

Backed by statistics, Nederveen Pieterse goes at length to dwell on the US war on Iraq and its inhuman consequences and calls the bluff of US mission of spreading democracy in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world. With impressive marshalling of statistics, Nederveen Pieterse shows the decline of the US economy and the emergence of rival super powers in the making such as China, India, Russia and Brazil known as BRIC but also the emergence of sovereign wealth funds in China and the United Arab Emirates and so on. The author concludes that American decline is a by-product of American hegemony as he quotes an author, “America’s military bark is louder than its economic bite” (Varzi, quoted on p. 166).

The message is clear: the world is no longer unipolar. The US military unipolarity is juxtaposed by growing economic and political multipolarities in the world. How does the US deal with the situation? Is there a way out? The author suggests reinventing New Deal policies and a return to progressive social policies and commitment as a likely solution.

But is capitalism as a system in crisis? Nederveen Pieterse, a critic of neoliberal capitalism, concedes that what is happening is realignment and reorganisation of capitalism rather than a crisis of capitalism as predicted by Karl Marx in the mid-nineteenth century. A likely scenario is a roll-back of the criticism of the state and a partial return to a Keynesian economics. In this situation, we will be better off reconciling with the variety of capitalisms with multiple centres than with singularity of neoliberal capitalism and unipolarity.

The author will find his position vindicated by the fact that in the recovery of the financial crisis that has begun in Asia (China, Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, etc) as of July and August 2009, the state plays a critically important role.

Diplomacy: Theory and Practice in Islam. By Wang Yong Bao @ Ahmed Musa. Kuala Lumpur, International Islamic University Malaysia Press, 2009, pp. 243. ISBN: 9789833855971 (Paperback).

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Wang Yong Bao Ahmed Musa in *Diplomacy: Theory and Practice in Islam* discusses the external relations of the Islamic State established by Prophet Muḥammad (SAW) which was popularised by his immediate successors, the Rightly Guided Caliphs, and the Muslims thereafter. Ahmed Musa's work is based on the assumption that numerous states can coexist provided that they all promote one common objective, i.e., establishing peace and justice ordained by Allah (SWT). He argues that Muslim scholars have discussed the practices of the Islamic State of *jihād* (war against aggression), division of the world into *dār al-Islām* (the territory of peace), *dār al-ḥarb* (the territory of war) or *dār al-amān* (the territory of covenant or truce), *jizyah* (tax imposed on non-Muslim subjects of the Islamic State), armistice and treaties, trade and diplomatic immunities and privileges within this peaceful framework advocated by Islam. In this book, the author writes about diplomacy and its conduct by the Islamic State during peaceful times as well as the actual state of war.

This book is organised into six chapters with an introduction and a conclusion. In Chapter One, Ahmed Musa describes the characteristics of diplomacy and its meaning in Islam and the West. However, it is noted that in this chapter, the author discusses mainly the various types of diplomacy and institutions used by diplomats while dealing with the Western and Islamic perspectives of diplomacy. However, the author provides the general framework that guided diplomatic practices of the early generation of Islam. He argues that diplomatic practices of the Islamic State were guided by the principles of universalism of Islam, freedom of faith, justice and equality, and tolerance. The principles of cooperation between Muslims and peaceful minded non-Muslims in promoting just/moral global order and legal competence of states, however, are not discussed. Then the author enumerates the objectives of diplomacy in Islam, pointing out a built-in contradiction between the objectives of diplomacy and the external relations of the Islamic State. At the beginning of Chapter One, the author argues that diplomacy is conducted within the framework of the above-mentioned principles. Yet towards the end of the Chapter he identifies the objectives other

than the aforementioned principles of Islamic diplomacy. Moreover, the author adopts a simplistic approach in identifying the objectives of diplomacy in Islam. Some of the objectives considered by the author do not have normative value and hence cannot be considered as norms capable of guiding the Islamic State's external relations.

In Chapter Two, the author analyses the characteristics and functions of diplomats representing the Islamic State. Chapter Three of the book chronicles the principles and types of diplomacy in Islam. According to the author, diplomacy is conducted based on mutual agreement between the host and receiving states, respect for the customs and traditions of the receiving state, principle of reciprocity, and non-interference in the internal affairs of the receiving state (p. 32).

Chapter Four discusses the diplomatic privileges and immunities advocated by Islam. Ahmed Musa argues that "diplomatic privileges and immunities are nothing but some exemptions from those regulations which are offered to some people" [sic] (p. 85) and are therefore essential for the conduct of affairs of the state. Islam encourages their practice and, indeed Prophet Muḥammad (SAW) observed them in his conduct of external affairs of the Islamic State (p. 87). Chapter Four also discusses the privileges and immunities foreign envoys enjoyed while on the territory of the Islamic State. Ahmed Musa distinguishes between diplomatic privileges and the legal system of the receiving state. He argues that the Islamic State can investigate the envoys of the sending state having civil or criminal liabilities. The Islamic State can unilaterally terminate the diplomatic privileges and immunities of the envoys of sending state if they are found to have violated the principles of good faith and non-interference, the laws of the host state or have been involved in acts, such as espionage, considered detrimental to the security of the Islamic State. Chapter Five examines the status and functions of diplomats during the actual state of war between the Islamic State and the belligerent states. The author, in Chapter Six, provides an in-depth conceptual analysis of negotiation with reference to practices of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the early generations of Islam.

In the final part of the book, the author underlines the need for academic discussion of external relations of Islam, in general and diplomacy with an Islamic bent of mind, in particular. This should

be taken seriously. Contemporary Muslim scholars have attributed the backwardness and underdevelopment of Muslim minds and societies, among others, to a lack of systematic study of external relations of Islamic State and the principles that guided it. This has led to misinterpretation of fundamental objectives of the Islamic State as part of the study of International Relations, which is dominated by the West. Given the urgent need of the study of International Relations with an Islamic focus, Ahmed Musa's work is a welcome but not sufficient contribution to the field of Islamic theory of International Relations. The author's book combines theory with practice and provides examples from practices of the historic Islamic State. In addition, the author has used primary as well as secondary sources.

The issues in this book are discussed with reference to the Qur'ān, Prophet Muḥammad's (SAW) tradition and practices of his immediate successors, suggesting originality of the work and author's ability to provide a coherent discussion of such an important issue in Islam's external relations. This kind of analysis is difficult and requires patience. The author, intentionally or unintentionally, throughout the book, discusses Western views on the topics and issues discussed therein, blending them with Islam. This tendency could result in confusion specifically among those who have little or no exposure to Islam's approach to International Relations. It seems that the book targets Muslim audience and assumes that the readers would know the Islamic and Arabic concepts used. It is hoped that a revised edition of this valuable work, which is organisationally and linguistically sound is made available to its readers soon.

A Fair Country: Telling Truths about Canada. By John Ralston Saul. Toronto: Penguin Books, 2008, pp. 340. ISBN: 9780670068043.

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Canada, a land of immigrants, is facing the challenge of national identity. Many authors have examined this issue through a variety