

powers in democratic governments and beyond. In essence the author pays attention to describing different theoretical postulates ranging from earliest perspectives to Kantian perspective in order to better our understanding of the relationships between power, hegemony and liberalism.

The next chapter adds some vital information on US involvement in the World War II as an effort to prevent foreign military threats and explain strategies employed by America. The last chapter which the author called the conclusion deals with democracy, hegemony and collective action. In this chapter Russett describes and analyses the relevance of realist and liberalist approaches in explaining international relations, particularly in relation to the application of power and its effect on how elites design foreign policy. He again questions whether hegemony is sustainable internationally. Considering the nature of international system within which an alliance takes place among states, security to members is obtainable even though costs and benefits may not be shared equally. It is here that Russett explains the role of economic power and capitalism as a source of power. The final section concluded with big question as to how long can a state be both hegemonic and democratic.

To sum up, this book is a significant contribution to the literature in international relations and helps understand some of the contradictions exhibited by politics of dominance and power retention in the international system. The author provides a critique of US hegemony and expresses fear on the possibility of sustaining this hegemonic power. While diverting from the ideal principle of democratic state US according to this book is likely to degrade as an empire of a chaotic failed hegemony.

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**Islamic activists : The anti-enlightenment democrats.** By Deina Ali Abdelkader. London : Pluto Press, 2011, pp. viii-157. ISBN 978 – 0 – 7453 – 2216 – 2.

**Reviewer :** Sherry Marlina Bt. Shharuddin (PhD Candidate),  
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The Arab uprising has attracted attentions especially when the uprising was made against regimes that have long been in power. The mass movements against the regime were unique because men and women of all religious and social backgrounds protested across the country demanding an end to dictatorship and economic corruption. However, among the protests there were elements of Islamists who have been fighting the government for a long time and suffered under those regimes. Many of them have been tortured, imprisoned, murdered and force to exile in secluded parts of the country. Deina Ali Abdelkader has studied these mass uprisings against regimes. She also studied the role of Shari'ah and Muslim's expectations as well as Islamist leaders, their ideas and writings.

This book is useful for those who want to know more about the contemporary political ideology and Middle East as well as North Africa. This book is easy to read since

the author uses a simple language to describe the ideas of the three popular Islamist leaders. Deina Ali Abdelkader has taught at the University of Massachusetts-Lowell, Tufts University and Cairo University. She is a member of the Islamic Jurisprudential Council of North America and an executive committee member of the Religion and Politics in the American Political Science Association. The author has been studying Islamic Activism and was fascinated by the Islamic legal thought especially on social justice. She has written *Social Justice in Islam* in 2000 that focused on Islamic Activists, mass movement and Islamic Law. However, this is the first book she wrote on the three populist Islamist leaders and critically analyses Western secular democratic theory.

The book is divided into six chapters. The first chapter analyses the Western thinkers and the views on the conflict between reason and faith which will determine whether secularism is a prerequisite for establishing a democratic state. In this chapter, the author explains the views of three different groups, Orientalist, Islamist and Rationalist and their perceptions on the relationship between faith and reason. The author also discusses the progress that shapes the ways writers and thinkers think on the relationship between reason and faith by examining the Enlightenment writers, colonial perceptions, the Weberian paradigm, structural functionalists and modernization theory as well as Islamist views.

In the second chapter, the author discusses the contributions made by Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi. The author specifically discusses his works because of the Islamic Law (shari'ah) legacy that has remained central to the Muslim political thought. The Islamic law constitutes the ideal social blueprint and aspiration for a good society. In the third chapter, the author discusses Yusuf al-Qaradawi's contributions. He is known as a major exponent of a centrist position and democracy based on tenets of Islamic faith and informed by Islamic history. In this chapter, the author examines his life and the development of his theoretical approach to knowledge and democracy. In the fourth chapter, the author concentrates on the contributions made by Rachid al-Ghannouchi, the founder and spiritual leader of the Tunisian Islamic movement, al-Nahdah. The author examines al-Ghannouchi's life and his works and shows how his views have changed after the failure of 1967 war. According to the author, these changing views become a barometer of the political evolution of modern Middle Eastern societies.

In the fifth chapter, the author examines Abdessalam Yassine, who is the founder of the Justice and Benevolence movement in Morocco. Yassine is well known as a prolific writer and his publications address topics such as democracy, reason, *ijtihad*, and the concept of guardianship (rulership) in Muslim communities. In this chapter, the author showed Yassine's views on Western democracy and the nature of Khilafah (guardianship) by emphasizing the moral code and ethos of a future Islamic state.

The sixth chapter is on the ideas of three Islamists on reason and its relation to faith comparatively by examining Islamic writings and Western liberal thoughts. In this chapter, the author noted the principle of accountability in Islamist's writings and that faith can be consistent with both morality and reason. The same argument lies at the heart

of some Western political thinkers such as Rousseau, and De Tocqueville. The author noted that the perceptions of “common good” differ from one society to another. These perceptions also apply to the definitions of democracy. There are many different views on the concept and theory of democracy but she finds that there are some elements in those arguments that did not contradict one another. Both Islamic and Western political thinkers argued that democracy is not a unilateral project and elections are not the hallmark of democracy. To the author, “Enlightenment rationalism” which rejects any role of religion in political life is deeply flawed. The author believes that Muslims should define democracy individually and formulate their own unique versions of just governance.

This book of Deina Ali Abdelkader is informative. However, Deina, chose three different figures that contribute to Islamic political thought. The difference between them is clear : al-Qaradawi is considered by many as clerics and Islamic theologian and not a political thinker. The same can be said about al-Shatibi. The author considered the two along Ghannouchi as political thinkers and that they represent Islamic political thought. However, these figures are not political thinkers though they had prominent roles in Islamist movements in their own countries. Their views mostly reflect their grievances against the government and therefore, their ideas reflect their own political interest. It is important for scholars not to generalize their ideas and views and assume the three figures to be the representative of Muslims.

The author indicates her dislike of the American views on democracy and the Enlightenment views of some of the Western political thinkers. In the preface, the author clarifies that this book aims at clarifying a certain discourse unfamiliar to the Western world. Therefore, the book is written for the Western audience who may want to know about Islamic contemporary political theory. Nevertheless, the book is a good read for serious students and scholars of Islamic political theory. Deina Ali Abdelkader tried to explain and compare Islamist ideas by focusing on their views of democracy. The author was hoping to remove any confusion of Muslims and the non-Muslims in West on the theory of democracy and the conflict over relationship between religion and faith.

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**International relations in Southeast Asia : Between bilateralism and multilateralism.** Edited by N.Ganesan and Ramses Amer. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2010, pp. 372. ISBN : 9814279579.

**Reviewer :** Dawud Pawang (PhD Candidate).

Since the post- Cold War period, multilateralism has gained prominence as an approach for forging international consensus on a number of issues. Multilateralism refers to three or more countries coming together to deal with issues of common interests. During the Cold War, forging multilateralism consensus on issues tended to be more difficult because of ideological differences between the two blocs. However, the end of the Cold