

Review Essay

Encyclopaedic Works on Islamic Political Thought and Movements in the Twenty-first Century

Books Reviewed: Gerhard Bowering, et. al., eds., *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013); John L. Esposito and Emad El-Din Shahin, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Islam and Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Emad El-Din Shahin, ed., *Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Politics*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

During last two decades or so, many encyclopedias have been published on Islam and its history – classical to contemporary – with a modern approach, among them Richard Martin’s two-volume *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*¹ and John L. Esposito’s *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*.² Other encyclopedic works focus on specific eras, like Josef Meri’s *Medieval Islamic Civilization*.³ One more category is that of Islam and politics, political Islam, and/or the various facets, complexities, and intricacies of Islamic movements. This essay focuses on three works that discuss the themes and issues that fall in this last category.

*The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought (EIPT)*⁴ is a wide-ranging one-volume publication, as well as the first encyclopedia and reference work on Islamic political thought. It includes articles ranging from the classical to the contemporary periods and incorporates the eras from the Prophet’s time to the present. Written by prominent scholars and specialists in the field, *The Oxford Handbook of Islam and Politics (OHIP)*⁵ is a single-volume sourcebook that provides a comprehensive analysis of “*what we know and where we are in the study of political Islam,*” thereby enabling scholars, students, and policymakers “to appreciate the interaction of Islam and politics and the multiple and diverse roles of Islamic movements” both regionally and globally (p. 2; italics mine). By analyzing Islam and politics through a detailed and profound study, the two-volume *Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Pol-*

itics (OEIP) provides in-depth coverage of the “political dimensions of Islam and the Muslim world” (pp. xvi, xix).

EIPT, a richly informative and innovative reference work on Islamic political thought, contains many articles that are not only *purely* “political” in nature and scope but also fall within the social, political, and economic categories as well. Consisting of 418 alphabetically arranged entries/articles, written by an “international team of [249] specialists,” the volume is divided and listed for easy access into five categories: (1) “Central Themes” and sources of Islamic political thought (15 entries) under the direction/editorship of Gerhard Bowering; (2) “Historical Developments, Sects and Schools, Regions and Dynasties” (108 entries), edited by Patricia Crone; (3) “Modern Concepts, Institutions, Movements, and Parties” (91 entries) under the direction/editorship of Muhammad Qasim Zaman; (4) “Islamic Law and Traditional Islamic Societies” (106 entries) under Devin J. Stewart’s editorship; and (5) “Thinkers, Personalities, and Statesmen” (98 entries), edited by Wadad Kadi.

Most of the contributors authored one or two entries; however, 24 of them contributed four to six entries each. The inclusion of new entries and articles on contemporary trends in political thought provides the framework for understanding the ongoing events in Islamic history. *EIPT* also features maps of Muslim empires and populations; guides readers to further research through bibliographies, cross-references, and an index; and includes an “Alphabetical List of Entries” (pp. xxi-xxiii) and a “Topical List of Entries” (pp. xxv-xxvii). These are its plus points, as they are informative and very useful and helpful for general readers.

Among the editorial team, Stewart has contributed twelve entries, which is the maximum number of articles contributed by a single author. Besides this, editor-in-chief Bowering has contributed a very thorough “Introduction” as well, which is, in my opinion, a book in itself on the genesis, development, and modern trends in Islamic political thought. This section also includes discussions on the “Islamic World Today in Historical Perspective” as well as on the evolution and “Rudimentary Foundations” of Islamic political thought and its development, especially from Europe’s Middle Ages to the present.

For Bowering,

Islam has not created a comprehensive system of political thought able to integrate the disparate elements informing its current stage of development. Emerging currents in political Islam are attempting to articulate ideologies and organize movements that aspire to inner purity, ethical strength, personal

freedom, and collective dignity. Burdened with political and cultural fragmentation and labeled by the West as a violent religion, Islam thirsts for a new paradigm of political thought that will enable it to construct its future as a peaceful order in a pluralistic world. (p. xviii)

This encyclopedia includes a wide diversity of topics. In order to show the innovative, and up-to-date approach, I provide below a brief assessment and evaluation of some the selected interrelated articles – those topics, themes, and issues that have gained importance due to the various post-9/11 trends and developments in the discourses and discussions, such as “Consultation (*Shura*), Democracy, Secularism” and “Minorities, and Jurisprudence of Minorities.”

“Consultation” (pp. 116-17, Roswitha Badry) and “Democracy” (pp. 128-30, Mirjam Künkler) are two major concepts as far as the Islam-democracy discourse is concerned – both in Islam and in Muslim societies – due to 9/11 and the Arab Spring. For example, Badry argues that *shūrā*, although a Qur’anic concept, has been a “core value of a newly propagated Islamic system” commonly referred as “Islamic democracy” since the nineteenth century and especially from the final decades of twentieth century. And Muslims have provided a broad spectrum of theories, especially four “tendencies,” ranging from “radical Islamists” to their opposites and from “pragmatic moderate Islamists” to “secular scholars and intellectuals” (pp. 116, 117). In practice, Badry writes, the idea of consultation has proven to be “compatible” with various political systems, whether “monarchical or republican” and with “assemblies of different kinds” (p. 117).

For Künkler, who approaches democracy from the general conceptual perspective and its place in and vis-à-vis religion, as well as in Islamic law and in the Muslim world, democracy does not require a “strictly secular order in institutional terms” (p.129). She opines that there is an “Arab democracy-gap,” at least as far as the Middle East is concerned – this has been changing, however, since the Arab Spring – and identifies its “causes,” ranging from, among others, “the prevalence of rentier economies among the gulf states to the Arab-Israeli conflict that allows authoritarian incumbents to suppress internal dissent in the name of security concerns” (p. 129).

Similarly, the authors of “Minorities” (pp. 340-46, Yohanna Friedman) and “Minorities, Jurisprudence of [Muslim]” (pp. 346-48, Alexandre Caeiro) approach the concepts and issues from twin perspectives. Friedman treats both “Muslim Minorities under Non-Muslim Rule” and vice versa and also tackles the issue of *fiqh al-aqallīyāt*, upon which Caeiro further elaborates in a sepa-

rate article. Friedman argues that (a) the question of majority-minority relationships has been relevant to Muslims ever since the emergence of Islam (p. 340); (b) “barely any Muslim minorities lived under non-Muslim rule” during the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal eras (p. 341); and (c) from the 1990s, the emergence of significant Muslim minorities in non-Muslim countries provided “the impetus” to develop the “legal theory of Muslim minorities” (p. 341). For him, on the other hand, the legal framework applied to non-Muslim minorities in Muslim-majority countries during Europe’s medieval period was “the *dhimma* system” (p. 343). This system entered a “new phase in the 20th century” with the emergence of numerous new states in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa (p. 343).

Moreover, Caeiro remarks that this issue/theory emerged after WWII as a “distinct field of Islamic legal research” and that it has been called a “modern phenomenon,” although Muslims have lived under non-Muslim rule throughout history (p. 346). This is still a contentious issue, although Taha Jabir al-‘Alwani and Yusuf al-Qaradawi, the two pioneering figures who have been promulgating it, have worked to make it an established issue. Its success depends upon “envisioning Islam as a ‘civil’ religion contributing to the common good” (p. 348).

Furthermore, regarding the issue of secularism’s place in Islam (pp. 489-90), Henri Lauziere argues that in general terms secularism means the “institutional separation between religion and state” or between “church and state,” but that in theory and practice this separation can assume various “forms” (p. 489). Its Muslim proponents argue that Islamic history is replete with examples of “de facto secularism.” In the twenty-first century as well, Muslim thinkers like Abdullah An-Na‘im and Abdulkarim Soroush continue “to defend the validity and even the necessity of institutional secularism” (p. 490).

Similar inter-related cases are: (1) “Civil Society” (pp. 98-99, Armando Salvatore), “Constitutionalism” (pp. 112-15, Andrew March), and “Pluralism and Tolerance” (pp. 419-27, Gudrun Krämer); (2) “Jihad” (pp. 273-82, John Kelsay), “Violence” (pp. 588-90, Thomas Sizgorich), and “Non-Violence” (pp. 396-97, Ahmed Afzaal); (3) “Fundamentalism” (pp. 179-88, Roxanne L. Euben), and “Quietism and Activism” (pp. 446-47, Kartin Jomaa); (4) “Modernism” (pp. 350-51, Charles Kurzman), “Modernity” (pp. 352-60, Armando Salvatore), and “Globalization” (pp. 194-95, Armando Salvatore); and (5) “Women” (pp. 595-99, Ayesha Chaudhry) and “Veil” (pp. 587-88, Sadaf Ahmad).

These few examples show the innovative and informative scholarly approach adopted in this volume as well as the editors’ successful attempt to

provide “a solid and innovative reference work that would trace the historical roots of Islamic political thought and demonstrate its contemporary importance” (p. xviii) – making this almost four-year project a “pioneering venture.” In addition, the editors have filled a gap in the literature on Islamic political thought by providing a comprehensive reference work on its core conceptions and institutions, as well as on its thinkers and movements.

On the whole, *EIPT* presents a combination of broad detailed articles on core concepts and shorter entries on specific ideas, movements, leaders, and related topics. The editors, to their credit, have made it not only “accessible, informative, and comprehensive with respect to the contemporary political and cultural situation of Islam,” but also have provided an “in-depth examination of the historical roots of that situation” (p. xviii).

In sum, the editors of *EIPT* have done an excellent job by bringing out such an all-inclusive and rich volume on the various aspects, trends and perspectives, of Islamic political thought. Taken as a whole, this work is a very thorough and concise guide that provides positive and reasonably balanced views on a wide range of topics relating to Islam and politics. It could also be recommended for use as an essential and important reference guide; a must-read for everyone interested in Islamic political thought, Islam and politics, and/or political Islam.

Since the last half of the twentieth century, political Islam (i.e., the attempts of Muslim individuals, groups, and movements to reconstruct the socio-cultural and politico-economic basis of their societies along Islamic lines) or Islamism (both extremist and mainstream) has increasingly played a significant role across the entire Muslim world. Understanding its nature and significance, its causes and consequences, as well as its multiple and diverse manifestations, requires an appreciation of national, regional, and international politics and socio-economic conditions (p. 4). *The Oxford Handbook of Islam and Politics (OHIP)*, written by prominent scholars and specialists, is a single-volume sourcebook that offers a broad exploration of “what we know and where we are in the study of political Islam.” It enables scholars, students, policymakers, and the educated public to appreciate, to use the phraseology of editors John L. Esposito and Emad El-Din Shahin, “the interaction of Islam and politics and the multiple and diverse roles of Islamic movements, as well as issues of authoritarianism and democratization, religious extremism and terrorism, regionally and globally” (p. 2).

Consisting of 41 chapters organized into four parts, it discusses major “political” themes, ideologies, activists, and thinkers of “political Islam”; Islam

and politics around the world; and Islamic movements and their dynamics. Being a voluminous work, one cannot sum up all the essays and themes covered. Therefore, I provide below an analysis of some of its concerns.

Part 1, “Major Themes” (chapters 1-7) discusses a plethora of topics: “The Shari‘ah” (Khaled Abou El Fadl); “Salafiya, Modernism, and Revival” (Abdullah Saeed); “Islamic Reform between Islamic Law and the Nation-State” (Sherman A. Jackson), “Political Islam and the State” (John O. Voll), “Islam and Democracy” (Nader Hashemi), “The Political Economy of Islam and Politics” (Tarek Masoud), and “Political Islam and Gender” (Margot Badran). El Fadl argues that the “Shari‘ah as a normative set of values will reinvent the epistemological instrumentalities for its continued legitimacy and authoritativeness and will in due time find its new reasonable equilibrium in Muslim societies” (p. 24). Similarly, Hashemi opines that the debates on Islam and democracy – having attracted a considerable amount of acrimony and controversy during the last few decades, specifically after 9/11 and the Arab Spring – circle around three central issues: Islamism, the role of western policy, and liberalism (p. 76).

In Part 2, “Islamic Ideologues, Activists, and Intellectuals” (chapters 8-17), the major revivalist and revolutionary figures of political Islam, both fundamentalist and moderate, are discussed: the “Founders or Trailblazers of [Contemporary] Political Islam,” namely, Hassan al-Banna (Ahmad Mousalli) and Mawlana Mawdudi (Joshua T. White and Niloufer Siddiqui, pp.125-55); the “Revolutionary Ideologues,” namely, Sayyid Qutb and Ali Shari‘ati (Shahrough Akhavi), and Ayatollah Khomeini (Mojtaba Mahdavi; pp.157-99), all of whom believed that Islam presents a viable alternative to socialism and capitalism and thus developed a strong critique of the West. And, finally, “The ‘Intellectuals’ of Political Islam,” namely, Hassan al-Turabi (Peter Woodward), Rashid al-Ghannoushi (Azzam Tamimi), Yusuf al-Qaradawi (Bettina Gräf), Muhammad Khatami (Mahmoud Sadri and Ahmad Sadri), and Abdolkarim Soroush (Behrooz Ghamari-Tabrizi, pp. 201-59). Seeing the West as an “ideological counterweight” rather than as an enemy, they have written prolifically on the renewal of religious thought, Islamic jurisprudence, modernization and Islam, non-Muslims, and women. The “Islamically informed orientations” of these “intellectuals-activists” have given birth to “an activist Islam that continues to impact new Islamic movements.” In other words, they have succeeded in turning faith into “a vehicle of social and political change” (pp. 2-3).

Part 3 provides a critical overview of the interaction of “Islam and Politics around the World” (chapters 18-25) according to region: North Amer-

ica (Abdullah A. Al-Arian), Europe (Sam Cherribi), the Middle East (Moataz A. Fattah), Central/South/Southeast Asia (Shireen Hunter, Irfan Ahmad, and Fred R. von der Mehden) to North and Sub-Saharan Africa (Azzedine Layachi and Leonardo A. Villalón). This part addresses the nature, extent, and dynamics of political Islam in these respective regions and also explores their diverse use of religion as well as various reform and opposition movements.

Part 4, “The Dynamics of Islam in Politics,” presents an in-depth analysis of the dynamics of political Islam through a wide range of case studies of both countries and movements. This approach reveals the diverse manifestations of political Islam or Islamism today (both mainstream and extremist). It is subdivided into three sections: “Political Islam in Power” (chapters 26-31) and includes Iran (William O. Beeman), Saudi Arabia (Natana J. Delong-Bas), Turkey (Ibrahim Kalin), Sudan (Abdelwahab al-Effendi), and Afghanistan (M. Nazif Shahrani); “Islamic Movements in the Political Process” (chapters 32-38), which discusses the Islamic movements active in Egypt (Tarek Masoud), Hamas (Beverley Milton-Edwards), Hizbollah (Bassel F. Salloukh and Shoghig Mikaelian), Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, (Michael J. Willis), Jordan (Shadi Hamid), Indonesia (Andrée Feillard), Pakistan and Bangladesh (Kamran Bokhari), and Malaysia (Fred R. von der Mehden); and finally covers discussions on the “Jihadi Political Islam” (chapters 40-41): “Al-Jama‘a al-Islamiya” and “al-Jihad Group in Egypt” (Nael Shama); “Jihadists in Iraq” (David Romano), and “Al-Qa‘ida and its Affiliates” (Jason Burke).

Although a number of works have been produced since 9/11 on various themes related to political Islam, most of them have tended, in one way or another, to limit their scope and theme to a specific country or region (i.e., geographically bound analysis) with either a superficial or a sensationalist approach. Thus there was a need for a comprehensive, analytical, and in-depth examination of Islam and politics, one that provides a fair and balanced approach to these crucial and critical, but central, themes. *OHIP* covers this great gap. With contributions from prominent scholars and specialists, it offers a comprehensive analysis and wide-ranging exploration of various contours of the study of political Islam, as well as the relationship between Islam and politics, Muslim intellectuals, activists, and ideologues of political Islam, and Islamic movements around the world. Esposito and Shahin, who collected 41 essays from leading scholars in their respective fields, have done a marvellous job by bringing out such an all-inclusive and rich volume on political Islam.

Treating Islam and politics through a detailed and profound study, the two-volume *Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Politics (OEIP)*, under the chief editorship of Emad El-Din Shahin, provides an in-depth coverage of the political dimensions of both Islam and the Muslim world. Seeking to target specialized users, scholars, students, experts, policymakers, and media specialists, *OEIP* offers both “accurate and balanced scholarship on Islam and politics” (p. xvi).

OEIP is one of the four authoritative works of “The Oxford Islamic World Encyclopedia Series,” edited by John L. Esposito. Building a great deal upon and bringing together some already published entries from his *OEIW* (revised and rewritten as necessary), this publication comprises 412 entries in total, more than 200 of which are entirely new; the rest have been heavily revised “to reflect the political focus of the encyclopedia and expand its scope significantly” (p. xix). Providing an in-depth coverage of the political dimensions of Islam and Muslim world, *OEIP* serves, in the words of editor-in-chief Shahin, as a “specialized supplement to [Esposito’s six-volume] *Oxford Encyclopedia of Islamic World* [2009] and treats Islam and politics through detailed and profound study” (p. xix).

This is due to the following factor: Over the past 150 years, major turning points have occurred in Muslim societies, such as the abolition of the caliphate; western colonialism and foreign domination of Muslim countries; the emergence of nationalist movements, the formation of nation-states, and the domination of secular ideologies; the rise of Islamic activist movements and their confrontations with secular-inspired regimes; the fall of some autocratic regimes after the Arab Spring; and the rise of Islamist parties to power. The Muslim world has experienced, due to several recent events (e.g., the Arab Spring and the fall of autocratic Arab regimes) dynamic political changes that have reasserted the “role of Islam in politics as a main catalyst for change, resistance, liberation, and reassertion of identity and governance” (see p. xix).

Seeking to target a particular readership, namely, specialized users, scholars and students, experts, policymakers, and media specialists, *OEIP* includes entries by highly qualified scholars written in a simple and lucid way to make them easily accessible to the general readers as well. Some of its salient features, which distinguish it from similar works, are that it (1) blends “theoretical dimensions of Islam and politics with practical and institutional aspects”; (2) does not restrict the focus “to a limited time period” but covers the classical, medieval, and contemporary periods in terms of “modern developments, schools of thought, institutions, movements, and personalities”; (3) follows

not only “the standard classification of modern political science references” ranging from concepts, values, and thought to ideologies, structures, institutions, and systems, but keeps in view what is particular to a reference work on Islam and politics: the basic religious beliefs, Muslim political history, Islam in specific geographical regions, thinkers and reformers, movements, society, economy, and international relations; (4) devotes an entire section to the regions and the interaction of Islam and politics therein, thereby demonstrating its recognition of Islam’s global reach; and (5) includes separate sections on (a) Muslim socio-religious and politico-economic institutions and structures; (b) Islamic movements, organizations, and political parties, as well as Muslim communities, sects, and schools of thought; (c) major political theorists, thinkers, and reformers of all eras – with a focus on the main tenets of their intellectual frameworks and their contributions to Muslim political thought and practices (see p. xx).

Additional features of this work include a six-page “List of Entries” (pp. ix-xiv); Esposito’s “Introduction to the Series” (pp. xv-xvii), and editor-in-chief Shahin’s “Preface” (pp. xix-xxi) at the beginning of first volume. At the end of volume two there is a “Topical Outline of Entries” (pp. 571-77) that provides a thematic outline of its contents; a “Directory of Contributors” (pp. 579-91); and an extensive helpful and useful “Index” (pp. 593-695).

A wide-ranging and diverse set of topics are included in this encyclopedia. But to reflect its distinctive approach and to differentiate it from similar works, I present an overview of concepts/entries on *Shura*/Mutual Consultation, Democracy, Secularism, Minority Fiqh, and Minorities in Muslim States. My objective here is two-fold: to show the innovative, advanced, and up-to-date approach, and to demonstrate the difference in methodology and style between *EIPT* and *OEIP*.

The two major concepts as far as Islam-democracy discourse is concerned are *Shura*/Mutual Consultation (2:418-19, M. A. Muqtedar Khan) and Democracy (1:253-59, Muhammad Muslih; updated by Micaelle Browers). Both contributors have approached these concepts from the perspective of blending classical scholarship with modern theories and perspective. For example, Muslih/Browers opine that around the mid-nineteenth century new ways of thought emerged in Middle East. They argue that that “Muslims could increase their strength by secretively adopting Western institutions and practices [like democracy and elections] that were compatible with Shari‘ah (Islamic law)” (p. 253). In their observation, there are three perspectives on this issue: “The Rejectionist” (i.e., Syed Qutb and Mawlana Mawdudi), “Moderate” (e.g., Hasan al-Turabi, Rashid al-Ghannushi, and Yusuf al-Qaradawi) and “Liberal”

(e.g., Fahmi Huwaydi, Tariq al-Bishri, and Abdolkarim Soroush). Within these trends they find “elements of modernity and tradition,” thereby illustrating the “intellectual attempts to restructure Islamic society and politics” and based on “the selective appropriation of modern democratic thought made to conform to Islamic values and law” (pp. 258-59).

Similarly, Nader Hashemi argues that “Secularism” (2:385-89) is marked by a perception of being an “alien ideology initially imposed from outside by invaders” and that the “problems of secularism in Muslim societies are rooted in the lived experiences of Muslim communities” (p. 385). Throwing light on the historical relationship between secularism and Islam in Arab, South Asian, and Southeast Asian, countries, as well as in Iran and Turkey, he writes that this process has passed through several stages that have “varied according to the particular Islamic society in question” (p. 388). He concludes that internal debates on religion-state relations and secularism within the current situation of the “Post Islamism” intellectual trend will likely “dictate how Muslim societies will approach the concept of secularism in the coming decades” (p. 389). Unfortunately, nowhere in his 3,500-word entry does Hashemi define secularism.

Likewise, the authors of “Minorities in Muslim States” (2:49-53, Nicola Mellis) and “Minority *Fiqh*” (2:54-57, Abdessamad Belhaj) approach these issues from twin perspectives: Mellis discusses both the Islamic theory and analyzes the issue of “*Dhimmitude*” in the modern context, and Belhaj, in sum, discusses the origins and emergence, objectives and intentions, and the applications and limitations of *fiqh al-aqalliyāt*. Overall, Mellis suggests that there are two perspectives here: (1) that of the Islamic political movements and Muslim scholars who are “hostile toward non-Muslims and advocate the reimposition of the *dhimma* regulations” and (2) the western scholars and ideologues who are “critical towards Islam,” calling it as a “monolith” (pp. 49-50). Presenting the Ottomans as a case study, Mellis argues that the three leading non-Muslim monotheistic communities (viz., the Jews, Greek Orthodox, and Armenian Christians) were “established as recognized *dhimmi* communities”(milllets) and led by their “proper religious dignitary” (p. 51). He also points out Muslims living in the West or other non-Muslim-majority countries.

In the same way, for Belhaj the discussion of the emergence, objectives, applications, and boundaries of minority *fiqh* is a “contemporary Muslim discourse that responds through the interpretive method called *ijtihād* to the challenges of private and public issues facing Muslims living in the West” (p. 54). In its “Application,” Belhaj focuses mostly on the European Council for Fatwa and Research’s functioning and approach of resolving issues and

argues that it reflects a “variation on modern Islamic jurisprudence, seen within the project of *fiqh* renewal” (p. 56). While examining the “Boundaries of *Fiqh al-Aqalīyāt*,” he concludes that this legal discourse does not fully grasp “the complex Muslim reality of western European societies” and thus it does not follow the “evolution of religiosity among young Muslims living in the West.” Rather, its legal process focuses on “preserving Muslim identity, the call to Islam, relations with non-Muslims, and providing Muslims with knowledge” (p. 56). Belhaj, who regards *fiqh al-aqalīyāt* as a “legal discourse for a specific community,” writes that should consider the secular public space in the West and find a way to work in accordance with it (pp. 56-57).

It seems that *EIPT* could have been a better encyclopedia if its editors had added such topics and themes as global jihad, Islamism, Islamophobia, multi-culturalism, interfaith dialogue, and Muslims in and of the West, given the popular demand, debate, and discussion on such topics, all of which gained prominence and importance after 9/11 and in the wake of Arab Spring. Moreover, there is no direct entry for “Islamic State,” which is astonishing for a work on Islamic political thought. But keeping in view the richness and comprehensiveness, lucidness and coherence, wide-ranging and diverse approach and nature of the entries, as well as the integration of the latest scholarship, *EIPT* is one of the most essential publications, a must-have and must-read reference work for students and specialists of Islamic political thought. It is one of the best one-volume works for undergraduates and graduates of Islamic studies in general, for it brings together concepts and issues as well as past and present personalities and movements.

Similarly, *OHIP* is a comprehensive, richly informative, and innovative reference work on various dimensions of contemporary Islamic political thought. In my opinion, as a student and researcher of modern Islamic political thought, every serious student and scholar of Islam and politics, contemporary Islamic political thought, political Islam, and related areas will benefit from its enlightening overview of Islam’s political dimensions.

Providing an enlightening overview of political dimensions of Islam in a wide-ranging and extensive perspective, OEIP – a comprehensive reference work – demands the widest possible readership, as it is useful equally for students and scholars, social scientists, and political analysts. Broader in coverage, impressive in information, profound in analysis, and lucid in style, anyone interested in learning about the multiple dimensions, complexities, convergences, and divergences of the Islam and politics discourse from the classical to the contemporary eras will benefit from it.

Endnotes

1. Richard C. Martin, ed., *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*, 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 2004).
2. John L. Esposito, et. al., eds., *Oxford Encyclopedia of Modern Islamic World*, 4 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); John L. Esposito, et. al. (eds.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*, 6 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).
3. Josef W. Meri, ed., *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia*, 2 vols. (New York: Routledge, 2006).
4. My review on this work was published in *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization* 3, no. 2 (2013): 85-87. DOI: 10.5829/idosi.wjihc.2013.3.2.3206.
5. My review on this book was published in *The Muslim World Book Review* 34, no. 4 (2014) 39-41.
6. See the review on this work by Muhammad Yaseen Gada in *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, published online on 5 May 2015, 1-3; <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13602004.2015.1039811>.

Tauseef Ahmad Parray
Independent Researcher, India