

lations based upon the China-centered world seems exaggerated.

Although there are some issues with the book, no one can deny its contribution to reconsider “conventional thinking in the study of international relations.” Obviously, this book’s

overall aim of reassessing European thinking in the study of international relations is well represented. The sharp but productive criticisms of contemporary international relations theories offer valuable insight into future studies focused on historical approaches in a non-European/Eurocentric context.

The United States and Great Power Responsibility in International Society

Drones, Rendition and Invasion

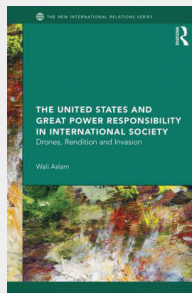
By Wali Aslam

Abingdon: Routledge, 2013, 174 pages, \$145, ISBN 9780415644686.

Reviewed by Dimitrios Anagnostakis

THE MAIN AIM of this book is to evaluate from a normative perspective the foreign policy of the United States (US) and, in particular, US conduct of the “war on terror.” The central research question that the author seeks to answer is whether US behavior is close to the behavior one would expect from a responsible great power. The US has justified and supported the invasion of Iraq, the use of drones for targeted killings, and the extraordinary rendition of terrorist suspects claiming that these actions were necessary for maintaining international order, peace, and stability. The US’ position was that it was within the responsibilities of great powers, such as the US, to preserve this order and stability. According to the author, the above justifications beg the question of whether the US has indeed behaved responsibly.

To answer this question Wali Aslam employs a normative framework based on the English School of international relations theory.



According to this framework, the benchmarks for evaluating great power responsibility are three-fold: legality, legitimacy, and prudence. While legality is related to the compliance of states with international law, legitimacy is related to whether there is an international consensus about the appropriateness of a state’s measures or actions. With regard to prudence, it concerns the consequences of an actor’s actions and it is linked with the concepts of deliberation and foresight. The author employs the above framework in three cases: the US operation “Iraqi Freedom,” the US drone strikes in Pakistan, and the US practice of extraordinary rendition. His central argument is that in the three cases, which were examined, US foreign policy was not responsible; in other words, the US actions were not legal, they lacked legitimacy, and they lacked the element of prudence.

Starting from the author’s methodological approach, the rationale for choosing the cases

that are examined in the book is not clearly specified. For example, the author does not specify why he chose to analyze the US operation “Iraqi Freedom” and not the operation “Enduring Freedom” in Afghanistan. From a similar methodological point of view, there is no mention in the book on the methods used for the research undertaken. The author relies on a great variety of both primary and secondary sources, ranging from media sources and speeches of practitioners to books and journal articles. He could have briefly explained in the book how he collected, used, and analyzed these sources.

Regarding the theoretical framework used in the book, one of its strongest and most original elements is the discussion on the importance of prudence as a central component of responsible foreign policy. The author does not stay strictly within the limits of the English School but he also brings insights from political philosophy and political theory (Aristotle and Edmund Burke) as well as the writings and political tradition of the American Founding Fathers. Thus, his conceptual framework is greatly enriched by this discussion. Closely connected, however, with the issues of legitimacy, the responsibility of great powers, and state sovereignty are the responsibility to protect doctrine and the just war theory. Consequently, the author could have touched upon these two topics in the chapter where he presents his normative framework (the just war theory is only passingly mentioned later in the book).

As underlined above, the book presents a strong argument of why legality, legitimacy, and prudence are characteristics of a responsible great power. The author makes the assumption that responsible statecraft matters in global politics and that continuous self-interested behavior on behalf of states are ulti-

mately self-defeating. This assumption could, however, be presented more explicitly and strengthened with some examples. It could be shown, for instance that the way states are perceived as responsible or irresponsible will have an impact in practice. It is mentioned in several places in the book that the alliances of the US could be endangered by Washington’s irresponsible policies, measures, and actions. However, in the period examined the US signed, for example, eight agreements with the European Union on counter-terrorism and internal security issues and the US and the EU intensified their cooperation despite many differences they might have on the invasion of Iraq, such as the extraordinary renditions and the use of drones for targeted killings. One could even argue that, given its enhanced power and status in the international system, a great power has greater flexibility in acting irresponsibly.

Moving to the empirical chapters, the author, who starts from a normative standpoint, makes a compelling and well-structured case of the irresponsibility of US actions. However, the conceptual framework mentioned previously is not applied in the same way in all chapters. In the discussion of the operation “Iraqi Freedom” and whether the US foreign policy was prudent the author looks at the elements of deliberation and foresight, as presented in the previous chapter. In the next empirical chapters, however, these two elements are not addressed fully; while the author makes a good and rich analysis of the harmful consequences of the US policies he does not examine whether these consequences were discussed in foreign policy-making circles (the element of deliberation). Admittedly, the necessary sources for this examination could be classified and inaccessible but if this was the case then it could be mentioned explicitly in the text. Finally, the

conclusion summarizes the results and the central arguments made in the book. To give justice to the research undertaken for this book the author could move beyond simply summarizing its results to discuss the broader implications of the findings for US foreign policy.

To sum up, this book is a useful resource for both scholars and students who work on normative approaches to foreign policy (including the English School of international relations theory) and study or are interested in the foreign policy of the US in the Middle East and US anti-terrorism policies and measures.

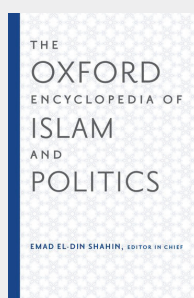
The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Politics (2 volumes)

Editor-in-chief Emad El-Din Shahin

New York: Oxford University Press, 2014, 1452 pages, \$395, ISBN 9780199739356.

Reviewed by Muhammad Yaseen Gadda

TO WRITE ABOUT the political dimensions of Islam is, indeed, to examine the universal phenomenon of Islam and politics as it happens to be expressed in the modern Muslim world; because the multiple aspects of politics in Islam continue to reveal themselves in more multifaceted ways. Though there would seem to have been little need to have more encyclopedias after the unveiling of the comprehensive six volumes, *the Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* (OEMIW) by John L. Esposito—to which the encyclopedia under review is, but a supplement; the *Princeton encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought* by Gerhard Bowering et al.; besides the more recent handbook, *the Oxford Handbook of Islam and Politics* by John L. Esposito and Emad El-Din Shahin. However, as I have pointed out in the opening lines about the dynamic and complex role of the politics in Islam, particularly in the contemporary Muslim world, need has been felt to offer an in-depth authoritative and comprehensive reference work in separate volumes primarily on the political di-



mensions of Islam. Furthermore, due to the dynamic changes—the Arab Spring, toppling of autocratic regimes, rise of Islamic parties to power, etc—the Muslim world experiences in recent years, have again reasserted the role of Islam in politics as a main catalyst for such dynamic change, resistance, liberation, and reassertion of identity and governance.

The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Politics (OEIP)—a supplement to OEMIW as described by the Editor-in-Chief, Emad El-Din Shahin, in a useful way in his preface—seeks to offer an in-depth coverage of the political dimensions of Islam and the Muslim world. Moreover, though, OEIP seeks to target a particular readership, but the entries, by highly qualified scholars in their respective fields, are written in such a simple and lucid way that makes them easily accessible to the general readership as well. Some salient features of the encyclopedia make it clearly distinctive from other such works. First, according to the Editor, the goal is “to blend theoretical di-