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almost every turn. When he finally acquires some and tries to stash it in Shanghai the coal is taken by the Russians.

In the end, like many scholars of energy geopolitics before him, Schulman narrowly studies empire only from the perspective of the powerful. Time and time again he skips over the perspectives and interests of those subjugated by empire. Perhaps the most egregious example is in the midst of a painstakingly detailed chapter on the efforts of Ambrose W. Thompson to lobby the American and Latin American governments for access to coal on the Isthmus of Chiriquí in modern-day Panama. Schulman briefly mentions that “the indigenous population was considerable” (95). End of story. Completely focussed on Thompson’s commercial quest for coal, and other wild ideas about creating a coal-mining colony for freed slaves, the concerns of the considerable indigenous populations are never returned to. This happens throughout the text. Bizarre racial theories of island purity (131), coal miner labor struggles (114, 191–93), and the other more sinister aspects of empire are skimmed over. In fact, one could read this book and imagine that empire has very little to do with violence and/or resistance, but is mostly a question of logistics and “economy.”

All that said, Schulman studies the perspective of the powerful very well. His use of primary sources is impressive. The book is jam-packed with interesting, sometimes riveting, stories. Those who know little about coal and steam power will learn a lot about this complicated sociotechnical system. My political concern is what readers will not learn.

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Osamah F. Khalil, *America’s Dream Palace: Middle East Expertise and the Rise of the National Security State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016, \$36.00). Pp. 295. ISBN 978 0 6749 7157 8.

Osamah F. Khalil’s important work of intellectual history opens with a reminder: the “Middle East” was in many respects an American invention. The term was coined in 1902 by US naval strategist and historian Alfred Thayer Mahan as a way to describe a region that, as Mahan argued, warranted continued British imperial domination. Despite Mahan not specifying geographical boundaries for the region, the term “Middle East” nevertheless was widely taken up in anglophone journalism, scholarship, and policy discourses of the period. Over the course of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, American expertise about the Middle East was continually made and remade at the intersection of academic knowledge production and state interest.

America’s Dream Palace takes its title from a passage by T. E. Lawrence. In *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, Lawrence presents himself as a catalyst in bringing the Middle East into modernity. “I meant to make a new nation, to restore a lost influence, to give twenty millions of Semites the foundations on which to build an inspired dream-palace of their national thoughts” (quoted at 2). Khalil’s thorough and absorbing history excavates a dream palace that was less the result of national aspirations in the region than it was the creation of American “missionaries, spies, soldiers, diplomats, and scholars” (3). The book chronologically charts how, from World War I through the Global War on Terror, dense relationships among US government agencies, universities, and private foundations produced and disseminated expert knowledge about the Middle East. Khalil argues that the interests of US foreign policy

primarily drove the knowledge created out of these relationships, and the locus of expertise changed over time to best meet those interests. While the relative impact of these domains varied over the course of the century, Khalil foregrounds the persistent and durable influence of orientalism on US foreign policy. The Middle East was routinely construed as inferior, tyrannical, traditional, a threat to Western civilization, while the heritage of American exceptionalism provided a warrant for the expansion of US power in the region.

The arc of Khalil's narrative moves from the "private knowledge" produced for the Wilson administration, to the Cold War influx of state funds for university area-studies units, to the rise of "privatized knowledge" produced by policy-focussed think tanks backed by private foundations. Each chapter focusses on a particular nexus of actors and agencies, and the forms of knowledge they produced. Chapter 1 highlights the World War I-era work of 150 scholars called "the Inquiry," whose Western Asia division was supervised by the Classics professor William Westermann, and whose proposals were "marked by Orientalist sentiments and notions of racial and religious supremacy" (37). Chapter 2 addresses the World War II-era development of partnerships between the US Office of Strategic Services, the Army Specialized Training Program, and the university campuses tasked with producing salient region-specific research and analysis for the war effort. Chapter 3 identifies the early Cold War rise of the State Department's External Research Staff, a unit tasked with interfacing between the US government, so-called "national security academics," and a suite of academic organizations like the Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies. Chapter 4 stands apart from the others by focussing on academic institutions not based in the United States – in this case, the American University of Beirut and the American University of Cairo.

Chapter 5 turns to the 1958 passage of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) and its effects on the development of Middle East studies as a field. While its first decade was marked by successful institution-building efforts, the "permeable line between academia and the national security state" (180) that, for some, the NDEA exemplified was the subject of criticism. Chapter 6 elaborates how key publications central to modernization theory, including Daniel Lerner's *Passing of Traditional Society* (1958), emerged in part out of a partnership between academic units and the US State Department. Such work encoded an orientalist racial logic that centered the tutelary role of the US in bringing the peoples of the region into modernity. Chapter 7 highlights the growing influence of think tanks like RAND, the American Enterprise Institute, and the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, as alternative venues for the development and analysis of foreign policy. These privatized forms of expertise developed in the context of widespread revelations and criticism of long-developed partnerships between US scholars, private research-oriented foundations, and the Central Intelligence Agency. Segments of academia, including those whose research focussed on the Middle East, were openly unsympathetic to US foreign policy. Finally, work like Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) offered an intervention into the scholarly genealogy of power and knowledge that emphasized the tenacity of racial discourse in constructing expertise about the "other." As Khalil aptly puts it, "although Said arguably won the contest of ideas within academia, [British orientalist Bernard] Lewis's influence was far more pronounced within policy circles" (239). The book closes by identifying how the contours of orientalist expertise during the First and Second Gulf Wars were shaped by tight-knit relationships between the US foreign-policy establishment and US think tanks and other private organizations.

Khalil's revelatory history of the changing shape of expert knowledges about the Middle East offers a significant contribution to the field of American studies.

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Ben Offler, *US Foreign Policy and the Modernization of Iran: Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, and the Shah* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, \$90.00). Pp. x + 227. ISBN 978 1 1374 8220 4.

In recent years historians have taken a great deal of interest in modernization theory and its influence on American foreign policy in the 1960s. For some, the body of theory that sought to guide postcolonial states through the perilous journey from tradition to modernity without succumbing to the temptations of Communism constituted nothing less than a Geertzian cultural system that created meaning for a generation of policymakers.¹ Against such claims, Ben Offler offers a fascinating study of modernization theory's *non*-influence on American foreign policy towards Iran (4, 30–34, 48). Offler shows that the discourse of “modernization” was merely campaign rhetoric that was always kept at a safe distance from the actual making of foreign policy. While Kennedy-era officials spoke often and loudly in public about the need to promote economic development and political reform in Iran and elsewhere, in private they saw a direct trade-off between maintaining stability and promoting reform, and were much more concerned with the former than with the latter. In practice, this meant channeling resources into a military and internal security apparatus designed to exert influence in the region, and repress demands for reform at home. Moreover, Offler shows that even if US officials had been sincere in seeking to “modernize” Iran, they had very little influence with the shah's regime, and what little influence they had gradually slipped away over the course of the 1960s.

Offler demonstrates the validity of his thesis by showing that the true innovation of the Kennedy administration was not a policy of modernization, but rather one of “massage.” Upon entering office in 1961, the Kennedy administration found that the true problem confronting US policy toward Iran was not how the US could push the shah in a reformist direction, but rather how the US could, in the face of the shah's nervous and paranoid disposition, “stroke his ego to assure him of American support” (49). The Kennedy administration found that the best way to “massage” the shah's delicate ego was to sell his government large numbers of guns on credit.

This policy of massage through arms sales far outlasted the Kennedy administration. Offler shows that this policy remained intact through the Johnson years and culminated in the Nixon administration's May 1972 agreement to furnish the shah's regime with any and all requested nonnuclear military equipment. Up to this point, there remained a few true believers within the administration who expressed concern that Iranian military spending was diverting resources from development

¹ See Michael Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and “Nation Building” in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), pp. 13–14.