

get the training courses for mullahs in the army and Nazi troops. At the same time, academics drove their Jewish colleagues out and many perished in the ever-growing system of concentration camps.

Wokoeck is generally correct in her conclusions, however one point needs to be clarified. Firstly, the assumption that most scholars in Middle Eastern studies, who stayed and worked in Germany, kept their distance from the regime was wrong (even today we find scholars discussing this and not mentioning the Nazi party's membership of their subjects). Furthermore, most academics became Nazis: cooperation was the rule rather than the exception. Contrary to the author's claim, the Nazis did not seem to have any longer term plans to conquer Middle Eastern lands. The Nazis followed chancellor Otto von Bismarck's tradition of not having colonies but regional rulers to do the job on their own in a pyramid of global power sharing. The Nazis regarded the Middle East only as a battleground as long as other European rivals like the British stayed there but not as an area to build settlements for "Aryans."

Secondly, the author maintains that many of the very same scholars who worked during the period of Nazi Germany continued to be employed at academic institutions

working on the Middle East after 1945. This means that modern Middle Eastern studies in Germany had a Nazi heritage, which needs to be recognized and investigated, including what impact that heritage actually had on German academia in the years that followed the World War II. Usually, it was assumed that scholars did define research topics on their own. The author claimed that the establishment of Middle Eastern studies and its major stages were determined by factors outside the discipline. We add that the Muslims living in Germany since 1900 also had an impact on the unfolding of those studies. The networks between Muslims living in Germany throughout the earlier part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the German scholars of that same time period are the missing dimensions in the research of this topic. However, Wokoeck's solid study opens the door to further research on German Orientalism and Middle Eastern Studies for this crucial time period in world history. Historically grounded, well balanced and highly insightful, this analysis is a significant contribution to a long lasting discussion, which since the millennium has become a subject of great international interest.

Wolfgang G. Schwanitz  
Gloria Center, Israel

## The Obama Moment: European and American Perspectives

Edited by *Alvaro de Vasconcelos* and *Marcin Zaborowski*

Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2009, 248 pp.,  
ISBN 9789291981601.

When Barack Obama became president of the United States in January 2009, expectations were unprecedented. Although

Obama had proven his ability to inspire the world, still at the end of 2009 the President said that "change...takes time."

Since this book was written last year the world has witnessed unexpected global crises and ongoing conflicts: the devastation of the earthquake in Haiti, the BP oil spill, a stalled Middle East peace process hampered by substantial diplomatic rifts between regional powers, and America's war in Afghanistan becoming its longest in history.

The *Obama Moment* presents a wide-range of American and European perspectives. The authors analyze facets of Obama's foreign policy and national security strategy and strive to make sense of Obama's multilateralism. The book also highlights strains within the US-EU relationship, differences among allies on the world stage that stand in the way of reform of international institutions, and finally suggests how the strategic transatlantic US-EU relationship can be revitalized.

To provide a critical look of the *Obama Moment*, I compare the analysis presented in the book related to the US National Security Strategy (NSS) released in May 2010. The themes that run throughout this book remain but with added complexity, despite some breakthroughs on the NPT front, the signing of the START treaty, the vote on Iran sanctions at the UN, and the global economic recovery. The parallel between the NSS and the book adds a tool to examine the book—to what extent the analysis in the book was in line with objectives laid out in the NSS, and what themes we are likely to see in the coming years.

The 2010 NSS begins with a realist strategic concept: a lens that American foreign policy must accept “the world as it is.” The strategy also emphasizes “smart power” concepts, where the US must more skillfully manage cooperation among allies, adversaries, and emerging powers. Delineated

in the new NSS are four major themes: first, “Disrupt, dismantle, and defeat Al-Qaida and its violent extremist affiliates in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and around the world”; second, “Pursuing a world without nuclear weapons by presenting ‘a clear choice’ to Iran and North Korea”; third, “Advancing peace in the Middle East with a secure Israel, a Palestinian state and a stable Iraq”; and finally, as a broader strategic concept, not a specific policy, “ensuring strong alliances, build cooperation with other 21<sup>st</sup> century centers of influence, strengthen institutions and mechanisms for cooperation, sustain broad cooperation on key global challenges.”<sup>1</sup> In the book, James Dobbins suggests that President Obama narrowed the rationale for engagement in Afghanistan while expanding the scope and agrees with Jones that in Afghanistan, the US overestimated support and assistance from the EU and other NATO members. The Obama Administration had hoped that the EU would utilize their strong civilian crisis management skills to bolster governance, rule of law, and capacity building. Based on the perspectives in this book, Europeans feel they got more than they bargained for in the Afghan war, and according to two authors, Hamilton and Foster, threats lying in Pakistan were barely mentioned in the European Security Strategy.

Ciricione and Alexander Bell co-authored a chapter discussing American nuclear policy. These authors offer a number of possible critical arms control and non-proliferation victories that would need to be achieved by mid-2010. Among these victories: a follow-on treaty to START, a successful 2010 NPT Review Conference, containment of the North Korea nuclear program, and a successful April 2010 Global Nuclear Security Summit.

This year, President Obama and President Medvedev of Russia signed the START protocols, and for a fourth time the UN Security Council voted for sanctions against Iran's nuclear program with 15 countries on the Council voting for the measure, while Turkey and Brazil voted against it and Lebanon abstaining. Furthermore, the 189 states that are parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty agreed to a final outcome document that lays out action plans for all three NPT pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The actions of Brazil and Turkey and the noncompliance of North Korea and Iran with the demands of US policy run contrary to mainstream post-Cold War concepts. Moreover, Brazil's and Turkey's recent alliance with Iran on uranium enrichment some say epitomizes the post-globalization realities that are in the process of transforming US foreign policy assumptions, planning, and actions. The current climate is also reflected in Glen Rangwala's interesting point that there will be a new regional dynamic after 2011, and that the US and the EU must be prepared to accept that they may be on an equal playing ground with Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

Hamilton and Foster argue that the Obama administration is likely to approach the transatlantic partnership far more pragmatically and from a less Eurocentrist lens. The authors suggest that the G20 should be used as an economic steering committee of sorts, and reform must take place in institutions like the IMF and the World Bank.

The new NSS makes great overtures toward the 'new kids around the block', and underlines that working with Brazil, Russia, India and China, as well as South Africa

and Indonesia, and leading G20 economies is indispensable.

In a later chapter, Bruce Jones argues that Obama's multilateralism isn't identical to Europe's, and that policy may over time shift the center of gravity away from the transatlantic alliance. He describes divergent policies on Iran, the Middle East and Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the EU unhappy with the US sluggish policy on the issue of climate change.

Overall the book tries to encompass a lot, perhaps too much. Editor Marcin Zaborowski pulls together the broad range of issues covered in this book, many of which are dealt with from within a bi-lateral US-EU framework, demonstrating how important this seemingly ad hoc bi-lateral relationship has become. Zaborowski cites the Turkish-Cypriot dispute vis-a-vis Turkey's major role in NATO as a major sore spot in the EU-NATO alliance. He also stresses that the EU should show more inclusiveness toward Turkey.

To conclude, Jones's main premise is that transatlantic relations will only be a strand of many in a broader management of international order and describes Obama's multilateralism as "cooperative realism". This is an accurate assessment of what the EU-US relationship may now resemble. Moreover, Hamilton and Foster also were correct in recognizing that the Obama Administration could receive a boost in credibility in Europe if it can use soft power tools effectively, and with his assertion that the EU-US relationship is "disposable, and also insufficient".

Through the main arguments introduced in beginning of the book, and summarized at the end, editors Alvaro de Vasconcelos and Zaborowski propose a set of ideas to transform the US-EU relationship,

amidst this post-Cold War, post-9/11 and post-globalized world. The book suggests that the US and the EU must work together on maintaining a strategic dialogue. By the same token, the Europeans must support NATO, and solve disputes within this alliance. Ending on a bittersweet note, the editors forecast an improved atmosphere in the US-EU transatlantic relationship. But, it also warns of the potential for only short-term momentum within the Obama foreign policy agenda by late 2010.

This book provides a collection of contemporary perspectives from experts and analysts on the most crucial issues in international affairs today, a focus that seems to mirror main aspects of Obama's National Security Strategy. Although the book only loosely provides a handful of all encompassing themes that all 18 authors agree on, it provides a snapshot analysis of every topical issue at hand under the current international system, and assesses the changing international environment. The book is

also successful in providing the reader with the sense that many of the most pressing issues must be addressed from a bi-lateral US-EU platform; yet to reach that point the transatlantic alliance needs to be re-energized. Finally there's a sentiment taken from the book that the US-EU relationship is an important, but it shouldn't be deemed the only card in the deck for tackling complex issues, and furthermore, that the West shouldn't just be a witness to the rise of the rest, but will need to cooperate with the new powers as they emerge.

**Hailey Cook,**  
*SETA Foundation, Washington D.C.*

#### Endnotes

1. The White House, Barack Obama, *National Security Strategy*. May 27, 2010.  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/homeland-security>  
[http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf)

## Islam and Liberal Citizenship: The Search for an Overlapping Consensus

By *Andrew F. March*

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. 350 pp., \$55.00.

---

Andrew March, starting from John Rawls's concept of overlapping consensus, examines whether or not Islamic political ethics provides a legitimate ground for Muslims to come to terms with citizenship in non-Muslim liberal democracies. More specifically, March looks at Islamic religious doctrines to assess the extent of their support for residing in and being loyal to a non-Muslim liberal state, recognizing

non-Muslims as equals in political terms, appreciating moral pluralism, contributing to the welfare of a non-Muslim state, cooperating with non-Muslims in a liberal political environment, and participating in liberal political systems. March argues that there exist "very strong and authentically Islamic arguments" (p. 15) in orthodox and modern religious doctrines that accept the core demands of liberal citizenship.