

CHOICE Magazine (American Library Association) reviews *Shadow Wars: The Secret Struggle for the Middle East*

5 January 2017

This is the best and most informative book yet on the struggle for power among the US and Europe, Arab autocratic regimes, and these countries' impoverished masses. The Arab Spring revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Yemen challenged this imperialist illiberal paradigm and were crushed. All of the revolutions, with the exception of Syria, failed, and the European powers and the US were able to restore the autocratic, illiberal regimes to power. The author argues that in return for their restoration to power, the Arab regimes agreed to open further their statist economies to European and American capitalism, compelling them buy hundreds of billions of dollars of arms, increasing the oppression and impoverishment of the masses. This is the reason why the EU and US never intended to eradicate the Islamic State—it was useful in bringing the Arab countries and Iran to heel. The lesson was clear: allow the penetration of global capital in your statist economies or face revolt. As a result, Arab regimes (and Iran) would be compelled to buy more weapons to suppress their poor and impoverished peoples. Intelligent readers should also consult Marc Lynch, *The New Arab Wars: Uprisings and Anarchy in the Middle East*. — Professor Emeritus R. W. Olson, University of Kentucky.