New Political Science outside APSA (p. 169).

The final chapter studies the contemporary crisis of the international discipline. Though, the initial developments in the era of détente were even promising: the war in Vietnam gravely undermined the moral posture on which Western supremacy is premised (p. 189), what followed was the neoconservative roll back at the universities and in academia (detected as problems), after the universities were declared as “more leftist than ever”. Neoconservative ideologues, deprived of the Cold War contender (the USSR), enlarged the new enemy (Islam) into a life and death struggle, dramatized in Huntington’s “clash of civilizations”, pointed against Islam, but also China and Russia (p. 189). At about the same time, a neoliberal utopia, “the end of history” (in liberal capitalist democracy) by another neoconservative (Fukuyama) became very famous. The neoconservative thinking (Huntington, S. M. Lipset) brackets the economy from the domain of

politics, entrusting it to the neoliberal (in the US mostly termed as neoconservative) experts. Therefore, neoliberal economic postulates have to be accepted by any government, and governments should not interfere in the once accepted basic economic (neoliberal) principles. The HST theory (with Kindleberger’s benign US hegemony) and international political economy (IPE) as a sub-discipline of IR also date from this period. In this chapter, the author discusses other important thinkers and developments, such as the non-violent conflicts as a project of mostly US foundations (NED, IRI, Soros’ Open Society Institute and others), aimed at changing regimes mostly in the former communist countries and producing “colored” revolutions. The author also gives a special attention to the never-ending War on Terror, which was actually devised in 1984 (17 years before the 9/11 events) and the catastrophic, catalytic event was for the first time then announced as the turning point that would make this War possible (p. 210-211).

After reading and re-reading this book, a couple of conclusions have come to mind:

First, the discipline of international relations (IR) has not been the product of spontaneous scientific development and scientific research at any time since its inception. On the contrary, its founding and development were guided from the power centers of the Anglo-Saxon elite in the Atlantic Community. Therefore, the author does not refer to it as “the IR scientific discipline”, but merely as “the IR discipline”.

Second, the author does not claim that all of the intellectuals that have developed the discipline and teach IR are not scientists or are under the dominant influence of

the elite and the establishment. However, in order to fund the projects and to become known, to “develop a name” in the discipline, in almost every period of the discipline’s history, the intellectuals mostly had to become “the intellectuals of statecraft” or “the academic intelligence base”.

Third, as the author of the book himself concludes, after elaborating throughout the whole book and referring particularly to the present day, on the numerous connections (corroborated by a number of examples) between “scholars”, the state structures, the intelligence communities, the military-industrial complexes of dominant states, and the “big businesses” (energy, weapons, etc.): a discipline led by scholars of this moral calibre cannot be expected to restore its intellectual integrity. Under conditions of the growing precariousness of academics at all levels, few of the rank and file can afford to take their distance from such leading scholars either. And yet, whilst both politically and economically the pre-eminence of the societies of the Lockean heartland is fast eroding, IR today is still spreading across the globe, along with economics and the rest of the Anglophone disciplinary infrastructure (pp. 234-235).

The conclusion formed from reading this book is that it is definitely worth reading. It is comprehensive by its conclusions and perspective, and detailed and analytic by its content. It is also very different from the mainstream literature devoted to IR because of its critical stance to the discipline itself. It could be used at the graduate and doctorate levels of education.

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Review

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Phillip Manow  
**Mixed Rules, Mixed Strategies:  
Candidates and Parties  
in Germany’s Electoral System**

ECPR Press, Colchester, 2015, 238 pp.

Philip Manow, currently Professor of Comparative Political Economy at the University of Bremen, has written extensively on welfare state systems, socio-economic and religious cleavages, and party and electoral politics. Manow’s recent monograph deals with the intricacies of the German personalized proportional electoral system. This book represents a serious empirical attempt to tackle some of the burning issues concerning the more subtle and complex aspects of electoral competition, electoral politics, and electoral outcomes in Germany.

The author follows an implicit rational choice, institutionalist approach, by following a research framework that deals with the constant interplay of electoral rules and the different strategies electoral competitors employ in order to maximize their gains. The book consists of three main parts. The first one deals with the way parties adapt to electoral rules. The second one offers an analysis of the strategies individual candidates employ regarding the electoral rules of the game. Finally, the third part discusses the characteristics of *Bundestag* members through the lens of the electoral system.